



November 4, 2020

Matthew Green
Infrastructure and Environment Committee
10th floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON
M5H 2N2

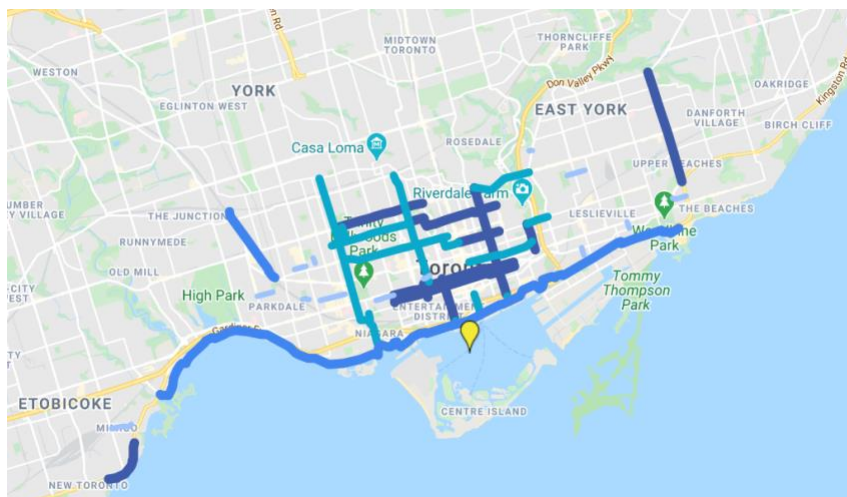
Submitted electronically to: iec@toronto.ca

Members of the Infrastructure and Environment Committee:

RE: IE17.7 -Clearing the Path Towards a Safe and Accessible Winter

We support the motion brought forward by Councillors Josh Matlow and Mike Layton which calls for improved clearing of bike lanes and trails; as well as sidewalk clearing in the Toronto – East York district. As part of our campaign calling for 100 kilometres of bike lanes along Toronto’s subway lines and busiest suburban bus routes, we believe any new bike lanes – including almost 40 kilometres installed this year as part of ActiveTO – must be properly cleared of snow to encourage people to bike year-round.

Except for the Martin Goodman Trail, the West Toronto Railpath, and the Woodbine cycle tracks, bike lane clearing last year was largely limited to an area from Shaw Street to the Don River and from Dupont Street to the Waterfront per the image below.



From an equity standpoint, the lack of snow clearing outside of downtown reduces the likelihood of suburban residents continuing to bike year-round, even though it is a great way to maintain physical distancing and get daily exercise. In order to encourage suburban residents to bike year-round, including in neighbourhoods with the highest COVID-19 rates, we call on City Council to amend this motion to ensure all on-street bike lanes --- including the new ActiveTO installations --- get snow clearing.

Another solution which would encourage residents of Scarborough, North York, and Etobicoke to bike year-round is to clear the busiest trails of snow, given that large parts of these suburban communities lack on-street infrastructure. Some of the paved trails that could benefit include the Lower Don Trail, the Humber Trail, the York Beltline Trail in midtown, the Meadoway in Scarborough, and the Finch Hydro Corridor Trail in northern Toronto. While we are pleased to see this motion reference the need to clear all paved cycling and pedestrian trails in Toronto's parks, this clarification must be added to take into account trail portions that are not in parks.

Last, but not least, groups such as Environmental Defence have expressed concern with the excessive use of salt to de-ice the roads and trails. Cities such as Montréal have been using sweepers and brine solution for their cycling infrastructure for a few years (see the photo below). The brine allows for a more even melting and less corrosion for bikes. This solution should be seriously considered when looking at snow removal equipment.



To help ensure a safety and mobility for all Torontonians, we are calling for proper winter maintenance on all sidewalks, which children below the age of 14 can legally bicycle on, as well as on all on-street bike lanes and Toronto's busiest trails. We urge the use of alternatives to salt such as sweepers and brine to help address environmental concerns.

Thank you for your consideration of our submission. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you wish to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Albert Koehl".

Albert Koehl

on behalf of the [Toronto Community Bikeways Coalition](#)