

16 Develop a paved provincial active transportation network for residents and tourists.

A paved network is ideal for people with disabilities and for travelling between communities by bicycle, rollerblades or other modes of active transportation. Paved networks provide the most active transportation options and the best option for longer trips between communities and in remote areas.

Manitoba's sections of the Trans Canada Trail involved residents and inspired communities to work together to highlight their areas of the province. Active transportation networks can boost tourism and improve a community's ability to attract and retain residents. A provincial network should connect all corners of Manitoba and, similar to the Route Verte in Quebec, could incorporate paved sections of the Trans Canada Trail and existing paved trails used by cyclists and pedestrians. Areas currently experiencing significant intercommunity traffic such as between Morden and Winkler and between Birds Hill Provincial Park and Winnipeg should be prioritized when developing active transportation connections. This will not only lead to higher use but also provide the greatest advantage from community resources including recreational facilities, libraries and shopping areas.

Quebec's Route Verte Attracts Significant Economic Benefits

Route Verte is Quebec's provincial cycling network. It extends more than 4,000 kilometres and includes sections of the Trans Canada Trail. Vélo Québec announced the project around the time the province adopted the 1995 Bicycle Policy, which provided for the development of cycling routes on approximately 40 per cent of the roads under the responsibility of the ministry of transportation. Work on this network involved a number of regional municipalities and organizations. It is featured prominently in the marketing of Quebec as a cycling destination.

– *Quebec ministry of transportation, Bicycle Policy (May 2008)*¹⁵

“The economic benefits associated with the Route Verte are significant:

- In 2000, Route Verte cyclists spent \$95.4 million. This corresponds to approximately 2,000 jobs (per person, per year) and revenues of \$15.1 million for the government of Quebec and \$11.9 million for the Government of Canada.
- People who live near the Route Verte spend over \$24.5 million on route-related activities.”

– *Retombées économiques de la Route verte - March 2003*¹⁶

