

From: Molly Miksa
Sent: Monday, November 15, 2021 10:45 AM
To: Lysynski, Heather <hlysynsk@London.ca>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Keep Blackfriars Bridge car free

Dear City Council,

London Cycle Link is a member-supported not-for-profit organization dedicated to helping Londoners ride their bikes more. We envision a healthy, vibrant London where it's safe and convenient for everyone to ride bikes, and by extension to use all forms of active transportation.

At the Nov.16 council meeting you will be asked to vote on a motion to **leave Blackfriars Bridge closed to motor vehicles**. London Cycle Link fully supports this motion, from the perspectives of promoting healthy lifestyles, preserving local heritage, and protecting the environment.

The stated reason for closing the bridge to cars and trucks at the beginning of the pandemic still applies: by increasing space for cyclists and pedestrians, the city is promoting safe active transportation. Currently, more cyclists are using the bridge because they don't fear being passed by rushing vehicles in close proximity. With multi-lane bridges immediately to the north (Oxford) and south (Kensington), the Blackfriars Bridge is not essential for motorists in the area to cross the Thames River. For cyclists and pedestrians however, the bridge is an important connection on the Thames Valley Parkway.



This photograph from the Nov.7 ride to support keeping the bridge car free, shows what Blackfriars Bridge looks like currently, as an active transportation destination and connection point.

The bridge is a crucial part of our heritage, and precedes the invention of automobiles. When we see the bridge being closed every few years for repairs, we know that it is literally being asked to bear a burden for which it was not built. Heavy cars and trucks rumbling across the span of our heritage bridge hasten its decline. By limiting bridge traffic to cyclists and pedestrians, we will preserve an important connection to our past.

Finally, it cannot be overstated that we are living in what council itself has declared a climate emergency. Encouraging active transportation, and subsequently discouraging the need for car use, benefits everyone.

As this initiative supports a vision of London as a healthy, vibrant city where cycling—and walking dogs, driving mobility scooters, pushing strollers, jogging, or stopping to watch the river flow—is safe and convenient for all, London Cycle Link asks that **Council approve the recommendation to keep Blackfriars Bridge car free.**

Sincerely,

Molly Miksa

Executive Director