



December 7, 2021

Executive Committee  
City Hall  
100 Queen Street W  
Toronto, ON  
M5H 2N2

## **Re: EX28.14 Ontario Line Downtown Stations - Temporary Road Closures and Community Impacts**

Over the past two months, I have expressed my opposition to Metrolinx about their aggressive takeover of public streets, sidewalks, and parks for years ahead. The downtown, especially at Yonge at Queen, welcomes millions of visitors and commuters. The local businesses are popular destinations that should not be made to suffer as a result of poorly managed construction. We have seen what construction looks like with Metrolinx at the helm as the Eglinton Crosstown has devastated their local businesses. Anecdotally, I've heard that businesses along Eglinton have felt more secure during the pandemic, due to government financial support, than through the entirety of the build-out of the Eglinton crosstown. Still incomplete.

No contractor should ever be given absolute permission to shut down one of the biggest downtowns in Canada without deep scrutiny and adequate conditions.

I am very supportive of new transit; however, the roll-out process from Metrolinx and the Province has been far from ideal. I have repeatedly asked them for stronger community consultation, more consideration for businesses, and greater accountability to ensure the disruptions will be minimal.

### **Recommendations:**

1) Direct City Manager and General Manager Transportation Services to report on road safety impacts for vulnerable road users through the downtown and report back in February 2022, including but not limited to:

- a) Bike lanes, cycle tracks, and connection;
- b) Sidewalks and pedestrian pathways;
- c) Priority signals for transit;
- d) Advance and clear communication to the local community

2. Direct General Manager of Transportation Services to include a requirement for Paid-Duty Officers and/or Traffic Agents and/or Trained Traffic Control Persons at each construction site to facilitate safe passage for all, especially vulnerable road users.



3. Direct General Manager of Transportations to record and monitor traffic counts and movement, public safety at intersections and sidewalks, all complaints and resolutions, and to report back on findings and additional recommendations for adjustments on a bi-annually basis to City Council with a written quarterly update to the local Councillor's office, to include but not limited to:
  - a) Vehicle movements, and travel patterns;
  - b) Pedestrian counts;
  - c) Cyclist movements and travel patterns
  
4. Direct the General Manager of Transportation Services to request an annotated traffic management plan from Metrolinx in advance of any procurement process or approvals from the City of Toronto, including but not limited to:
  - a) Construction vehicle travel paths to and from the site, and pick-up locations;
  - b) Cycling connections;
  - c) Pedestrian movements
  
5. Direct the City Manager, and Chief Financial Treasurer to provide a memorandum with estimated costs to Metrolinx and Project Co. for additional staffing requirements to be funded by Metrolinx, outside of the dedicated work zone coordinator and Sr Project Manager, Construction Coordination for Metrolinx Subway Projects in the downtown to ensure timely response to complaints and service enhancement requests from local residents and stakeholders as a result of the construction and traffic impacts of the Ontario Line and to report back to City Council in February 2022 on the outcome of this request for cost reimbursement.
  
6. Direct the City Manager, and General Manager of Transportation Services to require Project Co to ensure timely responsive service to local residents and stakeholders with respect to each construction site and report back to City Council in February 2022, including:
  - a) Actively patrol each construction site;
  - b) Be available 24 hours, 7 days a week;
  - c) Provide real-time response to complaints raised by residents and local stakeholders
  
7. City Council request Metrolinx in consultation with the City Manager, and Chief Financial Officer to develop a framework of subsidizing and reimbursing businesses impacted by the construction of the Ontario Line in an effort to support downtown recovery, including but not limited to:
  - a) Commercial rent subsidies;
  - b) Deferring, delaying, or adjusting property tax rates;
  - c) Something signage and wayfinding
  - d) Advertising in all major media outlets and social media.
  
8. City Council request Metrolinx in consultation with the City Manager and the General Manager of Economic Development and Culture and BIAs to design and broadly promote a Support the Downtown campaign wherein residents and visitors to the downtown can enjoy rebates, subsidies, financial



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discounts when they shop at businesses impacted by the Ontario Line construction, and report back on an implementation plan in January 2022 and share the financial costs for reimbursement of such a plan with the Province of Ontario and Metrolinx.

9. Direct the City Manager, and General Manager Transportation Services, Chief Planner and Executive Director of City Planning, and the Executive Director of Transit Expansion in consultation with local BIAs and the ward Councillor to require enhanced streetscape improvements to the right of way as part of the construction of the Ontario Line, to be funded by Metrolinx and the Province of Ontario, including but not limited to:

- a) Widening sidewalks;
- b) Installing improved cycle tracks;
- c) Planting trees, and planters
- d) Other streetscape improvements.

10. City Council request Metrolinx, in consultation with the General Manager of Transportation Services and Executive Director of Transit Expansion, to work with local BIAs, Urban Design, and the ward Councillor to minimize disruption and beautify the road closures during the multi-year construction period, funded by Metrolinx and the Province of Ontario, including but not limited to:

- a) Public art
- b) Planters and other barriers that are not concrete
- c) Any other additions to improve pedestrian wayfinding and user experience.

11. Direct the General Manager Transportation Services to establish a Construction Hub in the downtown area to be led by a Senior Project Manager who will ensure coordination between Metrolinx works, City-led projects, private developer works, and utility works and report annually to City Council.

Respectfully submitted,

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