Hi,
I would like to present this as a document for the upcoming City Council meeting, relating to item PW24.9 (Bloor Bike Lane Pilot Project). It is an open letter from Toronto Physicians to Mayor Tory and all City councillors.

Peter Sakuls MD
Doctors For Safe Cycling
An open letter to all City Councillors from Toronto Physicians

A few weeks ago, almost 200 physicians signed an open letter to Mayor John Tory in support of making the Bloor Bike Lanes permanent.

We would like to share this open letter with all City Councillors prior to the upcoming November City Council vote on the Bloor Bike Lanes.

Dr. Peter Sakuls
Dr. Samantha Green
Dr. Sarah Kim
Dr. Eileen Cheung
Dr. Mary Gaudet
Dr. Marco Lo
Dr. Edward Xie
An Open Letter to Mayor John Tory from Toronto Physicians

To: His Worship Mayor John Tory  
Cc: Councillor Jaye Robinson (Chair, Public Works and Infrastructure committee)  
Councillor Stephen Holyday (Vice Chair, Public Works and Infrastructure committee)  
Councillor Christin Carmichael Greb  
Councillor Chin Lee  
Councillor Giorgio Mammoliti  
Councillor Anthony Perruzza

Dear Mayor Tory:

We are a group of nearly 200 physicians who live and work in the City of Toronto. We urge you to make the Bloor bike lanes permanent, and to extend the lanes east and west.

As physicians, we are reminded every day of the dangers faced by people riding bicycles in Toronto. We see the impact first hand in our emergency departments, trauma wards, and family practice clinics.

Our experience is affirmed by injury data. In 2016, there were more than 1,000 reported crashes between cars and people on bicycles. Since 2005, at least 33 cyclists have been killed on Toronto’s streets, including 5-year-old Xavier Morgan and 70-year-old Gary Sim in 2017.

These tragic incidents are not only predictable, they are preventable. Two-thirds of collisions in Toronto happen on roads with no cycle infrastructure. Separated bike lanes, also known as cycle tracks, are a proven solution: in New York City, bike lanes reduced collisions by 57% for cyclists (and 29% for pedestrians). A 2012 study from Toronto and Vancouver found that cycle tracks reduced injury risk by 89% compared to major streets without them. Bike lanes on other Toronto streets, such as College and Harbord, have been found to reduce both collisions and injuries. In addition, separated bike lanes improve the perception of safety, encouraging more people to ride bikes, which in turn creates a “safety in numbers” effect that further reduces the number of injuries and fatalities.

The Bloor bike lane pilot has been a huge success. Ridership has increased by more than 50%, to about 6,000 cyclists per day, including many families with young children. Safety perception has improved: before the bike lanes, only 3% of cyclists reported feeling “safe” or

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2 http://deathbytraffic.ca/
3 “Road to Health: Improving Walking and Cycling in Toronto”, Toronto Public Health. April 2012
5 Pedestrian and Cycling Safety in Toronto, Toronto Public Health, June 2015
“very safe” on Bloor; now 85% do. And public support is high, with 75% of local residents in support of the lanes.⁷

We applaud your initial support for, and evidence-based approach towards, the Bloor bike lane pilot project. We also commend your commitment to Vision Zero and improving road safety for all users. The bike lanes on Bloor Street are a key component to achieving this vision. Maintaining and further developing the lanes will send a message to all Torontonians that the City is committed to protecting its most vulnerable road users.

As a natural east-west corridor, Bloor is an ideal cycling route for people of all ages and abilities. It traverses through universities, schools, and residential and shopping neighbourhoods, presenting few barriers for people on bicycles. We urge you to ensure their safety by making the Bloor Street bike lane pilot permanent.

Yours sincerely,

Doctors for Safe Cycling

Samantha Green, MD CCFP, Family Medicine
Peter Sakuls, MD CCFP, Family Medicine
Sarah Kim, MD, CCFP(SEM), FCFP, DipSportMed(CASEM), MScCH, Sports & Exercise Medicine
Eileen Cheung, MD CCFP(EM), Emergency Medicine
Marco Lo, MD CCFP, Family Medicine
Tomislav Svoboda, MD CCFP FRCPC, Family Medicine
Edward Xie, MD CCFP(EM), Emergency Medicine
Mary Gaudet, MD, Family Medicine
Daniel Rosenfield, MD FRCPC, Pediatric Emergency Medicine
Alison Hall, MBBCh CCFP, Family Medicine
Anna Malek, MD CCFP, Family Medicine
Matthew Cruickshank, MD CCFP, Family Medicine
Doug Richards, MD Dip Sport Med, Sports & Exercise Medicine
Donald C Cole, MD MD FRCPC(C), Public Health & Preventive Medicine
Mike Benusic, MD CCFP, Public Health & Preventive Medicine
Alia Sunderjei, MD, Pediatric Emergency Medicine
Jabeen Fayyaz, MD, Pediatric Emergency Medicine
Trent Mizzi, MD, FRCPC, Pediatric Emergency Medicine
Alan Abeslohn, MB ChB, CCFP, FCFP, Family Medicine
Janet Lee-Evoy, MD, Psychiatry
Ritika Goel, MD MPH CCFP, Family Medicine
Amina Jabbar, MD, Geriatrics
Genevieve Rochon-Terry, MD, Family Medicine
Danyaal Raza, MD MPH CCFP, Family Medicine
Lucy Barker, MD, Psychiatry

⁷ Bloor Street Bike Lanes Pilot Project Update, City of Toronto, June 2017
Andrew Pinto, MD CCFP FRCPC MSc, Family Medicine & Public Health and Preventive Medicine
Thomas Man, MD CCFP, Family Medicine
Anne Biringer, MD CCFP FCFP, Family Medicine
Gary Bloch, MD CCFP FCFP, Family Medicine
Melanie Kalbfleisch, MD CCFP, Family Medicine
Christiane Dauphinais, PhD, MD, FCFP, Family Medicine
Eric Letovsky, MD FRCPC, Emergency Medicine
Michaela Beder, MD FRCPC, Psychiatry
Glen Bandiera, BASc, MD, MEd, FRCPC, Emergency Medicine
Rick Glazier, MD, CCFP, FCFP, Family Medicine
James Owen, MD CCFP, Family Medicine
Ahmed Bayoumi, MD, MSc, FRCPC, General Internal Medicine
Vanessa Redditt, MD CCFP, Family Medicine
Joshua Tepper, MD CCFP, Family Medicine
Sharon Zikman, MD FRCPC, Psychiatry
Nikki Bozinoff, MD CCFP, Family Medicine
Sharon Gazeley, MD CCFP FCFP, Family Medicine
Deborah Pink, MD FRCPC, Psychiatry
Wendell Block, MD, Family Medicine
Meb Rashid, MD CCFP, Family Medicine
Linda Weber, MD CCFP, Family Medicine
Larisa Eibisch, MD CCFP MPH, Family Medicine
Laura Pripstein, MD, Family Medicine
Amy Freedman, MD,CCFP, FCFP, Family Medicine
Hasan Sheikh, MD CCFP(EM), Emergency Medicine
Catherine Benes, MD, FRCPC(C), Psychiatry
Antoinette Wertman, MD, CCFP(EM), Family Medicine & Emergency Medicine
Katrina Hui, MD MS, Psychiatry
Jonathon Herriot, MD, Family Medicine
Jia Hu, MD CCFP FRCPC, Public Health & Preventive Medicine
Cassy Shitong Wang, MD, Family Medicine
Katie Zhu, MD, Psychiatry
Lucy Manchester, MD CCFP, Family Medicine
Katie Dorman, MD CCFP, Family Medicine
Mariam Naguib, medical student
Sara Mirali, medical student
Marisa de Souza, medical student
Sofia Solar Cafaggi, medical student
Jordan Lewis, medical student
Marisa Leon-Carlyle, MD, Psychiatry
Leeor Sommer, MD CCFP(EM), Emergency Medicine
Jim Sugiyama, MD CCFP, Family Medicine
Michael Peer, MD, FRCPC(C), Pediatrics
Sarah Follett, MD CCFP, Family Medicine
Ketan Vegda, MD FRCPC, Psychiatry
Lesley Barrin, MD FRCSC, General Surgery
Leslie Shanks, MD CCFP, Family Medicine
Angela Wong, MD, Family Medicine
Patrick Phillips, MD, Family Medicine
Tiffany Lam, medical student
Brent Crawford, MD MSc, Family Medicine
Nicholas Wang, MD, CCFP, Family Medicine
Mark Tessaro, MD, FRCPC, Pediatric Emergency Medicine
Gabrielle Freire, MD, FRCPC, Pediatric Emergency Medicine
Erin Rogers, MD, CCFP, Family Medicine
Vanessa Razack, MD, FRCPC, Pediatric Emergency Medicine
Melissa Melnitzer, MD, CCFP, Family Medicine
Elana Thau, MD, Pediatric Emergency Medicine
Alun Ackery, MD, FRCPC, Emergency Medicine
Gailrie Stephen, MD, Family Medicine
Susan Woolhouse, MD, MCISc, FCFP, Family Medicine
John Marshal, MD FRCSC, Trauma and Acute Care Surgery/Critical Care
Michael Roberts, MD FCFP, Family Medicine
Saad Ahmed, MD, Family Medicine
Dennis Cho, MD, FRCPC, Emergency Medicine
Samuel Vaillancourt, MD, FRCPC, Pediatric Emergency Medicine
Alina Toma, MD, FRCPC, Emergency Medicine & Critical Care
Ellen Lewis, RN, Clinical/Leader Manager-Trauma Neurosurgery Intensive Care Unit
Natalie Wolpert, MD, FRCPC, Emergency Medicine
Jeffrey Wassermann, MD, FRCPC, Anesthesiology
Meghan Daly, MD CCFP, Family Medicine
Gautam Goel, MD CCFP, Family Medicine
Isser Dubinsky, M.D. CCFP(EM), Emergency Medicine
Monica Branigan, MD, Palliative Care
Tara Kiran, MD, MSc, CCFP, FCFP, Family Medicine
Gary Burrows, MD FRCPC, Psychiatry
Daniel Rosenbaum, MD, Psychiatry
Sara Gray, MD, FRCPC, Emergency Medicine
James Lee, MD, FRCPC, Emergency Medicine
Karim Manji, MD, Family Physician
David Wyndham Lawrence, MD, CCFP(SEM), Dip Sport Med, Sports & Exercise Medicine
Carly Willemsma, MD CCFP, Emergency Medicine
Samuel Merrifield, MD, Family Medicine
Steven Marc Friedman, MD, MPH, CCFP(EM), Emergency Medicine
Kathleen Doukas, MD, CCFP, MScCH, Family Medicine
Dave Paskar, MD FRCSC, Trauma Surgery
Megan Saunders, MD, Family Medicine
Aaron Orkin, MD MSc MPH CCFP(EM) FRCPC, Emergency Medicine, Public Health and Preventive Medicine
Alun Ackery, MD, FRCPC, Emergency Medicine
Wendy Lai, MD, CCFP(EM), FCFP, Emergency Medicine
Ed Weiss, MD CCFP, Family Medicine
Suzanne Beno, MD, FRCPC, Pediatrics Trauma Director
Benjamin Watson, MD, Pediatric Emergency Medicine
Max Ben Yacov, MD FRCPC, Emergency Medicine
Lianne McLean, MB Bch, BAO, FRCPC, Pediatric Emergency Medicine
Heidi Walk, MD CCFP, Family Medicine, Psychotherapy
Roy Male, MDCM, FCFP, Family Medicine
Sarah Freeman, medical student
Victoria Pho, MD, Family Medicine
Sarah Andersen, MD, Internal Medicine
Nayana Somaiah, MBBS CCFP, Family Medicine
Georgina Wilcock, MB ChB FRCS(C), Obstetrics and Gynaecology
Natasha Crispino, MD, CCFP (PC), Family Medicine, Palliative Care
Esther Rosenthal, MD CCFP, Family Medicine
Angela Ho, MD, FRCPC, Psychiatry
Raymond Fung, MD, FRCPC, Endocrinology
Bruce Fage, MD, Psychiatry
Olivia Bottenheim, MDCM, CCFP, Family Medicine
Lisa Bell, MD CCFP, Family Medicine
Hal Braden, MD, Family Medicine
Andrew Arcand, MD CCFP(EM), Chief Department of Emergency Medicine, Markham
Stouffville Hospital
Adam Kaufman, MD CCFP(EM), Emergency Medicine and Family Medicine
Chantal Perrot, MD, CCFP, FCFP, MDPAC(C), Family Medicine
Azad Mashari, MD FRCPC, Anesthesiology
Stephen Fowler, MD, FIPA, Psychoanalysis
Marc c Gabel, MD, MPH, General Practice
Michael Jonathon Taylor, MD CCFP(EM), Emergency Medicine
Paul Hannam, MD CCFP(EM) FCFP, Emergency Medicine
Margarita Lam Antoniades, MD CCFP, Family Medicine
David Austin, MD FRCPC, Emergency Medicine
Wendy Thurston, MD BSc FRCP, Diagnostic Imaging
Debra Stein, MD FRCPC, Psychiatry
Kasia Stefanski, MD CCFP(EM), Emergency Medicine
Sonia Sabir, MD, CCFP(EM), FCFP, Emergency Medicine
Aleixo Muise, MD PhD FRCPC, Pediatrics
Joel Ross, MD CCFP(EM), Emergency Medicine & Coroner
Karen Andrews, RN BScN CCN(C), Cardiovascular Nursing
Patrick Wong, MD, CCFP-EM, Emergency Medicine and Family Medicine
Wendy Iseman, MD, CCFP-EM, Emergency Medicine
James Fairbairn, MDCM, CCFP-EM, Emergency Medicine
Aleixo Muise, MD PhD FRCPC, Pediatrics
Ilana Birnbaum, medical student
Brodie Nolan, MD, FRCPC, Emergency Medicine
Eileen Nicolle, MD, CCFP, Family Medicine
Edred Flak, MD, FRCPC, Psychiatry
David Ng, MD, CCFP(EM), Family Medicine and Emergency Medicine
Jonathan Fiddler, MD, CCFP, Family Medicine
Theresa Heese, MD, FCCFP, Emergency Medicine
Kristin Malcolm, MD, CCFP, Family Medicine
Lauren Welsh, MD, Family Medicine
Benjamin Chin-Yee, MD, Internal Medicine
Justin Losier, MD, CCFP, Family Medicine
Alison Charlebois, MD, CCFP, Family Medicine
James Deutsch, MD, PhD, FRCPC, Psychiatry
Elia Abi-Jaoude, MD, FRCPC, Psychiatry
Rosa Magalios, MD, FRCPC, Obstetrics & Gynecology
Rebecca Wallace, MD, CCFP, Family Medicine
Carlye Jensen, MD CCFP(EM), Emergency Medicine
(Richard) Myles Lipton, MD, General Practice
M. Louise Walker, MD, CCFP(SEM), FCFP. Dip. Sport Med., Sports Medicine
Doreen Yee, MD, FRCPC, MBA, Trauma Leader, Anesthesiology
Mary Gaudet, MD, Family Medicine
Latif Murji, MD, Family Medicine
Beverley Davis, MD, CCFP, Family Medicine
Jessica Wilson, MD, Family Medicine
Jillian Baker, MD, MSc, FRCPC, Pediatrics and Hematology
Jennifer McCabe, MD CCFP, Family Medicine
Heather Wray, MD CCFP (SEM) Dip Sport Med (CASEM), Primary Care Sports & Exercise Medicine
Jame Meindok, MD, FRCPC, Radiology
Sarah Marshall, NP, Trauma and Acute Care Surgery