

October 25, 2021

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

RE: IE25.11 Improving Winter Access to Toronto's Parks for 2021-22

Dear members of the Infrastructure and Environment Committee,

Toronto's parks have proved invaluable in providing people with outdoor space to maintain their physical and mental health. Access to parkspace is important to support people year-round, whether for winter recreation or transportation.

Pathways and trails that are not cleared of snow are dangerous and prohibit or discourage people from accessing parks in the winter. Snow clearing on more pathways and trails in more parks across the city will encourage people to walk and cycle through parks year-round by providing safe routes for active transportation.

The introduction of a winter maintenance pilot for Environmentally Significant Areas (ESAs) is an excellent initiative that could maintain year-round access to Toronto's amazing ravines, such as the Don River Valley, Highland Creek Valley, or Humber River Valley. This pilot project could allow Toronto to trial rotating brushes, brine solutions, or additional techniques that are considered best practices for ESAs in other jurisdictions.

Lastly, winterizing more public park washrooms is critical to providing equitable access to outdoor space.

We urge you to follow staff's recommendations to improve winter access to Toronto's parks, ensure these additional services are distributed equitably citywide, and continue to grow the number of parks and pathways that are maintained throughout the winter.

Sincerely,



8 80 Cities



Cycle Toronto



The Centre for Active Transportation