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NDP Responses to Bike to the Future Survey

Grade: C

Question 1: Support for Cycling as Transportation



Do you agree that increased use of bicycles as everyday transportation for work, shopping or other travel is desirable for environmental, health and/or economic reasons, and that the province of Manitoba should develop a provincial policy designed to promote and support the use of bicycles as transportation?

The NDP agrees that cycling is an activity that provides benefit for personal wellbeing and health, while reaping environmental and economic benefits. Cycling can be an important part of a healthy lifestyle and can also provide a key alternative to motor vehicle use as part of a broader climate change strategy.

A re-elected NDP government will honour its 3-year commitment of \$1.8 million to the Winnipeg Trails Association to develop trails across the city, bringing our total trails commitment to \$11.5 million since 1999. Trails that will be developed with this support include the Bishop Grandin Greenway, Fort Whyte Alive, Harte Trail, Transcona Trails, Chief Peguis pedestrian trail and Marconi in Kildonan.

As a national leader in the promotion of healthy living and responding to the challenges of climate change, our government has made investments to support cycling through:

- Establishment of a low cost helmet purchase program as recommended by the Healthy Kids, Healthy Futures Task Force including the distribution of 1,000 free helmets to underprivileged children;
- \$2.1 million in funding to the Manitoba Recreational Trails Association to begin Manitoba's portion of the Trans-Canada Trail and subsequent funding of \$1 million to continue construction of the trail;
- Amending the Municipal Assessment Act to enable trails owned by the Manitoba Recreational Trails Association and similar non-profit organizations to be exempt from taxation to facilitate trails development;
- Amending the Occupiers' Liability Act to facilitate the development of recreational trails by reducing the liability of private property owners;
- Funding this year alone of \$21 million to the City of Winnipeg for road improvement projects, including cycling trails.

A re-elected NDP government is also committed to the development of multi-use greenway trails, including bicycle trails, along an expanded Red River Floodway.

In regard to the development of a provincial policy to promote and support the use of bicycles, our party will consult with the community to determine the need for a provincial policy to promote and support the use of bicycles.

Active Commuting Path our government is partnering with the City and the Federal Government to improve commuting opportunities between the University of Manitoba and downtown by building a new cycling/skateboarding/walking path. The total length of this commuting path will be 11.68 kilometers.

Question 2: Provincial Bicycle Policy

Provincial and State bicycle policies generally include a number of elements such as:

- ***Reviewing and updating traffic legislation to ensure that it takes into account the needs of cyclists and the issues that arise when cyclists and motor vehicles are sharing the roads;***
- ***Developing standards for road and bridge construction and rehabilitation that ensure that it is practical and safe to ride bicycles on provincial roads;***
- ***Requiring municipal governments to have bicycle plans and that they incorporate appropriate design standards into road and bridge construction and rehabilitation;***
- ***Undertaking or funding public education for motorists and cyclists concerning safe driving and cycling practices;***
- ***Providing targeted funding, in cooperation with municipal governments, that supports the development of cycling infrastructure and is designed to make cycling safe and accessible;***
- ***Establishing standards concerning design of facilities and bicycles;***
- ***Supporting research on cycling so that the volume and characteristics of bicycle traffic can be identified and analyzed, causes of bicycle collisions and injuries can be identified and redressed, and potential and actual reductions in greenhouse gases and air pollutants resulting from increased bicycle traffic can be calculated;***
- ***Promoting the use of bicycles and other forms of active transportation through a public information campaign emphasizing the direct and indirect benefits of cycling to individuals, governments, the environment and the economy.***

If elected, will your party implement a provincial bicycle policy with some or all of the above components? Specifically will your party implement:

- * ***A public review of the Highway Traffic Act from the standpoint of cycling?***
- * ***Cycling-related standards for road and bridge construction?***
- * ***Legislation requiring bike facilities in all road and bridge construction projects?***
- * ***Legislation requiring municipal governments to have bicycle policies?***
- * ***Targeted funding to support the development of cycling infrastructure?***

- * ***Driver education programs for motorists and cyclists?***
- * ***Research concerning cycling in Manitoba?***
- * ***Promotion of cycling as a means of transportation in Manitoba?***
- * ***Other bicycle-related policies?***

Prior to the development of a provincial policy on cycling, a re-elected NDP government would consult with key community stakeholders, including local municipalities, regarding the effectiveness of a provincial policy. However, as demonstrated over the past eight years, our party is strongly committed to:

- Infrastructure development that would facilitate and support cycling;
- Promoting cycling as an important aspect of Healthy Living;
- Promoting cycling as an important activity to help reduce green house gas emissions; and
- Working with the City of Winnipeg and local governments for the development and funding of bicycle trails.

Question 3: Measuring Progress

According to a 2004 City of Winnipeg survey, approximately 3% of Winnipeggers choose to commute to work by bicycle, and about one third of Winnipeggers travel to work by bicycle at least once a year. In addition, 40% of Winnipeggers would cycle to work more often if there was adequate cycling infrastructure. Other Canadian cities are doing better than Winnipeg, with 5% of commuters in Victoria B.C. traveling by bicycle. Yet this pales in comparison with many northern European cities where extensive cycling facilities exist. In Amsterdam 28% of all trips are made by bicycle. In Copenhagen, 20% of all trips are made by bike. In Bremen Germany, 21% of all trips are made by bicycle.

If elected what would your goals be for cycling in Winnipeg and Manitoba, and how would you measure the success of your cycling policies?

Identification and monitoring of participation rates would provide an indication of the success of any efforts to increase cycling in Manitoba. Our government would work with the City of Winnipeg and the cycling community to determine participation rates.