

Public Health and Transportation

The Manitoba Public Health Association (MPHA) is an independent, non-profit, non-partisan voluntary association representing public health in Manitoba. We recognize that health is determined by more than health care services. We believe that Manitobans should live, learn, work, play and age in environments which support their best possible health.

MPHA is calling on its members and everyone living in Manitoba municipalities to discuss issues affecting our health in the upcoming municipal elections and ongoing.

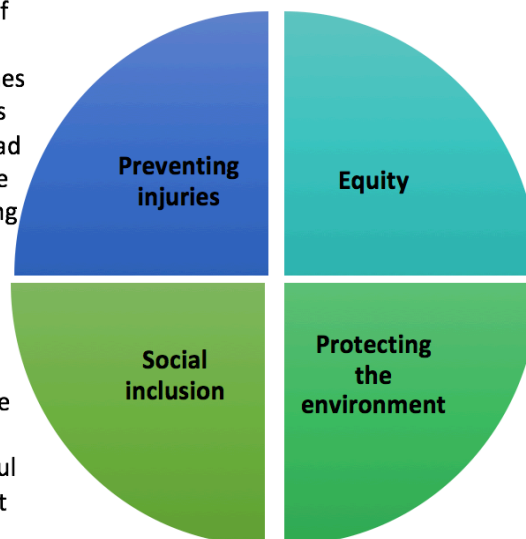
**Let's #VOTE4PUBLICHEALTH on October 24th
and contribute to healthier communities all across Manitoba.**

How does transportation affect public health?

Transportation is usually a part of everyone's day. We travel to get to school, work, visit friends, stores and services. Healthy transportation networks are affordable, accessible, safe, and enjoyable. They give people options to walk, cycle, take public transit, and support transportation options for people with disabilities. How we travel affects our health – at an individual and community level.

Injuries are consistently a leading cause of death among Canadians 1-35 years of age, with motor vehicle crashes a top cause.² There are less traffic injuries when more people use public transit instead of cars. Transportation networks with safe cycling and walking infrastructure, including for people using mobility devices, also reduce injuries.

Transportation networks that allow people to engage with others improve social inclusion. This boosts immune system function, protects from harmful effects of stress, and helps to prevent loneliness and depression.³



People on low incomes and those with mobility issues have fewer transportation options. Safe and accessible networks for walking, cycling, and routes to public transit make it easier for everyone to access the resources they need to fully participate in community life.

Transportation networks that support sustainable forms of travel (public transit, walking, cycling) decreases air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.⁴

¹Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology (2011). *Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines for Adults*.

²Statistics Canada (2015). Data manipulation from Table 102-0561. Leading causes of death, total population, by age group and sex, Canada.

³Umberson, D., & Montez, J. K. (2010). Social Relationships and Health: A Flashpoint for Health Policy. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 51(Suppl), S54–S66.

⁴Maizlish N, Woodcock J, Co S, Ostro B, Fanai A, Fairley D. Health cobenefits and transportation-related reductions in greenhouse gas emissions in the San Francisco Bay area. *American journal of public health*. 2013;103(4):703-9.

Did You Know?

Type of cycling infrastructure greatly influences injury risk. Bike lanes on major routes (without parked cars) have 1/2 the injury risk of no cycling infrastructure. Separated cycle tracks have 1/9 the injury risk.⁵

Ambient air pollution is the largest environmental health risk, with transport a major factor in urban areas. Cities that are built around affordable and accessible rapid public transport systems, with supported walking and cycling networks, reduce ambient air pollution and associated health risks.

40% of people with the lowest household income use active modes to get to work (walking, cycling, public transit), compared to only 10% of those with the highest incomes.

Motor vehicle air pollution causes a similar number of premature deaths as traffic crashes.⁶

While the number of road deaths in Canada fell between 2010 and 2016, pedestrian fatalities are on the rise.⁷

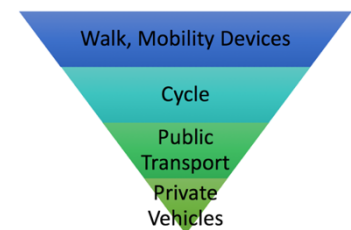
⁵Teschke, K., et al. (2012). Route infrastructure and the risk of injuries to bicyclists: a case-crossover stud. *American Journal of Public Health*. Dec; 102(12):2336-43.

⁶Murray, et al. (1996). Global Burden of Disease and Injury. Center for Population and Development Studies, Harvard School of Public Health.

⁷TF (2018). *Road Safety Annual Report 2018*, OECD Publishing, Paris

What can Municipalities Do?

Municipal governments make decisions about building and maintaining transportation infrastructure and networks. This includes public transit, sidewalks, cycling paths and roads. Currently, many municipalities focus on roads, and moving motorized vehicles. For positive health outcomes, there must also be priority on supporting other modes of travel. Municipalities across Canada, are flipping the hierarchy of transportation priorities to prioritize healthier modes of transportation.



Municipal governments can:

- ✓ Use street designs that prioritize active transportation
- ✓ Address affordability of public transit
- ✓ Equally prioritize sidewalk clearing in the winter so that everyone, especially those living with disabilities, can participate fully in community life
- ✓ Make active transportation networks accessible for all ages and abilities
- ✓ Design transportation networks that allow people to use different modes of travel e.g., cycling to public transit, park and ride
- ✓ Invest in transportation networks that create a more sustainable and healthier future

Share this information with friends and family. Learn more about why transportation networks that support all modes of travel are important regardless of how you choose to travel and how municipalities can be a part of the solution.

#VOTE4PUBLICHEALTH