



October 24, 2023

Toronto City Hall
Infrastructure and Environment Committee
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON

M5H 2N2

RE: IE7.8 - Connected Communities: Advancing Year-Round Trails between Earl Bales Park and York Mills Station. Parks, Forestry & Recreation

Chair McKelvie, Infrastructure and Environment Committee Members,

Walk Toronto supports the motion *Connected Communities: Advancing Year-Round Trails Between Earl Bales Park and York Mills Station.*

Toronto's ravines are vital spaces for our communities to access greenspace and viable active transportation routes. Too many of these ravines remain disconnected from neighbourhoods, reducing opportunities for citizens to easily access outdoor recreation options and alternative transportation routes. The Don Valley Golf Course between Earl Bales Park and the Yonge/York Mills intersection is one of these major points of disconnection, currently stopping movement from Earl Bales Park (north of the 401) and Yonge Street at York Mills (south of the 401).

Currently, the walking and cycling routes traversing the 401 in this area are extremely limited. Travelling under the 401 on Yonge Street is noisy and unpleasant as well as arduous and hazardous. The ravine route through the Don Valley Golf Course could offer a more pleasant and safe path of travel. It would also offer significant convenience for those moving between the intersection at Bathurst and Sheppard at the north west corner of Earl Bales Park and the intersection and TTC station at Yonge Street and York Mills Road.

Currently, there are several indications of informal trails being walked to shorten the distance for people moving north and south, east and west of the golf course. Creating a formal trail that is open year-round would create a safer passage while potentially protecting wildlife and plant habitat.

Finally, creating such a trail would support both Toronto's Vision Zero and TransformTO missions. This trail would offer a safe and beautiful route for active transportation while lowering the need for vehicle use by improving access by foot, bicycle and mobility devices to public transit options.

We hope this initiative can be advanced quickly and we anticipate collaborating with local Councillors, community members and other stakeholder groups to determine the best trail alternative.

Sincerely,

Lee Scott, Member Steering Committee, Walk Toronto
info@walktoronto.ca

cc. Cllrs McKelvie, Colle, Morley, Pasternak, Perruzza, Saxe