

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Clerk](#)
Subject: item for City Council meeting
Date: Tuesday, October 31, 2017 7:01:39 AM
Attachments: [An Open Letter to Mayor Tory from Toronto Physicians \(2\).pdf](#)

Hi,

I would like to present this as a document for the upcoming City Council meeting, relating to item PW24.9 (Bloor Bike Lane Pilot Project). It is an open letter from Toronto Physicians to Mayor Tory and all City councillors.

Peter Sakuls MD
Doctors For Safe Cycling



An open letter to all City Councillors from Toronto Physicians

A few weeks ago, almost 200 physicians signed an open letter to Mayor John Tory in support of making the Bloor Bike Lanes permanent.

We would like to share this open letter with all City Councillors prior to the upcoming November City Council vote on the Bloor Bike Lanes.

Dr. Peter Sakuls
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Dr. Sarah Kim
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Dr. Mary Gaudet
Dr. Marco Lo
Dr. Edward Xie

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An Open Letter to Mayor John Tory from Toronto Physicians

To: His Worship Mayor John Tory
Cc: Councillor Jaye Robinson (Chair, Public Works and Infrastructure committee)
Councillor Stephen Holyday (Vice Chair, Public Works and Infrastructure committee)
Councillor Christin Carmichael Greb
Councillor Chin Lee
Councillor Giorgio Mammoliti
Councillor Anthony Perruzza

Dear Mayor Tory:

We are a group of nearly 200 physicians who live and work in the City of Toronto. We urge you to make the Bloor bike lanes permanent, and to extend the lanes east and west.

As physicians, we are reminded every day of the dangers faced by people riding bicycles in Toronto. We see the impact first hand in our emergency departments, trauma wards, and family practice clinics.

Our experience is affirmed by injury data. In 2016, there were more than 1,000 reported crashes between cars and people on bicycles. Since 2005, at least 33 cyclists have been killed on Toronto's streets, including 5-year-old Xavier Morgan and 70-year-old Gary Sim in 2017.

These tragic incidents are not only predictable, they are preventable¹. Two-thirds of collisions in Toronto happen on roads with no cycle infrastructure.² Separated bike lanes, also known as cycle tracks, are a proven solution: in New York City, bike lanes reduced collisions by 57% for cyclists (and 29% for pedestrians).³ A 2012 study from Toronto and Vancouver found that cycle tracks reduced injury risk by 89% compared to major streets without them.⁴ Bike lanes on other Toronto streets, such as College and Harbord, have been found to reduce both collisions and injuries⁵ In addition, separated bike lanes improve the perception of safety, encouraging more people to ride bikes, which in turn creates a "safety in numbers" effect that further reduces the number of injuries and fatalities.⁶

The Bloor bike lane pilot has been a huge success. Ridership has increased by more than 50%, to about 6,000 cyclists per day, including many families with young children. Safety perception has improved: before the bike lanes, only 3% of cyclists reported feeling "safe" or

¹ Cycling Death Review: A Review of All Accidental Cycling Deaths in Ontario from January 1st, 2006 to December 31st, 2010. Office of the Chief Coroner for Ontario. June 2012.

² <http://deathbytraffic.ca/>

³ "[Road to Health: Improving Walking and Cycling in Toronto](#)", Toronto Public Health. April 2012

⁴ Teschke et al. 2012, [Route Infrastructure and the Risk of Injuries to Bicyclists: A Case-Crossover Study](#), American Journal of Public Health

⁵ [Pedestrian and Cycling Safety in Toronto](#), Toronto Public Health, June 2015

⁶ Bhatia et al. Examining the impact of cycle lanes on cyclist-motor vehicle collisions in the city of Toronto. Journal of Transport & Health. 2016;3(4):523-8.

“very safe” on Bloor; now 85% do. And public support is high, with 75% of local residents in support of the lanes.⁷

We applaud your initial support for, and evidence-based approach towards, the Bloor bike lane pilot project. We also commend your commitment to Vision Zero and improving road safety for all users. The bike lanes on Bloor Street are a key component to achieving this vision. Maintaining and further developing the lanes will send a message to all Torontonians that the City is committed to protecting its most vulnerable road users.

As a natural east-west corridor, Bloor is an ideal cycling route for people of all ages and abilities. It traverses through universities, schools, and residential and shopping neighbourhoods, presenting few barriers for people on bicycles. We urge you to ensure their safety by making the Bloor Street bike lane pilot permanent.

Yours sincerely,

Doctors for Safe Cycling

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⁷ [Bloor Street Bike Lanes Pilot Project Update](#), City of Toronto, June 2017

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