

## QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSE

### North Kildonan Ward

# Andrew Podolecki

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1. Public transit was identified as the most important issue facing Winnipeggers in the 2019 budget consult, followed by active transportation and roadway construction and maintenance. In your opinion, why is public transit deemed the number one priority?

With rising gas prices, stagnant wages, climate change, and higher costs of living, people are trying to find alternative ways to either cut back on costs or on their carbon emissions, and Transit in Winnipeg has been starved of proper funding for so long that it's once small problems have blossomed to large problems, and it's problems are only getting worse as our city continues to grow and spread. Many people have been to other cities with more functional systems and see how Winnipeg's has fallen behind in times and service and that it needs to be improved soon or we risk having gridlocked roads.

2. If you could give Winnipeg's transit system an overall letter grade, what would it be? What do you feel is holding the current transit system back from getting a better grade? If you could sum up your vision for the future of Winnipeg's transit system what would it be?

I would give it a 'D'. If you're a downtown commuter who works an 8 to 4 job during the week, then transit can be convenient and accessible, but many folks are not able to access transit efficiently or reliably as people live and work all over our city. Lack of planning, resources, and advocacy has haunted Winnipeg Transit over the decades. The system hasn't changed much since the 1970s and was tweaked a bit in the 1990s, but since then, Winnipeg has grown over 100,000 but transit has not been able to accommodate these differences. We need to increase funding dramatically to increase frequency, accessibility, and efficiency so folks can commute more easily and quickly across Winnipeg. Whether its to work, shopping, school, recreation or any purpose they need Transit.

3. Safety is an increasing concern for transit riders and drivers, alike. What do you feel contributes to the lack of safety in the current system? How would you improve safety?

Rising fares, unreliable service, lack of resources and a combination of compounding problems has led to increase safety issues facing transit operators and passengers. To address these issues we need to install driver shields to protect drivers, and see the creation of a Transit police similar to those seen in cities like Vancouver, and Toronto to appropriately handle the issues that arise without tying up Winnipeg Police Services resources and all Transit supervisors to be able to return back to the work they're suppose to do.

4. If you could sum up Winnipeg's current transit system in 3 words, what would it be?

Underwhelming, but has potential.



5. Cities like Ottawa and Edmonton contribute over \$220 million to their transit networks, while the City of Winnipeg contributes just \$65 million. To match these other cities in per capita terms, Winnipeg should be contributing \$170 million. How will you fight for more funding towards transit?

If elected, it would be my top priority to dramatically increase transit funding, freezing transit fares as well. Working with others on council to ensure that it becomes a priority no matter who's on the EPC, in the mayor's chair or provincial funding levels. To keep the issue on the tip of our tongues including my own if elected to council. We need to explore the idea of raising revenues for this other than property taxes by either mimicking Montreal's 3.5 cent per litre transit tax, or British Columbia's 5.5 cent per litre transit tax, or going with a different idea.

Bonus question: What is your favourite Transit App and why?

Its called 'Transit', green coloured app with GPS maps and specific arrival times based on your location. It shows the order of the buses and closest stops to you.

I'd like to say I'm a pro-transit candidate.