

From: [Toronto Community Bikeways Coalition](#)
To: [Infrastructure and Environment](#)
Cc: communitybikewaysmedia@gmail.com
Subject: [External Sender] My comments for IE27.7 - Ravine Strategy 2026 Implementation Update
Date: February 23, 2026 8:35:18 PM
Attachments: [Toronto Loop Ltr to Mayor Chow 2025 11 25.pdf](#)

To the City Clerk:

We would appreciate it if the attached pdf of our letter could be hyperlinked to the agenda item. Our letter relates to the Loop Trail, which is an element of the Ravine Strategy.

Please add our comments to the agenda for the February 25, 2026 Infrastructure and Environment Committee meeting on item 2026.IE27.8, Tree By-law Review Report

I understand that my comments and the personal information in this email will form part of the public record and that my name will be listed as a correspondent on agendas and minutes of City Council or its committees. Also, I understand that agendas and minutes are posted online and my name may be indexed by search engines like Google.

Sincerely,
Albert Koehl, Executive Director
647 985 3754

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November 25, 2025

Mayor Olivia Chow
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen St W, 2nd Floor
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Sent as email attachment to mayor_chow@toronto.ca

Dear Mayor Chow,

Re: After a half century(!) it's finally time to close The Toronto Loop

In 1974, Metro Toronto (now the City of Toronto) approved a 425-km plan for off-road bike paths that included a closed loop of trails.¹ Since then, initiatives for bike trails have been revived or buttressed with new plans, including a 77-km [Bikeway Trails Implementation Plan](#) in 2012 and the 85-km [Pan Am Path](#) to be completed for the 2015 games. In 2020, your predecessor proposed a "[Loop Trail](#)" as part of a ravines strategy.² Today segments of many trails are in place and enjoyed by thousands of Torontonians and visitors. Unfortunately, the city's multi-million-dollar investment in trails is undermined by gaps that significantly compromise their value (and the safety of residents who use them for cycling).

Our proposed Toronto Loop already exists in the [city's Major City-wide Cycling Routes plan](#) and in previous iterations of city plans for bike trails. **But we should not have to wait yet another generation for the connection of these strands of bike trails into a completed network.**

On November 16, 2025, at the launch of our campaign for The Toronto Loop, a group of [cyclists braved the cold and gusting wind](#) to ride a 52-km southern section of The Toronto Loop. The ride required careful planning to safely navigate the gaps. In fact, [another group in April 2022 undertook a ride](#) along the entire loop. None of the gaps we faced on that ride --- with the

¹ "[Long Overdue Bicycle System Finds Beginning](#)," *Globe & Mail*, June 11, 1974. A year earlier, Metro staff had proposed a closed circuit of bike trails along the Humber and Don Rivers to be linked by a waterfront trail and Eglinton Ave.¹ (Parks Commissioner Tommy Thompson had previously proposed a U-shaped cycling trail system that included the Humber and Don Rivers, and the waterfront.)

² The non-profit Evergreen has also [promoted the Loop Trail](#).

exception of a section of Finch Avenue where LRT completion is imminent --- have been closed, more than 3.5 years later.³

[The Toronto Loop](#)⁴ consists of existing trails (and some on-road infrastructure) along the waterfront, the Humber River, Finch Avenue/Finch Hydro Corridor, and the Betty Sutherland, Don Mills and Don River Trails. The ten remaining gaps in this 73-km loop amount to less than 5,500 metres but undermine the potential value of a closed circuit and thwart greater use of the bicycle for health, affordability, transportation, recreation, and climate action. The chart below lists the gaps and the [corresponding wards](#).

The Toronto Loop would also serve as the foundation for an off-road network that offers access to other existing bikeways or projects that are underway and a wide range of destinations. From The Toronto Loop, riders could access --- either directly or via other bikeways --- almost every part of the city: the eastern and western portions of the waterfront; [the Rouge National Urban Park](#) and [The Meadoway](#) in Scarborough; Centennial Park and Mimico Creek in Etobicoke, York University and Humber College; the new East Don Trail,⁵ and [Biidaasige Park](#) in the Don Lands. Significantly, The Toronto Loop would connect neighbourhoods.

We appreciate that in earlier eras off-road bike trails were proposed as a way to get cyclists “out of the way of motorists”, despite the need to use roads to get to shops, entertainment, schools, and work. This outdated approach was based on a notion of cycling as only for children or for recreation, as opposed to an important element of our transportation system. The choice today, unlike in the 1970s, is no longer an either/or proposition. When bike trails are connected (maintained, and accessible from bike lanes), they serve a variety of functions, including commuting. The waterfront trail that stretches from Balmy Beach to Mimico is today a valuable cycling corridor that links the major population centre at Humber Bay Shores to downtown, while relieving pressure from the chronically congested Gardiner Expressway.

What are the other potential benefits? Imagine being able to promote our city to visitors as a place that can be seen by bicycle (and without adding to the burden of air pollution). Visitors could rely on our excellent Bike Share system. In addition, city residents struggling with the high cost of living could enjoy inexpensive family excursions (even vacations) on The Toronto Loop.

It is an opportune time to devote resources to close The Toronto Loop, especially while Premier Doug Ford’s regressive transportation initiatives are making it more difficult to install bike lanes

³ See, e.g. Robert Zaichkowski, *Toronto Star*, [“Closing gaps in the Loop Trail is one big way to boost cycling in Toronto,”](#) June 29, 2022.

⁴ This GPS map has slight variations from our proposal for The Toronto Loop.

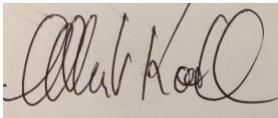
⁵ As an example of the significant investment in trails, and their higher cost relative to bike lanes, [the East Don Trail](#) cost about \$30 million. This higher cost is because trails are new infrastructure essentially requiring road-like paths, as opposed to the simple re-allocation of existing road space.

on roads. During the mayoralty of the late Rob Ford (and the supposed “War on the Car”), the city also put greater emphasis on completing its bike trail network. Today, those provincial and city politicians who claim that alternate routes to main streets are the best place for cyclists should be energetic proponents of closing gaps in The Toronto Loop.

The gaps in our trail system mean that city residents are being shortchanged of the dividends they should be enjoying from our major investments over many years in off-road bicycle paths. Completing The Toronto Loop is a city-building project that should spark pride and a collective sense of accomplishment. The gaps thwart this ambition. We look to you to complete what other administrations have failed to achieve, and to close The Toronto Loop.

We would appreciate an opportunity to meet with you or your staff to discuss next steps, including a more urgent timeline for completion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Albert Koehl", is placed over a light brown rectangular background.

Albert Koehl, Coordinator

cc. Cassidy Ritz, Project Director, Strategic Capital Coordinator
Adam Popper, Manager, Cycling & Pedestrian Projects
Amber Morley, Ward 3, Etobicoke-Lakeshore
Gord Perks, Ward 4, High Park
Frances Nunziata, Ward 5, York South-Weston
Anthony Perruzza, Ward 7, Humber River-Black Creek
James Pasternak, Ward 6, York Centre
Lily Cheng, Ward 18, Willowdale
Jon Burnside, Ward 16, Don Valley East
Rachel Chernos Lin, Ward 15, Don Valley West
Cheryl MacDonald, Strategic Initiatives & Programs - Parks, Forestry & Recreation, Toronto
Visitor Economy Office, City of Toronto
Evergreen
Destination Toronto

Chart of gaps in The Toronto Loop

Ward	Description	Length	Action required
3, Etobicoke Lakeshore	Gap between South Humber Park (at the outlet to Stephen Dr) and the entryway into King's Mill Park at Riverwood Parkway. Along this stretch there is a short, paint-only bike lane (from Cloverhill Rd to Berry Rd), with sporadic sharrows along other sections. Wayfinding signage is poor.	450m (excluding 270m portion of Stephen Dr with bike lanes)	Closing gap may require removal of on-street parking. (Adjoining residential buildings have private parking.) An alternate route should also be investigated. In the immediate term the link between South Humber to King's Mill Park should be better sign-posted, and speed limit reduced to 30km/h. (Northbound cyclists arriving at Stephen Dr. don't even know whether they should turn right or left to return to the path.) This gap is not shown on the Major Cycling Routes plan .
3, Etobicoke Lakeshore & 4, High Park	Gap between Old Mill Trail Rd and the entry into Etienne Brulé Park through the parking lot. The connecting roadway includes a narrow, historic bridge, which is dominated by two-way motor traffic. Old Mill Rd becomes Catherine Rd east of the bridge. The bridge does not have a sidewalk despite the many people of all ages that use the bridge to access Etienne Brulé Park.	200m	The bridge could be turned into a walk- and bikeway, while motor access to the parking lots east and west of the Humber should provide a turn-around so that motor traffic enters and exits the same way to avoid using the bridge. In the longer run a new footbridge could be installed if motor access across bridge is considered vital. This gap is not shown on Major Cycling Routes plan .
5, York South-Weston	Mid Humber Gap . The bike path ends at a stairway leading to/from St. Phillips Dr in Mallaby Park near a busy Weston Rd. intersection. Cyclists are directed only by a sharrow that leads to the resumption of the path at Cardell Ave. This gap has been the subject of the city's Class EA assessment. (Subsequently the Ford gov't was sued by the city when it tried to require a full EA. The province backed down, and the project known as the Mid Humber gap has now been approved for installation.)	800m	Approved for construction by City Council in early November 2025 . Project currently in the detailed design and land acquisition phase. The detailed design is expected to be completed in 2027, with construction anticipated to start later that year and to be completed in 2028. These slow timelines should be advanced. They are also subject to change (presumably more delay), based on the land acquisition process and required approvals.
7, Humber River-Black Creek	Gap between the end of the bike path at Lanyard & Weston Roads and Weston Rd at Finch Ave W. Cyclists currently have to ride along the on-road connection, which has fast-moving, heavy motor traffic between Lanyard and Finch. There is no bike lane or other provision for cyclists on Weston Rd.	400m	A two-way bike lane is proposed on the west side of Weston Rd. Public consultation ended on Oct 31, 2025 . City staff reviewing public feedback and considering changes to proposed design where feasible, before reporting to Infrastructure and Environment Committee in Dec 2025. Subject to approval. Installation planned in 2026.
7, Humber River-Black Creek	Gap on Finch Ave. W. between Weston Rd and Arrow Rd at rail underpass. The new 11-km Finch Ave W LRT (the official opening of which is imminent) otherwise provides significant cycling improvements, including a tunnel that allows cyclists to avoid the dangerous on- and off- ramps to Hwy 400, where Joe Pellerito was killed while riding	500m	We presume bike lane for rail underpass was part of Metrolinx LRT contract, and therefore grandfathered as an existing contract under Bill 60. (Inquiries of Metrolinx, Lameck Nsubuga, Community Engagement Advisor, Finch West LRT about timeline for bike lane have produced no answer. Riding on the road at underpass

	<p>his bicycle in 2020. The rail underpass between Weston and Arrow Roads remains a dangerous location that undermines the noted investments.</p> <p>An additional 500m gap exists on Norfinch Dr, between Finch Ave and entry onto Finch Hydro Corridor (near Finch LRT Maintenance & Storage Complex). Metrolinx was supposed to finish this bikeway. Unclear why incomplete. This gap is not included among total distance of gaps on chart, given the alternative bike lane option on Sentinel Rd to access Hydro Corridor.</p>		<p>is frightening. An alternative may be to widen the sidewalk, as suggested by this this analysis. Children under 14, but not accompanying parents, are in any case legally allowed to ride on sidewalk, though this is awkward. Absent the addition of a bike lane, the city could investigate measures to <i>significantly</i> slow cars and trucks in curb lane to ensure safety of cyclists. This gap shown on Major Cycling Routes plan as “expected to be completed in 2024.”</p>
6, York Centre	<p>Gap in the Finch Hydro Corridor Trail at the G Ross Lord Conservation Area. The gap is between the trail at Dufferin St. and a connection to the trail near Wilmington Ave. (It is possible to cycle this gap with a combination of paths and side roads through a northern part of the conservation area, but it is a long meandering route to cover the otherwise short distance of the gap.)</p>	850m	<p>Adding a two-way boulevard (or sidewalk-level) bike path along the east side of Dufferin St and north side of Finch Ave W should be investigated. This bikeway would run from the intersection of the trail with Dufferin (just north of Finch Ave W) to Wilmington Ave/trail at G Ross Lord Dam. This provides a more direct connection than the existing meandering northerly route. Shown on Major Cycling Routes plan as “future study required.” The plan shows a closure of the gap that runs through the park – a superior option, depending on the timeline.</p>
18, Willowdale	<p>Gap on the Finch Hydro Corridor trail in North York between the entry/exit to the TTC Finch subway parking lot on the west side of Yonge St at Hendon Ave and an awkward entry/exit at the TTC parking lot on the east side of Yonge, running off Bishop Ave.</p>	450m	<p>A protected bike lane is required on the west and east sides of Yonge St. to connect the bike trail. There may be sufficient room to create a two-way bike path on the north side of Hendon St and Bishop Ave west and east of Yonge St. Shown on Major Cycling Routes plan as “study or design planned (2025-27)”</p>
16, Don Valley East	<p>Gap between the Betty Sutherland Trail at Duncan Mills Road and the Leaside Spur Trail. At southern terminus of Sutherland Trail, southbound cyclists, for example, must ride along Duncan Mills Rd, Valleybrook Dr, and Lesmill Rd and over the York Mills Rd rail overpass to reconnect to the trail at Scarsdale Rd. York Mills has a paint-only bike lane though the heavy traffic here and the left turn across York Mills for southbound cyclists is unpleasant/risky, especially for novice riders and families with children.</p>	1,100m (excluding 500m bike lane section on York Mills Rd) - or shorter depending on suitability of an alternative route	<p>Add bike lanes along Duncan Mills Rd., Valleybrook Dr, and Lesmill Rd to connect Betty Sutherland to the Leaside Spur Trail. There are also alternate off-road options that should be investigated such as securing the trail through the parkland between Duncan Mills Road and Moatfield Dr, and in the plan of subdivision for the redevelopment of the Pan Pacific Hotel at 900 York Mills Rd. Another alternative is along the side of the Donalda Golf Course. Not shown as a gap on Major Cycling Routes plan. In the immediate term, a bike lane barrier is required on York Mills to separate heavy, fast motor traffic from cyclists.</p>

<p>16, Don Valley East & 15, Don Valley West</p>	<p>Gap between southern terminus of Don Mills Trail and bike lane on Eglinton Ave E or entrance into Sunnybrook Park via South Entrance (although there is no bike lane on this roadway). Currently, cyclists are obliged to ride east-west along a narrow passage beside an industrial building from southern end of Don Mills Trail to connect to Leslie St and then to Eglinton Ave, where there is new cycling infrastructure leading back to the path, which runs under Eglinton Ave.</p>	<p>550m</p>	<p>The gap may require some land acquisition beside the industrial property and a two-way, separated bikeway along Leslie St to connect to Eglinton Ave E or to Sunnybrook Park, South Entrance.</p>
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