



Tuesday, November 30, 2021

Councillor Jennifer McKelvie
Chair, Infrastructure & Environment Committee
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen St. W, Suite B25
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Submitted electronically to: Councillor_McKelvie@toronto.ca

Dear Councillor McKelvie,

Re: "The Scarborough opportunity" – road safety and active transportation

We write to urge you to consider, as a basis for road safety action in Scarborough, the October 22, 2021 [letter from Toronto East Cyclists \(TEC\)](#) and the September 2021 report by Professor Andre Sorensen entitled, "[The Scarborough Opportunity Report: A Comprehensive Walking & Cycling Network.](#)"

We are sure you will agree that residents of Scarborough have no less interest in road safety, equity, public health, and the fight against climate change than residents elsewhere in Toronto. And yet, almost a half century after the installation of its first bikeway, Scarborough still suffers from a patchwork of cycling facilities that do little to promote cycling (or other active transportation). In fact, the city record on building bikeways in Scarborough was described in Dr. Sorensen's report as "an abject failure." This failure, according to Toronto East Cyclists "has cost lives and injury, impacted marginalized and racialized communities, contributed to Toronto's failure to adequately address climate change, reduced opportunities for local businesses and the quality of life for many of Scarborough's residents."

It is ironic that [Scarborough's first bikeway](#), built in 1972, was itself an alternative to a more ambitious proposal by students at the Scarborough campus of the University of Toronto that would have connected the Warden subway station to the Toronto Zoo. Instead of building this link, the City of Scarborough (prior to amalgamation) built a bikeway that today remains largely orphaned and limited to recreational use, while the city continues to work on a bikeway that would finally carry out the student proposal.

Scarborough has the dubious distinction of leading Toronto in bikeways that have been removed after installation (Brimley Road, Pharmacy Avenue, and Birchmount Road). We support Toronto East Cyclists in their recommendation to explore options that move away from a one-size-fits-all solution and to engage the public in a manner that ensures success for new

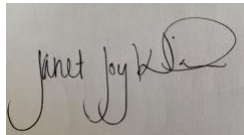
cycling facilities. In groups such as the TEC and Scarborough Cycles, the city will find eager, experienced, skilled advocates who would offer invaluable insights as well as connections to the local community – and thereby to avoid, as the TEC points out, “poor execution and consultation [which] simply encourages opposition and further emboldens NIMBY actors to fight against any cycling and pedestrian improvements.”

We appreciate that city staff were directed to review the Scarborough report, and reported back to you in [Attachment 7 of the Bike Plan update](#), which comes before the Infrastructure & Environment Committee on December 2, 2021. The new bikeways for Scarborough noted in this report are a step forward; past experience, however, suggests that the city must review the approach it has relied upon previously to ensure the success of these bikeways, and a pace of action that matches the urgency of problems faced by our city.

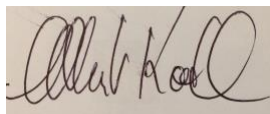
Sincerely,



Mary Ann Neary



Janet Joy Wilson



Albert Koehl

[Toronto Community Bikeways Coalition](#)

Email: Community.Bikeways.Toronto@gmail.com

cc. Becky Katz, Pedestrian & Cycling Projects
Prof Andre Sorensen, lead author of The Scarborough Opportunity
Dr. Marvin Macaraig, Scarborough Cycles
Dr. Jonathan Schmidt, Toronto East Cyclists
Councillor Paul Ainslie
Councillor Cynthia Lai
Councillor Nick Mantas
Councillor Michael Thompson
Councillor Gary Crawford