

May 27, 2020

Dear Mayor Tory and Toronto City Councillors,

Please register my name for the public record as being in support of the item 2020.CC21.20, Cycling Network Plan Installations: Bloor West Bikeway Extension & ActiveTO Projects. An enhanced vision for “complete streets” across Toronto will benefit all residents including those in my Beaches-East York communities.

Protected cycling infrastructure projects are essential for the safety of Toronto students, schools, and families. As a Trustee with the Toronto District School Board I know the challenges that our Beaches-East York students face being active in the community. In the TDSB we value the ability of students to attend their local community school, where they can walk and bike easily from home. And yet many families feel safer in a car and drive their children relatively short distances to school. School administrators are put at risk by having to manage congestion and driver behavior in front of their schools. School staff and families work hard to promote active routes to school, to educate children and families about the benefits of active travel, and to help families to have the confidence to engage in cycling and active transit. Safe infrastructure for cycling in our communities would be a significant support for our community schools.

As a member of the Ontario Active School Travel Council I have been working with experts from across the Province to support and promote initiatives like item 2020.CC21.20 – infrastructure that improves both the physical safety and the feeling of safety for families. We know that children learn better when they are active and can use active means to get to school. We know that school zone “drop off” traffic creates congestion, pollution, and significant safety risks for our students. We know that helping families feel safe is a critical step in getting them to adopt active travel to school. The ActiveTO vision aligns with the OAST Council’s work to promote active routes to school and 2020.CC21.20 is a critical step in creating safer streets.

We know that the percentage of students walking and biking to school, even when they live within easy walking distance, has decreased dramatically over the last few decades. Our school and community based education initiatives are creating a greater awareness for the environment and emphasize active, healthy lifestyles, yet driving to schools remains a significant problem. Parents simply perceive driving as safer and without safe cycling infrastructure this perception is unlikely to change. As the governing body for the City of Toronto you as Councillors have the ability to vote yes to this exciting opportunity and make our city streets safer for all. Keep in mind that protected cycling infrastructure and safer intersections along Bloor-Danforth will provide active travel safety for 60 schools, as well as countless childcare, after-school care, and youth programs.

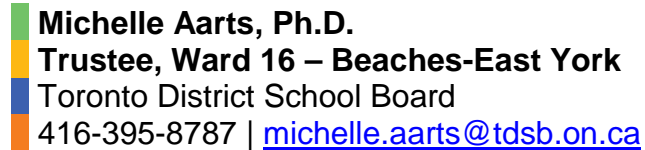
As a parent and resident of Beaches-East York I welcome the work outlined in item 2020.CC21.20, which will support ‘complete streets’ in our community. I will feel more confident when my teens go out the door that they have access to safe routes for cycling in the

community. These safe infrastructures will help us teach our youngest how to ride her bike. This infrastructure will support our wonderful local businesses by making the streets safe and welcoming. When residents feel welcomed they are more likely to venture out, explore new areas, and discover new businesses.

On May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020 please vote yes on item 2020.CC21.20. This is a critical step in making the lives of tens of thousands of Toronto students, schools and families safer, healthier and greener.

I also support the earlier letter submitted by Samuel Perry, which outlines that 2020.CC21.20 is a great first step that could, and should, lead the way to more extensive infrastructure that supports active transit for students and residents across our City. Imagine an entire network of cycling infrastructure that allows students in any area of our city to get to bike to school safely! I encourage you to find more ways to work with your school trustees, neighbourhood groups, and business associations on this greater vision for complete streets across our city.

Best Regards,

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