



May 24, 2022

Infrastructure and Environment Committee
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

RE: IE 30.15 Western Waterfront Master Plan - Update

Dear Members of the Infrastructure and Environment Committee,

With the Western Waterfront Masterplan being formally reviewed I would like to submit my support for an update by City Staff, and I would like to simultaneously submit my opinion on this unique and valuable public realm.

Now is the time to include a dedicated commuter cycle track along Lake Shore Blvd West into and out of the downtown. It needs to be implemented as part of the update to the Western Waterfront Plan and should be considered as an extension of the Park Lawn Master Transportation Plan. I believe this cycle track could eventually extend even farther west to Brown's Line. Lake Shore Blvd West from Brown's Line to the Humber River is a four-lane speedway alternative to the Gardiner Expressway that transitions dangerously to a 6-lane speedway at the Humber River to downtown. Vehicles drive at excessive speeds, in close proximity to people walking, running and biking.

The Martin Goodman Trail, a bidirectional recreational path between Norris Court and First Street, and the waterfront trail are outdated infrastructure for cycling commuters whose priorities differ from those of leisure cyclists. We have plenty of space to make room for all. A dedicated commuter cycle track would reduce the stressful interaction of leisure cyclists, who include families, young people, and seniors, with faster cyclists trying to commute in and out of the downtown core.

Having a separated cycle track would encourage active transportation, which has been proven to improve the health and happiness of citizens, it offers mitigating effects on detrimental climate change and air quality. Good cycling infrastructure has been proven to improve quality of life for pedestrians and drivers as much as for cyclists, and it has been shown to consistently improve the success of local businesses.

A commitment to quality cycling infrastructure along this western waterfront corridor, which would eventually and naturally extend farther west to the city boundary at Etobicoke Creek, would create an unparalleled urban "blue-green" park space along the waterfront which is unique to Toronto. Blue-green space has repeatedly been proven to improve the mental health of people using such space. If the Western Waterfront Plan prioritizes a growing global urban commitment to infrastructure that encourages safe commuting by bike, as well as a commitment to the Light Rail Transit corridor that seems abandoned, both of these infrastructure projects would dramatically improve the quality of life along the western waterfront from several

perspectives — improve commute times, improve air quality, lower noise pollution, and create a larger buffer for citizens enjoying the leisure possibilities of the waterfront.

I am a resident of Etobicoke South (New Toronto), living near Lake Shore Blvd W. I use this road every day — sometimes just within my neighbourhood but several times a week going all the way into the downtown core. I walk it, cycle it, take public transit, or drive my car. Also, as a professional fitness coach working in the west end of the city, I encourage people to use outdoor space for exercise and to incorporate active transportation as part of a healthy lifestyle, I consider myself an advocate for and business stakeholder in any plans to enhance the public realm of the waterfront and its connections to other parks and trails.

Living here for the past 8 years, I am constantly reminded of the inherent unsafety and poor design of Lake Shore Blvd West, from Brown's Line to downtown. Lake Shore Boulevard West is a place of high risk to people's lives every single day. At the very least, it is a road that negatively affects quality of life. I experience this danger and mayhem in every way I use it: as a walker, a cyclist, a user of public transportation, and as a driver of a car.

I believe that speed-reducing infrastructure, along with radically reduced speed limits and reduction of hundreds of poorly designed and used parking spots between Brown's Line and the Humber River, could make way for faster public transit and bicycle commuting. Bicycle commuters could likely travel faster along a dedicated commuter bike lane than any car on the Gardiner during rush hours.

Just a little over a week ago, a woman cyclist was seriously maimed when a vehicle left Lake Shore Blvd West, crashed through a barrier, and hit her while she was riding on the Martin Goodman Trail near Jameson. She was on the trail, and she was not safe from a speeding vehicle that left the road. I ride this route several times a week for errands and pleasure, as does my 26-year-old son who cycles into work

From Brown's Line to downtown, I watch as drivers regularly exceed the speed limit by tens of kilometres per hour, often running red lights. I have very nearly been hit while pulling out in my car when I have the green light at First Street.

I have personally witnessed the driver of a vehicle strike down a pedestrian after disregarding the stoplights on a streetcar at Kipling.

I have seen a car teetering on the concrete barricade erected between Sand Beach Road and Royal York — a barricade that was built to protect cyclists in the bi-directional bike lane. This has left me feeling vulnerable as a cyclist along there. It is my understanding that, sadly and ironically, the bi-directional lane itself was built in response to the death of a west-bound riding cyclist who was killed trying to make a left from Lake Shore Blvd West south to First Street.

This past spring, three pedestrians were struck and killed on Lake Shore Blvd West in Mimico at the very intersection where a car clipped me this winter while I was walking southbound on Superior Avenue to the Valu-Mart. I was wearing a brilliant yellow winter coat I had purchased to be visible. I was walking home from my local library.

It is time for the city to take a close look at the real culprit in this chaos and carnage on Lake Shore Blvd West — poor design that invites reckless speed of vehicular traffic and deters climate-friendly, active transportation. It is time for a new vision and action on that new vision.

This new vision would recognize the trend toward active transportation and apply principles to encourage it at every opportunity. The current Parklawn Master Transportation plan disregards this trend at a critical junction, funneling cyclists from Lake Shore Blvd West to the Martin Goodman Trail and the Humber Bay Arch Bridge — a section of the MGT that is already dangerously crowded with pedestrians and cyclists who are out for leisurely walks and bike rides. It makes sense to continue the planned cycle tracks eastbound onto the Lake Shore Blvd West at the Humber River and farther east to downtown.

Toronto is a city blessed with the beauty of a waterfront that has untold potential for integrating an active transportation system that leaves room for leisure activity. While I understand that some of my concern is outside of the scope of the Western Waterfront Plan update, I believe it is important context as City Staff moves forward updating the plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'L. Scott', written in a cursive style.

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