



Wednesday, January 25, 2023

Infrastructure & Environment Committee
c/o Matthew Green
10th floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Submitted by e-mail to iec@toronto.ca

Dear Councillor McKelvie & Members of the Infrastructure & Environment Committee:

RE: IE1.4 (Cycling Network Plan: 2021 ActiveTO Cycling Network Expansion Project Updates)

We strongly support the staff recommendation to make the Midtown Yonge Complete Street Pilot and the Bayview multi-use path permanent.

The Toronto Community Bikeways Coalition was established after the outset of the pandemic in 2020 to advocate for new bikeways to mirror transit for the benefit of essential workers and transit-reliant residents. Our work has transitioned to a focus on holding City Hall to account for its cycling, road safety, and climate goals. During the election, we articulated three road safety calls to action, including the completion of cross-town bikeways along Yonge and Bloor-Danforth-Kingston by 2026. These calls to action – including reducing speed limits and increasing Vision Zero funding – were supported by over 40 candidates, 12 of whom were elected. The Midtown Yonge pilot is an important step forward.

We are pleased, but not surprised, that cycling volumes have almost tripled on the Midtown Yonge Complete Street Pilot with almost 2,000 cyclists per day counted at Rowanwood Avenue. The final staff report also confirmed a 132% increase in pedestrian volumes, along with minimal impacts to motor vehicle travel times and emergency response times. Given these statistics, the improved safety, and the popularity of CaféTO patios, it is no wonder that the Midtown Yonge pilot has been well received with **over 8,000 signatures** on a (Yonge4All) petition to make it permanent.

We believe the Midtown Yonge pilot would become even more useful by extending it north to Eglinton Avenue as soon as possible. This extension offers a key connection to the planned eglintonTOday Complete Streets project from Keele Street to Brentcliffe Road. In addition, a southbound extension would also connect to the approved yongeTOMorrow project from College to Queen Streets.

Both of these extensions will ensure that the fast-densifying midtown area will have a safe cycling 'lifeline' to downtown, where the population is also expanding rapidly. This would remedy one of the most egregious shortcomings in Toronto's cycling network which — prior to the implementation of the ActiveTO bike lanes — did not offer cyclists a safe way to ride along our main street between Eglinton Avenue and the city's core.

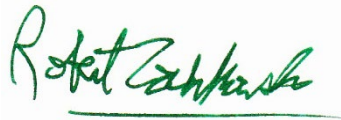
The approval of the Midtown Yonge bike lanes would avoid taking out a bike lane during a time when there has been very little progress with the 2022-24 Near Term Cycling Implementation Plan. Of the 100 kilometres that was promised as part of this plan, only 13 kilometres were installed last year. It remains unknown how the City of Toronto will complete this plan, let alone accelerate it to the pace required to meet the TransformTO goal of having 75% of trips under five kilometres done without a car by 2030.

We urge the Infrastructure and Environment Committee and City Council not only make the Midtown Yonge pilot permanent, but also extend it north to Eglinton and south to College as soon as possible.

As for the Bayview Multi-Use Trail, we believe making this route permanent would help provide residents with a much-needed alternative to the Lower Don Trail.

We thank you for taking these comments into consideration and please don't hesitate to contact us should you have any questions.

Sincerely yours,



Robert Zaichkowski
Toronto Community Bikeways Coalition

CC: Mayor John Tory, Councillor Josh Matlow