

QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSE River Heights – Fort Garry Ward

Gary Lenko

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?

Public transit is a necessity for youth, working people and seniors, it should be considered an essential service. Funding is lacking for our basic public transit system, it must be increased. Federal funding recently received by Manitoba is being used in Winnipeg for rapid transit rather than to improve safety, reliability and implement a frequent service network.

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 grade the system with a B-

Better overall route scheduling, new feeder routes, more buses, free passes for all students, seniors, persons with disabilities and low income earners upon application. Ensure safety for drivers. Secure adequate funding from the province and apply for other federal transportation infrastructure programs.

A combination of light rail and bus service, continue to review and upgrade as needed along the way.

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?

People who do not pay their fares, fare disputes cause conflict and often the driver is threatened if they attempt to confront the customer and ask them to pay or get off the bus. Transit administration expects the drivers to police the customers to ensure they pay the fare, this creates problems for drivers and other passengers on a daily basis. Winnipeg differs from most municipalities in that our drivers must collect fares rather than utilizing an automated fare collection system.

Investigate new safety shields and design driver's side doors (we make buses in Winnipeg), rotating peace officers on routes as needed to ensure safety. Upgrade of real time cameras and GPS monitoring.

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

Needs more work

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?

I will work with council after consultation with the community and transit to present a viable, sustainable and complete plan to the provincial government for increased operating costs and capital funding for new electric buses, new and upgraded security systems and ongoing conflict resolution training and whatever additional support is required to achieve an A+ service grade.

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

Unfortunately, I don't use Transit applications so I cannot comment. I did speak to a few people that use the apps and their preference was Navigo.