

Toronto Parking Authority (TPA)
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RE: Increasing Access and Equity of Bike Share Toronto

Walk and Cycle York South-Weston is a ward advocacy group composed of people who live, work, and play in Ward 5 York South-Weston and are interested in building a healthier, safer community. The group is dedicated to making it possible for residents to get around their neighbourhoods and their community using active transportation, including walking, cycling, and rolling.

Bike Share is an incredible service that has grown in popularity year over year. New stations have expanded the reach of the system and we are thrilled to have Bike Share stations in Ward 5! Yet, Bike Share is not accessible to everyone in Toronto due to limitations such as cost, location, and trip length. This is particularly true in areas outside the downtown core such as Ward 5, where the average household income is 34% less than the city average¹. Therefore, we are writing to the Toronto Parking Authority to request the following three changes to improve access and accessibility of Bike Share Toronto:

1. Introduce a low-income pass
 2. Expand Bike Share in Ward 5 and across the city
- 1. Increase the ride duration from 30 minutes to allow for longer trips**
Introduce a Low-Income Pass

We urge the City of Toronto to develop a program to introduce a low-income, barrier-free access pass for Bike Share bikes in Toronto. The introduction of this pass will help unlock this public asset for the most underserved communities for whom the upfront and ongoing costs of bicycle ownership or a traditional Bike Share membership may be inaccessible.

Low-income residents may be unable to afford the cost of both an annual Bike Share membership and a monthly TTC pass, for example, though both systems could greatly enhance one another's service. Mobility as a Service (MaaS) envisions a more integrated service delivery model for a range of public and active transportation modes. Making it easier to pick and choose

¹ City of Toronto, [2018 Ward Profile Ward 05 York South-Weston](#), 2018.

between transportation modes can make them more competitive with vehicle ownership: simply because it's just as easy and quick to use TTC and Bike Share to get to a destination as it would be to own and drive a car.² The TTC plans to implement a MaaS strategy in their five-year plan, which is intended to run from 2020 to 2022.³

All residents deserve to have access to affordable, physically distant, and healthy ways of getting around. Hamilton's Everyone Rides Initiative, for example, has been recognised as an award-winning equity initiative that includes a bike share basics intro that can be used as a blueprint for success for subsidised memberships.⁴ The City of Toronto's 'Welcome Policy' could be a way to pilot a low-income Bike Share program.⁵

2. Expand Bike Share in Ward 5 and across the city

We have been encouraged by the introduction of five new Bike Share stations in or very near Ward 5 and even more across the city. We look forward to the future expansion of more stations, particularly near future transit hubs along Eglinton and in the commercial core of the ward, such as Weston Village and Mount Dennis. We would be pleased to provide feedback on future station locations.

3. Increase the ride duration from 30 minutes to allow for longer trips

The current 30-minute time limit for Bike Share trips is adequate in downtown Toronto; however, increasing the time limit to 45 minutes could help make Bike Share a strong commuting option for residents in Ward 5. Increasing the ride duration time would allow for longer trips within the more spread out neighbourhood and to access key destinations outside of the neighbourhood. Bike share systems in cities such as Montreal, New York, and Chicago all have 45 minute time limits. With Bike Share's expansion outside of the downtown core, a trip limit increase will make for a more appealing option in the inner suburbs.

² Warwick Goodall, Tiffany Dovey Fishman, Justine Bornstein, and Brett Bonthron, "[The Rise of Mobility as a Service](#)," *Deloitte Review*, Issue 20, 2017.

³ Toronto Transit Commission, [5-Year Service Plan & 10-Year Outlook: Next Stop. Even Better. 2020-2024 & beyond](#), 2019.

⁴ Everyone Rides "provides subsidized memberships to individuals who identify that they are in financial need of one." The program seeks to make Bike Share more equitable by improving bicycle access, subsidizing the cost of membership, providing educational resources, and conducting outreach. [Everyone Rides](#).

⁵ City of Toronto, "[Help with the Cost of Relocation](#)."

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Walk and Cycle York South-Weston urges the City of Toronto to undertake this work to expand the Bike Share project to serve a wider proportion of the city's population. These actions will contribute to a greener, more equitable, and more flexible transportation system across the city.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Warm regards,

Walk and Cycle York South-Weston

Supported by:

Mount Dennis Neighborhood Centre

Weston King Neighborhood Centre

Weston and Mount Dennis Renaissance Project (OSN)

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