



INFORMATION - COMMUNIQUÉ

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Winnipeg Transit begins pilot project to test bus operator safety shields

Winnipeg, MB – As part of Winnipeg Transit’s commitment to increase operator safety, a pilot project to test bus operator safety shields is now underway.

“A growing city like Winnipeg needs an efficient, well-functioning, and safe transit service,” said Mayor Brian Bowman. “This requires us to continue investing in key infrastructure while ensuring transit passengers and operators are able to safely access and operate transit services.”

In consultation with Winnipeg Transit employees and the Amalgamated Transit Union, Winnipeg Transit issued a [request for proposals](#) in mid-2017 for the supply and delivery of bus operator shields. Two contractors met the criteria set out in the RFP; in order to select a contractor, Winnipeg Transit will be analyzing the two shield designs for a minimum of six months to determine which design best meets our needs.

“The shields pilot project is the next step in our commitment to improving safety on our buses for both passengers and operators,” said Councillor Marty Morantz, Chair of the Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works. “I’m pleased to see that Transit safety is a major priority in our proposed 2018 budget, and look forward to seeing these priorities realized in the near future.”

Once the pilot project is complete, Winnipeg Transit will prepare a report discussing the findings of the test period and recommending next steps for Council’s consideration.

In spring 2017, Winnipeg Transit prepared a comprehensive list of current safety management practices, and researched potential concepts that would provide increased security for transit bus operators and customers. The [report](#) was adopted by the Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works on May 30, 2017.

In the report, Winnipeg Transit recommended implementing the following safety enhancement initiatives, which have all been achieved to date:

- A pilot project to test bus operator safety barriers,
- A [Transit Advisory Committee](#) to review industry practices, assess and determine trends, and recommend strategies to improve safety,
- An [advertising campaign](#) to encourage customers to report undesirable behavior, and
- Stronger reporting procedures with the Winnipeg Police Service to facilitate proactive safety initiatives within the 'Winnipeg Police Service Smart Policing Initiative'.

The report also recommended that the following safety enhancement concepts be considered in 2018. The following are major highlights of the 2018 Preliminary Budget:

- Expansion of the audio/video surveillance system to deter undesirable behaviour and assist with identification, investigation, and prosecution of perpetrators,
- Adding one instructor and three dedicated relief operators to provide additional ongoing training for operators to prevent and diffuse conflict,
- Funding for five additional full time positions, or another source of security presence, to assist operators and passengers and to increase awareness and enforcement of the Public Transit By-law, and
- Four new Point Duty Inspectors to assist operators and passengers at set strategic locations.

For more information on Winnipeg Transit, please see winnipegtransit.com.

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