



**Bike to the Future**  
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March 31, 2009

Jim Rondeau  
Minister of Science, Technology, Energy and Mines  
333 Legislature Building  
450 Broadway  
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 0V8

Dear Mr. Rondeau,

**Re: Plans for Active Transportation Advisory Committee**

Mark and I appreciated the opportunity to meet with you last week. I wanted to follow up that meeting by summarizing our understanding of the meeting and commenting on a few issues that arose at the meeting. As we noted at our meeting with you and in our letter to the Minister of Finance earlier this year, we are suggesting the province take action on three fronts:

- **Establish a provincial 50/50 municipal cost-sharing program** targeted at on-road infrastructure for cycling.
- **Establish an educational program for both cyclists and motorists** that would provide everyone with a common understanding of the rules of the road and how cyclists and motorists can safely share the road.
- **Adopt a transportation infrastructure policy** such as is promoted by the U.S. Department of Transportation policy statement: "Integrating Bicycling and Walking into Transportation Infrastructure".

From our meeting with you we understand that you are focused on establishing an effective working committee that can enter into dialog with you concerning active transportation, and can recommend the best ways for the province to use its resources to make progress in this area. We agree with this concept and with your suggestion it may be counter-productive for the committee to focus on making formal reports to you as opposed to engaging in discussion of the problems facing this sector and how best to solve them. Our understanding of your thinking is that the committee might meet 6-8 times per year to have these kinds of discussions, and that the committee would meet perhaps twice per year with you to inform you of its collective advice and conclusions. We understand that you have the responsibility to decide on what action to take, and that the committee's role would be to make sure you are provided with the best advice available. We are in agreement with this constructive, problem-solving approach.

In the meeting we suggested that one way for the committee to function would be through identification of suggested priorities for the provincial government. These priorities would be based on a set of criteria arrived at by the committee, and through the systematic application of these criteria to various alternative actions that might be possible. In other words, rather

than arriving at a lengthy list of recommendations, the committee would define areas of priority, which you might find more helpful in establishing a course of action. We think this is consistent with your vision of the committee's role.

One issue that concerns us, however, is the scope of the committee. As an organization we are focused on creating conditions that will encourage and enable more people to use bicycles as a means of transportation, for all of the good health and environmental reasons that you are already aware of. In our meeting you suggested that the scope of the committee might include other related parts of the transportation sector – the example you mentioned was the issue of retiring older cars. We feel that the focus of this committee needs to be on active transportation, rather than trying to cover too much ground and too many issues. Perhaps committee members can be included who have a broader perspective, while still keeping the focus on active transportation – we are thinking for example of someone from the Physical Activity Coalition of Manitoba. In any case, we feel the need to clarify the scope of the committee.

A second question concerns the sharing of information. In keeping with the idea of a working committee we would hope that the committee will be supported through the provision of relevant information concerning provincial programs, policies and budgets. During our meeting, for example, you mentioned some of the practical issues involved in adding shoulders to provincial highways. The committee needs this kind of information in order to arrive at realistic suggestions about what action to take. Committee members also need to be able to communicate this information back to the community at large to get meaningful feedback. It is often difficult for people outside of government to gain access to this kind of information. Similarly we have found it difficult at times to obtain relevant data on provincial budgets and allocations. We would hope that the committee can provide a means of sharing this kind of information. Committee members in turn would bring information from their own backgrounds and research, and ideally the result would be constructive discussions based on the best available information.

Again, I would like to thank you for inviting us to meet with you to discuss this promising development, and we look forward to an ongoing dialog with you concerning active transportation in Manitoba.

Yours truly,

Jeremy Hull  
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