

September 19, 2013

PW 25.3 – Extending the Bay Street Bicycle Lanes

Chair Minnan-Wong and Members of the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Cycle Toronto urging you to reject Transportation staff's recommendation to receive the previous report for information and instead support the extension of the Bay St bicycle lanes. Cycle Toronto is a diverse, member-supported organization that advocates for a healthy, safe, cycling-friendly for all and currently represents over 2,300 Torontonians.

Bicycle lanes are important in that they create dedicated space on the roadway for cyclists. Bicycle lanes reduce conflicts and collisions between cyclists and motor vehicles. Staff originally proposed adding bicycle lanes to Bay St from Cumberland St to a point 30m south of Bloor St. As staff originally noted in their report:

“During the Bay Street study Transportation staff suggested removing the northbound and southbound left turn lanes to extend the bicycles through the Bloor Street West intersection because the left turn volumes are relatively light and bicycle traffic is comparable or exceeds the motor vehicle left turn movements during the AM and PM peak periods...”

While the stretch of roadway under consideration is small, it connects cyclists travelling southbound from Davenport Rd along the proposed Bay St Bikeway to the Waterfront and creates safer access for northbound cyclists leaving downtown Toronto. However, due to opposition over the proposed restriction of left turns onto Bloor St from the BIAs and Residents Associations' that surround the intersection and a relatively small number of participants at the July public meeting, staff have instead recommended receiving their previous report for information only and instead installing sharrows.

It is disappointing that rather than adding bicycle lanes to the streets of Toronto, staff instead recommend sharrows which do very little to improve the safety of cyclists. We do not support this change and instead urge you to support the original extension of the Bay St bicycle lanes.

Sincerely,



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Executive Director



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