

September 25, 2020

Toronto City Council
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON
M5H 2N2

Dear Members of Council,

RE: INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE REQUEST FOR BIKE LANES IN MIDTOWN ALONG YONGE STREET (IE15.11)

We are writing in response to the above noted item which was adopted at the Infrastructure and Environment Committee on September 17, 2020. We understand that through this motion, the General Manager of Transportation Services has been instructed to study a temporary bikeway along Yonge Street from Bloor to Lawrence Avenue.

This proposed bikeway would run through our Yonge + St. Clair Business Improvement Area (BIA), which represents over 100 individual property owners and over 450 businesses. The Yonge + St. Clair area employs more than 14,000 people, contributing to the economic health and prosperity of our community and the city as a whole. Yonge Street is our 'main street', and is an active transportation corridor that accommodates a significant volume of road users, below ground subway riders, pedestrians, and servicing vehicles.

Accordingly, we respectfully request that the General Manager, as part of the study process for a potential Yonge Street bikeway, address the following concerns and recommendations of our Board and BIA membership:

1. **Stakeholder Consultation:** we ask that the study process allow for appropriate consultation with our businesses and property owners, to ensure that any future roadway conditions accommodate our businesses and their operational needs.
2. **Maintaining Servicing, Loading and Delivery Capacity:** many of our Yonge Street businesses lack rear laneway servicing, necessitating the use of curb-side access along Yonge Street for their deliveries and drop-offs. We kindly request that Transportation Services ensures that servicing, loading, and deliveries for Yonge Street businesses are maintained and accommodated.

3. **CafeTO Prioritization:** the economic well-being of our small and local businesses needs to be top-of-mind as part of this study. COVID-19 has caused significant interruption to their normal operations, and programs like CafeTO have helped restaurants and bars stay afloat through this difficult time. We are eager to see the CafeTO program return in 2021 and recognize Councillor Matlow's support of this as well. The study must ensure that CafeTO curb lane closures can continue to operate alongside a bikeway in a safe, well-designed manner.

4. **Traffic Impact:** the study needs to take into consideration impacts on vehicular traffic, to ensure appropriate traffic flows, and to keep our roadways safe and functional for all users. While this may be an obvious point, our section of Yonge Street is in a state of significant change with ongoing redevelopment activity. Construction and added traffic pressure will create an environment that necessitates a detailed review of how bike lanes can work safely in this context.

The Yonge + St. Clair BIA is excited to explore future opportunities for Yonge Street and to work with the City in creating a safe and functional environment for all road users, including cyclists. In fact, the BIA's own Streetscape Master Plan envisions a future Yonge Street condition with bike lanes. But getting to that point should be a well-thought-out endeavor that considers the needs of all stakeholders.

We appreciate your consideration of the above, and look forward to working with our local Councillors and City Staff on this important project.

Kind Regards,



Mackenzie Keast
Executive Director
Yonge + St. Clair BIA

- cc. Councillor Josh Matlow, Ward 12
Councillor Mike Layton, Ward 11
Councillor James Pasternak, Chair, Infrastructure and Environment Committee
Barbara Gray, General Manager, Transportation Services
Michael Williams, General Manager, Economic Development and Culture
John Kiru, Executive Director, TABIA