

March 27, 2015

The Honourable Glen R. Murray
Minister of the Environment and Climate Change
77 Wellesley Street West
11th Floor, Ferguson Block
Toronto, ON M7A 2T5

Dear Minister Murray:

Re: Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Proposed Cycling Amendments

We are writing on behalf of the Toronto Centre for Active Transportation (TCAT), a project of the registered charity Clean Air Partnership, and Cycle Toronto. TCAT's mission is to advance knowledge and evidence to build support for safe and inclusive streets for walking and cycling. Cycle Toronto is a diverse member-supported organization that advocates for a healthy, safe, cycling-friendly city for all. Cycle Toronto has more than 2,800 members.

There is a great deal of frustration within the cycling community in Toronto about the significant amount of time cycling projects take to implement. We believe this is in part due to the lack of clarity in the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (MCEA) process with respect to bicycle lanes and other cycling facilities, and that these projects are unnecessarily subjected to a more rigorous process than other projects. We are aware that the Municipal Engineers Association (MEA) has also recognized this problem, consulted widely on it and proposed amendments to the MCEA to remove the onerous process for cycling infrastructure projects.

In 2013 the Ministry conducted an extensive review of the proposed amendments and in December 2014 it was posted on the EBR for a final round of consultation. On January 14, 2014 TCAT made a submission to the EBR on this topic. In our response, we expressed support for all of the changes recommended by the MEA with the exception of the proposal to streamline the removal or reduction of sidewalks, multi-purpose paths, or bike lanes. We also recommended that a review of opportunities to improve active transportation be required for streamlined road projects. Overall, however, the MEA's proposed amendments will provide much needed clarity to municipalities regarding bicycle facilities.

In a letter to you dated March 24, 2015, Anna Godo (President of the MEA) and Paul Knowles (Chair of the MCEA Monitoring Committee) urged "prompt approval of this amendment to the MCEA so that [cycling facilities] projects can proceed without an onerous EA process and municipalities can provide their communities with safe, health[y], green active transportation opportunities." We also urge you to make the appropriate changes to enable municipalities to expedite bicycle infrastructure projects.

Sincerely,



Nancy Smith Lea, Director
Toronto Centre for Active Transportation,
Clean Air Partnership



Jared Kolb, Executive Director
Cycle Toronto