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## **Backgrounder – Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) – Phase 1**

**COST:** \$50 million

**CONSTRUCTION START:** Late 2004

**COMPLETION:** Fall 2007

### **PROJECT SUMMARY**

In Canada, Ottawa, Vancouver and Quebec City have already implemented Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) services.

The long-term, city-wide Bus Rapid Transit System for Winnipeg includes six “legs” or corridors, combining the attractive features of a rail system with the flexibility of a bus system to provide fast, convenient, comfortable transit service that minimizes the need to transfer. The proposed corridors include southwestern, western, northwestern, northeastern, eastern and southeastern legs.

Separate roadways called busways – for transit only – will permit high-speed operation (up to 80 kph) of rubber-tired, low-floor, low-emission electric hybrid coaches, that can also operate on regular streets.

Once downtown, BRT vehicles can use existing transit priority measures, such as Diamond Lanes and the Graham Transit Mall.

**Phase 1** of the BRT system includes:

- Implementation of the rapid transit infrastructure for the first stage of the Southwestern Corridor.
  - The Southwestern Corridor includes a 3.4 km busway between Queen Elizabeth Way and Stradbrook and Pembina and Jubilee; a recreation path adjacent to the busway; on-street diamond lanes on Main Street and Pembina Highway; and terminals at the University of Winnipeg (Balmoral and Ellice) and the University of Manitoba (Dafoe Road).
- The introduction of intelligent transportation systems (ITS) to provide real-time schedule information and onboard “next stop” information for passengers.
- Preparation of a functional design for the Eastern Corridor (Phase 2), which includes a 5.1 km busway, on-street diamond lanes on Regent Avenue, transit

signal priority at intersections, weather-protected stations and a recreation path adjacent to the busway.

## **PROJECT BENEFITS**

- A new BRT system is part of a comprehensive plan, as outlined in *Plan Winnipeg ... 2020 Vision*, to improve the environment, revitalize the downtown, provide for more compact urban development and strengthen the local economy.
- The intent of the BRT initiative is to dramatically improve the quality and attractiveness of public transportation in Winnipeg by improving speed, reliability, comfort and flexibility in routes.
- Busways are much more affordable to build and operate in comparison to Light Rail Transit (LRT) in low-density corridors.
- BRT systems are much easier to stage – to build and immediately put into service.