



October 28, 2021

Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC)
Toronto City Hall, 10th Floor, West Tower
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, Ontario M5H 2N2

Dear Committee Members,

RE: The Closure of Essential Bus Stops in our Communities

BACKGROUND

On October 6, my office received a notice from the TTC noting the planned cancellation of two stops along the 121 bus route, effective October 10. The two existing stops were located at the intersection of Market Street and Lower Jarvis Street. According to the TTC, these changes are in part due to the new cycling tracks on the Esplanade but was mainly made to achieve the goal of 300-400m distance between stops.

Following the cancellation, many residents – particularly the many senior residents in the area – reached out with complaints about the lack of accessibility of this change. The stop served three senior buildings including 85 The Esplanade (Old York Towers), 110 The Esplanade (Performing Arts Lodge) and 115 The Esplanade (OWN Coop Housing). In addition, both the bus stop’s proximity to St Lawrence Market made it essential for seniors to access a grocer without a vehicle.

Area residents have expressed concerns that the alternative stop now experiences heavier transit rider traffic, lacks coverings or benches, and increases the travel distance for many residents with mobility challenges. This may lead to increased demand for WheelTrans services for these residents. It appears that the notice and consultation about the removal of this stop, in particular, was not robust enough to consider the unique needs of this neighbourhood and its residents. Furthermore, it would be helpful to hear from the TTC how this decision was approved, and where this decision is documented.

Understanding that the TTC consults with the Advisory Committee for Accessible Transit (ACAT), I believe TAAC and its members would benefit from better understanding the rationale, including the accessibility and equity considerations behind cancelling bus stops and ensuring safety for all.

RECOMMENDATION

Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee recommends:

1. City Council request the Toronto Transit Commission Board to request Chief Executive Officer, Toronto Transit Commission to arrange a presentation to the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee in the first quarter of 2022 on the removal of the two Market Street bus stops on the 121 route, including an explanation of how an equity and accessibility analysis was used to consider the potential impacts of cancelling or moving bus stop locations in general and these stops in particular.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam
Ward 13, Toronto Centre