



CONSULATE OF SWEDEN

Toronto

Toronto, January 7, 2021

CITY OF TORONTO

City Hall, 100 Queen Street West
TORONTO, ON, M5H 2N2

Attn. Infrastructure & Environment Committee

Re: yongeTOMorrow - Municipal Class Environmental Assessment on Yonge Street from Queen Street to College/Carlton Stree

Dear Committee Members,

Throughout the review and planning process for Yonge Street and the yongeTOMorrow project, the Consulate General of Sweden has followed and participated in the conversation around this exciting project. Yonge Street is THE street in Toronto; arguably also in Canada. The whole world knows of Yonge Street.

A watermain from the 1880's may the spark for the review of Yonge Street. However, current and future use of the street as well as the enormous growth along, and in its vicinity, requires bold decisions regarding the street design. We understand the last time work of the same magnitude took place was in the mid 50's with the construction of the subway line.

Avoiding any major reconstruction in the next generations, it is important the new Yonge Street is future-proofed to the largest extent possible. Consequently, the street design must be very flexible to handle future changes in traffic pattern without any need of major reconstruction, be it more pedestrians and cyclists or fewer cars and autonomous vehicles. While this trend will happen over time, already now there are, and will be, hourly and seasonal variations of how the street is being used.

With more pedestrians on wider sidewalks, it is important that all users on Yonge Street are safe. Toronto has adopted Vision Zero, a concept initiated in Sweden more than 20 years ago. We think more can be done and would be delighted to assist in establishing contact with authorities in Sweden.

Traffic safety can also be improved by reducing unnecessary traffic. Waste management is an excellent example. A doubling of the population and employment along Yonge Street is expected by 2041. One can also expect more visitors to the area, i.e. tourists, shoppers and festival goers. More people will result in more waste. At festivals, litter bins are often over-full.

With traditional waste collection, more waste equals many more garbage trucks, servicing public space, residential and commercial buildings. A vacuum waste collection system with underground pipes, will eliminate garbage truck traffic with up to 90 percent, also reducing the GHG-emissions with roughly the same percentage. We encourage the City to seriously consider this technology, as it will also result in a cleaner city core. No over-full litter bins. The same system can handle public, residential and commercial users.

The City of Bergen, Norway decided a few years ago to install such a system in their city centre. They plan to eventually cover the whole city. In Bergen, the installation of vacuum waste is coordinated with the installation of pipes for the district energy system. Please, visit the following link for more information on Bergen's decision: <https://www.envacgroup.com/casestudies/bergen/>

The Consulate General of Sweden would be pleased to assist the Infrastructure & Environment Committee and the City of Toronto in any way we can. Over the years, we have arranged visits to Sweden for representatives from Toronto. Similarly, individuals from various levels of government in Sweden have been warmly received here by Toronto councillors and staff. We think these contacts can be developed further, benefitting both sides.

Please, feel free to contact me at your convenience, either by email, lars.henriksson@swedishconsulates.ca or on my direct line, tel. 416 402 6093.

Very truly yours,


Lars Henriksson
Honorary Consul General

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