



Date: May 13, 2015

To: Planning and Growth Management Committee, City of Toronto

Re: Canada Post Community Mail Boxes

From: Walk Toronto

Pedestrian spaces are in need of improvement throughout most of Toronto. The main problem is that sidewalks are too narrow, and often further constricted by the inappropriate installation of infrastructure and street furniture.

Constricted pedestrian space is a problem for several reasons:

- Sidewalks become zones of turbulent pedestrian flow and conflicts. Sidewalks should be given the same consideration as streets have, with the aim to making commuter movement smooth and efficient. Significant numbers of Torontonians rely on sidewalks as their main commuting route, and every effort should be made to facilitate pedestrian commuting, and to make the use of sidewalks more enjoyable.
- Sidewalks are prevented from being used as vibrant community space or "linear parks" if they are constricted. It is difficult to stop and chat on the sidewalk without irritating other walkers whose transportation route has become blocked by normal social interaction. If sidewalks could be used as more pleasant public space, some pressure to expand traditional park space might be released.
- Sidewalk clutter limits where mechanical snow plowing machinery can travel, which results in hazardous walking conditions because of inconsistent or nonexistent clearing by landowners with sidewalk frontage.
- Large infrastructure installed at the sidewalks could create safety issues: sight lines between pedestrians and those who might harm them could be blocked, and it may be difficult for people with strollers or assistive devices to pass safely.

Walk Toronto is concerned that Community Collection Boxes could constrict pedestrian space, resulting in some of the negative outcomes listed above.

Even if community boxes are installed at the edges of the pedestrian flow zones, people stopped in front of the boxes to retrieve their mail will create pedestrian flow turbulence, making navigation of these space difficult, or dangerous in high traffic areas, or in poor weather conditions. We encourage the City to closely work with Canada Post to ensure that community mail boxes do not adversely affect pedestrian space.

Walk Toronto is a grassroots walking advocacy group dedicated to making Toronto a better city for walking.

Thank you,
John Fischer, Walk Toronto Steering Committee member