

June 26, 2019

## Ryerson City Building Institute Deputation

The City Building Institute produces public policy research to address diverse urban challenges and promote healthy neighbourhoods, cities and regions -- including policies related to the public realm, complete streets redesign, and active transportation.

We applaud the City for its efforts to strengthen the Cycling Network Plan, and to better link this plan with Vision Zero 2.0 for a more holistic approach to supporting active transportation and eliminating traffic-related injuries and fatalities on Toronto's streets.

The original Ten Year Cycling Network Plan proposed an ambitious network of 560 lane kilometers of bike lanes and cycle tracks, as well as hundreds more kilometers of multi-use trails and shared lanes. But without links to realistic timelines, budgets, staff resources, and coordination with capital works programs, the plan fell short of its goals. The City estimates that, in the three years since the plan's approval in 2016, only 60 km of new infrastructure was installed. Altogether, only 7% of the plan's total proposed kilometers of cycling infrastructure has been put in place. Meanwhile, over this same time period, nine cyclists were killed and 128 more seriously injured in Toronto, according to TPS data.

But, despite these statistics, more and more Torontonians are choosing to travel by bike to move around the city. And they are flocking to those few areas where high quality, safe cycling infrastructure is already in place -- like the Adelaide/Richmond corridor, which saw a 1,095% increase in cycling volumes after installation, or Sherbourne Street's cycle tracks, which saw a 156% ridership increase after installation.

So, we welcome the June update to the Cycling Network Plan, and its renewed commitment to getting safe cycling infrastructure on the ground. We would also like to thank the staff in Transportation Services' Cycling Unit who have recognized that the plan needed a rethink, and have worked so diligently to engage diverse stakeholders. We are grateful to have been a part of that process.

The Cycling Plan Update you are considering today includes many positive updates and additions, including:

- Installing 120 km of new cycling infrastructure by 2021 – doubling the rate at which new infrastructure has been installed in the past three years;
- Upgrades to existing infrastructure in concert with the Vision Zero Road Safety Plan;
- A move towards a near-term implementation program coupled with longer-term goals, to more appropriately prioritize and phase implementation of the plan;
- The integration of cycling infrastructure into the updated Vision Zero 2.0, and the application of a Vision Zero lens to the Cycling Plan Update, implementing these plans in tandem to reduce road injuries and fatalities; and
- The identification of a set of Major City-Wide Cycling Corridors prioritized for study in the near-term 2019-2021 program, along with remaining corridors to be brought forward annually.

Overall, we feel that this update is a step in the right direction, and we hope that the Committee will recommend its adoption and help to expedite its implementation.

To ensure the success of this plan, we urge the Committee and Council to:

- Ensure that, beginning in the 2020 Budget process, sufficient capital funds and staff resources are allocated to ensure the success of the near-term implementation plan, along with sufficient operating funds identified as necessary to secure the ongoing maintenance of projects on the ground
- Support staff in identifying a stable funding strategy to secure the \$150 million necessary to fully fund the planned streetscape and cycle track as part of the Eglinton Crosstown LRT and Eglinton Connects plan
- Continue to support cycling infrastructure projects as they are brought forward to Council for approval. Council approval will be required for each project to go forward, requiring strong political will to make this plan a reality.
- Support efforts to implement the cycling network plan in your local wards, at every opportunity -- as the Vision Zero 2.0 plan states, full road reconstruction is the most advantageous moment in which to implement a safe street redesign, including protected cycling infrastructure. Seize those moments.
- And in particular, focus on the Major City-Wide Cycling Routes as identified in the plan for priority implementation. These are the core streets that have the most potential to carry people on bikes safely across the city and are the big wins for active transportation. One key route to focus on is the Bloor-Danforth corridor, from High Park to the Danforth -- a stretch where we have seen through the Bloor Bike Lane pilot the potential of a few small changes to create a safe street that attracts cyclists of all ages, reduces conflicts, and supports local business. We encourage Council to extend the existing Bloor Bike Lanes to High Park by 2020, and implement a pilot protected cycling lane on the Danforth by 2020.
  - Next spring, CBI will be releasing new research in collaboration with Ryerson Associate Prof. Anne Harris, quantifying the burden of cyclist injuries and fatalities that could be avoided by installing separated cycling infrastructure on these key corridors. While we know that safe infrastructure saves lives, it is our hope that putting a number to this issue will encourage City Council to expedite the implementation of the Cycling Network Plan.
- And finally, seek opportunities to accelerate the implementation of the plan, by allocating staff resources, or capital or operating funding where appropriate. Safe cycling infrastructure is a necessary and proven measure to prevent injuries and save lives on our streets; we have no time to lose.

In order to meet the Official Plan's goal of having a cycling route within one kilometer of all residents, and TransformTO's ambitious goal to have 75% of all trips under five kilometers by foot or bicycle by 2050, we will need to invest in safe, continuous, and connected cycling infrastructure, and streets for all. The Cycling Network Plan update represents strong progress towards this goal, and we encourage Council and Committee to support this plan today and in future decisions regarding proposed projects and budgets. Thank you.