



Safe streets
Healthy city
Vibrant voice

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June 10, 2022

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. Providing safe, healthy, affordable, and zero-emission ways to stay active and move about on our western waterfront has helped thousands of people of all ages and abilities stay healthy and connected outside, and has resulted in a steady increase in trips made by bike during the pandemic and beyond, as noted in the 2020 ActiveTO report.

As people are returning to post-pandemic life, it is crucial now more than ever to design streets for the traffic patterns we want to see instead of accommodating traffic patterns that have trapped us in an unhealthy, unsustainable and costly loop. Thousands of residents who don't have a lakefront cottage to escape to on weekends, who attend sporting events and festivals by bike or by transit, or who drive to visit their families and friends sometimes but also bike with family and friends other times, they want and deserve to use the waterfront space, free from speeding vehicles, unbearable traffic noise, and smog that comes from Lake Shore Blvd. ActiveTO has proven that when you provide a safe and inviting space for people to use, they come in droves. It is time to look beyond the ActiveTO major road openings and consider the evolution of what Lake Shore W and the Western Waterfront should become.

We urge City Council to implement the following measures:

- 1. Create a new temporary pilot on Lake Shore West this summer to transform 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

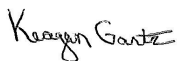
2. Create a predictable schedule for ActiveTO Road Openings (e.g. last Saturday of each month) and promote these events early, which would provide residents with opportunities to participate and time for people driving to plan for other routes to exit/enter the city. **We also recommend looking for other Open Streets opportunities in the city, including the return of Open Streets TO** to downtown Yonge, Bloor, and Danforth ave in tandem with ActiveTO and CafeTO initiatives.

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. By implementing the changes noted above, we can create the future waterfront we want to see, and we can start now.

Sincerely,



Keagan Gartz
Executive Director

Cycle Toronto is a member-supported charitable organization that works to make Toronto a healthy, safe and vibrant cycling city for all. We are focused on advocacy, education and encouragement, as we work to shape policy and infrastructure, and build community to transform our city's cycling culture.