



April 20, 2021

Toronto and East York Community Council
City Hall, Committee Room 1
100 Queen Street West
Toronto ON M5H 2N2

Dear Chair and Council Members,

RE: Request to temporarily close a portion of St. Nicholas St. from Phipps St. to St. Joseph St.

As we all know, the pandemic has hit our small, independent storefront businesses disproportionately hard. Many have already closed and the Canadian Federation of Independent Business reports that one in seven small businesses are at risk of going under as a result of COVID-19.

The owners of Bar Volo, a family-owned Italian restaurant located at 17 St. Nicholas Street, reached out to my office in desperation. After a year of pandemic lockdown that prohibits indoor dining, like many restaurants in Toronto, Bar Volo, is on the verge of closing. They are in rare placement as a restaurant that directly fronts onto a laneway with no sidewalks and no conventional outdoor patio space. The survival of Bar Volo is now contingent on having an outdoor patio space to operate safely.

I have worked with Transportation Staff to explore all possible options and believe that a temporary road closure of St. Nicholas Street from Phipps Street to St. Joseph Street may be possible to safely accommodate the CafeTO permit for Bar Volo.

Therefore, I recommend that:

1. The Toronto and East York Community Council request the Acting Director, Traffic Management, Transportation Services, to further investigate the feasibility of a temporary road closure of St. Nicholas Street from Phipps Street to St. Joseph Street to vehicular traffic for the duration of the 2021 CaféTO program and report back on the outcome of this review to the May meeting of the Toronto and East York Community Council.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam
Ward 13, Toronto Centre