



Public Works and Infrastructure Committee
Committee Room 1, City Hall
100 Queen St. W.
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

May 6th, 2015

Re: Ensuring safety for cyclists during construction and closures

Dear Chair and Members,

According to the City of Toronto's 2010 Bike Count report, almost 20,000 people enter the downtown core on bicycles every day. Cycling continues to be on the rise, and we know that positive impacts on health, the environment, congestion and gridlock and local business are directly connected to the continued growth in cycling throughout the City. As the number of cyclists continue to grow, we must sustain our work in expanding our bikeway network and in promoting cycling programs, like Toronto BikeShare. The expansion of Toronto BikeShare is a priority of this year's Panam Games, and is a crucial way to promote affordable and accessible cycling across the City.

As the City works hard to update and improve our road, water and transit infrastructure, major construction projects are scheduled more and more throughout the City. These projects often require the closing of roads and intersections, and the re-direction of vehicular traffic onto alternate roadways. Cyclists are heavily affected by this work - when major bikeways are closed for construction, cyclists are forced to navigate dangerous construction conditions and seek unsafe alternatives. Cyclists are also negatively affected by the issuance of film permits to occupy bike lanes or close roads. When these occupations are necessary, safe alternatives should be provided to protect cyclists during the permit period. Without adequate safe cycling infrastructure that serve as alternatives, cyclists are forced to cycle on dangerous routes and into unsafe circumstances.

The Ontario Traffic Manual (OTM) Book 7 – Temporary Conditions is a provincial guideline for establishing safe construction conditions on roadways, which provides guidance for many, but not all situations concerning cycling traffic through work zones and detours. All City divisions and agencies, private contractors and utility companies performing work on Toronto streets are required to comply with Book 7. However, as a major urban city, the City of Toronto has unique conditions that are not adequately addressed in these provincial guidelines – including streetcar tracks, bicycle lanes with high cycling volumes, as well as areas with a combination of high volumes of cyclists and pedestrians.

Ensuring coordination between City departments and that safer roadway construction conditions or alternative bikeways are provided during major construction and/or closures is essential in supporting cycling as part of our City's transportation network.



It is recommended that the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee:

1. Direct the General Manager, Transportation Services, to liaise with the General Manager, Economic Development, and the Executive Director, Engineering and Construction Services to develop a protocol to better address cycling infrastructure during road construction, road closures and bike lane closures, including the requirement to install temporary cycling infrastructure and/or cycling detour routes when bike lane closures are required, and report on this protocol to the November 12th, 2015 meeting of the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee;
2. That the General Manager of Transportation Services include in this protocol the development of new construction condition practices (e.g. checklist and/or training), as supplement to the Ontario Traffic Manual Book 7 – Temporary Conditions, to better address urban cycling conditions and ensure safer conditions for cyclists during major construction and/or closures.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Cressy".

Joe Cressy
City Councillor
Ward 20, Trinity-Spadina

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike Layton".

Mike Layton
City Councillor
Ward 19, Trinity-Spadina

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary-Margaret McMahon".

Mary-Margaret McMahon
City Councillor
Ward 32, Beaches-East York