

January 23, 2023

Chair McKelvie, Vice Chair Colle, and Members of Infrastructure and Environment Committee
Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen St. W.
Via email: iec@toronto.ca

Dear Chair McKelvie, Vice Chair Colle, and Members Burnside, Morley, Perruzza and Saxe:

Re: Item IE1.4 – City Builder Coalition in Support of Staff Recommendations

We are a coalition of city builders and real estate leaders, writing to express our support for Staff recommendations in Item IE1.4: Cycling Network Plan: 2021 ActiveTO Cycling Network Expansion Project Updates. Our comments focus on the Yonge Street complete street.

In summary, we believe the Yonge Street complete street is a success, and we ask you to support the Staff recommendation to make it permanent.

Toronto's density is fundamental to our shared success. The concentration of hardworking and talented people powers our local and provincial economies, thriving cultural sectors, vibrant city life, and sustainable land use. However, density is only a virtue when people can live, work, shop, and travel comfortably and efficiently. This requires safe streets and multi-modal transportation options.

Toronto is growing at tremendous speed, and building our transportation system around private motor vehicles is no longer viable. We need more streets like the Yonge Street Complete Street, in order to deliver an efficient and sustainable future. As the City's staff report summarizes, pedestrian and cycling volumes have significantly increased within the project corridor, and the rapid growth in outdoor café use is another key indicator that the complete street pilot has been a resounding success. And this is no surprise. Not long ago, we saw similarly positive results on [Bloor Street](#) and [Destination Danforth](#).

As city builders in Toronto, we are leading a significant reduction in motor vehicle parking in many new housing and commercial projects. Our sector is embracing sustainable and efficient transportation options like cycling, e-bikes, cargo bikes, car share, bike share, transit, and walking. These options are more sustainable, healthier for users, and make better use of existing public space and infrastructure. And crucially, we are able to deliver housing and commercial space faster and cheaper as motor vehicle parking is reduced.

Streets that work better for people also work better for retail businesses. Study after study—both here and abroad—have repeatedly proven this. When complete streets were implemented on 8th and 9th Avenue in New York City, retail sales [increased by 49%](#). In San Francisco, after a number of complete streets were implemented, [two-thirds](#) of businesses thought the redesigns had improved their sales. A [Portland State University study](#), similar to a [Toronto study about Bloor Street West](#), found pedestrians and cyclists spend more than car-driving customers because they visit more frequently, versus driving through an area and stopping only occasionally.

In addition to the direct benefit to retailers and property owners, it is also essential to enable efficient and safe work commutes throughout Toronto. Yonge Street is a vital north-south connector, and many of the people who work in our offices bike or take transit regularly. It is important that workers have an affordable and efficient way to travel that is safe and comfortable. This is particularly true now that more people are returning to the office to work, and as Bike Share Toronto is rapidly expanding and rolling out an extensive fleet of e-bikes to assist people riding longer distances.

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Infrastructure and Environment Committee, **we support making the Yonge Street Complete Street permanent**, as we believe it delivers on our shared goals of sustainable and healthy development, safety, efficiency, and business success. Thank you for your consideration, and if there is any way we can assist you, please do not hesitate to ask.

Sincerely yours,

City Builder Coalition Co-Chairs

Stephen Job
Vice President
Tenblock

Alex Mather
Vice President
Markee Developments

Christopher Wein
Chief Operating Officer
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City Builder Coalition

Jennifer Arezes
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Joshua Bénard
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