



June 19, 2020

To: Executive Committee

Re: EX14.1 - CaféTO - Increasing Outdoor Dining Space for Toronto Restaurants and Bars

Dear Executive Committee Members,

Walk Toronto strongly supports the CaféTO proposal. Enabling restaurant patios in curb lanes and retail plaza parking lots will improve the experience of walking in Toronto and encourage more people to walk.

Pedestrian clearway

Our primary concern is that a clear, wide and straight path is always preserved for pedestrians. It is even more important during the Covid-19 pandemic, to allow pedestrians to maintain a safe physical distance and avoid crowding.

To that end, we are pleased that the staff report notes the importance of ensuring that “General safety and accessibility requirements are met to ensure that sidewalk users have adequate space to travel.”

We are also pleased that the specific guidelines highlight the pedestrian clearway and note “A minimum pedestrian clearway of 2.1 metres is required.”

In our experience, it is common for restaurant owners to encroach on the clearway in various ways to enhance their patios. It will be vital for bylaw enforcement officers to be vigilant and to work with restaurants pro-actively (not just in response to complaints) to ensure the required pedestrian clearway is maintained. It is also important that enforcement is done equitably and does not engage in profiling.

Sidewalk extensions

As restrictions ease, we can expect an increasing number of pedestrians on Toronto’s crowded sidewalks. We urge the City to establish continuous sidewalk extensions on main streets with narrow sidewalks. These can include patios but can also include parklets for sitting and spaces for pedestrians to step off the sidewalk in order to keep physical distance from others or to stand and conduct conversations, etc. With the combination of CurbTO and CaféTO extensions into curb lanes, it makes sense to close off entire curb lanes to vehicles to provide needed space for pedestrians.

Thank you,

Dylan Reid

On behalf of Walk Toronto