

ACTION 2014 - TAKING THE NEXT STEP

from the Toronto Coalition for Active Transportation's

2010 ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLATFORM

In the lead up to the 2006 Municipal Elections, the Toronto Coalition for Active Transportation (TCAT) created an Active Transportation Platform that identified actions that the next City Council could take to support cycling and walking – or what we call active transportation.

With another municipal election on the way in 2010, TCAT is once again providing detailed analysis of concrete steps that the city can take in all areas of its operations to improve walking and cycling in the next term of council.

But first, let's give credit where credit is due! TCAT is pleased to report that the City did act on some of the 2006 platform recommendations and progress is being made.

Who is TCAT?

The Toronto Coalition for Active Transportation (TCAT) is a project of the Clean Air Partnership (CAP). TCAT conducts research and policy analysis, organizes public events and collaborates with City staff and Councillors to identify practical and do-able actions that will improve active transportation in Toronto.

TCAT was formed in 2006 to unite all of the organizations and groups across Toronto who support a vision of Toronto as a safe, convenient and enjoyable place to walk and cycle.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2006-2009 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Since 2006, the City has installed pedestrian countdown signals at over 2,100 intersections.
- In 2008, for the first time ever, the entire Toronto Bike Plan was fully funded within the 5-year Capital Plan. The current 10-year capital plan commits about \$101 million for cycling infrastructure to 2019 (but will require some commitments from the federal and provincial governments).
- 2008 saw the most kilometres of new bike lanes (35 km) ever put on the road in one year in Toronto.
- The Walking Strategy – the City's "plan to create high quality pedestrian environments and foster a culture of walking in all of Toronto's neighbourhoods" – was developed through an open and consultative process, and was approved by Council in May 2009.
- In 2009 the City established the Public Realm Section within Transportation Services.
- In 2009, approximately 4% of the federal and provincial stimulus funds Toronto received were directed to cycling infrastructure projects.

These are all important steps forward and City staff, the Mayor and Council are commended for their efforts. But Toronto is still not living up to its potential as a cycling and walking city. TCAT's 2010 Active Transportation Platform identifies many practical and affordable steps that the City could take that would improve Toronto's streets for all road users.

But with so much that could be done, what should be our next steps? This is the question that TCAT hopes all candidates and voters will discuss in the upcoming elections. Since we can't fix everything overnight, what changes would you like to see in your neighbourhood, in your ward, in your City? Is it a new pedestrian crossing in front of a home for the aged? Is it better traffic calming around your children's schools or a new school program to teach safe cycling skills? Or perhaps it is a new bike lane that connects your neighbourhood to the City's Bikeway Network? There is no shortage of good ideas – be sure to ask your candidate what she or he plans to do for active transportation in your ward.

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TCAT's TOP 3 PRIORITIES: BUILDING MOMENTUM

With the aim of improving cycling and walking conditions across the whole city, TCAT has identified three active transportation priorities for the next term of Toronto City Council:

1. Develop and implement a Complete Streets policy.
 - A Complete Street policy will provide city-wide engineering and design guidelines that ensure the safe travel of *all* road users, including cyclists and pedestrians, is *routinely* accommodated whenever new roads are built or existing roads are reconstructed.
2. Build a new major east-west bicycle lane on Bloor St./Danforth Ave.
 - There is currently no safe and convenient way to get quickly across the city on bike.
 - Bloor St./Danforth Ave. is a natural choice for an east-west bike lane because it runs right through the middle of the city, offers connections to the subway should people want to bring their bikes in from the suburbs, and there is plenty of space on the road to add a bike lane.
 - Adding a bike lane would require removing parking on one side of the street in some sections, but the Clean Air Partnership's "Bike Lanes, On-Street Parking and Business" studies show that this would likely increase or not change the daily number of people who shop on Bloor St. – most customers already come on foot, by bicycle and by transit.
3. Staff & fully fund the Pedestrian Projects Unit of the Public Realm Section.
 - The City has established a new office within Transportation Services – the Public Realm Section. The Public Realm Section is responsible for a broad range of issues affecting the public realm, one of which is the implementation of the Walking Strategy. The Pedestrian Projects Unit within the Public Realm Section is charged with this important task but there have been continued delays in hiring the required staff. Up until April 2010 only one staff had been hired to carry out the implementation of the Walking Strategy. TCAT calls on the City to fully staff and finance this Unit.

These are three ideas that lay the foundation for incremental, yet meaningful change in Toronto. Supporting walking and cycling will make Toronto a healthier and more livable city.

Including walking and cycling in our transportation planning will also make our streets safer and help traffic run more smoothly. This will not happen overnight, but by including cycling and walking in all aspects of City business we can be sure that – step by step – we build a city where bicycles and pedestrians, the young and the old, can all enjoy the city.

Ask your candidate what he or she plans to do for cycling and walking in Toronto!

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TCAT'S 2010 ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLATFORM

Over the last three years TCAT has been closely following the work of city planners, other staff and City Council to understand how decisions are made about cycling and walking policies and initiatives. TCAT has gained insight into how the city works, and our analysis has identified points where real change can occur. The platform is our summary of the actions that the city staff and council can take to make Toronto a world-class walking and cycling city.

When TCAT analyzes what the city must do, we think in terms of the following categories:

- LEAD by example to create a walkable, bikeable city.
- BUILD safe pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.
- INTEGRATE cycling and walking into the life of our city.
- PROTECT cyclists and pedestrians on our streets and trails.
- PROMOTE walking and cycling as safe, sustainable and desirable transportation.

In the following pages we have detailed each of these categories.

LEAD

by example to create a walkable, bikeable city

Toronto should be a leader in finding innovative ways to change North American cities into bikeable and walkable cities. Investing in active transportation will help combat climate change, improve air quality, strengthen the local economy and provide Torontonians with enhanced mobility, more livable communities and increased physical health. The city needs to develop direct action and implementation plans that ensure that its Active Transportation goals become reality. The city must also work with other levels of government and other municipalities for changes needed to fully achieve its goals.

Walking

- Develop a walking action plan in the next term of council. The action plan would:
 - Ensure that sufficient budget and staff resources within the Public Realm office are in place to fully implement the *Toronto Walking Strategy* by 2019.
 - Outline two 5-year workplans to achieve implementation of the *Toronto Walking Strategy* by 2019. Identify goals and set indicators for progress within the workplan.
 - Set a schedule to ensure that City staff will have secured all necessary approvals in advance of the construction season so that implementation is not delayed



Cycling

- Develop a cycling action plan that will be implemented during the next term of council. The Action plan would:
 - Ensure that budgets, staff resources, and planning lead time necessary are in place to complete the *Toronto Bike Plan* by 2012.
- Develop initiatives that go beyond the *Toronto Bike Plan* and respond to emerging concerns and demand and take advantage of new opportunities to expand cycling infrastructure across the city.
 - For example, the City built bike lanes on Christie St. that were not in the Bike Plan – yet these bike lanes are needed and well used.



PanAm 2015

Ensure that all venues and facilities for the PanAm Games are easily accessible by walking and cycling, including:

- Direct connections to the Bikeway Network.
- A safe and convenient pedestrian environment.
- Secure off-sidewalk bicycle parking.

Lead by Example in City Business and Operations

- Adopt and implement internal staff policies for promoting walking and cycling for commute and work-related trips, including a compensation scheme similar to those provided for the use of a personal motorized vehicle.
- Integrate active transportation into the City of Toronto's Programs and services by:
 - Increasing the number of employees using bikes in the course of their duties.
 - Increasing the use of bike and foot couriers.
 - Ensure that all city buildings and recreational facilities have bicycle parking facilities



Policy Development and Planning

- Develop and implement a Complete Streets policy. The primary goal of this proposed policy is to provide city-wide engineering and design guidelines that ensure that the safe travel of *all* road users, including cyclists and pedestrians, is *routinely* accommodated whenever new roads are built or existing roads are reconstructed. While Complete Streets policy is widespread in the United States, Complete Streets in the Canadian context is still in its infancy. This is a huge and exciting leadership opportunity for the City of Toronto.

- Fully embrace the link between walking and riding transit -- every bus stop is a pedestrian destination. Cultivate a mutually beneficial relationship with the TTC that raises the profile of each mode. Invest in mutually supportive amenities such as lighting, seating, shelter, trash cans, wayfinding, etc.
- Include bicycle and pedestrian levels of service for traffic impact studies related to development applications, as well as area-wide assessments.
 - A "level of service" is a standard used by planners and engineers that tells them that the infrastructure being proposed must be able to accommodate the expected pedestrian and cycling demand (the so-called "level of service").
- Collect and regularly report on pedestrian and bicycle movements, demand for facilities, and safety indicators (i.e., collisions, injuries, deaths), and take action based on the data available to make specific improvements.
 - Ensure that the data is widely available to professional planners and the public.

Traffic Laws and By-Laws

- Review and amend traffic laws and city by-laws to enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety and where necessary identify changes that need to be addressed by the province of Ontario within the *Highway Traffic Act* and any other laws or regulations that pertain to walking and cycling.



- For example, in Idaho cyclists are allowed to treat a Stop sign like a Yield sign and come to a rolling stop rather than having to put their foot down. This is safe and makes for a more cycling supportive environment.
- For example, it is currently required that the flashing hand signal follow the pedestrian countdown and precede the solid hand signal. This flashing hand is known to not be well understood. Pedestrian safety could be enhanced if changes to the Highway Traffic Act permitted the exploration of alternatives, i.e. the use of a flashing walk signal.

BUILD

safe pedestrian and cycling infrastructure

In order to increase walking and cycling, the City must build continuous and safe networks of bikeways, sidewalks and trails that are well connected with other modes of transportation. The complementary facilities and amenities that allow people to use those networks efficiently and enjoyably must also be put in place.



Bikeways and Walkways



- Ensure substantial budget and implementation staff resources are allocated for the *Essential Links Sidewalk Program*, and expand the program scope to include residential streets.
- Expand and intensify the Bikeway Network in specific geographic areas, such as public bike share catchment areas, transit hub catchment areas, and wards with incomplete or insufficient bikeway network routes.
- Seek new opportunities to add bikeways to rail, hydro and transportation corridors.
- Repurpose boulevards (i.e. the wide grassy strips on the sides of the roads) in suburban areas to create safer spaces for cyclists and pedestrians.
- Plan and implement the following major projects to improve the bike network:
 - A bike lane across the entire length of Bloor/Danforth
 - Buffered and/or separated bike lane on Richmond & Adelaide
 - Buffered and/or separated bike lane on University
 - Parallel bike path continuing the Lake Shore Blvd. East path to downtown as a part of the potential Gardiner Expressway teardown east of Jarvis Street.
 - Junction to Downtown Pedestrian and Cycling Path – Southern Section (next to the rail corridor)
- Complete the gaps in major north-south and east-west bikeways. For example:
 - Harbord Street Bike Lane
 - Humber Trail
 - Queens Quay Martin Goodman Trail
 - Finch Hydro Corridor Pedestrian and Cycling Path
 - Pharmacy Avenue Bike lanes
 - Bayview Bike lanes, including the Redway Road Extension between Millwood and Bayview
 - Royal York Road Bike lanes



- Design and build safe bicycle and pedestrian crossings of major barriers, such as 400 series highways, major arterial roads, transit right of ways, rail corridors and waterways.
- Innovate and use new cycling infrastructure designs, such as physically separated bicycle lanes, physically separated boulevard paths, and bike lanes separated with flexible bollards.
- Retrofit corners with bulb-outs to narrow the distance in which pedestrians are vulnerable to traffic while crossing the road.
- Adopt new designs for corner curbs to reduce motor vehicle speed and enhance pedestrian safety.



Signs and Signals

- Incorporate pavement markings at intersections that prioritize the safety and convenience of cyclists, such as closely spaced sharrows through conflict zones, bike lanes marked through intersections, bike boxes, and bike-activated signals.
- Continue using and accelerate the installation of innovative pedestrian pavement markings and signals (e.g., zebra striping, leading pedestrian intervals and pedestrian scramble intersections), and consider other non-marking or non-signal technologies, like retractable bollards for temporary car-free zone



- Complete the installation of bike route signage on all existing bike routes on streets and on multi-use trails through parks.
 - Improve the legibility of bike route signs by making them larger and clearer.
 - Ensure all new bikeway network projects include installing bike route signage as part of the project.
 - Install map and information boards at strategic locations in the bikeway network.
 - Ensure that connections between on-street and multi-use trail sections in parks are clearly marked.
- Install emergency locator signs on posts along multi-use trails and walkways in parks so that exact locations can be identified when calling 911.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive wayfinding strategy that responds to the practical needs of community members.

Facilities and Amenities

- Include capital budget funding for *Tower Renewal* projects that improve the pedestrian environment (e.g., better lighting, benches, garbage cans, curb cuts, fence removal, formalizing shortcuts) so that other property owners/managers throughout Toronto will see the benefits and make similar improvements.
- Plant and strategically place more trees to improve the pedestrian environment by creating more shade, providing a buffer between walkways and motor vehicle traffic, and improving air quality.
- Complete the bike stations currently planned at Union Station, City Hall and Victoria Park subway station, and continue to build Bike Stations at transit hubs, new and modernized subway stations and other strategic locations.
- Create on-street/off-sidewalk bicycle parking corrals throughout Toronto. Develop a plan to replace on-sidewalk bike parking with on-street bike parking corrals. Phase it in such a way that results in a net gain of bike parking.



INTEGRATE

cycling and walking into the life of our city

In order to ensure residents can incorporate cycling and walking into their daily routines the city must prioritize the needs of cyclists and pedestrians and integrate them into its policies, procedures, plans and designs and with other modes.

Integration in Complete Street Designs

- Incorporate the principles of "Road Diets" where there is significant pedestrian and cycling traffic. This means:
 - Reduce the number of motor vehicle traffic lanes to reduce pedestrian crossing distances and reduce risk of car-pedestrian collisions.
 - Eliminate unnecessary turn lanes and reconfigure travel lane widths to create more space for pedestrian and cycling infrastructure such as sidewalks that accommodate greater pedestrian amenities and bike lanes.
- Harmonize the guidelines for sidewalk furniture installation with guidelines for establishing and protecting the pedestrian clearway, and monitor installation to ensure guidelines contained in the *Walking Strategy* and *Vibrant Streets Guidelines* are enforced.
- Map gaps in the existing clearway (i.e. space on the sidewalk for pedestrians to walk free of furniture or lamp posts, etc.) and systematically work to reduce sidewalk clutter.
- Provide widespread training in bike infrastructure and pedestrian realm planning and design for all transportation engineers and drafts people.

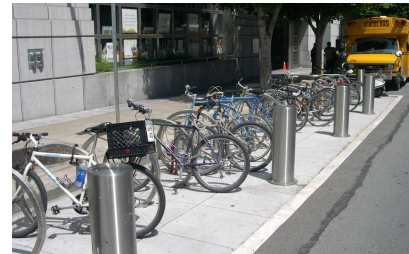
Integration at Intersections and Crossings

- Move forward on improvements to intersection design regarding, for example, safer crosswalk design and "squaring-off" corners to reduce turning radii and traffic speeds.
- Ensure that there are frequent enough signalized (mid-block crossings) or otherwise safe pedestrian crossings to improve walking convenience.
- Develop criteria (e.g., pedestrian volumes) for pedestrian scramble intersections and other special treatments (e.g., leading pedestrian intervals), triggering more automatic installation rather than unnecessary City Council approval.
- Provide more time for pedestrians to safely cross the intersection.



Integration with Parking

- Improve the safety of pedestrians travelling through parking lots by ensuring pedestrians have safe, direct and accessible routes from their car or the sidewalk to the building entrance or other destinations.
- Review the City's boulevard parking policy to ensure that these areas become more attractive and walkable. The review would include measures to redirect the funds raised from parking fees toward improvements to these areas.
- Make the provision of enhanced bicycle parking such as valet parking mandatory for large events.

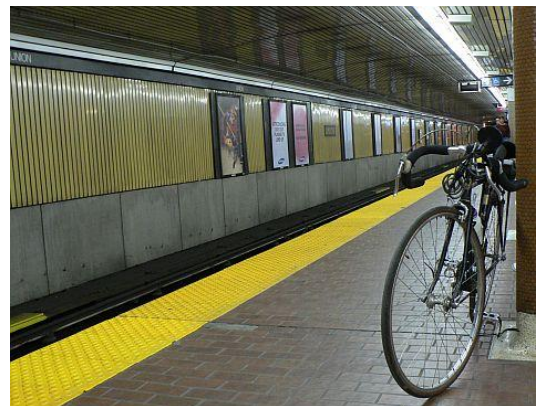


Integration with Public Facilities

- Provide safe and secure bike parking facilities and change room facilities at all City-owned buildings.

Integration with Transit

- Ensure that *Transit City* and other rapid transit projects incorporate and encourage cycling. For example:
 - Highlight the need to connect walking with all aspects of public transit - in particular the notion that transit hubs as well as each and every transit stop is an important pedestrian destination. This will improve the viability, safety and attractiveness of both walking and taking transit.
 - Include bike lanes and bike parking as part of all Transit City LRT projects and other major on-street transit projects, including the Eglinton LRT (both along the the surface level sections and over the underground sections of the route by extending the Eglinton Bikeway proposed in the Toronto Bike Plan).
 - Adequately address the issue of "interference zones" to eliminate potential conflicts between cyclists and pedestrians when they are accessing the transit station.
 - Early in the design stage of these projects, include safe crossings for cyclists across LRT routes, especially where existing or planned Bikeway Network routes intersect with LRT routes.
- Ensure the presence of garbage and recycling bins, shelter, and seating and adequate pedestrian scaled lighting at transit stops.
- Develop neighbourhood resources to be posted at transit stops, including local maps, a list of businesses in the area, and suggested walking and cycling routes to get to key destinations. Community members should be the primary audience, tourists a secondary audience.



- Establish a committee of TTC and City staff , bicycle advocates and pedestrian advocates to assist with the development of the *TTC Active Transportation Plan* , and develop timelines and budgets for individual projects and initiatives.

Integration into the Community

- Continue to plan and implement permanent and/or temporary pedestrian zones, starting with locations near Ryerson University and the University of Toronto.
- Remove on-street ball hockey prohibitions on residential streets.
- Provide a single contact person for individuals and groups planning street closure events, and provide assistance with all the necessary permitting, barriers, insurance, etc.
 - Develop a how-to guide for planning, coordinating and delivering a car-free/road closure event.

Integration into Maintenance Programs

- Assign enforcement officers to regularly inspect and enforce the clearing and maintenance of sidewalks throughout the city; and bring all sidewalks to a safe and fully accessible standard of usability.
- Following a snowfall, ensure that all sidewalks and bike lanes are adequately cleared in a timely fashion.



- Avoid clearing snow off the road and into the paths of pedestrians and cyclists, especially at intersections.
- Ensure that snow removal budgets include enough funds to remove snow out of bike lanes. Redistributing this onto sidewalks is not an acceptable solution.
- Ensure that parking bays are cleared of snow so that parked cars do not push cyclists further into motor vehicle traffic.
- Increase winter maintenance on off-street bikeways by expanding the Martin Goodman Trail winter maintenance pilot project to other off-street Bikeway Network trails and developing a policy to determine which off-street Bikeway Network trails will receive winter maintenance on an ongoing basis.
- Eliminate the backlog and maintain a state of good repair for roads, paths and sidewalks by conducting regular audits of the conditions of roads, paths and sidewalks, trails and pathways, prioritizing repairs on roads that are part of the Bikeway Network.

PROTECT

cyclists and pedestrians on our streets and trails

In order to ensure safe access to our streets for cyclists and pedestrians, cycling and walking supportive policies must be consistently applied and supported by legislation that protects these road users.

Safe Streets

- Improve enforcement of illegal parking and stopping in bicycle lanes.
 - Train Toronto Police Traffic Services and Parking Enforcement personnel on the parking and stopping by-laws pertaining to bike lanes.
 - Institute regular enforcement of parking and stopping by-laws in bike lanes by dedicating 2 officers and a tow truck to bike lane parking enforcement.
- Ensure that construction sites have pedestrian and cyclist access plans, providing safe and clear routes for cyclists and pedestrians through and around construction zones during all phases of construction; and ensure that these plans are enforced.
- Where collisions with pedestrians or cyclists are high, the city needs to look for opportunities to reduce speed limits. This is especially true on bridges and under rail/highway underpasses.
- Use street designs that encourage lower speeds such as traffic calming on residential streets.
- Improve the enforcement of lower speed limits.
 - Increase the frequency of speed limit signage.
 - Increase fines for speeding and reckless driving.
- Establish a multi-disciplinary team with members from the Toronto Police Services, Transportation Services and Public Health to conduct an annual review and publish a summary report of all cycling and pedestrian fatalities & injury.



Safe Sidewalks

- Improve pedestrian safety on sidewalks by decreasing the incidence of cycling on sidewalks. This will also enhance the safety of children on the sidewalk. This can be accomplished through initiatives such as:
 - Develop and disseminate additional resources educating people about the risks of cycling on sidewalks,
 - Develop an information campaign educating parents and children on safe cycling practices.
 - Amend the sidewalk cycling by-law to allow sidewalk cycling based on age rather than wheel size.
 - Enforce the sidewalk cycling by-law.

Safe Trails

- Review existing trail design guidelines and develop city-wide standard recreational trail design guidelines to ensure trails and pathways can be used safely by all trail users. As part of that process the following issues should be addressed:
 - Sufficient trail widths should permit users at different speeds to pass safely – at least 3.5 metres wide and wider where usage warrants.
 - Improved signage and user education to promote safe interaction between all trail users (e.g., ringing a bell to alert other trail users of an approaching bicycle, and making sure to pass on the left).
 - Safe and accessible connections between off-street trails and streets and sidewalks.
 - Twin bike and pedestrian paths, where usage warrants and conditions allow. This will separate cyclists and in-line skaters from walkers.



P R O M O T E

walking and cycling as safe, sustainable transportation

In order to encourage more residents and employees to make more trips by active transportation, the city must increase its efforts to promote walking and cycling as transportation options for commuting, recreation and work. The city also needs to educate all road users on how to share the road safely.

Cycling and Walking Promotion

- The city should invest more in cycling and walking promotion campaigns.
 - Roll out public information campaigns about walking and cycling in tandem with new cycling and walking infrastructure installation.
 - Increase resources and develop campaigns that promote cycling and walking as part of a daily travel routine, including trips to school, work, shopping and other regular activities.
 - Promote respect for pedestrian and cyclists by all road users.
 - Link walking and cycling to transit – i.e. provide maps of "Safe Routes to Transit"
- Promote Toronto as a bicycle tourism destination and a safe and enjoyable walking city.

Traffic Safety Education

- Work with the Toronto District School Board to put more resources toward programs that encourage children and teenagers to ride their bikes. For example:
 - Make it mandatory for all children to go through an on-road bicycle safety training course by grade 6, which includes time spent practicing on minor arterials and residential streets.
 - Institute a high school bicycle training program/course that includes how to cycle safely on major arterials and link this with courses on driver education.
- Request that the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario review driver testing procedures to ensure drivers are aware of the rules regarding cyclists and pedestrians and the proper driving habits for driving safely among them.