

Public Works and Infrastructure Committee

From: Angela Bonfanti <Angela.Bonfanti@cnib.ca>
Sent: Friday, May 5, 2017 2:43 PM
To: Public Works and Infrastructure Committee
Cc: Kat Clarke; Jaye Robinson; Jennifer Spencer
Subject: CNIB comments re Public Works and Infrastructure Committee

Importance: High

To the City Clerk:

Please add my comments to the agenda for the May 9, 2017 Public Works and Infrastructure Committee meeting on item 2017.PW21.3, Lawrence Park Neighbourhood Investigation of Basement Flooding (Area 20) and Road Improvement Class Environmental Assessment Study.

I understand that my comments and the personal information in this email will form part of the public record and that my name will be listed as a correspondent on agendas and minutes of City Council or its committees. Also, I understand that agendas and minutes are posted online and my name may be indexed by search engines like Google.

Comments:

CNIB was disappointed to read the recommendations relating to sidewalk installation in the report: "Lawrence Park Neighbourhood Investigation of Basement Flooding (Area 20) and Road Improvement Class Environmental Assessment Study". Installing sidewalks in only five out of 26 streets in Lawrence Park creates a dangerous situation for vulnerable pedestrians, including people who are blind or partially sighted.

The preservation of trees is important, but the safety of people who are blind or partially sighted is even more important. Curbs are an essential navigation tool for people with sight loss. They denote street crossing points and sidewalk edges, which helps a person using a mobility aid, such as a white cane or a guide dog, navigate safely and confidently to their desired destination.

A person who navigates with a white cane can use their cane to feel the curb and walk down the road with ease. Without knowing where the curb

ends and the street begins, a white cane user could veer out into the street and risk being hit by an oncoming vehicle.

Similarly, guide dogs are trained to stop when they come to a curb, which signals to their owner that there is a surface change and they need to proceed with caution. Without a curb denoting a change in surface, the guide dog will proceed and unknowingly place their owner in danger.

Curbs are not only an invaluable tool for a person with sight loss who is walking straight down the street, but also assists with navigation when they wish to turn on to an intersecting street. When approaching the desired street, a person with sight loss will locate the intersecting sidewalk of the street they wish to turn on to. If no sidewalk exists, then the user may not be aware of the upcoming street and miss turning on to it altogether and becoming disoriented.

Installing sidewalks in five out of 26 streets in the Lawrence Park area is not enough. Only having sidewalks on one side of the street can create a major safety issue for people with sight loss, and ultimately creates "no-go" areas. This is unacceptable in any neighbourhood, but it is particularly problematic in this neighbourhood which borders CNIB's head office at 1929 Bayview Avenue, and is frequently visited by people with sight loss.

We urge the City to install sidewalks on both sides of the streets of Lawrence Park as part of the reconstruction. A tree can be replaced, the life of a person with sight loss cannot.

Sincerely,

Angela Bonfanti
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CNIB is ready to fast-forward and start working on our next strategic plan – one that will guide everything we do from 2018-2022. We need your opinions and feedback to help us! To complete our online survey and find out about consultation events near you, visit www.cnib.ca/lookingforward today!

INCA désire maintenant accélérer la cadence et commencer à travailler sur son prochain plan stratégique, qui guidera tout ce que nous faisons de 2018 à 2022. Pour y arriver, nous avons besoin de votre avis et de vos commentaires. Pour répondre à notre sondage en ligne et connaître les séances de consultation qui se tiendront dans votre région, nous vous invitons à visiter www.inca.ca/regarderverslavenir dès aujourd'hui!

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