

November 30, 2022

Office of the Councillors
2nd Floor, City Hall
1 Sir Winston Churchill Square
Edmonton, AB T5J 2R7

Dear Members of Edmonton City Council,

Re: Support for Active Transport Network in 2023-26 capital budget

We are writing in strong support of including funding in the City of Edmonton 2023-26 capital budget for the accelerated development of Edmonton's Active Transportation Network.

The majority of cycling deaths in Canada involve collision with a motor vehicle. The creation of a safe active transportation network that separates those cycling, scooting, or rolling from motor vehicle traffic will serve to greatly increase the safety of Edmontonians. A recent study looking at long term data from multiple American cities demonstrated that cities with a developed network of protected and separated active transportation lanes had significantly fewer road traffic deaths and serious injuries than those without. There was an improvement in safety seen for all road users, including those walking or operating motor vehicles. The study suggests that the built infrastructure also served to calm traffic leading to reduced motor vehicle speeds and more careful driving habits which resulted in a reduction in the number of motor vehicle collisions and the severity of those that do occur.

In addition to improving the safety of Edmontonians, a well-developed active transportation network will foster many positive health benefits for the people of Edmonton. Regular physical activity is known to improve overall health, fitness, and quality of life. It reduces the risk of chronic conditions such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, many types of cancer, depression, anxiety and dementia. People face many barriers when it comes to getting enough physical activity, be they financial, time, or ability related. Creating a built environment throughout Edmonton that allows for safe, active transport that can be incorporated into daily life will have an immensely positive impact on the health of the people of Edmonton. Research has consistently shown that access to a safe, active transportation network leads to increased physical activity for those living nearby. This is true for both children and adults.

As physicians, we serve to treat and prevent illness as well as promote healthy lifestyles in our patients. We are writing to you because the effect that a person's built environment has on their health, be it positive or negative, is substantial. As elected officials, you have the power to invest in Edmonton in a way that can positively impact the health and safety of Edmontonians for generations to come.

As you consider the 2023-2026 capital budget for the City of Edmonton, please consider the health and wellbeing of the people who call this great city home and consider making an historic investment in their health, safety and wellbeing.

Sincerely,
Edmonton Zone Medical Staff Association