

MEDIA RELEASE

Torontonians Celebrate Cycling with a Pedal-Powered Parade along the Length of Danforth Avenue JUNE 1, 2015

TORONTO: Cyclists of all ages from around the city will converge on Danforth Avenue on Saturday, June 6, at 10:30 a.m., ringing their bicycle bells for the fourth annual Bells on Danforth (www.bellsondanforth.ca) fun ride. Both of its sister rides, Bells on Bloor and Bells on Yonge, are on hiatus this year, leaving the Danforth event as the only opportunity for families to join one of the popular family-friendly Bells rides.

The pedal-powered parade turns things around in its fourth year, starting at the western end of the Bloor Viaduct and proceeding east along the full length of The Danforth all the way to Danforth Road. Special guests include Anthony Lue, a 2016 Rio de Janeiro Paralympics hopeful in the sport of handcycling, who will “slow down” to participate. Jennifer Keesmaat, Chief Planner of the City of Toronto, will be speaking at the ride. And Councillor Paula Fletcher (Ward 30) will make an exciting infrastructure announcement regarding the Lower Don Trail.

The number of participants in Bells on Danforth grew five-fold in its first three years, reflecting the increasing popularity of both recreational and utilitarian cycling. Val Dodge of Bells on Danforth said, “Everyone knows that cycling is fun, but more people are discovering that cycling is practical too: it’s often faster than driving for local trips, you don’t have to circle the block or pay for parking, and the cost of fuel is included in dinner.”

Bells on Danforth will arrive this year at a party hosted by the Crossroads of the Danforth Business Improvement Association (www.crossroadsbia.ca). “Safety is our number one concern,” said Joe Murillo, chair of the Crossroads BIA. “We want everyone to be able to get to our shops safely and quickly, no matter how they arrive here. We’ve hosted a community starting point for Bells on Danforth since the very beginning and are thrilled to host the party at the end this year.”

A recent study conducted for the Toronto Centre for Active Transportation (TCAT) showed that people who arrive at The Danforth on foot or by bike visit more often and spend more money on average than those who arrive by car or transit. The report echoes similar results from previous studies conducted in both the Annex and Bloor West Village, as well as in numerous other neighbourhoods and cities around North America.

“People and cities around the world are embracing cycling as a practical method of transportation for short urban trips,” added Kathy Chung, another Bells on Danforth organizer. “When people have the opportunity to ride in a safe environment, they quickly discover how practical and fun cycling can be.”

Bells on Danforth is organized by a coalition of cycling advocacy groups in Toronto’s east end, including Ward 29 Bikes (www.29bikes.ca), Ward 30 Bikes (ward30bikes.blogspot.ca), Ward 31 Bikes (twitter.com/ward31bikes), 32 Spokes (www.cycleto.ca/ward/32), TO35Cycles (www.to35cycles.ca), and Ward 36 Cyclists (ward36cyclists.blogspot.ca).

TCAT studies:

- Danforth: <http://www.tcat.ca/knowledge-centre/bike-lanes-on-street-parking-and-business-a-study-of-danforth-avenue-in-toronto-danforth-neighbourhood/>
- Annex: <http://www.tcat.ca/knowledge-centre/bike-lanes-on-street-parking-and-business/>
- Bloor West Village: <http://www.tcat.ca/knowledge-centre/bike-lanes-on-street-parking-and-business-year-2-report-a-study-of-bloor-street-in-torontos-bloor-west-village/>

Contacts

Bells on Danforth: Val Dodge, tel. 416-617-4513, email info@bellsondanforth.ca

Crossroads of the Danforth BIA: Joe Murillo, tel. 416-699-6976, email joe@tiptopcollision.com