



21 Dundas Square, 10th Floor
Toronto, Ontario
M5B 1B7

January 8, 2021

**His Worship, Mayor John Tory,
Councillor Mike Layton &
Councillor Kristyn Wong Tang**

VIA EMAIL

c/o Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, Ontario
M5H 2N2

Re: **Yonge TOMorrow**

Dear Sirs & Madam,

HNR is a family-owned business with properties along and around the Yonge Street corridor. We are proud to be part of the vibrant community that is Dundas Square and its surroundings – and we are equally proud of the fact that we put down roots in the area long before it became trendy to do so.

Our team has been engaged in the Yonge TOMorrow process and with the stakeholder advisory group for quite some time. Earlier in the process we had the opportunity to meet with Johanna Kyte and Maogosha Pyjor to voice our overall support for the project, and to express some concerns, particularly with respect to potential vehicular congestion around Dundas Square.

Subsequent iterations of the now preferred option addressed these concerns, and although we are still concerned about potential congestion, we think the current design is the best solution for the plan moving forward.

We are in support of the Downtown Yonge BIA's *Priorities for Yonge Street* that include a truly inclusive, highly walkable, and always vibrant neighbourhood, with the support of a truly flexible and complete street.

Yonge Street needs widened sidewalks to help improve the pedestrian experience and enable seasonal patios. Wider sidewalks will ease pedestrian congestion, enabling more people to walk comfortably and facilitate establishing seasonal patios to boost food service businesses.

We all know that safety has become a serious issue in recent years. Pedestrianizing any part of Yonge Street, at any time, requires the appropriate social services and neighborhood supports.

In addition, we are concerned with the impact that this major project will have on our tenants. Years of continuous infrastructural construction will affect their operations and we would like to ensure that there is clarity in the scheduling and sequencing before and while the construction unfolds.

We recommend that a tentative construction schedule be presented that takes into account operational impacts on all stakeholders and tenancies within a selected radius of the construction. We also recommend that an intermittent and staggered construction schedule be considered so large swaths of the street are not closed for long periods of time.

The recent shuttering of numerous businesses along Yonge St. (at and above the sidewalk) coupled with the future construction activity will result in an increased loss of activity and may lead to further shuttering. We would like to ensure that the high street experience of Yonge St. is considered prior to construction and managed and maintained throughout.

Finally, HNR is interested in the dynamism of the public realm adjacent to and surrounding our properties, in addition to those areas that connect to these existing public spaces. We see great promise in the laneways adjacent to Yonge Street, in particular O'Keefe Lane and Saint Enoch Square.

We understand that this project is focused on Yonge Street, but we also consider the extended public realm including the laneways that support the activities of the area to be vital to the plan. We foresee the future of the larger public realm as part of the current plans for Yonge TOMorrow, and anticipate the future role of the laneways, not as a subsidiary thoroughfare and utility corridor but, as an engaged public space that will add to the rich diversity of the area.

With the completion of Yonge TOMorrow, attention will be directed towards these laneways as complementary but integral to the newly pedestrianized public realm, likely seeing significant increases in activity. In this way, the project could consider how this future activation will play a role in the developed design.

I welcome the opportunity to discuss these matters with you in greater detail.

Sincerely,

Najib Rahma
Chief Operating Officer
HNR Properties