

Background

Winnipeg is growing and expected to reach nearly a million people in the next 25 years. We need to invest in important infrastructure and services, like public transit, to support a growing, thriving, modern city — now and into the future. The Winnipeg Transit Master Plan will guide the development of a transit system that will meet the city’s needs, connect residents and neighbourhoods, and provide practical ways to create a more sustainable city. It will cover all aspects of public transit including transit, rapid transit, and Winnipeg Transit Plus (formerly Handi-Transit) services, and will identify infrastructure to address accessibility, safety, and efficiency improvements.

Previous engagement

Phase One engagement for the Winnipeg Transit Master Plan ran from March 15 to April 20, 2019 and began to shape a vision for the city’s future transit system. This phase built awareness of the project and identified what is important to Winnipeggers. The top themes that emerged from Phase One were:

- A desire for a more efficient transit system
- Improved frequency, scheduling, and reliability
- Better transit connectivity and coverage

Phase Two engagement ran from October 25, 2019 to January 30, 2020 and asked Winnipeggers to provide input on a new network design, including the proposed routes. Almost 75 percent somewhat supported or completely supported the proposed network design. Of those who did not support the network concept, the main themes that emerged were:

- Route specific input and concerns
- Lack of frequency and reliability of the current system, and doubt that the new network would improve this
- Concerns over the network concept or design, and expected challenges in accessing the new network

Phase Three engagement

Phase Three: The Future of Rapid Transit ran from October 9 to November 6, 2020 and asked Winnipeggers to provide input on plans for rapid transit as well as proposed changes to improve accessibility. The purpose of this phase was to determine the level of support for proposals for rapid transit and accessibility. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, engagement was conducted online only. This feedback will be used by Winnipeg Transit as it proceeds with implementing the Winnipeg Transit Master Plan, if approved by Council. Details are in *Table 1* below.

Promotion

Public engagement opportunities were promoted using the following methods:

- City of Winnipeg website: Launched on October 9, 2020 and linked to the online engagement platform, project timeline, engagement updates, background information, and FAQs
- News release in English and French: “Public invited to provide feedback on Winnipeg Transit Master Plan” released on October 9, 2020
- Facebook posts: five posts each in English and French between October 9 and November 6, 2020
- Twitter posts with 100,000+ followers: five posts each in English and French between October 9 and November 6, 2020
- Facebook ad campaigns: 916,786 impressions, 317,112 people reached and 14,864 clicks to the website
- City of Winnipeg public engagement newsletter with over 2,400 recipients: two newsletters, issued on October 15 and October 29, 2020
- Newspaper ads: Canstar community newspapers (October 14), Senior Scope (October 10), and La Liberté (October 14)
- Digital display network: ads ran from October 9 to November 6, 2019 on 21 screens in 18 high-attendance city facilities
- Transit ads: ads ran in French and English in half of Winnipeg Transit’s bus fleet starting October 18, 2020
- CJNU: announcer-read messages ran daily from October 15 to 21 and from October 26 to November 6.

Date	Activity	Details
October 9 to November 6, 2020	Online engagement platform	Over 1,150 participants engaged online, providing input and personal experiences on our English and French engagement platforms. The survey provided participants with background on proposals for rapid transit and accessibility improvements and asked them to share their level of support and additional comments for consideration. They also had the option of answering demographic questions to help assess how participants represented Winnipeg’s population. Note: Participants self-selected to complete the survey, meaning the results are not statistically representative of Winnipeg’s population. Survey responses and a map of where participants live are in Appendices B and D.
October 24 and 28, 2020	Virtual meetings	Approximately 105 people attended two Zoom meetings to learn about the proposed rapid transit service and infrastructure plans and accessibility improvements and ask questions of the project team. A summary of questions and responses is available online.

Table 1 Phase 3 engagement details

Engagement results

Overall, of the 1,150 participants who completed the survey, a strong majority of Winnipeggers expressed support for the proposed rapid transit infrastructure. This report provides a summary of engagement results. The percentages in this report are based on those who completed the online survey and have been rounded to the nearest whole number. A summary of survey questions and responses is available in Appendix B.

- Over half of respondents (about 54 percent) use public transit more than once a week: 12 percent use transit every day, 22 percent use transit at least five days per week and 21 percent use transit two to four days per week. About 15 percent do not use public transit.
- Over half of respondents (about 57 percent) were between the ages of 25 and 44 (30 percent were between 25 and 34 and 27 percent were between 35 and 44); only six percent of respondents were 65 or older.
- Over half of respondents (about 54 percent) identified as a man; only about 38 percent of respondents identified as a woman.

Rapid transit

Participants were asked about their support for focusing rapid transit investment Downtown and making Union Station the central hub of the rapid transit network. Support for these proposals was high. As seen in *Figure 2*, over 75 percent of respondents somewhat or strongly supported both proposals.

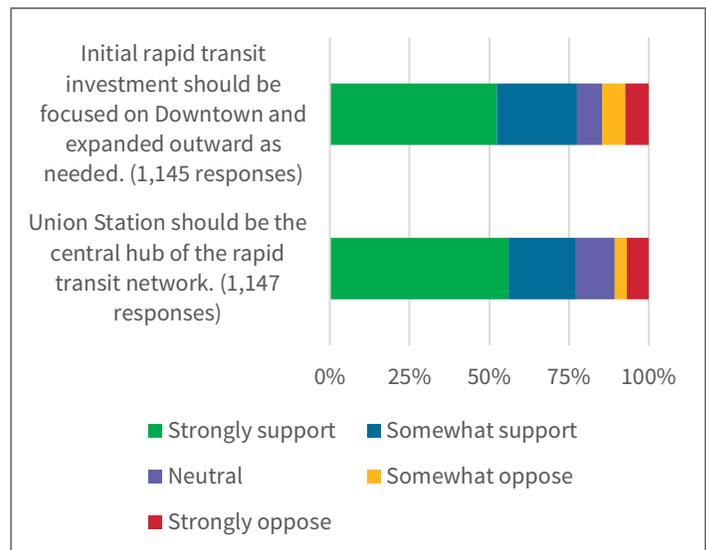


Figure 2 - Support for Downtown infrastructure priorities

Participants were asked how they thought the proposed plans for rapid transit will affect how people get around the city. As seen in *Figure 3*, nearly 80 percent of respondents saw the proposed changes as an improvement. About eight percent said there would be no change, and 12 percent said the proposals would worsen how people get around the city.

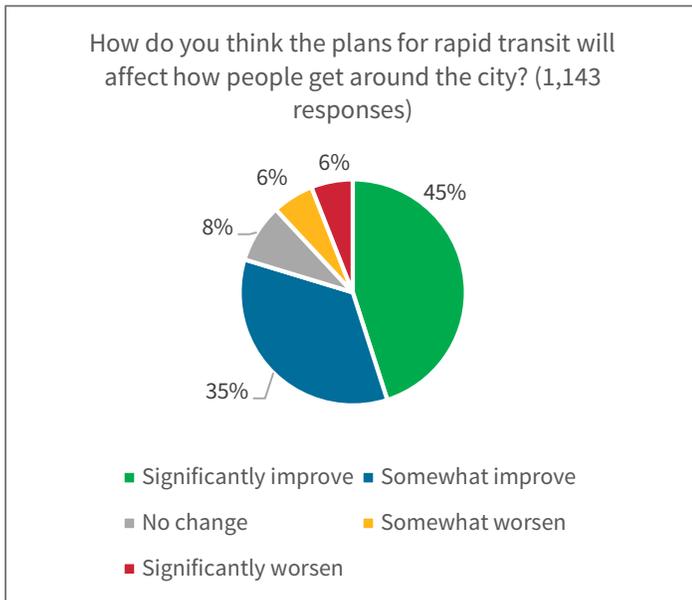


Figure 3 – Perception of rapid transit proposals

Participants could suggest additional changes to the proposed rapid transit plan to better suit the needs of Winnipeggers. Over 540 respondents provided comments. The most common themes were route-specific suggestions (36 percent of comments), and enhanced connections between routes and to different destinations (32 percent).

Other themes that arose included:

- More or different transit-oriented development near stations and stops
- Better connections to active transportation modes (for example, more bike racks on buses)
- Enhanced routing to the suburbs

Participants were also asked to rate a number of features in terms of which are most likely to encourage more people to take bus rapid transit. The results are shown in *Figure 4*; 1 means ‘not

likely to encourage more people to take bus rapid transit’ and 5 means ‘very likely to encourage more people to take bus rapid transit.’

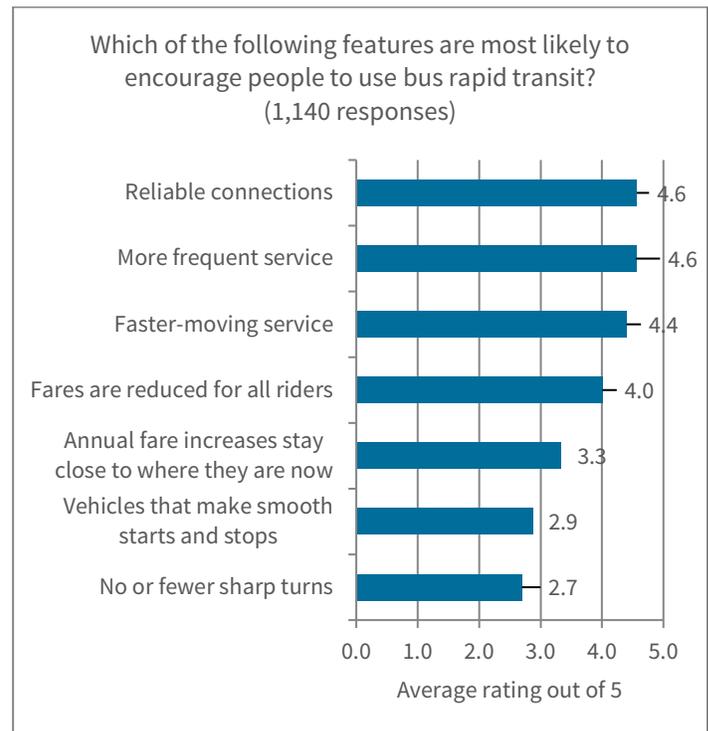


Figure 4 – Perception of features most likely to encourage people to use bus rapid transit

The features that were considered by respondents to be the most likely to encourage people to take bus rapid transit were: more frequent service, reliable connections, faster-moving service and fares reduced for all riders. All options scored high, with no option rated below 2.7 out of 5.

About 333 participants wrote in an “other” option for this question. Most of these comments repeated options given — primarily faster-moving service, predictable service and reducing fares. Outside of those themes, the next most common theme was safety at 11 percent.

Accessibility

Participants were asked to rate a number of features in terms of which are most likely to improve the experience of taking transit for travellers with accessibility needs. The results are shown in *Figure 5*; 1 means 'not likely to improve accessibility' and 5 means 'very likely to improve accessibility.'

The options that were deemed most likely to improve accessibility on transit were: snow clearing at bus stops; sidewalk connections to bus stops that are wheelchair accessible; and bus shelters with accessible seating. All options scored high, with no option rated below a 3.4 out of 5.

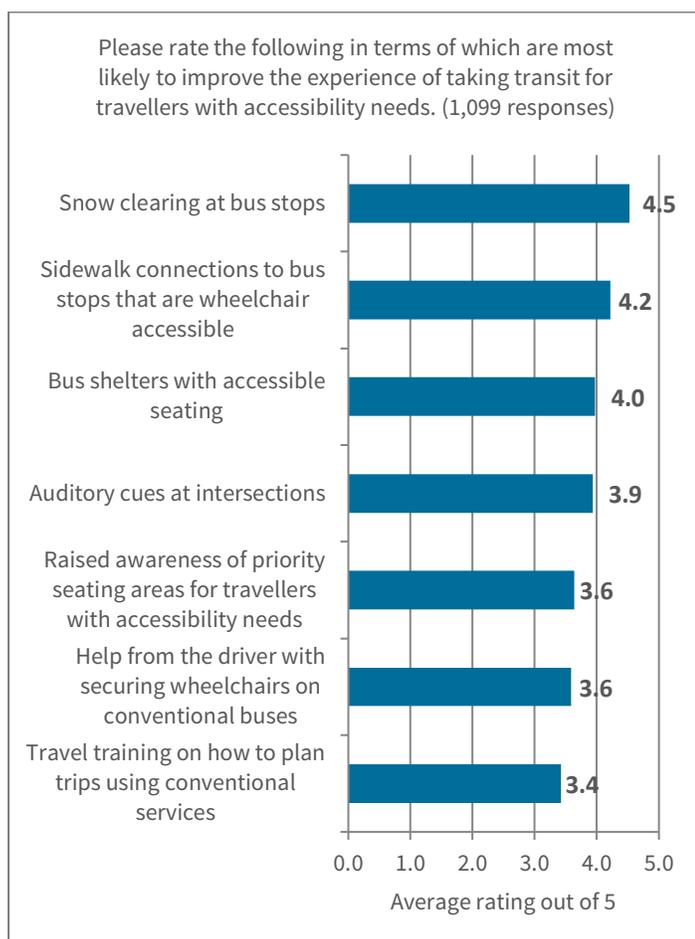


Figure 5 – Features most likely to improve the experience of taking transit for travellers with accessibility needs

Transit Plus

Approximately 23 percent of participants chose to give additional input on Winnipeg Transit Plus.

Participants were asked if they would take trips that combined conventional and Winnipeg Transit Plus services if it allowed them to book same-day service. Approximately 43 percent said yes; 16 percent said no; and 41 percent said they were unsure. Those who said no or that they were unsure were asked why they would not take combined trips. Common themes that emerged were route and bus predictability (18 percent), route efficiency (16 percent) and problems with accessibility features of conventional buses (13 percent).

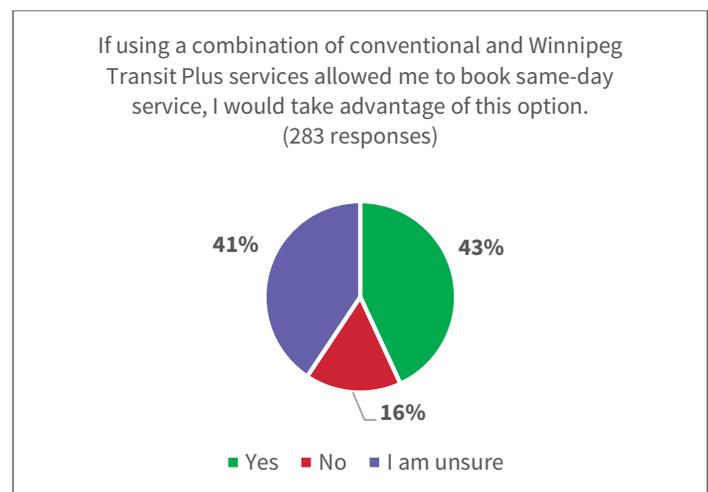


Figure 6 - Respondents who would use a combination of conventional transit and Winnipeg Transit Plus

Participants were asked to rate different options for how they would like to be notified that their Winnipeg Transit Plus vehicle is on its way. A rating of 5 meant "I would use this notification option the most" and 1 meant "I would not use this notification option." Text messages had the highest rating at 4.2, followed by a new app (3.7), phone call (3.1), and email (2.4).

The Winnipeg Transit Master Plan proposes changes to the Winnipeg Transit Plus no-show/late cancellation policy that are intended to give customers more flexibility. About 64 percent of respondents somewhat or strongly supported the proposed policy changes, while 11 percent somewhat or strongly opposed the changes, and 25 percent were unsure.

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Participants were also asked to rate the appropriateness of different penalties in the proposed new system, with 1 being “not appropriate at all” and 5 being “most appropriate.” Fines had the highest rating at 3, followed by a combination of fines and suspensions at 2.9, and suspensions at 2.7 out of 5. About 11 percent of participants provided further feedback on their response, half of which suggested there should be no penalty.

How input is being used

What we heard	What we are doing
Route-specific comments	Route-specific comments will be used by Winnipeg Transit to inform the next iteration of route plans. Winnipeg Transit will revise the proposed feeder route network based on the feedback received and will present the revised maps to City Council in early 2021. Feeder route changes are expected in Sage Creek, Castlebury Meadows, Valley Gardens, Grant Park, and Canterbury Park, among others.
Feedback on proposed changes to Winnipeg Transit Plus	<p>Engagement with Transit Plus customers will continue pending approval of and implementation of the Winnipeg Transit Master Plan.</p> <p>Winnipeg Transit Plus is in the process of developing a policy related to seasonal service, which will include conversations with Transit Plus customers regarding their experiences accessing transit in the winter.</p> <p>Regarding the proposed integration of conventional and Transit Plus services, survey respondents were either generally supportive of the idea, or needed more information to form their opinion.</p>

Next steps

The Winnipeg Transit Master Plan will be presented to Council for consideration in spring 2021. Input gathered in Phase Three public engagement will inform plans as Winnipeg Transit moves toward implementation, if the Winnipeg Transit Master Plan is approved by Council.

Appendices

Appendix A – Promotional materials

Appendix B – Online survey questions and feedback

Appendix C – Survey respondent postal code map

Appendix D – News release