

Dear Mayor Guthrie and Members of Council,

I am writing to share my strong opposition to the proposed budget cuts to Guelph's cycling and AT programs. While I am pleased that Guelph has been recently making some progress in improving our bicycling infrastructure, we still have a very long ways to go to make Guelph safe and efficient for bicycle commuting, and we should not be postponing improvements even further into the future.

The economic, equity and environmental benefits of creating cycling infrastructure that encourages people to ride instead of drive are huge. As a health economist, I could send you several pages explaining how spending on cycling infrastructure has a much higher benefit:cost ratio than so many other items that staff has not chosen to propose for budget reductions. Guelph has committed to Active Transportation, equity, Vision Zero, reducing greenhouse gases, etc - all things of which cycling is an integral part - so how has it become a throw-away item? It's horribly short-sighted.

I am particularly bothered by the proposal to stop winter bike lane snow removal. As is, a cyclist is hit every 11 days in Guelph and we've already had two cycling fatalities in the last two years. Forcing people who cycle year-round for transportation (I am one of those) to share lanes with cars that are being driven even more erratically than on dry roads will, without doubt, send those dreadful numbers higher - it's a recipe for disaster.

Please support active transportation by not supporting the proposed AT budget cuts.

Sincerely,

Dr. Meg Thorburn