

From: Mr. Christian Chan, B. U. R.PI

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Toronto, ON

To: Public Works and Infrastructure Committee
City of Toronto
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON
M5H 2N2

Re: May 16, 2012 - PWIC Meeting - Items PW 14.5 2012 and PW 5.1 2011

May 8, 2012

Chair Minnan-Wong and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to you on behalf of the ward advocacy groups of Cycle Toronto (formerly the Toronto Cyclists Union) in wards 19, 20, 27 and 28. I am a lifelong resident of Ward 20 and an urban planner, practicing in the Greater Toronto Area.

Cycle Toronto held a joint meeting with the ward advocacy groups of wards 19, 20, 27 and 28, on April 17, 2012. At that time I was authorized to make the following submissions on behalf of the four ward groups.

The ward advocacy groups of Cycle Toronto in wards 19, 20, 27 and 28 strongly support:

- **The installation of a continuous separated bicycle lane along Wellesley-Harbord-Hoskin connecting Ossington Avenue and Parliament Street.**
- **The conversion of current painted bicycle lanes to separated bicycle lanes on Beverley Street.**
- **The implementation of Councillor Vaughan's vision for a Ward 20 Bikeway Network for completion by 2014.**

Surveys show many Torontonians want the advantages of using bicycles for their commute.¹ These include escaping crowded public transit vehicles and congested roads, saving the City money on transit and vehicle costs, as well as getting exercise. However, many commuters feel they cannot choose this option because they fear for their safety on roads shared with motorized traffic.

The general public would benefit from more bicycle commuters. Torontonians using bicycles reduce congestion on public transit and roads, stay healthier by exercising, and contribute to our public health by reducing air pollution.

¹ Ipsos Reid City of Toronto Cycling Study: Tracking Report 1999-2009
http://www.toronto.ca/cycling/reports/pdf/cycling_study_1999_and_2009.pdf pp-10-11.

The Economic Benefits of Cycling in the City

More cyclists on our roads mean more economic benefits for local business. Cyclists shop closer to home and more often, because of the inherent scale and speed of cycling. And cyclists who forego car ownership have an extra \$6,000 per year to spend, that a similarly situated motorist would not, thanks to avoided car ownership costs.² Intelligent Communities, a research program of the American National Building Museum, has concluded that for those households that own cars, only 16 percent of those household expenditures stays in their own community.³ Cycling infrastructure is an economic generator.

Examples of the economic benefits of cycling infrastructure include the following:

- The opening of the Mineral Belt Line Trail in Leadville, Colorado led to a 19 percent increase in sales tax revenues along that route, leading to economic recovery in 1999;⁴
- The Washington and Old Dominion Trail in Washington D.C. brings about \$7 million to the northern Virginia economy;⁵
- In Dunedin, Florida, the Pinellas Trail spurred on economic development from a corridor suffering from 35% storefront vacancy rates to now being at or near 100%;⁶
- The Political Economy Research Institute at UMass has examined the costs of engineering, construction, and materials for different projects in Baltimore and found that bike lanes create more jobs than other road projects per \$1 million spent, about twice as many jobs as road construction for the same amount of money.⁷

Finally, as cities around the world have already discovered, a safe and inviting bikeway network is an attractive way for tourists to discover more of our city when they visit Toronto. For example, Quebec's Route Verte is estimated to have created \$134 million in sales revenues along the routes and over \$36 million in tax revenues.⁸

² Canadian Automobile Association "Driving Costs – Beyond the price tag: Understanding your vehicle's expenses": 2011 Edition.

³ Opsahl Andy "IBM Data Comparison Site for Cities Launched" Government Technology 2012.03.10 - <http://www.govtech.com/e-government/IBM-City-Forward-Launched.html>

⁴ Robinson Rory "Economic (and other) Benefits of Trails Greenways and Open Space: National Parks Service – Rivers Trails and Conservation Assistance 2009 January - <http://www.miamivalleytrails.org/benefits.htm>

⁵ Robinson Rory "Economic (and other) Benefits of Trails Greenways and Open Space: National Parks Service – Rivers Trails and Conservation Assistance 2009 January - <http://www.miamivalleytrails.org/benefits.htm>

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Garrett – Peltier Heidi "Estimating the Employment Impacts of Pedestrian Bicycle and Road Infrastructure – Case Study: Baltimore": Political Economy Research Institute University of Massachusetts Amherst December 2010.

⁸ La Route Verte "Retombées économiques" <http://www.routeverte.com/ang/facts.lasso?page=retombees> 2006

Wellesley-Hoskin-Harbord Separated Bicycle Lane

Toronto City Council should expand the scope of the Wellesley separated bicycle lane plan to include the detailed design and consultation for a continuous separated bicycle lane from Parliament Street to Ossington Avenue following Wellesley Street, Queen's Park Circle, Hoskin Avenue and Harbord Street.

With the environmental assessment for bicycle lanes on Bloor Street abandoned, there is now a clear need for an alternative east-west cycling route.

Our members report seeing an increased volume of east-west cycling commuter traffic on Harbord and Hoskin streets. Bicycle traffic is not safely accommodated on Harbord and Hoskin streets because the current painted lane is discontinuous, which confuses all road users.

Sharrows sometimes present the most danger where they invite motorists to dangerously squeeze by commuters on bicycles. These problems are exacerbated by the increase in the number of Torontonians commuting by bicycle using this route.

In June 2011, PWIC directed city staff to proceed with the detailed design and consultation for developing separated bicycle lanes on Wellesley Street with the goal of implementing them in 2012.

We welcome this first step, but it is now clear that the detailed design and consultation must be extended to include Hoskin Avenue and Harbord Street and connect Parliament and Ossington with separated bicycle lanes. This route should be contiguous across Queen's Park Circle.

This would create a safe and practical route for the many Torontonians commuting by bicycle.

Beverley Street

Beverley Street bicycle lanes would also be greatly enhanced by their physical separation. We applaud Councillor Vaughan for announcing his support of separated bicycle lanes on Beverley at PWIC's meeting on February 16, 2012. We hope the committee will support this important bicycle infrastructure.

Proposed Resolution

We recommend PWIC adopt the following resolution, or a version achieving the same results, instructing City of Toronto staff to:

Proceed with the detailed design and consultation process for the installation of continuous physically separated bicycle lanes on Wellesley Street, through Queen's Park connecting Hoskin Avenue and Harbord Street terminating in the west at Ossington Avenue and in the east at Parliament Street with a view towards their installation in 2013.

And further proceed with detailed design and public consultation in the fall of 2012 for the installation of continuous physically separated bicycle lanes on Beverley Street with a view towards their installation in 2013.

Ward 20 Bikeway Network

PWIC should support the installation of physically separated bicycle lanes in accordance with Councillor Vaughan's proposed Ward 20 bikeway network with the design and community consultation process to commence in the fall of 2013 with implementation in 2014.

Finally the Ward 19, 20, 27 and 28 Cyclist Union Advocacy Groups support Councillor Vaughan's proposed south Ward 20 Bikeway Network.

We understand Councillor Vaughan envisions the installation of bicycle lanes on Spadina Avenue, Portland, Peter, Simcoe Streets, Bremner Boulevard and Blue Jays Way.

By implementing Councillor Vaughan's vision and joining it with an expansion of Councilor Minnan-Wong's East-West proposal, all Torontonians will benefit for the reasons outlined at the beginning of this letter.

Kindly acknowledge receipt of this communication in writing, and I respectfully request the Committee to list me as a deputant to speak on the above – mentioned item at the May 16th, 2012 meeting of the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee.

Yours Truly

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On behalf of the Ward 19, 20, 27 and 28 Advocacy Groups of Cycle Toronto (formerly Toronto Cyclists Union)

cc: Ward Captains of the Ward 19, 20, 27 and 28 Advocacy Groups of Cycle Toronto
Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam - councillor_wongtam@toronto.ca
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