



Monday, January 29, 2024
Budget Committee c/o Mathew Green
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, Ontario, M5H 2N2

Submitted by e-mail to BCUC@toronto.ca; mayor_chow@toronto.ca

Dear Mayor Chow and Members of the Budget Committee:

We are writing to you with comments and feedback on the capital budget submission by Transportation Services with respect to the Cycling Plan and Vision Zero.

We applauded the TransformTO Transportation goal of having 75 percent of school/work trips under 5 km walked, biked, or by transit. With the climate crisis worsening, it becomes even more critical that we keep this goal in mind as we view the current capital budget for 2024 and the execution of the 2022 – 2024 Near Term Bike Plan’s target of 100 kilometres of new bikeways.

We are pleased to see that spending of the capital allocation of the budget for bikeways has steadily improved since 2020, now up to over 90% in 2022 with \$34 million allocated for 2024. We note that in January 2020, the Budget Committee asked for a Capital Budget briefing note from Transportation Services related to their underspending of the capital budget on cycling infrastructure.

We wish, however, to bring two overarching concerns to your attention:

Near Term Bike Plan

The city’s 2022-24 Near-Term Cycling Implementation Program articulated the completion of 100 kilometres of new bikeways by the end of this 3-year cycle, or an average of 33 kilometres per year. By our count, Transportation Services (TS) delivered 13 kilometres in 2022 and 20 kilometres in 2023, including the Finch West LRT. This leaves TS with 67 kilometers to deliver in 2024 to achieve the City’s goal. Not only are we calling for an increased budget that would enable the City to build bike lanes faster given the ever-escalating climate crisis, we urge City Council to conduct an inquiry to identify current barriers to meeting installation targets.

Vision Zero Capital Budget

With respect to Vision Zero, the overall KSI rate for 2021 and 2022 has remained steady despite the goal of the Vision Zero Road Safety Plan to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries. Although the budget for Vision Zero projects an increase in overall spending, it is mainly on the operating side of the budget, given that crossing guard salaries are within this budget. As successful Vision Zero initiatives internationally have shown, it is road redesign, slowing of motor traffic speeds, intersection redesign, and tools such as speed camera installation, better traffic enforcement, and installation of protected bike lanes that show the most success in reducing fatalities. Unfortunately, the capital expenditure that is allocated for safety initiatives such as road redesign remains stagnant at approximately \$25 million annually for 2024 – 2026. Our calls to action, signed by 12 councillors elected in 2022, have asked for an increase to \$75 million annually in capital expenditure for Vision Zero initiatives.

Thank you for your attention to our comments on the 2024 Budget.

Sincerely,



Mary Ann Neary



Robert Zaichkowski

Community Bikeways (established in May 2020) is a grassroots organization dedicated to holding City Hall accountable for implementing the cycling network plan, Vision Zero, and TransformTO. We also strive to amplify community voices, offer policy solutions, and host community events that emphasize the joy, affordability, and convenience of cycling.