



2022 Mayoral Election- -Accessibility Survey



✓ **Responses:** Rana Bokhari, Chris Clacio, Scott Gillingham, Kevin Klein and Shaun Loney

✗ **Non-responses:** Idris Adelakun, Jenny Motkaluk, Glenn Murray, Robert-Falcon Ouellette, Rick Shone and Don Woodstock

Question #1

Presently all City of Winnipeg access points to the Portage and Main underground are inaccessible to citizens who use wheelchairs (stairs only). Elevators located on private property are not regulated by the City, and have much shorter hours of availability.

As mayor will you ensure equitable passage to the Portage & Main underground for wheelchair users?

Rana Bokari	Not only will I ensure equitable passage in the Portage and Main underground by either making sure the elevators are always operational or finding another solution, I will ensure passage for all at the city’s most famous intersection. The barriers at Portage and Main have to be brought down due to badly-needed repairs, and when I am elected mayor, they will not be going back up. This will provide choice and access for all, no matter if they travel above or underground, at any given time on any day.
Chris Clacio	As mayor I vow I will ensure everything that I can when elected to bring all key stakeholders and partners of the Portage & Main underground to implement solutions and actions that would allow for equitable passages for wheelchair users. The city currently has a 2021 - 2022 Accessibility Plan, Universal Design Policy, Accessibility Design Standards, universal design guiding principles for developers, and a building a visitable home document that has basic information. The part of where the city of Winnipeg has underserved supporting citizens with disabilities is related to how the city does their procurement process for construction projects. Right now the city has a request for proposal (RFP) process which ultimately the outcome leads to the lowest bid and not many companies apply that have qualifications and the capacity to include implementation of these city processes. My solution is replacing the RFP process into a Qualification-Based Selection process or a Request of Qualification process. The other aspect related to this is to expand the Office of Public Engagement towards an Office of Civic Engagement and the creation of a four year participatory budget process.



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Scott Gillingham	<p>Clearly, we do need to prioritize elevator access to Portage and Main, and I am committing through this survey to act on this issue quickly. However, Winnipeg often suffers from an unwillingness to use resources that are already available. In this case, private elevators are not regulated by the City, but it may be possible to reach a faster outcome in terms of short-term access by partnering with one or more of the property owners to facilitate access where appropriate, depending on site configuration, security and so on. I am committing to bring all Portage and Main stakeholders together with a designated Mayor's Office / City Council lead to try to find the fastest possible remedy for this issue before March 1, 2023.</p>
Kevin Klein	<p>Portage and Main underpass will be undergoing extensive renovations to repair and replace aspects of the structure that are in disrepair. As part of that work, accessibility standards will need to be met. The time to address accessibility is during construction and repairs to ensure that individuals requiring assistive devices for mobility are able to access the space equally.</p>
Shaun Loney	<p>To be honest, as a sign of my privilege, and even though I've been underground at Portage and Main many times, I was unaware that the area is inaccessible. When elected mayor, I will be happy to sit down to ask the city administration about options to address this issue. I am for the opening of Portage and Main.</p>



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Question #2

In 2023 the Government of Manitoba is expected to implement the Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA): Design of Public Spaces Standard. Like the Manitoba Building Code, the AMA will not be applied retroactively, but only to new developments and major renovations.

As mayor how will you improve access to older neighborhoods (like the Exchange) and public spaces for citizens with disabilities?

Rana Bokhari	<p>1.While the AMA will not be applied retroactively, all city projects in the Exchange, including roads, sidewalks, active transportation paths and civic buildings will be required to adhere to, if not exceed, the standard. Any renovations being done in Exchange District buildings will also be required to upgrade to these standards before receiving their renovation permits.</p>
Chris Clacio	<p>As mayor, how I would improve access to older neighbourhoods (like the Exchange) and public spaces for citizens with disabilities would be through the expansion and rebranding of the Office of Public Engagement into the Office of Civic Engagements. And the creation of a four year participatory budgeting process which would allow for citizen based organizations and citizens with disabilities to work with the Office of Civic Engagement and the City Councillor of that ward to allow for public spaces within the city to adapt the universal and accessibility design standards within older neighbourhoods. City government will educate its citizens on how our local government works.</p> <p>All citizens of Winnipeg will learn the roles of local elected government representatives, city administration officials, city service delivery departments, and the role of other levels of government. The 4 year participatory budget is allocating more of the capital budget towards your local city councillors ward budget. What this entails is based on the concept of tax choice. The basic idea of that is if you're a resident of a ward/councillor the taxes you pay for as a citizen you deserve the choice to decide how your councillor invests within their ward. This would also allow for citizens to design active transportation networks within the older neighbourhoods as well if that's what citizens demand. I fully understand that active transportation networks like sidewalks and bicycle infrastructure are essential for a fully accessible city and for local economic development for citizens of Winnipeg.</p>



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Scott Gillingham	<p>My final platform will include a commitment to create a permit-fee holiday on access improvements to existing buildings and structures until year-end 2024, alongside a broad effort to encourage private owners and managers of grandfathered buildings to find ways to improve site accessibility. (The deadline on the fee waiver would be there to help put pressure on those interested to act quickly to prepare, design and deliver upgrades).</p>
Kevin Klein	<p>As noted, the AMA will not apply retroactively but areas such as the Exchange are destinations that should be enjoyed by everyone. As Mayor, I will work with local businesses and groups such as yours to create a plan to make the Exchange a featured destination by creating a space that does not allow vehicles. As part of that plan, I commit to working closely with people who have lived experience with mobility and accessibility challenges to ensure the space provides equal access to everyone who chose to visit and enjoy the Exchange District. To support accessibility, the design of such a space will incorporate features such as proper surfaced and curb cuts as well as handicapped parking and transit plus access. I believe that all public spaces should be developed to incorporate equity of access for all.</p> <p>As Mayor, I will have an Infrastructure Master Plan created by a team of experts in infrastructure and transportation to incorporate accessibility standards and remove barriers. When everyone can fully participate in all aspects of our City then we all benefit. This would include prioritizing the snow clearing of public transit spaces and sidewalks on major routes to minimize the risk and disruption for everyone when snow accumulates on public walkways and transit access points.</p>
Shaun Loney	<p>As Mayor, I will be happy to work with you to prioritize key accessibility issues and incorporate a plan to improve accessibility in the areas of most concern. While approaches like the AMA is a good start, there are other levers that the city of Winnipeg has that can trigger accessibility improvements.</p>



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Question #3

The Winnipeg Transit Master Plan (WTMP), adopted by Council in 2021, includes a \$478 m investment in fixed route infrastructure projects. Despite being under resourced for decades, and plagued by human rights concerns, Transit Plus (Winnipeg Transit’s para-transit service) has received \$0 in WTMP improvements.

As mayor will you invest in front-line resources for Transit Plus passengers?

Rana Bokhari	<p>Unequivocally, yes. I have already outlined my plans for Transit Plus in my bid to make Winnipeg an age-friendly city, and that plan will vastly improve Transit Plus. It includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ensuring the current recommendations of Winnipeg Transit Plus continue to be implemented as fast as possible b. Increase funding to decrease call wait times for Winnipeg Transit Plus c. Evaluate the impact of expanded eligibility d. Evaluate bus stops to ensure all are accessible by sidewalk or path - (for example: Lormier Blvd.)
Chris Clacio	<p>As mayor I vow to invest front-line resources for Transit Plus passengers. One way I envision doing this is restructuring the city administration to include a department of local economic development. With this change the community services team would be rebranded into citizen and advocacy services. I also believe that we need to fundamentally change how Winnipeg Transit Plus is designed, improved, funded, and evaluated within city hall. The current culture within administration has not improved the quality of life of all citizens within Winnipeg. Along with the department of local economic development the city hall must as well create a special operating agency of transit-oriented development within the city. My rationale behind the creation of the citizen and advocacy services would allow for Winnipeg Transit Plus to be a separate entity away from Winnipeg Transit and have its own specific funding structure that will allow the city to serve citizens with disabilities in a more proactive manner. With the implementation of the Accessibility for Manitoba Act in 2023 maybe this is the time to work with the province to find a funding structure to address accessibility to be a top priority for local economic development in this election.</p>



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<p>Scott Gillingham</p>	<p>I hope to attack this challenge in two ways in my platform. First: my “Big Move” transportation plan includes the launch in 2023 of the first of several planned transit on-demand services for suburban areas that are in the Transit Master Plan. While these new services will not help every Transit Plus user, at least some riders with mobility challenges will be able to access the service, reducing demand for the conventional Transit Plus system. Secondly, I am committing to improve the efficiency of Transit Plus for both the system and its users by finally bringing the booking system online, even if that means partnering with an existing private booking or scheduling app to get the fastest possible solution online.</p>
<p>Kevin Klein</p>	<p>As Mayor, I will review the operations and contract for Transit Plus to establish customer service standards and implement measurable outcomes to improve the customer experience when using this service. I will work with the Transit Plus team and an advisory table that would include your organization and others with lived experience to find and implement solutions that better meet the needs of Transit Plus customers. If it is identified that there is a need to invest in front-line workers to improve the customer experience, I will work with address these needs for Transit Plus users.</p>
<p>Shaun Loney</p>	<p>I have announced a major revamp of Winnipeg Transit to be called MetroMobility, the plan has many benefits for as many features that will enhance accessibility, including; number one; the deployment of wheelchair accessible vans to bring customers to wheelchair accessible buses with one fixed fare. The vans will be dynamically routed and be able to pick people up at their place of residence.</p> <p>A - The incorporation of electric vans enables us to bring transit plus in-house, which will make the service more seamless B - As mayor, my administration will also conduct and review the number of rides pertaining to health appointments, such as for dialysis treatment. Working with Manitoba Health, to create new partnerships, we can free up transit plus to focus on more non-medical rides.</p> <p>I have committed to implementing the transit master plan in 10 years, rather than the current 25 and we have identified several current new sources of revenue.</p>