



**Toronto Youth Cabinet**  
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RE: IE20.12: ActiveTO - Lessons Learned from 2020 and Next Steps for 2021

Members of the Toronto Youth Cabinet have always been strong proponents of active transportation in our city. The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the City taking bold action to ensure Torontonians continued to be able to traverse the city safely through the ActiveTO program. Having read the report submitted to the Infrastructure and Environment Committee on March 9, 2021, we are hopeful that Council will continue to take decisive action in ensuring increased investments are made in promoting active transportation in Toronto throughout the year.

Investing in active transportation will continue to have positive impacts on the health of Torontonians, increased spending on main street businesses and allow the city to meet its climate targets under the current TransformTO plan. We are hopeful that the announcement of \$400 million in federal funding for active transportation projects will allow the city to continue to meet the needs of its residents.

The TYC is strongly in favour of installing ActiveTO bike lanes on Yonge Street between Bloor and Davisville and supports extending the lanes even further north, if possible. The TYC is a member of the ActiveTO Yonge Street stakeholder committee and was present at the meeting held last week where concerns were raised about the safety of cyclists and pedestrians on Yonge Street.

As we continue to work through the pandemic as a collective, we support calls for Major Road Closures to allow all residents to enjoy physical activity while maintaining staying socially distanced. It is, however, unfortunate to see that there are no recommendations made for the return of the Lake Shore Blvd. W. closure, which was by far the most popular route last year, attracting an average of 22,000 people per day. We support closing Lake Shore Blvd. W. again this year. Weekend major road closures should be expanded to additional streets, including those outside downtown and should be made permanent. Now is the time for Council to take decisive action and bold steps to ensure active transportation remains a permanent fixture and option for all while also ensuring that increased attention to neighbourhoods outside the downtown core that do not have adequate access to open spaces.

While steps are taken to ensure Torontonians have access to spaces to exercise while maintaining their physical distance, we must stress the importance of taking into consideration the need to make investments that ensure access to other spaces are made to encourage continued activity throughout the winter months. As a city that boasts numerous trails, the lack of winter maintenance along these paths will continue to limit access and serve as a detriment

to the mental and physical health of residents. These spaces must continue to remain safe and accessible year-round to promote an active lifestyle.

We are hopeful that following the report and recommendations made by the committee, the necessary steps will be taken to ensure ActiveTO continues to grow across the city while also ensuring further investment in active transportation, public consultation, and the implementation of adequate safety measures.

Sincerely,

Toronto Youth Cabinet