



February 11, 2016

The Honourable Amarjeet Sohi, Minister of Infrastructure and Communities
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada K1A 0A6

Re: Funding for urban pedestrian and cycling infrastructure plans

Dear Minister Sohi,

We are writing to express our support for dedicated federal funding for cycling and pedestrian infrastructure plans and to solicit your views on this matter.

Funding for cycling and pedestrian infrastructure plans are an important opportunity to build stronger communities in ridings across Canada, including the many ridings in the City of Toronto.

City planners have identified a number of opportunities to enhance this low-cost infrastructure in our city. Moreover, public interest in active transportation alternatives, such as walking and biking, is growing rapidly. Federal funding could help accelerate these investments and help us leverage valuable synergies with transit and green infrastructure spending.

An example of a major, shovel-ready, transit-related project that will enhance both walking and cycling is the Eglinton Connects plan that is intended to widen and enhance sidewalks and create separated bike lanes along the route of the new Eglinton Crosstown LRT. Other shovel-ready examples include several multi-use cycling and walking trail projects that will help complete the trail network throughout Toronto.

Given the federal government's commitment to strengthening infrastructure in Canada, dedicated funding for cycling and pedestrian infrastructure would:

- align with the tri-partite federal emphasis on transportation, social and green infrastructure – it would improve transportation options, add to the safety, health and vibrancy of communities across Canada, and reduce greenhouse gases;
- be “shovel-ready”, having already been conceptualized and planned at the municipal level;
- be a tangible investment opportunity that would result in visible short- and long-term economic and social benefits in communities across the country; and
- be highly cost-effective and impactful when compared with expenditures targeted at more traditional (e.g., automobile-focused) road infrastructure investments.

We would very much appreciate better understanding your views on the merits of dedicated federal funding for pedestrian and cycling infrastructure plans. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Franz Hartmann
Executive Director
Toronto Environmental Alliance



Jared Kolb
Executive Director
Cycle Toronto



Dylan Reid
Walk Toronto