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October 25, 2021

To: Infrastructure and
Environment Committee

Re: Improving Cycling and Pedestrian Safety on the York Beltline Trail and Kay Gardner Beltline Trail

SUMMARY:

The York Beltline Trail and Kay Gardner Beltline Trail form a critical east-west trail system running through the middle of Toronto and within Ward 8, running parallel to Eglinton Avenue West from Spadina Road to Caledonia Road.

Over the years, a number of safety improvements to the trails have been recommended by community members, local Councillors, and Cycle Toronto.

Many of these long-standing safety enhancement requests have not been addressed. Due to the dramatic increase in the use of the trails during COVID-19 and increased population in the community, it is crucial that these safety improvements be addressed as soon as possible.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. City Council request that the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation work with all relevant City departments to address urgent cycling and user safety improvements to the York Beltline Trail and Kay Gardner Beltline Trail, and report back to the next Infrastructure and Environment Committee meeting on the following:

1. Ensuring proper integration between access routes from the York Beltline Trail and Kay Gardner Beltline Trail to Crosstown LRT stations
2. Address poor drainage and stormwater runoff issues
3. Explore improvements to address safety problems where the York Beltline Trail and Kay Gardner Beltline Trail cross arterial and collector roads including:
 - a. Sidewalk curb cuts at key locations where the trails intersect with City roads (i.e. Old Park Road, Ronald Avenue, Caledonia Road, and Marlee Avenue)
 - b. Installation of traffic signals and safety refuge islands, where appropriate
 - c. Changing the configuration of stop bars and pedestrian crosswalks to remove obstructions and make for easier pedestrian and cyclist movement

4. Removing trail clutter such as excessive bollards, garbage/recycling bins, and ensure safer storm drain covers
5. Improving signage and trail etiquette guidelines to make both more informative and user friendly to cyclist and hikers
6. Enhanced wayfinding signage on the trails, especially at the Allen Expressway barrier wall
7. Explore improvements to connections between the different segments of the York Beltline Trail and Kay Gardner Beltline Trail, including on-street routing for cyclists and building walkway connections between the trails and important streets
8. Immediately deal with the hazardous condition at Elmridge Drive/Roselawn Avenue access to the York Beltline Trail

Thank you,

Mike Colle
Toronto City Councillor
Ward 8, Eglinton-Lawrence

