



Safe streets
Healthy city
Vibrant voice

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Toronto City Council
100 Queen St. W.
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

RE: IE11.10 Congestion Management Plan 2023-2026 - Update

Dear Mayor Chow and Members of Council,

Construction is inevitable in a growing city like Toronto. Without it, new housing could not be built, roads could not be repaired, and transit could not be expanded. But none of this should come at the expense of safety and mobility. We're concerned that right from the top the framing around construct work zones does not mention safety. Safety, not convenience, should be the priority. And while we're pleased to see considerations around improving wayfinding, ultimately the goal should be for these construction work zones to not encroach on the public realm.

Over the past four months, Cycle Toronto has engaged with staff and councillors on three proposed construction projects that would have involved closing sidewalks and bikeways for months on Yonge midtown, Bloor W, and Strachan. In all three instances, staff have been extremely helpful to work to find new solutions to minimize the impact to people walking, rolling, and cycling. (Cycle Toronto would like to applaud the efforts of Deputy Mayor Malik and Transportation Services for finding an alternative design option for the construction staging area at 950 King St which will not impinge the northbound and southbound bicycle lanes on Strachan Avenue, re: item **TE11.19 - 950 King Street West - Construction Staging Area.**)

Finding these kinds of solutions at the outset should be the default, and captured in this report as a requirement of staff as directed by Council. Toronto shouldn't wait until it's the victim of potential lawsuits to be proactive on construction zone safety, like what happened in the city of Vancouver.

The city should not be approving any construction zones that seek to close sidewalks and bike lanes without including a safe alternative, and should be prioritizing safety over convenience as a matter of policy.

Fundamental to our city's congestion management plan must be enabling more people to choose other modes of transportation other than single occupancy vehicles. Riding a bike shouldn't be an act of courage, but instead a safe, and convenient way for more people to choose to get around their neighbourhoods. **Prioritizing construction zone safety, not just QR codes and wayfinding, should be a key component of the city's VisionZero program.**

On parking, we applaud the specific mention of blocked bikeways, and specifically mentions around automated enforcement technologies. Recently there was a video shared on social

media of a vehicle parked up on the new upgraded College cycle tracks, and a traffic agent walking past and apparently not issuing a ticket or even a warning. With a strained police budget and lack of resources, we believe expanded automated enforcement is the solution to avoid human bias and worse as we've seen with the successful deployment of the ASE and Red Light Camera program. We are glad to see specific timelines for a report back on an automated enforcement program, including increased fees for repeat offenders and businesses that can afford to write off expenses, to prevent parking in the bike lanes.

Cycle Toronto consistently hears from supporters that if our bikeways are not safe and passable for all—not just in the winter but all year round—they will choose other modes of transportation. Toronto has seen a historic expansion of our cycling network in recent years, and this committee deserves praise. We know that a safe, connected cycling network is essential to enable more people to choose to ride a bike. And because of unsafe construction zones and parking in bike lanes, too much of that network is unsafe and uncomfortable for people of all ages and abilities. Even a short trip can feel unsafe or impossible.

We urge you to find a holistic and systematic solution that will guarantee the safety of people who rely on active modes of transportation during construction that doesn't rely on the leadership and support of the local councillor.

Best regards,



Michael Longfield
Executive Director

Cycle Toronto is a member-supported charity that works to make Toronto a safe, healthy, and vibrant cycling city for all.

