

Nov5th, 2015

Harinder Malhi, Member of Provincial Parliament Brampton-Springdale
Unit 515 2250 Bovaird Dr E
Brampton ON L6R 0W3

Dear Ms. Malhi:

Thanks very much for taking the time to meet with me this past Friday. There has been a lot happening on the active transportation file since we last met, both in Brampton and the Province in general. I apologize for the “brain dump”. In future I’ll plan on shorter, more frequent meetings to keep you updated.

As noted, great progress was made this fall with the implementation of the “Keeping Ontario Roads Safe Act” as well as the announcement of provincial funding for cycling skills training and municipal cycling infrastructure. The City of Brampton is poised to take advantage of these Provincial initiatives in at least two ways.

First, Brampton has been awarded funding to provide CanBike instruction to several BikeBrampton and Brampton Cycling Advisory Committee members. Once trained, these volunteers will support the City and Peel Region at various cycling events and programs next spring and summer.

Second, in terms of municipal cycling infrastructure, Brampton is on the short-list for funding to complete the Kennedy Valley extension. This upgrade to the Etobicoke Creek Trail would provide the much needed off-road multi-use pathway connection linking the Cities of Brampton and Mississauga. It would also provide funding for a bridge to connect the trail with the parkland trails network behind the Powerade Centre.

MPP Kathryn McGarry is continuing the work of implementing the **Ontario Cycling Strategy, (CycleON)** and its multi-year “**Action Plan**”. There is much work to be done to build upon the excellent initiatives that have already been announced. I have no inside knowledge about what is next on the **Action Plan** priority list. But, as we discussed last Friday, I do have thoughts about the items that should be on that list. Here is a summary of the ones I mentioned:

Under Section 1.2, “Implementing the Provincial Policy Statement, 2014 for direction to the municipalities on land-use planning which emphasizes the importance of cycling to healthy active communities”,

I understand that a task force is currently looking at changes to **the Development Charges (DC) Act** and that a report is due to the legislature before the end of this year. I understand that the current act prevents DC funds from being applied to construction for pathways that are not part of the road allowance. This may be an unintended consequence of the intention to protect greenspace. But DC revenue received from new community construction needs to be able to help support active transportation

connections to existing communities. As you know, Brampton's priority is to support active transportation primarily through pathways connections rather than through on-road infrastructure. As such connections to existing valley land pathways represents a significant part of Brampton's active transportation strategy. I don't know if the task force is looking for public input but, if so, I would appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback. Thanks for your offer to make the connection.

Under Section 2.3 "Incorporate design features for cyclist and pedestrian facilities on provincial road and bridge projects",

Highways 410 and 407 in Brampton establish significant barriers to active transportation. This is particularly problematic where the city or Region has built cycling infrastructure such as a multi-use path along a road which crosses one of these highways. In most cases the path disappears in the lead up to the bridge crossing and reappears on the other side. A sidewalk is often the only facility provided as part of the bridge but even that is often so narrow as to prevent safe 2-way passage for either cyclists or pedestrians, to say nothing about those with disabilities. Bovaird Drive at the 410 is a prime example of this inadequate infrastructure. It is important that support for cyclists and pedestrians be built into the policy framework for all future bridge construction projects. I would also hope that MTO would fund retrofits to existing bridges on a priority basis.

Under Section 4.2 "Promoting cycling to school and to work through the **Active and Sustainable School Transportation (ASST)** program and Smart Commute workplace program",

I mentioned that BikeBrampton and Share the Road Cycling Coalition have recently launched a **Bicycle Friendly Business Program** in Brampton. Smart Commute has also agreed to help us promote the program to businesses within the Region.

BikeBrampton is also working with Metrolinx and Peel Region to promote the **ASST** program in Peel Region schools. As part of its GTHA ASST strategy, Metrolinx established a goal of **60%** participation in school active transportation within 15 years. Research indicates that the **School Travel Planning (STP)** methodology can be effective at significantly increasing AT participation at the schools where it is implemented.

The problem is that STP is currently being carried out only in about **2%** of the Region's schools. At that rate, there is no foreseeable way that Peel Region can do its part to help Metrolinx meet its stated goal of 60% within 15 years. Other Regions are facing similar challenges.

As discussed, the School Boards need additional encouragement from the Province to work with Metrolinx, (in our case, the Peel Region Health Department) to implement school travel planning within a larger percentage of the schools.

Under Section 4.6, “Supporting student learning about cycling through the existing elementary and secondary curriculum”,

As mentioned, the Joint Cycling Committees of Western Lake Ontario recently agreed to raise a motion to ask the Province to include **cycling education** as part of the **standard curriculum for Grades three to twelve**. Each committee has gone to its respective municipal government to ask for support for this motion. In Brampton the motion has been presented to the Brampton Cycling Advisory Committee and currently is being reviewed by staff.

BikeBrampton endorses this motion. Many countries in Europe already include cycling skills training as part of the education curriculum and the result has been improved road safety, increased acceptance of cycling as a normal mode of transportation, better cyclist skills and better motorist skills as students grow up to become drivers in addition to cyclists. Washington DC is one of the first North American jurisdictions to make cycling training a mandatory part of their school curriculum.

These issues as noted above are becoming increasingly urgent. I would appreciate your help in finding appropriate ways that they can be put on the table for discussion as Ms. McGarry moves forward with the **CycleON Action Plan** implementation.

That’s all for now. I commit to keep you in the loop as Brampton continues on its journey to become a Bicycle Friendly Community.

Thanks again for your time and I look forward to your participation in our June 18, 2016 Bike the Creek cycling event!

Sincerely,

David Laing, B.A.Sc., LEED AP
Chair, BikeBrampton www.bikebrampton.ca
OntarioCAN member - Share the Road Cycling Coalition

cc: Jamie Stuckless – Executive Director, Share the Road Cycling Coalition
Kevin Montgomery – co-chair Brampton Cycling Advisory Committee
Anthony Simone – co-chair Brampton Cycling Advisory Committee
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