Bike to the Future Presentation To the City of Winnipeg on Reduced Speeds on Residential Streets

Bike to the Future enthusiastically welcomes the news that the City of Winnipeg is considering a reduction of speed limits on residential streets.

We strongly recommend that the City set a 30 kph speed limit on residential streets, unless otherwise posted.

Here's why:

Bike to the Future strives to encourage more people to choose to ride their bikes more often. We note that this goal compliments the City of Winnipeg's own strategic goal calling for a transportation system that supports active, accessible and healthy lifestyle options.

Each year, the average Canadian makes 2,000 trips of less than three kilometers by car. These trips could just as easily be made by bicycle or on foot. Many Winnipeggers tell us that they would like to use their bikes for such trips, but they do not feel safe riding in Winnipeg traffic. So they drive a vehicle instead.

International research demonstrates that slower speed limits reduce collisions and injuries to motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians. By reducing the speed differential between motorists and cyclists on streets where such traffic must mix, slower speeds increase the safety of cyclists and pedestrians, increasing the likelihood of that people will choose to make short trips by bicycle or on foot.

Bike to the Future commends Mayor Sam Katz for his initiative to bring back 30 kph school zones. We enthusiastically endorse that concept, but we recommend 30 kph speed limit zones big enough to allow kids – and the rest of us -- to walk or bike to neighbourhood facilities, including schools, recreation facilities and shopping areas.

Walking/biking mode share is directly related to the real and perceived safety of a route. In turn, there is a direct relationship between the walkability / bikeability of a community, and its health. Rates of obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and many other ailments are higher in communities where people spend less time getting around on their own power. Historically, our transportation system has been biased to favour travel by motor vehicle, and people have become increasingly reliant on motor vehicles. This has made us increasingly sedentary, which has caused increased suffering and high health care costs among both adults and children. Setting 30 kph as the default speed in residential areas could help to reverse this trend.

Public health leaders in Ontario recommend AT for health reasons

The link between health and transportation choices has persuaded authorities such as the Toronto Public Health Officer and the Ontario Coroner's Office, among others, to recommend reducing speed limits in urban residential areas.

In April 2012, the Toronto Public Health Officer released a report entitled Road to Health: Improving Walking and Cycling in Toronto. The City of Toronto Board of Health reviewed the report and recommended, inter alia, that the Medical Officer of Health work in collaboration with the General Manager of Transportation Services to support the increased use and safety of walking and cycling by: … Reducing vehicle speed limits to 30 km/hr on residential streets and adopting a city-wide speed limit of 40 km/hr on all other streets, unless otherwise posted"

The report summarized the benefits of active transportation as:

- Physical activity from active transportation has very important health benefits, including significantly reducing the risk of all-cause mortality, cardiovascular disease, obesity, type II diabetes, and certain types of cancer.
- Increasing the use of active transportation can also generate significant social, environmental, economic and transportation system benefits.
- In North America, users of active transportation generally face greater risks from traffic collisions than users of other modes (such as cars and transit). However, the health benefits experienced by individuals who increase their physical activity through the use of active transportation greatly outweigh the risks.
- Walking and cycling infrastructure investments are extremely cost-effective, even when considering the health benefits alone.
- Better design for active modes, such as walking and cycling, can greatly increase safety for all modes; increasing the proportion of trips made by walking and cycling can also independently lower collision and injury rates (the 'safety in numbers' effect).

In June 2012, the Chief Coroner of Ontario released a report *Cycling Death Review: Road Safety is Everyone's Responsibility* which also recommended "*Designation of community safety zones in residential areas, with reduced posted maximum speeds and increased fines for speeding.".*

International authorities public health recommend reduced urban speed limits

World-wide, there are many initiatives led by public health organizations to reduce speed limits to 30 kph in urban cores and residential areas.

The World Health Organization http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/publications/road_traffic/en/ and the United States National Highway Traffic Safety Administration have both found that lower speed limits in urban areas improve the health of pedestrians, both in terms of the number of accidents and their severity.

The European Union Transport and Tourism Committee has recommended 30-kilometre-per-hour speed limits for residential areas, with the specific goal of reducing by 60 per cent the number of children under 14 years old killed by motorists.

Thirty kph speed limits are a key component of sustainable travel policies in Denmark, Belgium, Germany the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. In the UK, there is a popular movement promoting "20 is plenty" (meaning 20 miles per hour) www.20splentyforuk.org.uk, www.slower-speeds.org.uk.

Public health call for action in Manitoba

Dr. Lynne Warda of the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority's Injury Prevention Program made a presentation the Legislative Committee on Bill 3 (concerning school zones) on June 6, 2012:

> "After 30 kilometre an hour zones were introduced in London, these zones experienced a 42 per cent reduction in fatalities. In 1988, the town of Baden, Austria reduced speeds to 30 kilometres an hour and reduced road injuries by 60 per cent. In the late 1970s, Danish residential speeds were reduced to 30 kilometres an hour and traffic calming measures were introduced. This led to a 72 per cent reduction in injuries. In 2004, the city of Helsinki reduced speed limits from 50 to 40 and from 40 to 30 kilometres an hour for an estimated 15 per cent reduction in injury costs, 15 per cent reduction in fatalities, and a savings of 5 million euros per year."

Dr. Warda noted the impact of speed on active transportation: "Research shows that neighbourhood traffic speeds can either promote or inhibit walking and biking to school. School speed zones can be an effective strategy to increase the number of students walking and biking to school, but this effectiveness is significantly enhanced with the addition of traffic calming measures, and also the presence of crossing guards. If active transportation of children is to be promoted, we should reduce speeds and use traffic calming measures, as well as crossing guards, to maximize the impact. We are concerned that limiting speed reduction to school zones may not have the desired impact."

Speed has a significant impact on safety & well being:

Basic laws of physics dictate that vehicle's stopping distance and the kinetic energy that it delivers when it hits something are a function of the square of the vehicle's speed. Thus, pedestrians or cyclists are more likely to be hit by motor vehicles that travel faster, and the likelihood of death increases exponentially with the vehicle's speed. Empirical studies find that, at 30 km/hr, 5% of pedestrians struck by a vehicle will die. At 40 kph, 25% will die. At 50 kph, 55% will die.

Reducing speed limits has many benefits to society as a whole.

1. A more walkable, liveable city with a higher quality of life.
2. A healthier population, as more citizens will choose to walk and bicycle and reduce costs to our health care system, as well as wear and tear on infrastructure
3. More children walking or cycling to school, reducing the "school taxi" duties on parents, reducing commuting time, reducing traffic congestion near schools, and improving child safety
4. Fewer accidents
5. Reduced severity of injury from accidents
6. Reduced consumption of gasoline, fewer carbon emissions, and better air quality
7. Enhanced social equality: Poorer children are five times more likely to be killed on the roads than their well-to-do schoolmates. . Poor children are more exposed to being hit by vehicles than wealthier children riding in cars because 67% of the poorest households have no access to a car as compared to compared to 6% of the richest

Winnipeg's sustainable transportation strategy

Setting a speed limit of 30 kph in residential areas would support all five of the City of Winnipeg's Sustainable Transportation Strategy's five strategic goals:

> A transportation system that is dynamically integrated with land use
> A transportation system that supports active, accessible and healthy lifestyle options
> A safer, efficient and equitable transportation system for people, goods and services
> Transportation infrastructure that is well-maintained
> A transportation system that is financially sustainable

Recommendation:

Bike to the Future recommends that, to promote the health and well-being of all Winnipeg residents, the default speed limit on all residential streets in Winnipeg be 30 kilometres per hour, unless otherwise posted.

Thirty kph in residential areas is becoming an international standard. If Winnipeg sets speed limits of 30 kph in residential areas, it will experience a corresponding increase in active transportation. We urge the City to make Winnipeg a nicer place to live, and not to settle for 40 kph in residential areas, when cities in leading developing countries are moving to 30 kph.

Communications

We also recommend that the City design the public communications program that will enlist parents and citizens in general to support the reduced speed limits in their neighbourhoods, to defuse the noise generated by the minority of drivers who may choose to object. Once a reduced neighbourhood speed policy is in place, the City must review its guidelines, standards and procedures to implement street design and signage in residential areas to match the 30 kph speed limit.

For references to international data on the impact of speed limits on public health, please see attached "Analysis of 30 km/h Zones" We would be glad to provide further references as required.

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