

From: [Melissa Goldstein](#)
To: [Public Works and Infrastructure Committee](#)
Subject: Regarding PW5.10
Date: Thursday, May 28, 2015 3:53:01 AM

Dear Councillors,

While many improvements have been made recently in the city to make the roads safer for cyclists, one huge problem remains: the completely preventable hazardous road conditions that are created by construction projects.

Last summer I spent hours on the phone with 311 trying to find someone to come and cover holes in the curb lane of College Street that were each the size of a parking space and 3" deep. Construction crews had put a barricade up facing traffic to prevent cars from driving in the holes, but nothing had been done to prevent cyclists from falling into the hole as they passed alongside it. In other places I've had to get off my bike and move pylons that had been thoughtlessly and unnecessarily placed far from the curb and next to streetcar tracks, leaving no room for cyclists to get through. Similarly, I've had to get off my bike and move construction signs, erected to notify cars of construction ahead in the car lanes, that had been placed in the middle of the bike lane. In yet other cases, bike lanes suddenly disappear--blocked by construction vehicles, pylons, holes in the road, or construction debris, forcing cyclists out into traffic or onto sidewalks, often at particularly dangerous places along the road. And I'm not even going to get into the insanity that has been Queen's Quay for the past couple of years.

I wouldn't have to spend my time and energy managing or navigating the mess created by construction crews if those construction crews were following a clear set of guidelines and standards for construction projects that were designed to maintain the safety of roads during those construction projects. Not only do we need a set of clear standards, we need to ensure that they are enforced. Far too often I've seen duty cops working at a construction site where the construction crew has created hazardous conditions. It should be the duty cop's job to ensure that those hazardous conditions are prevented.

Poorly planned construction sites create hazardous conditions for all road users, not just cyclists. Drivers become frustrated by slow moving traffic, unpredictable and erratically moving cyclists and pedestrians and become more aggressive on the roads. Cyclists are forced to navigate all sorts of obstructions, forcing them back and forth in and out of the car lane, forcing them to ride along the very narrow space between streetcar tracks and heavy machinery, forcing them between cars jockeying to get through narrowed lanes. All of this manoeuvring puts cyclists at risk of being hit by cars, of colliding with construction materials, and of falling off their bikes and into traffic where they will be run over by cars.

Finally, poorly planned construction sites create many of our traffic congestion problems: they slow the flow of traffic to a trickle, which is only made worse when cyclists are forced to take up space in car lanes, creating chaotic and unpredictable road conditions.

The City of Toronto needs to stop allowing construction crews to make the city's streets hazardous.

Sincerely,

Melissa Goldstein,
Ward 19 resident and Deputy Captain of Cycle Toronto's Ward 19 advocacy group.