



January 10, 2021

Dear Members of the Infrastructure and Environment Committee,

I am writing today to affirm my support for the staff recommendations in item IE19.11 yongeTOMorrow - Municipal Class Environmental Assessment on Yonge Street from Queen Street to College/Carlton Street, which will be discussed at the January 11th committee meeting.

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 decided today is how we 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—for a world with COVID-19 and beyond. yongeTOMorrow proposes a full and flexible redesign of the street from College St, south to Queen St. The proposal is smart and forward-thinking, with sidewalks to 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. On the heels of the successful ActiveTO and CafeTO initiatives, this is the moment to mobilize public support and act boldly to anchor a sustainable future for this iconic street. Yonge TOMorrow must start today!

Where public space is valued through its thoughtful design, citizens congregate and collaborate, and visitors to our city will also be enticed to connect and explore.

Working in public relations, with various consumer brands, often based in other parts of the world, it is with great pride that I can tell stories about Toronto that drive interest in this market. This is largely due to the collaborative diverse communities and the engagement opportunities for our citizens here, and for those who visit. It is my view that our well-loved globally-relevant experiences, such as the Toronto International Film Festival, Luminato, IDS, and Toronto Fashion Week, among others, would benefit significantly from this new vision for Yonge St.

Downtown Yonge St is a neighbourhood's backyard, and Canada's Main Street. yongeTOMorrow caters to both. This proposal addresses the local needs of the immediate and extended communities, while strengthening the long-term economic development and success of the city at large. I 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.

Candice Best | Founder, BEST PR Co. | Toronto, ON