

March 19, 2008

To: Executive Committee

From: Toronto Pedestrian Committee

Subject: 2008 Operating Budget – Parks, Forestry and Recreation - Priorities for Walking

Recommendation:

The Toronto Pedestrian Committee on March 18, 2008 endorsed the attached draft letter which recommends the following, and requested that it be sent to the Executive Committee for consideration at its special meeting on March 25, 2008:

That a full-time trails and pathways planner be hired to coordinate the planning, consultation, construction and maintenance of pedestrian paths and the bikeway network infrastructure projects in Toronto's parks, and that funding in the approximate amount of \$80,000 be included in the Parks, Forestry and Recreation operating budget.

Background:

The Toronto Pedestrian Committee on March 18, 2008, considered a draft letter, addressed to Councillor Carroll, Chair, City of Toronto Budget Committee, prepared by Fred Sztabinski, Chair, Budget Working Group, Toronto Pedestrian Committee, respecting Toronto's priorities for walking and the need for a dedicated staff resource from the Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division.

for City Clerk

Belinda Bains
Item 4

February 25, 2008

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Chair Shelley Carroll
City of Toronto Budget Committee
10th floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, Ontario, M5H 2N2

Re: 2008 Operating Budget – Priorities for Walking

Dear Chair Carroll and committee members,

On behalf of the Toronto Pedestrian Committee, we thank you for the opportunity to provide the budget committee with the following recommendations.

First off, we are pleased to see that the 2008 recommended operating budget includes funding of the new **Public Realm Office**, as well as **Clean and Beautiful City initiatives**. We hope that this committee will confirm this funding, as expected.

An item that is not in the recommended budget is a new trails planner for the Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division. The City's forthcoming Walking Strategy, the Toronto Bike Plan, and other new commitments to sustainable transportation, require that Council provide sufficient staff and resources to implement these plans and make our City a truly walkable place to live. While this is an area that the City Planning and Transportation Services divisions are generally prepared to work on, Parks does not have a dedicated position or group to work on these projects. This means that projects can often be forgotten or postponed because there is no internal champion to work on them. That is why we recommend the Budget Committee:

Fund a full-time trails and pathways planner to coordinate the planning, consultation, construction and maintenance of pedestrian paths and the bikeway network infrastructure projects in Toronto's parks – approximately \$80,000 in the Parks, Forestry and Recreation operating budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. On behalf of the Toronto Pedestrian Committee, we urge this committee and Council to continue making our streets and recreational areas safer and more enjoyable for everyone.

Councillor Bill Saundercook
TPC Co-Chair

Dylan Reid
TPC Co-Chair

C.C. Councillor Paul Ainslie
Councillor Maria Augimeri
Councillor A. A. Heaps
Councillor Joe Mihevc
Councillor Gord Perks
Councillor Kyle Rae

