

For Immediate Release

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## City Council Votes “Yes” to Better Pedestrian Safety in Black Creek

After two years of community advocacy, residents of the Black Creek area of Toronto and people traveling to and from the Black Creek Community Farm will finally get the new traffic signal they’ve been asking for.

On February 10, 2015, Toronto City Council approved the installation of a new traffic control signal at the intersection of Jane Street and Hullmar Drive. [1] This new traffic signal will help make traveling in the area safer for all street users, especially pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users.

From 2013-2014, made possible through funding from the Heart and Stroke Foundation, and in partnership with Toronto Public Health, the Toronto Centre for Active Transportation (TCAT) led a community engagement process to improve active transportation (walking and cycling) in Toronto’s culturally diverse Black Creek neighbourhood. Through this process, the installation of a traffic signal at the entrance to the Black Creek Community farm was identified as the top solution to help improve walking and cycling in the area. [2]

In May of 2014, TCAT made a submission to the Toronto Board of Health to urge the installation of the traffic signal, which led to Transportation Services producing a report on the feasibility of a light. In January 2015, North York Community Council recommended the following to City Council: “The installation of a traffic control signal will satisfy the request from the Toronto Centre for Active Transportation (TCAT) on behalf of the Black Creek Community Farm/Everdale Farm to provide a protected pedestrian crossing for the users of the farm.” [3]

This week’s final city council approval marks the end of a lengthy approval process, and TCAT’s Director Nancy Smith Lea is thrilled at the outcome. “The Everdale Black Creek Community Farm is an absolutely fantastic community resource in Toronto,” said Smith Lea. “Unfortunately the farm has been cut off from the community by the traffic on Jane Street, a major arterial. There have been many close calls at this location as people attempt to cross the street. The approval by city council is a big step forward for pedestrian safety for the Black Creek community.”

Pedestrian improvements are especially important in a community such as Black Creek, which has high rates of chronic diseases such as diabetes and obesity, and poor access to healthy food. Evidence has shown that improving walkability can have a huge positive impact on people’s health. [4]

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