



GreekTown on the Danforth Business Improvement Area
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May 25, 2020

SENT VIA E-MAIL

Mayor John Tory and Toronto City Councillors
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N1

Dear Mayor Tory and Toronto City Councillors,

RE: CC21.20 – Cycling Network Plan Installations

We have reviewed the City of Toronto's News Release issued today with respect to bike lane expansion and are disappointed that there has been no public consultation and/or community engagement with the GreekTown on the Danforth BIA property owners and businesses or any other BIA to our knowledge.

This is particularly upsetting as it is not a secret that GreekTown BIA has been vocally opposed to bike lanes on the Danforth and the negative impact that they will have on our businesses. This is based on a study that was commissioned by GreekTown BIA which is now not subject to submission to Committee or Council.

Danforth Avenue has been, for many years, a vibrant, local, social node and business district and a regional destination for dining and unique special events, like Taste of the Danforth. Because of GreekTown BIA's special character, there must be an understanding of its uniqueness. Our restaurants and retailers are suffering from the fallout of the COVID-19 public health crisis. Businesses around the world are filing for bankruptcy daily. Closer to home, Pappas Grill, a neighbourhood institution, closed its doors for good this month after 33 years on the Danforth – a casualty of COVID-19.

On May 11, 2020, main street businesses were allowed to open for curbside pickup. The City of Toronto staff have been working to guide and support businesses as they re-open responsibly to accommodate for curbside pickup. Many businesses are still waiting for their curbside pickup spots to be installed. As the economy gradually re-opens from COVID-related restrictions, restaurants and bars will be among the last to get the green light. GreekTown BIA's patio culture will be a critical part of the recovery of this neighbourhood.

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There are multiple demands for the use of the road. How do you expect to accommodate parking and loading on both sides of the Danforth, a separated bike lane in both directions, curbside pick-up and delivery, expanded patios, curb lane pedestrian zones and traffic lanes in both directions? While this installation of bike lanes on Danforth Avenue is being presented as a pilot project in response to the pandemic, we all know that pilot projects in the City of Toronto are, in fact, a precursor to a permanent installation.

The timing of this proposal is insensitive to our member businesses struggling for their survival. Anything that shifts focus off of survival of main street businesses is unacceptable.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Constantine Voidonicolas', written over a faint horizontal line.

Constantine Voidonicolas
Chair, Board of Management
GreekTown on the Danforth BIA