



February 11, 2016

Mayor John Tory
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON
M5H 2N2

Re: Federal funding for pedestrian and cycling infrastructure plans

Dear Mayor Tory,

We are writing to ask that you include funding for pedestrian and cycling infrastructure in your list of priorities for federal infrastructure funding.

As you know, the federal government has committed a minimum of \$60 billion over ten years to infrastructure spending on projects across Canada. The federal government has said it has three major priorities for selecting projects: public transit infrastructure; social infrastructure; and green infrastructure.

We believe that funding for active transportation measures to enhance the walkability and rideability of our city fits within all three priorities:

1. It is a key “first mile, last mile” component of transit and has the potential to significantly enhance the climate and health benefits of replacing car travel with transit;
2. It is an effective way to address health issues like obesity and mobility while creating safer neighbourhoods; and
3. It is green both in its outcomes (fewer car trips) and in its potential to change our city’s built form (e.g., more permeable paving, ancillary plantings in buffers and trees along sidewalks and pathways, etc.).

Our city has identified the need for significant upgrades to cycling and pedestrian infrastructure. In addition to the advantages noted above, upgrades would contribute to

addressing key City goals, such as reducing congestion by diverting trips from overcrowded roads and transit. By seeking additional federal dollars, we can accelerate implementation of these important projects.

Furthermore, the relative simplicity of these active transportation projects makes them ideally “shovel ready.” With costs that are a fraction of the cost per kilometer or cost per user of transit or roads, it should be easy to accelerate work on these projects, while also having a large impact on neighbourhood liveability, public health and our city’s efforts to reduce climate damaging emissions.

An example of a major, shovel-ready, transit-related project that will enhance both walking and cycling is the Eglinton Connects plan that is intended to accompany the new Eglinton Crosstown LRT. Other shovel-ready examples are the Railpath extension and the East Don Trail.

With projects spread out across the city, spending on active transportation infrastructure would also help the public see the direct benefit of federal-municipal cooperation on infrastructure at street level and also help them to see that the city is addressing their need for better ways to get around. And compared to conventional infrastructure spending on roads, active transportation spending will help us avoid a boomerang effect of actually increasing traffic congestion and greenhouse gas emissions.

For these reasons, we urge the City of Toronto to prioritize an appeal for federal funding for pedestrian and cycling infrastructure as part of its request for federal infrastructure funds.

We would very much appreciate hearing your thoughts on this matter. Thank you for your consideration of this letter.

Sincerely,



Franz Hartmann
Executive Director
Toronto Environmental Alliance



Jared Kolb
Executive Director
Cycle Toronto



Dylan Reid
Walk Toronto