



January 7, 2021

TO: City of Toronto, Infrastructure and Environment Committee

RE: Meeting, January 11, 2021

AGENDA ITEM: IE19.11 yongeTOMorrow - Municipal Class Environmental Assessment on Yonge Street from Queen Street to College/Carlton Street.

Dear Members of the Infrastructure and Environment Committee,

The St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association (SLNA) represents the interests of over 30,000 people who live in the St. Lawrence neighbourhood. The Association is also a member of the West Don Lands Committee and an immediate neighbour to Corktown, the Distillery District and the Financial District. It has been part of the stakeholder group involved in this initiative from its beginning. The Board of Directors is writing to affirm its support for the staff recommendations in item IE19.11 yongeTOMorrow - Municipal Class Environmental Assessment on Yonge Street from Queen Street to College/Carlton Street.

As you know, the City of Toronto is mandated to replace a failing water main that is over 100 years old and buried directly under downtown Yonge Street. This will require major construction, and disruption in the area. What is being debated today is how the City will decide to put the road back together.

yongeTOMorrow is our once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to transform Yonge Street into a world-class, 21st century urban destination that supports critical public health objectives – both in a world with COVID-19 and beyond. yongeTOMorrow proposes a full and flexible redesign of the street from College St south to Queen St, where sidewalks will be expanded, vehicle lanes modified, restaurant patios extended and street furniture and streetscape elements added.

Lined with brand destination retailers, restaurants, music venues, theatres, the Eaton Centre, and Yonge Dundas Square, yongeTOMorrow is our chance to bring one of Toronto's most historic and culturally important streets back onto the world stage. In the wake of the successful ActiveTO and CafeTO initiatives, this is the moment to mobilize huge public support and think boldly about the future of this iconic city street. This is the time for Yonge TOMorrow.

The population in the St. Lawrence neighbourhood is growing, supported by the continuing addition of significant numbers of new residential units and associated infrastructure. Current and future residents are drawn to the area because of its history, its accessibility and its uniformly high *walk score*. The improvements proposed for Yonge TOMorrow extend this desirability to one of the most significant retail and cultural sections of this *Great Street*. Some of the planned benefits include:

- improved pedestrian safety and accessibility;
- increased public space for downtown residents;

- increased support for the local economy: pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders spend more money locally than motorists;
- increased capacity to support festivals, performances and other tourism incentives;
- reduced maintenance costs associated with narrower streets and lighter overall uses;
- improved storm water management from tree planting; green streets and alleys;
- public health benefits from easier (and safer) walking, running and cycling;
- reduced air pollution, greenhouse gases by encouraging walking, cycling vs. driving.

Downtown Yonge Street is in our neighbourhood's backyard but needs to cater to all – residents, commuters, visitors and tourists – as the city's *Main* street. This proposal addresses the needs of the community, while also making a significant statement regarding the long term economic development and success of the whole city.

We urge you to support this once in a lifetime opportunity to amplify Yonge Street's prominence as a vibrant, pedestrian-prioritized, globally-significant and flexible destination street.

Thank you for your consideration of this important request.

Sincerely,

Board of Directors
St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association

cc: Mayor John Tory
Members of the Infrastructure and Environment Committee:
Councillor Colle
Councillor Layton
Councillor McKelvie (Chair)
Councillor Minnan-Wong
Councillor Pasternak
Councillor Perruzza
City Councillors:
Councillor Cressy
Councillor Wong-Tam
Councillor's Staff:
Robin Buxton Potts
Tom Davidson
Edward LaRusic
City Managers:
Matthew Green (iec@toronto.ca)
SLNA Board of Directors:
Mr. B. Leps Mr. S. Linton Ms. S. McMillan
Ms. D. Patterson Ms. G. Siciliano Ms. T. Tenenbaum
Ms. R. Tilson Ms. D. Wang