

From: [Amanda O' Rourke](#)
To: [councilmeeting](#)
Subject: My comments for 2022.IE30.19 on June 15, 2022 City Council
Date: June 14, 2022 8:24:34 AM

To the City Clerk:

Please add my comments to the agenda for the June 15, 2022 City Council meeting on item 2022.IE30.19, Revisiting ActiveTO Interventions on Lake Shore Boulevard West

I understand that my comments and the personal information in this email will form part of the public record and that my name will be listed as a correspondent on agendas and minutes of City Council or its committees. Also, I understand that agendas and minutes are posted online and my name may be indexed by search engines like Google.

Comments:

Mayor John Tory and Toronto City Council

Toronto City Hall

100 Queen Street West

Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

RE: IE30.19 - Revisiting ActiveTO Interventions on Lake Shore Boulevard West

Dear Mayor Tory and members of City Council,

Thank you for your leadership on introducing the extremely popular ActiveTO program in 2020 amidst the global pandemic. Active TO provided important mental and physical health benefits to Torontonians of all ages, backgrounds and abilities.

ActiveTO addresses a latent demand for more a safe and inviting space for people to use. Active TO is a win-win-win and aligns with city policy and priorities that focus on meeting our sustainability, health and equity goals. We strongly encourage City Council to build off the successes and positive momentum generated by ActiveTO that in many ways exemplified the more sustainable, people focused, and healthy city we aspire to.

We encourage City Council to look beyond the ActiveTO major road openings and consider the evolution of what Lake Shore W and the Western Waterfront should become and what a more regular Open Streets/ActiveTO program could achieve for millions of Toronto residents seeking more free, fun, recreational opportunities this summer and fall.

We urge City Council to implement the following measures:

1. Create a new temporary pilot on Lake Shore West this summer from a road that is dangerous by design, to a more inclusive lake front street with two curb lanes repurposed for active transportation all the time using robust, crash-proof jersey barriers.

There are many good reasons to reallocate a portion of the space on Lake Shore Blvd with temporary infrastructure:

- It doesn't require Paid Duty or Traffic Agent resources
- It creates separated space and reduces conflicts for people using active travel at

different speeds on the already congested Martin Goodman Trail

- It will improve safety significantly by reducing travel lanes and speeds, helping ensure Lake Shore can operate like the local lakefront road it is while maintaining motor vehicle traffic in both directions
- It will improve public space and the beachfront experience, and will allow people to think about the Western lakeshore in a different way
- It can be adjusted and removed if it is not popular, but like most of the temporary bike lane projects implemented under the ActiveTO program, we believe the street will function better for everyone if we move toward a Complete Street approach for our local roads

2. Create a predictable and consistent schedule for ActiveTO/Open Streets (e.g ideally every Saturday or Sunday mornings to early afternoon, or monthly from July-October) and promote these events early, which would provide residents with opportunities to participate and time for people driving to plan for other routes to exit/enter the city. Based on our international experience in running and launching open streets programs a consistent and predictable route that connects diverse neighbourhoods across the city is ideal. Working in partnership with Open Streets TO, an organization with a successful track record in running street closures on Yonge and the Bloor/Danforth Corridor would mean many more Torontonians could enjoy our streets as a public space. To meet our ambitious climate, health, and equity goals we must use our streets (the largest public space in our city- a space that belongs to ALL Torontonians not just those who have access to a car) as assets, as a space for supporting belonging, social connection, joy, and physical activity. All of which are even more important as our city recovers from the pandemic.

3. Ensure Lake Shore W becomes a Complete Street as part of the long-term Western Waterfront Master Plan, which is currently under review and sets out to include dedicated space for people walking, wheeling, cycling, and using public transit.

Last month, a person biking on the Martin Goodman Trail was struck by someone who lost control of their car on Lake Shore Blvd, and suffered life-altering injuries. Five year old Xavier Morgan was killed in a similarly harrowing nearby stretch of Lake Shore Blvd W. It is clear that Lake Shore Blvd operates more like a highway adjacent to the Gardiner Expressway, than the local lakefront street that it is. Critiques of this program have conflated Lake Shore with the Gardiner: Lake Shore West is not a highway, it is our only western lakefront road and it is currently dangerous by design. But it doesn't have to be this way. We can reimagine a Lake Shore Blvd that will work well for people driving, biking, walking, wheeling, and using mobility devices. We can accommodate the various ways we Torontonians get around and also create the lakefront experience everyone deserves. No one complains about how serene the eastern waterfront is in the Beaches; residents in the western part of the city deserve that too.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,
Amanda O'Rourke, Executive Director 8 80 Cities

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