

VIA EMAIL

February 25, 2019

His Worship John Tory
Mayor of Toronto
City Hall, 2nd Floor
100 Queen St. W.
Toronto, Ontario
M5H 2N2

Dear Mr. Mayor:

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) is a national, not-for-profit, non-partisan organization representing 110,000 independently-owned small- and medium-sized businesses across the country, with 42,000 of those in Ontario, and more than 3,500 here in Toronto.

We've been hearing increasingly from small business owners on King Street that the customer spending data for the King Street Pilot Project published to date does not reflect what they've been experiencing on the ground, so we have a few questions about the data collection.

Based on the project's Dashboard Updates, it appears that the data includes only businesses that use Moneris to process payments, yet many business owners have told us that they use a different payment processor. **Does the City plan to collect data from other payment processors to ensure the data is more complete?**

Furthermore, as far as we can tell, the published data is available in aggregate only. CFIB members have raised concerns that the data includes sales from recession-proof large retailers and chains and the PATH underground network, as well as online transactions.

If this is the case, could the City provide data breakouts in its future King Street Pilot Project reporting to separate online and in-person sales, as well as sales by business size and sector (e.g. small storefront dining establishments)? This would help to better illustrate the project's impact on the bricks-and-mortar businesses in the area.

Whether on King Street or any street, small businesses create more than just jobs. They are also the foundation for unique and vibrant communities, offering “out of the box” choices for customers and shaping the character of neighbourhoods.

We strongly encourage Council to seriously consider the economic side of the issue before a final decision is made on the future of the King Street Pilot Project or any similar projects. Greater detailed economic data would provide a clearer and deeper picture of the project’s impact. Small businesses have much less financial runway than their larger counterparts to absorb the higher costs of doing business that they already face. Losses from reduced customer traffic would greatly exacerbate the problem.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We look forward to hearing back from you and meeting with you in future to share our knowledge of small business priorities and concerns in general.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Julie Kwiecinski
Director of Provincial Affairs