June 10, 2016

Councillor Mike Layton
Chair of Toronto and East York Community Council
100 Queen Street West, Suite C47
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Councillor Layton,

RE: TE17.103 FRONT-YORK-UNIVERSITY INTERIM STREETSCAPE PLAN

The Toronto Financial District BIA would like to thank City of Toronto staff for their leadership role in advancing the Front-York-University Interim Streetscape Plan and strongly encourage the Toronto and East York Community Council to support this initiative.

This process has been a model collaboration between the Toronto Financial District BIA, Toronto Entertainment District BIA and the City of Toronto in an effort to respond efficiently to the significant increase in pedestrian volumes on York Street.

As part of the broader revitalization plans for Union Station in 2008, City Council adopted a preferred plan to provide additional pedestrian facilities at-grade and below-grade on York Street to address projected pedestrian volumes outlined in the Environmental Assessment (EA). It was predicted that pedestrian volumes traveling northbound from Union Station would increase from 14,000 in 2008 to 24,000 in 2021 with 6,100 pedestrians traveling northwest from Union Station in the AM peak hours.

It is evident that current facilities are not able to meet the pedestrian demands at street level. Since the opening of the York GO Concourse in 2015 pedestrians regularly travel in mixed-traffic as sidewalks are at capacity.

Pedestrians walking in mixed-traffic due to sidewalk overcrowding. May 30, 2016 4:15 pm.

As part of our public realm strategy “Raising the Standard,” we identified the opportunity to partner with the City to improve York Street, and allocated capital cost-share towards permanent improvements. However, permanent reconstruction of York Street was delayed and subsequently deferred as part of the North-West PATH project and will not be reviewed until 2018. In the interim it is critical that we create a safe and high-quality public experience for pedestrians traveling to and from Union Station.
The Toronto Financial District BIA is committed to this partnership with the Toronto Entertainment District BIA and City of Toronto and has allocated resources towards the initial purchase, installation and ongoing seasonal maintenance of the planters on York Street and Front Street. **It is critical that the City prioritize the implementation of this project to ensure maximum benefits to the public during the peak pedestrian season.**

*Planters on Front Street which were a partnership between the Toronto Financial District BIA, Toronto Entertainment District BIA and City of Toronto.*

This is an opportunity to advance the City’s role as an innovator of public space and we look forward to this ongoing partnership through implementation and monitoring.

If you have any questions please contact Evan Weinberg, Policy and Advocacy Manager, at eweinberg@torontofinancialdistrict.com or 416-995-8825.

Best regards,

Grant Humes
Executive Director

cc: Councillor Bailão  
Councillor Cressy  
Councillor Davis  
Councillor Fletcher  
Councillor Fragedakis  
Councillor Matlow  
Councillor McConnell  
Councillor McMahon  
Councillor Mihevc  
Councillor Perks  
Councillor Wong-Tam  
Fiona Chapman, Manager of Pedestrian Projects