



c/o The City Institute at York University
Seventh Floor, Kaneff Tower, Keele Campus
Toronto, ON M3J 1P3

July 27, 2020

Nancy Martins
10th floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

RE: Mobility Greenway (IE 14.17)

Dear Mayor Tory and City Councillors,

Since the start of 2020, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and social movements seeking equity have led the City of Toronto to acknowledge the need to address social determinants of health for the City's most vulnerable, commit to concretely tackle anti-black racism, and advance the building of resilient communities as we restart and rebuild Toronto's economy. These urgent strategies build on existing Council directives to create age friendly communities which support robust biodiversity and mobility corridors, as well as draw on new ideas and partnerships to deliver high quality services and programs to business and residents.

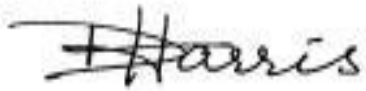
Over the past five years, Our Greenway's team has engaged and been supported by businesses, educational institutions, Business Improvement Areas, entrepreneurs, and residents across the northwest. We hear the repeated message – our arterial roads are dangerous due to oil tankers and other heavy vehicles competing with lighter vehicles, cargo bikes, electric cycles, mobility wheelchairs and people walking who are all simply seeking safe local mobility (Please see our open letter dated July 28, 2020, which is also attached to IE 14.17). In addition, entrepreneurs in Jane and Finch and Rexdale could be just twenty minutes away from each other - if their paths were not literally blocked by Highway 400. Our Greenway Conservancy's team proposes the extensive use of raingardens, trees, and plants to protect a high-quality multi-modal mobility network. This would enable economic opportunities while developing safe and resilient neighborhoods.

Given existing budgetary constraints which have only been exacerbated due to COVID-19, it is vital that The City of Toronto embrace new partnership approaches to address historic deficits in quality across northwest Toronto. Land trusts and conservancies, such as the one which manages the extensive Indianapolis Cultural Trail, are proven models to attract tens of millions in private funds to protect and enhance public land for public benefit. Just in the last few years, Council has supported the establishment and operation of the Toronto Zoo Wildlife Conservancy and The Bentway Conservancy, and is exploring a Ravine Protection Conservancy as approved through 2019.MM3.13. Our Greenway Conservancy believes that an extensive linear park can be managed, maintained and expanded to ensure it is stewarded as a world-class community asset, while profiting the City of Toronto and other levels of government.

Complexities are expected and usually present in projects of this scale. The recommendations put forward by the Infrastructure and Environment Committee on July 9, 2020 will provide opportunities to deal with these complexities. A strategic plan that considers fully the links to proper land use planning, economic development, environmental and climate impacts, social planning and community health and safety will be developed.

As we rebuild and repair our communities, we ask that City Council support this motion that will enable the advent of safe, healthy and practical local mobility across nine of Toronto's Neighbourhood Improvement Areas all year round.

We sincerely thank you,



Darnel Harris (Executive Director)



Sam Starr (President)



Jessica Medina (Vice-President)



Manny Zanders (Secretary)



Francine Harris (Treasurer)



Armi De Francia