



August 25, 2016

John Livey
Deputy City Manager, Cluster B
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen St. W.
Toronto ON M5H 2N2

Dear Mr. Livey,

With the resignation of Stephen Buckley, the City of Toronto will be looking for a new General Manager of Transportation Services. The choice of this new General Manager will play a fundamental role in the overall direction of transportation policy in Toronto at a crucial point in the city's development. The outcome of this decision is of immediate interest to Walk Toronto, and we would thus like to share our hopes for the vision and experience that the City of Toronto will look for in the candidate chosen to take on this important position.

Walk Toronto was formed in 2013 by a group of advocates who wanted to ensure a voice for pedestrians and make Toronto a better city for walking. We are a grassroots, volunteer group with an active steering committee and hundreds of people on our mailing list. We have worked with city staff and politicians on a number of issues, including street transformations, road safety, park planning, accessibility, and sidewalk snow clearing.

In recent years, cities across North America have come to realize the vital importance of walking for their transportation network, economy, tourism, environment and public health. Several cities have appointed dynamic, visionary heads of transportation who have guided a transformation in the outlook of their municipal transportation departments, from one focused on servicing the needs of cars to one focused on the needs of everyone who is getting around the city, by all modes. They have not only articulated, but also implemented, concepts such as Complete Streets, Vision Zero, and Universal Accessibility, which are essential to creating a better city for walking.

In Toronto, while lip service has been paid to these concepts, genuine progress both in vision and on the ground has been slow. For example, Toronto's Road Safety Plan evoked Vision Zero but consisted of limited, incremental measures. Another example is sidewalk snow clearing, an essential element of implementing Universal Accessibility for seniors and people with disabilities. Walk Toronto is pleased that staff have met with us several times on this issue, but progress has been slow and restricted to minor improvements.

Meanwhile, walking is becoming ever more important in Toronto. Almost 50% of people living downtown rely on their feet to get to work and other destinations, and the number of people in the downtown is expected to increase by hundreds of thousands. Almost everyone who takes transit in Toronto walks to their transit stop. And in the increasingly congested inner suburbs, the success of the transformation of arterials into "Avenues" is dependent on creating a strong culture of walking.

When making a choice for a new General Manager of Transportation Services, **Walk Toronto feels that it is essential for Toronto to choose someone who is fully in tune with the new reality of North American cities – where walking (along with cycling and transit) is no longer an afterthought but rather a primary focus of transportation policy. Toronto needs someone who has a vision for a sustainable city where walking is fully accessible, safe, and appealing, and who is able and willing to begin a transformation of the City of Toronto's transportation policy to meet this new reality.** We urge you to bear this need in mind when making your choice.

Sincerely,

Walk Toronto Steering Committee
www.walktoronto.ca