

April 14, 2021

To Infrastructure and Environment Committee Chair and Members:

Re: Supporting Precarious Delivery Workers and Bike Couriers in Toronto

E-commerce and app-based food and goods delivery is on the rise in Toronto. It has become essential in the pandemic to allow people to stay home and stay safe, but it is clear that this is also a greater long term shift in our economy.

Delivery couriers are considered essential workers, but they face significant challenges and often struggle to make a living wage because they are misclassified as independent contractors and are paid per delivery.

Being able to find car and bike parking easily and avoiding being ticketed is key to being able to survive financially since completing their job within a timely manner impacts the revenue they obtain.

With the increasing number of deliveries, couriers are struggling to find legal parking and are being ticketed at an increasing rate. When drivers return to their vehicles with a ticket on their dash, this adds complications to their already challenging jobs. An entire day's worth of pay could be wiped out as the result of a parking ticket, since it is a cost the driver has to pay, and is not covered by the delivery companies.

Delivery drivers have started a petition that details these challenges, and proposes the creation of a special permit, similar to the City of Ottawa, that allows for short term parking for certain delivery drivers in no-parking zones.

Lack of parking also leads to safety risks for driver and bike couriers. Couriers who hope to make their deliveries swiftly are sometimes unable to park close to their destination, which can increase risk of personal injury due to theft, being assaulted, and/or carrying heavy items.

Our city needs to recognize the challenges faced by essential delivery workers in these changing times, and to act to change our policies to reflect the new reality of delivery work in Toronto.

Recommendations:

1. Request the General Manager, Transportation Services, to explore the possibility of offering a special permit that allows delivery vehicles to park temporarily in areas that are designated as a 'no parking zone', and in consultation with organizations that represent delivery workers and report back in the fourth quarter of 2021 to the Infrastructure and Environment Committee.
2. Request the General Manager, Transportation Services, develop and communicate a plan to increase bicycle parking in high-delivery areas in Toronto

Councillor
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Thank you,

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