

**ECOLOGY
OTTAWA**



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October 7, 2013

Dear Mayor Jim Watson and Ottawa City Councillors,

Our organizations are pleased to see that the City of Ottawa is considering Complete Streets as one of the key policy proposals in its 2013 Building a Liveable Ottawa planning process. We would like to see this policy adopted promptly and incorporated into both the Official Plan and Transportation Master Plan. A Complete Street is designed for all ages, abilities, and modes of travel. On Complete Streets, safe and comfortable access for pedestrians, bicycles, transit users and the mobility-impaired is not an afterthought, but an integral planning feature. A Complete Streets policy ensures that transportation planners and engineers consistently design and operate the entire street network for all road users, not only motorists.

We are pleased to work with you to help build a liveable city, and we believe passing a strong Complete Streets policy is one of the best steps that Ottawa City Council can take toward realizing that goal. We ask that the policy please be applied to the entire urban boundary area so that residents in urban Ottawa, as well as citizens living in the suburbs and villages, all benefit from Complete Streets. We ask you to please ensure that the policy includes the 10 Key Elements of a Comprehensive Complete Streets Policy to encourage uniform and effective implementation.¹

Complete Streets offer wide ranging benefits. They are cost effective, sustainable, and safe. And, as noted by the Ontario Professional Planners Institute, a Complete Streets policy is very adaptable depending on the particular location and current uses of the road in need of improvements. "Also, the improved social interaction of Complete Streets is good for businesses and property values."²

Complete Streets was one of the solutions recommended by the Pedestrian Death Review and Cycling Death Review recently conducted by the Office of the Chief Coroner for Ontario. Complete Streets have a big role to play in helping to ensure better environmental and public health outcomes. Creating safe and welcoming conditions on our roads will allow Ottawans to leave their private automobiles at home more often and will result in cleaner air and better water quality by reducing the pollutants that negatively impact the natural environment. By developing better infrastructure for active transportation modes, residents can build regular exercise into their daily lives, reducing their risks of heart disease, obesity and diabetes.

¹ To learn more about the 10 key elements of a comprehensive Complete Streets policy, please see the Complete Streets for Canada website <http://completestreetsforcanada.ca/policy-elements>.

² Ontario Professional Planners Institute. "Complete Streets—Planning 101." YouTube video. 20 Nov. 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sc-GKNeclbq>.

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We support the principle that our elected officials and public servants need to ensure our streets—important public places—serve all users, no matter their age or abilities. Using a Complete Streets policy to improve Ottawa's existing road network will help make our city more liveable, and will help the city save money as there will be less wear and tear on our roads as fewer heavy vehicles travel on them. Streets with wide sidewalks, bike paths, slow speed limits and reliable and fast public transportation encourage people to frequent their local businesses more often while they socialize and linger in their neighbourhoods longer. Indeed, Complete Streets offer great local economic improvement potential. As noted by Transport Canada: “The philosophy behind the concept is holistic in nature. All stakeholders in the road network must be involved in order to create a transportation system that works for everyone. This not only leads to greater cooperation among many different users and stakeholders, it helps create more mobility options, provides safer and more livable communities and reduces municipal, business and personal costs.”³

Ottawans are fortunate to have a beautiful and dynamic city, with many colourful and diverse events, businesses and landmarks. With the greater safety, comfort and mobility provided by Complete Streets many residents and tourists—including cyclists, pedestrians, public transit users, motorists, persons living with disabilities, young people and seniors—will enjoy greater access to all that the nation's capital has to offer.

Can you please respond to the address listed on the letterhead and let us know if you will soon join with us to voice your support for Complete Streets for Ottawa? Many thanks for your commitment to building a more liveable city. Our organizations look forward to working with you to help realize that shared goal.

Sincerely,

Graham Saul
Executive Director, Ecology Ottawa

Tom McAllister, Chief Executive Officer,
Ontario | Heart and Stroke Foundation

Dr. Mark Tremblay, Director of HALO
Healthy Active Living and Obesity Research Group
(HALO), Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario

Dianne Urquhart, Executive Director
Social Planning Council of Ottawa

Anne-Marie Roy, President,
Student Federation of the University of Ottawa

Gina Parker, Vice President Student Issues
Carleton University Students' Association

Seamus Wolfe, External Commissioner
Graduate Students' Association, University of Ottawa

Grant MacNeil, President, Graduate Students'
Association, Carleton University

Clare Doherty
Saint Paul University Students' Association President

Sean McKenny, President
Ottawa & District Labour Council

³ Transport Canada. “Complete Streets: Making Canada's roads safer for all.” Website text; for more information related to economic benefits, scroll down to “Benefits” > “Financial.” <http://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/programs/environment-utsp-casestudy-cs72e-completestreets-812.htm>. Accessed Aug. 2013.

Yolande Cremer, Chair
Lowertown Community Resource Centre

Jeff Morrison, Board President
Centretown Community Health Centre

Karin Keyes Endemann, President
Riverview Park Community Association

Jordan Charbonneau, president
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Christopher Collmorgen, President
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Catherine James, Acting President
Wellington Village Community Association

Lorne Cutler, President
Hampton Iona Community Group

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Eric Kunstadt, president
Kunstadt Sports

Erwin Dreessen, Nicole DesRoches, Co-Chairs
Greenspace Alliance of Canada's Capital

Michael Napiorkowski and Maayke Schurer
Founders of Ottawa Bicycle Lanes Project

Christopher Tucker, on behalf of the Steering
Committee, Walk Ottawa