September 10, 2013

Dear Toronto and East York Community Council,

Shaw Street in Ward 19 will soon host the city’s longest contra-flow bike lane. This important part of the west end bikeway will connect bike lanes on Davenport Road, Hallam Street, Barton Avenue, Harbord Street, College Street, Douro Street, and make connects to Strachan Avenue and the Martin Goodman Trail. This is an exciting new project that was approved at the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee and City Council this summer.

Bicycles account for 25% of all road users on Shaw Street with more than 600 cyclists using Shaw Street every day. Of the 600 cyclists on Shaw Street daily, upwards of 30% of cyclists are currently travelling northbound. This bike contra-flow lane will be the first of several to be installed in the west end to fill gaps within the existing bikeway and will significantly enhance safety for cyclists, pedestrians and motorists. The contra-flow lane will be painted along Shaw Street from Dundas Street north to Davenport Road. South of Dundas sharrows will be painted on Dundas Street to King Street and bicycle lanes from King Street to Douro Street.

North of Dundas, Shaw Street typically has a speed limit of 30km/hour, but south of Dundas the speed limit is 40km/hour. Since taking office I have heard frequently from residents along Shaw Street south of Dundas about speeding concerns. Toronto's Medical Office of Health recommends 30km/hour as a speed limit that is safer for cyclists and pedestrians. Since residents have been calling for slower speeds on Shaw Street and because we are reinforcing Shaw Street as bikeway, I am recommending a consistent speed of 30km/hour along Shaw Street.

Further, the installation of contra-flow on Shaw Street results in parking along Shaw Street from Dundas to Bloor Street West being permanently placed on the west side of the road, rather than alternating. This could result in a significant loss of parking in an already overburdened permit parking area, since there is currently a parking prohibition adjacent to Fred Hamilton Park. For this reason, I am recommending that permit parking be permitted between 9pm and 9am adjacent to Fred Hamilton Park.

After public meetings and canvassing Shaw Street over the last few months, I am making the following recommendations to ensure that this new infrastructure functions properly and serves our wider goals of safety and convenience.

I recommend that the Toronto and East York Community Council:

Request the Director of Transportation Services to report back to the Toronto and East York Community Council at its meeting on October 17th 2013, with proposed-by-law amendments to:

a) Enact a 30 km/h maximum speed limit on Shaw Street between Davenport Road and Douro Street; and,

b) Amend the parking prohibition on Shaw Street adjacent to Fred Hamilton Park to permit parking between 9pm and 9am.

Thank you for your support,

Mike Layton
City Councillor
Ward 19, Trinity-Spadina