

“We should be using the money we already have in current transportation budgets. Retrofit projects always cost more than doing it right the first time.”

– Barbara McCann, Executive Director, Complete Streets Coalition (U.S.) speaking at the Complete Streets Forum 2010, Toronto, ON

15 Assign a dedicated percentage of the annual roads and bridges capital and operating budgets to fund a cost-share program with municipalities to encourage the development and maintenance of active transportation infrastructure in and between Manitoba communities.

In the past, Manitoba’s transportation system was designed specifically for motorized vehicles and without adequate consideration for other methods of transportation. This means that today, many of our roads may not be safe for walking, cycling or using a wheelchair. A set proportion of the capital budget would help to address the existing gap in active transportation infrastructure and help communities take actions to develop and retrofit facilities such as sidewalks, pedestrian and bikeway crossings, bike lanes, paved shoulders, trails, bike racks, signs, traffic signals and traffic calming measures. The maintenance fund would address repair and operating costs (including snow clearing) as needed.

Dedicated infrastructure makes long-distance cycling more appealing. ►
- pathway near Drayton Valley, Alberta

To reflect the significant health benefits participating in active transportation can provide, particularly as preventative care, the funding formula for this grant should be significantly more generous than the traditional formula for infrastructure projects. Beyond the health benefits, over time, the increased investment in active transportation will also mitigate the growing cost of road and highway infrastructure as more people use lighter-load active transportation methods of travel.



▲ A new pedestrian, bicycle and equestrian bridge across from the Birds Hill Provincial Park entrance lets people safely cross Highway 59.