



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
Friday, November 16, 2007

Governments Partner to Move Winnipeg Transit Improvements Forward Bus stop upgrades, on-street transit priority benefits commuters

Winnipeg, MB – Committed to improving public transit infrastructure in Winnipeg, the Honourable Vic Toews, President of the Treasury Board, on behalf of the Honourable Lawrence Cannon, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, together with Steve Ashton, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs for Manitoba, and Winnipeg Mayor Sam Katz today showcased the newly upgraded heated transit shelters in the heart of the Graham Mall Transit corridor. This improvement is just one of the many enhancements the citizens of Winnipeg will see on city streets as Winnipeg Transit moves forward with its Transit Improvement Program.

“Increased transit use is a clear priority for the Government of Canada. We are pleased to see that the City of Winnipeg is using its federal Gas Tax and Public Transit Capital Trust funding to improve its transit services,” said Minister Toews. “Projects like the one we see today contribute to our commitment to build strong, sustainable communities that encourage the use of public transportation to help reduce our footprint on the environment.”

“Winnipeg’s transit system provides an environmentally conscious way to travel around our capital city,” said Minister Ashton. “The provincial government is committed to restoring the 50/50 funding arrangement and is pleased to join with our civic and federal counterparts to help improve the system and make it more efficient for riders.”

The Transit Improvement Program is a comprehensive approach to improve speed, reliability, comfort, convenience and accessibility of Winnipeg’s transit service. It will help to reduce traffic congestion, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and improve the quality of Winnipeg’s transit program.

“Winnipeggers have told us they want to see improvements made in our current system,” said Mayor Sam Katz. “With more heated bus shelters, transit signal priority lights, and on-street improvements, we will continue to attract ridership and increase the reliability and comfort for our transit riders, and improve traffic flow for not only transit, but all Winnipeg commuters.”

.../2

This year's completed upgrades include 104 new transit shelters at major transit corridors (37 of which are heated), new signage, information kiosks, new bus benches, and sidewalk improvements.

Phase one of the on-street transit priority program will improve bus operating speeds and transit on-time reliability with signal-timing improvements, road geometry improvements, transit queue jumps, transit signal priority lights, and transit-only lanes. Transit-only lanes have new red concrete which has been used in other jurisdictions to keep non-transit traffic from using dedicated lanes.

Work completed or underway includes Pembina Highway, St. Mary's Road, and St. Anne's Road. These initiatives will save commuters time as they travel between downtown and suburban areas along Pembina Highway and St. Mary's Road, and along St. Anne's Road. These measures will also improve the on-time reliability of service on these corridors.

The Government of Canada is providing \$167.3 million to Manitoba from 2005 to 2010 through the Gas Tax Agreement. As part of its recently launched \$33 billion "Building Canada" infrastructure plan, the Government of Canada extended Gas Tax funding by an additional \$2 billion per year nationally, from 2011 to 2014. Gas Tax funding is available to local governments for projects that contribute to environmental sustainability, and in particular, infrastructure projects that lead to cleaner air, cleaner water or the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The Gas Tax Fund is administered in Manitoba by the Province of Manitoba.

The Government of Canada is also providing \$32.6 million to Manitoba through the Public Transit Capital Trust for public transit projects that increase capacity, reduce congestion, and lower greenhouse gas emissions.

For more information on Building Canada, please visit www.buildingcanada.gc.ca.

BACKGROUNDER

Winnipeg's "**Transit Improvement Program**" is a comprehensive approach to improve transit service along the major arterial streets with high transit service levels that will improve:

- speed
- reliability
- comfort
- convenience
- accessibility

Funding for these improvements is made possible by the following funding partners:

Bus Stop/Station Upgrades (2006-2007)

• City of Winnipeg	\$590,000
• Government of Canada (Public Transit Capital Trust)	\$3,150,000
• Government of Canada (Gas Tax Fund)	\$1,300,000
Total:	\$5,040,000

The Bus Stop/Station Upgrades Program is to continue in 2008 and 2009 with the Government of Canada (Gas Tax Fund) funding \$2.1 million in each of those years.

For the Phase 1 (2007) portion of the on-street transit priority program:

• City of Winnipeg	\$345,400
• Province of Manitoba	\$1,334,600
• Government of Canada (Gas Tax Fund)	\$320,000
Total:	\$2,000,000

BACKGROUND

In 2006, City Council approved a comprehensive multi-year Transit Improvement Program that includes:

Bus Stop Upgrades at most major stops

- New heated and non-heated shelters, new signage, information kiosks, new benches, and sidewalk improvements at the following locations:
 - Downtown (Graham, Portage, Main, Vaughan, Donald, Fort, University of Winnipeg)
 - Osborne Junction – Osborne Village
 - Polo Park
 - Kildonan Place
 - St. Vital Centre
 - University of Manitoba
 - Pembina Highway
 - Henderson Highway
 - Regent Avenue West.
- Schedule: 2007-2009

The first phase of this program is underway and improvements are now starting to appear at some major bus stops throughout the city and along some of the Quality Corridors.

Please note, work completed by November 16, 2007, will include stop and station upgrades in the downtown (Portage, Graham, Main), Osborne Junction, University of Manitoba, Polo Park, St. Vital Centre, Kildonan Place, and along the Pembina, Henderson, and Regent West Quality Corridors; and on-street transit priority measures along Pembina Highway and at Osborne Junction.

On-Street Transit Priority Program: the goal is to improve bus operating speeds and transit on-time reliability on major arterials with:

- signal timing improvements
- road geometry improvements
- transit queue jumps
- transit signal priority lights
- transit-only lanes
- Schedule: 2007-2009

Diesel-Electric Hybrid Articulated Buses:

- The test bus is expected to arrive near year end of 2007 for a winter demonstration.
- Upon successful testing in April 2008, an order will be placed and delivery of 20 of these units is anticipated by the end of March 2009.

Regular Air Conditioned Buses:

- 33 regular low-floor buses are expected to be delivered in spring 2008.

PROJECT BENEFITS

- supports the commitment in Plan Winnipeg 2020 Vision for sustainable transportation
- improves the quality of public transit in Winnipeg
- encourages higher ridership
- reduces greenhouse gas emissions
- supports economic growth
- improves streetscape