

QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSE

Charleswood – Tuxedo Ward

Ken St. George

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?

I believe Transit is deemed by many as Winnipeg's number one priority due to the system's inability to provide and adjust consistent service to a growing city. Funding has been below par to keep up to the demand of urban sprawl, despite fare increases. Routes are being cut, scheduling is off, buses are beyond capacity during rush hours, all leading to decreased ridership and facilitation of inconvenience of those whom rely on the service.

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 Winnipeg's Transit system a C. The service in Winnipeg is below average, keeping in mind of environmental factors drivers and schedulers endure, winter and construction seasons. Absolutely, funding is holding back our Transit system. To increase ridership, and efficiency of the system, funding which reflects the needs of sprawl is required. In regard to the future, I firmly believe in two initiatives. First, is the promotion of zero emission electric fleet buses. I would also like to see these electric buses articulated to accommodate the ridership needs. I would also like to implement a park and ride near our portals of entry at the perimeter highway to be utilized by the 80,000 commuters from bedroom communities coming into Winnipeg daily for work.

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?

Safety for our drivers has been certainly brought to center stage, as it should be. There are crises in Winnipeg, unlike ever seen before, specifically methamphetamine (an area I know well for I am heavily involved in resolving it). I think Transit has been caught off guard and are urgently trying to do the right thing. My entire platform is based on harnessing innovative ideas from front line civil service providers, and I wish Transit to do so. Recently, I was at Fort Rouge garage, looking at the various safety shields being trialed. Transit corporate services are engaging their drivers by survey as to which shield is preferred, I hope they follow through. Improvements could include a left door exit for drivers, a LED distress light around the perimeter of each bus. And if sustainable, security on each bus. Bottom line is, without drivers feeling secure on the jobsite, recruitment and retainment becomes a bigger issue, hence Transit will never keep up to the city's needs.

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

Three words, More Work Required



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?

Funding will require significant lobbying and advocating to the province, a specialty of mine. Accountability of transfer equalization payments from the feds via Alberta oil profits should be portioned to improve ridership and transform to a greener system. Accountability of the province in regard to spending of the unavoidable carbon tax will be brought to the table.

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

Winnipeg Bus Live, maps nearby stops, very convenient.

Added note: I take ridership, efficiencies, safety, and the future of Winnipeg Transit as a high priority. Winnipeg needs to look to the future, and our Transit system is slow to do so. I also would like it noted, that Transit is an integral part of my entire life. I use it when I can, and my father has been a driver, and still driving, for 44 years. He is actually badge #1, so I am very familiar with this vital public service.