



Honourable Jim Rondeau
Minister of Healthy Living, Youth and Seniors
310-450 Broadway
Winnipeg, MB
R3C 0V8

July 25, 2012

Dear Minister Rondeau:

On behalf of the Manitoba Cycling Association (MCA) and Bike to the Future (BttF), we would like to thank you for inviting us to discuss, on Wednesday, July 11th, cycling safety and active transport in Manitoba. It was refreshing to be included in this consultation process and we were encouraged to learn about your interest in developing cycling as a safe and healthy activity for Manitobans.

The meeting facilitated an exchange of ideas among individuals with diverse interests, views and areas of cycling expertise such as sport, recreation, transportation, advocacy, injury protection, epidemiological research, government administration and yourself, as a political leader. Despite the diversity in representation, common themes and ideas quickly emerged concerning safe cycling policy, gradual improvements to infrastructure, and the need for an ultimate vision of cycling as a key active transportation method within Winnipeg and Manitoba.

Manitoba cyclists have travelled to many cities, provinces and countries to pursue their passion. They have observed a multitude of successful practices implemented by governments of other jurisdictions. As we know, Europe's approach to cycling is very advanced; however, when we compare Manitoba's cycling environment to bike-friendly jurisdictions in the U.S., or even across Canada, it is quite evident that Manitoba has a long way to go.

The environment for cycling on Manitoba's roads, and driver behaviour towards cyclists, are constant reminders that we have much work ahead of us. Given our current position, even small changes made can result in substantial improvement. So that Manitobans can also enjoy the benefits of cycling in terms of population health, microeconomics, and environmental stewardship, a coordinated and multifaceted approach that engages all stakeholders is essential.

We believe that there is a need for Manitoba's executive leadership and relevant stakeholders to break down silos in government departments and agencies, and to establish coordinated and collaborative approaches to laws, public policy and services that enhance cycling safety in Manitoba.

We therefore call upon you to engage these senior leaders and stakeholders by bringing them together to facilitate an exchange of ideas and a collective plan for the future. It is our expectation that the effectiveness of such a collaborative group will far exceed the impact of an individual office or organization.

We envision a half-day meeting of executive and senior-level government representatives that include the following individuals and offices:

- Yourself, the Honourable Minister of Manitoba Manitoba Healthy Living, Seniors and Consumer Affairs
- Local Government (responsible for Active Transportation)
- Infrastructure and Transportation
- Manitoba Health
- Manitoba Public Insurance
- Manitoba Justice
- Active Transportation Coordinator
- The Forks (River City Connections)
- City of Winnipeg

The cycling and injury-prevention leaders would include:

- Co-Chair, Bike to the Future
- Provincial Committee Director, Bike to the Future
- President, Manitoba Cycling Association
- Dr. Lynne Warda, Injury Prevention and Child Health, WRHA
- Dr. Ryan Zarychanski, Epidemiologist and Critical Care Physician
- Dr. Dean Kriellaars, Sport Medicine and Science Council of Manitoba
- Representative(s) from rural cycling locations
- Representative(s) from Aboriginal, women and/or student organizations

While the final format would of course be up to your discretion, we would like to propose a format whereby community participants prepare in advance one-page descriptions summarizing their needs and vision, including examples of cycling best-practices from other jurisdictions. Participants/stakeholders could briefly present their vision to the group, followed by an open and frank discussion of key items. Creating a list of priorities and brainstorming how each priority might be realized would be the meeting's objective. Tasking leaders to identify what steps are needed and what barriers must be addressed would be essential follow-up from the meeting.

In order to effectively implement any outcomes in time for the 2013 cycling season, this meeting should ideally take place in the fall of 2012.

Finally, we would like to again commend you and your staff for the leadership in promoting cycling. We have an opportunity to work together to learn from the positive and negative experience of cyclists in Manitoba, and from the best practices in other jurisdictions. With established initiatives that facilitate Manitobans to ride their bikes with greater frequency and safety, all stakeholders will ultimately benefit.

Respectfully,

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