



April 8, 2014

RE: PW 30.1 – Approach to Developing Complete Streets Guidelines

Dear Chairman Minnan-Wong and Members of the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Toronto Centre for Active Transportation (TCAT), a project of the registered charity Clean Air Partnership. TCAT's mission is to advance knowledge and evidence to build support for safe and inclusive streets for walking and cycling. Since 2009, TCAT has played a leadership role in Canada to build momentum and focus community and government interest in Complete Streets. In 2010 TCAT hosted its first annual Complete Streets Forum and in 2012 launched the Complete Streets for Canada website (<http://completestreetsforcanada.ca/>), a "go-to" hub for Complete Streets policy, design, and citizen engagement.

At your meeting on the 9th of April you will address a staff report outlining an approach for the development of Complete Streets guidelines. I would like to express the support of TCAT for this approach and the accompanying recommendations to proceed with the development and implementation of a Complete Streets policy.

With such guidelines, Toronto will follow the lead of other Canadian cities championing Complete Streets, including Edmonton (2013) and Calgary (2011 interim guide), who have both produced Complete Streets guidelines. Many prominent U.S. cities have also released similar guidelines, including Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, and Philadelphia. Complete Streets guidelines will ensure that transportation planners and engineers consistently design and operate the entire street network for all road users, not only motorists. This will have far-reaching positive effects on all ages, abilities and modes of travel. Complete Streets have shown to offer wide-ranging benefits, from increasing safety to encouraging more people to take active modes of transportation.

While Toronto's official plan already incorporates some aspects of a Complete Streets policy framework, there are no strong regulatory or implementation tools to facilitate the engineering of streets that are safer and welcoming for all road users. A significant strength of Complete Streets guidelines, when properly developed, is the regulatory framework created with language that specifies that multi-modal streets are the norm, not the exception, and that every road project, no matter the size, is an opportunity to build streets that are safe for all. As discussed in the staff report, these are some of the 10 elements that must be included in Toronto's Complete Streets policy. In addition, the creation of an implementation plan is key in order to provide staff with the tools they need to apply policy into practice.

To conclude, TCAT applauds the City of Toronto for its practical yet forward-thinking approach to developing Complete Streets guidelines and policy. With these in place, Toronto will have a roadmap in place for creating safer streets for all road users, including pedestrians and cyclists, while promoting public health through the encouragement of active transportation.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Nancy Smith Lea".

Nancy Smith Lea
Director, Toronto Centre for Active Transportation (TCAT)
Clean Air Partnership
75 Elizabeth Street, Toronto, ON M5G 1P4
Phone: 416-392-0290
Email: nsmithlea@tcat.ca