



# Strategic Plan

## 2020-2022

December 2019

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# Introduction

Bicycles rolled down the streets of 19th century Winnipeg before the City saw its first car.<sup>1</sup> Over 100 years later, in 2007, Bike Winnipeg was founded as the City's current cycling advocacy organization under the name Bike To The Future. Over the past 12 years, the organization has built strong relationships in the City and now plays a central role in expanding cycling infrastructure and growing the cycling community.

In 2018, Bike Winnipeg's Board of Directors began a strategic planning exercise to update our vision, mission, and long-term objectives as a member-based advocacy organization. The Board surveyed members, held workshops and meetings, took stock of our ongoing activities, and discussed future opportunities of the organization with the aim of aligning our operations with the future needs of our membership.

The year-long process resulted in an ambitious plan to guide the organization's activities over the next 3 years.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://winnipeg.ca/ourstories/2019/190910.stm>

# Membership Survey

In late 2018, a survey was distributed to members who responded with their key priorities:

1. Greater continuity of routes and associated strategy (~40%)
2. Advocate for more cycling infrastructure and bike lanes (~35%)
3. Education initiatives for cyclists (~10%)
4. Education initiatives for drivers (~10%)
5. Maintain existing cycling infrastructure (~5%)

The first two priorities focused on **advocacy** and formed  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the membership's top priority. The second two focused on **education**, comprising of 20% of members' top priorities. The dominant focus on advocacy with education as a second overall priority influenced subsequent discussions, especially the review of our committee structure.

# Workshops

Bike Winnipeg retained the services of a strategic planning specialist from one of its existing partners for two workshops in March of 2019. The scope of these workshops was to review our vision and mission, modify these if necessary, then to determine our highest priority strategic objectives that Bike Winnipeg could focus on to help achieve our mission. All current Board members and a small number of core stakeholders in cycling advocacy were invited to attend. Additional steps and details are included in the final report prepared by the external facilitator.

## Mission and Vision

Bike Winnipeg's mission and vision were passionately brainstormed, discussed, and slightly modified from their previous versions. The resulting vision statement is:

**We envision a city where every road is safe for cycling,  
all bike paths are connected,  
and riding a bike is normal and always fun.**

The resulting mission statement is:

**We are an inclusive group of people and organizations  
working to make cycling in Winnipeg a safe, enjoyable, accessible,  
and convenient transportation choice year-round.**

## Strategic Objectives

To achieve this mission, additional rounds of individual, small-group, and collective brainstorming led to a long-list of 20 objectives that reflected Bike Winnipeg's current activities and areas where the organization can grow. The long-list was ranked, items were combined, and language was refined into the following strategic objectives:

#1: Improve relationships with decision-makers

#2: Determine and influence cycling infrastructure priorities

#3: Build member capacity

#4: Build awareness of Bike Winnipeg and of cycling facilities

#5: Increase Bike Winnipeg's funding

#6: Pursue charitable status

#7: Increase organizational strength

# Committee Structure

The strategic objectives were then used to establish a committee structure that would provide the logical organization needed to pursue these objectives. The result did not significantly differ from Bike Winnipeg's current organizational structure:

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Strategic Objectives</b>
<b>Advocacy</b>	#1: Improve relationships with decision-makers #2: Determine and influence cycling infrastructure priorities
<b>Outreach</b>	#3: Build member capacity #4: Build awareness of Bike Winnipeg and of cycling facilities
<b>Fundraising</b>	#5: Increase Bike Winnipeg's funding
<b>Executive</b>	#6: Pursue charitable status #7: Increase organizational strength

# Committee Responsibilities

The external facilitator recommended that Bike Winnipeg develop tactics to achieve each strategic objective following the SMART principles (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound). These tactics are listed in the following sections. Their Key Performance Indicators (KPIs, i.e. measures), relative priorities, and timelines included in the accompanying spreadsheet and are briefly discussed in the following sections.

## Advocacy Committee

1. Improve relationships with decision-makers and influencers
  - 1.1. Develop/refresh Power Map and Engagement Action Plan to increase interactions with the image of decision-makers and influencers

The power mapping exercise will help the committee understand who makes decisions and who influences these decisions so that we can better focus our limited resources towards individuals or groups who have the power to advance cycling infrastructure projects. For example, rather than focus on every councillor, this exercise may determine that the chair of the City Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works (IRPW) Committee and the members of the Executive Policy Committee (EPC) are the individuals with whom Bike Winnipeg needs the most interaction. Influencers may include City staff, community organizations, and major media outlets. The power map will be a key early deliverable in the Strategic Plan.

2. Determine and influence cycling infrastructure priorities
  - 2.1. Influence major policy documents
  - 2.2. Influence City projects
  - 2.3. Transfer capacity from Executive Director to volunteers
  - 2.4. Collect data to support Bike Winnipeg priorities and advocacy



A top priority for Bike Winnipeg is to influence major policy documents such as the Transportation Master Plan, Precinct Plans, and the City Budget. Investing our efforts in these overarching documents can significantly reduce the amount of effort for project-level advocacy if the City already has established policy that aligns with Bike Winnipeg's priorities. Often these are only renewed or rewritten every 5 to 10 years so it's critically important that these policies are forward-thinking, empathetic, and inclusive towards the needs of people on bikes. Part of this task will be to establish policies for high-quality infrastructure planning and design such as the minimum grid, Vision Zero compliance, and/or user design envelopes.

A significant amount of Bike Winnipeg's work centres around project-level advocacy. The Strategic Plan includes targets to ensure that we are taking advantage of the large majority of engagement opportunities available. To assist with this large quantity of work and in recognition of the many demands placed on Bike Winnipeg's Executive Director, the Plan includes targets for transferring capacity to volunteers who can represent us for less complex projects. One tactic to build volunteer capacity is to establish Community Committee Groups mirrored after the City's base-level committees that cover three wards each. This will also help Bike Winnipeg to increase our work outside of central Winnipeg.

## Outreach Committee

3. Build member capacity
  - 3.1. Increase and diversify membership

Part of the Outreach Committee's mandate is to the capacity of members and of Bike Winnipeg through its members. More people are likely to volunteer their time if we increase the number and variety of volunteer opportunities. Attracting new members also grows the organization's clout for our advocacy work.

4. Build awareness of Bike Winnipeg and of cycling facilities
  - 4.1. Develop Communications Plan
  - 4.2. Develop Social/Encouragement Plan

One of the central deliverables of this Strategic Plan is the Outreach Committee's Communications Plan. This will organize our various communications--social media, newsletters, press releases, calls for action, infrastructure news, etc.--and ensure that they're regular and have content from all committees. A second priority is developing a plan to increase Bike Winnipeg's social and encouragement activities.

## Fundraising Committee

5. Grow funding
  - 5.1. Meet or exceed budgeted revenue target
  - 5.2. Grow fundraising capacity
  - 5.3. Oversee grant writing

The organization's central investment is in our Executive Director, whose part-time role can be greatly expanded if more funds are available.

In addition to fundraisers, there is an opportunity to expand on Bike Winnipeg's highly successful social enterprise model—the [Bicycle Valet](#)—with longer-term bike parking, consulting services, bike tours, etc.

If Bike Winnipeg becomes a registered charity (as discussed further in this document), the Board may need to adjust the Fundraising Committee's structure and activities to be able to pursue new funding sources.

## Executive Committee

### 6. Pursue charitable status

Given recent changes in federal legislation, advocacy organizations are now able to register as a charity and give tax receipts. This one-time activity will temporarily reallocate some resources from Bike Winnipeg's normal activities but, if successful, should significantly increase the organization's financial capacity over the long term. The Executive Committee will be accountable for work on this initiative, though a temporary committee or task force may also be created to organize for this unique effort.

### 7. Increase organizational strength

- 7.1. Grow staff impact
- 7.2. Grow board and committee strength
- 7.3. Establish election strategies
- 7.4. Manage Strategic Plan

Substantial work will be required to increase Bike Winnipeg's organizational strength. Activities include reviewing our by-laws, committee terms of reference, Board structure, expectations of Board members (e.g. reducing Board-level requirements to increase committee-level work), compensation and mandate of the Executive Director, and the onboarding process for new directors.

One activity to grow the organization will be to **increase the number of volunteer roles** available within Bike Winnipeg to support new and expanding initiatives in this plan, to provide more opportunities for volunteers, to improve succession through the organization, and to delegate responsibilities away from core volunteers whose workload is sometimes very demanding. The Advocacy Committee may implement coordinator roles for city engagement, provincial and federal engagement, cycling data, cycling policy, external advocates, and direct action. Outreach Committee coordinators

may include communications, education, membership, and group rides. The Fundraising Committee may create a grant coordinator and multiple coordinators for events and for social enterprises. The Executive Committee may add a coordinator to track and report progress on the Strategic Plan. At a minimum, each committee should appoint a secretary to schedule meetings, take notes, and document items required for the Strategic Plan.

An important objective of the organization will be to increase the pay rate and number of hours of our Executive Director whose advocacy work on dozens of policies and projects takes a considerable amount of time in addition to many other roles and time requirements. The Executive Committee will be responsible for ensuring that the mandate of the Executive Director matches the time expectations and compensation provided.

Maintaining gender parity on the Board will be an ongoing objective of the Executive Committee along with organizing the Annual General Meeting.

The Executive Committee will also be responsible for managing and reporting on the Strategic Plan back to the Board.

## Strategic Deliverables

The Strategic Plan includes several major deliverables:

1. Power Map & Engagement Action Plan (Advocacy Committee)
2. Action Plan for Major Policy Engagement (Advocacy Committee)
3. Communications Plan (Outreach Committee)
4. Funding Opportunities Review (Fundraising Committee)
5. Organizational By-law Update (Executive Committee)
6. Strategic Plan reports (Executive Committee)

# Implementation & Monitoring

## Schedule

Most strategic plans are scheduled per quarter of a fiscal and/or calendar year. However, a focus on seasons is more reflective of our volunteer's availability and the cycling community's activities: spring holds a lot of activities for cyclists re-emerging from the winter culminating in Bike Week, summer sees much of Bike Winnipeg's volunteer base take vacations and are therefore less active with the organization, fall is a second opportunity to engage cyclists returning to school and Councillors returning to work, and winter is a long season where a lot of strategic advocacy work occurs.

The full list of tactics and strategies are spread out over the three years of the Strategic Plan. They build on earlier tasks, are scheduled considering the season (time availability and/or appropriateness), and account for the municipal election.

## Monitoring

Reports from committees and the Executive Director will require specific content regarding progress on Strategic Plan initiatives and targets. The Executive Committee will be tasked with reporting back to the Board each season with the organization's overall progress in the Strategic Plan.

A report on the Strategic Plan will also be included in the Annual Report presented at Bike Winnipeg's Annual General Meeting.

## Closing

Because of the dedication of Bike Winnipeg's current and former boards of directors, Executive Director, and key stakeholders, the organization has a reasonably ambitious long-term plan to guide it through the next three years.

It is very reassuring that the committee structure, major responsibilities of the Executive Director, and normal operations of Bike Winnipeg are not significantly changing: this process reaffirmed that our organization was on the right track. Rather than adjusting to major changes, Bike Winnipeg can focus on maintaining current activities and to expand in targeted areas. This plan doesn't limit additional activities—stretch goals were not included—but provides structure for a core set of major priorities.

This Strategic Plan also helps Bike Winnipeg to be more proactive, invest more on system-level change, and align out advocacy with the City's decision-making process.

The Executive Committee is tasked with maintaining and course-correcting the Strategic Plan over time and with reporting back to the Board.

The Board of Directors would like to profoundly thank everyone who provided input in one way or another. We will use this framework to guide us as we work hard to build a city where every road is safe for cycling, all bike paths are connected, and riding a bike is normal and always fun!