



May 21, 2024

Toronto Council
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen St W
Toronto, M5H 2N2

Sent via email

Re: IE13.2 - EglintonTOday Phase 1 Complete Street Project: Bicknell Avenue to Mount Pleasant Road

Dear Mayor Chow and members of Toronto Council,

Walk Toronto fully supports the recommendations of the Infrastructure and Environment Committee regarding the EglintonTOday Phase 1 Complete Street Project.

During the Crosstown LRT construction period, pedestrians have endured walking conditions on and near Eglinton Ave. that have been unsafe, unpleasant and inconvenient. Although Metrolinx has recently been rolling out streetscape improvements in the vicinity of Crosstown LRT stations, the interstitial sections of Eglinton Ave. located between stations also require significant enhancement. This is the responsibility of the City of Toronto. The ultimate goal should be a harmonized streetscape that supports pedestrians in a seamless manner along the entirety of the Eglinton Crosstown route.

It is our understanding that EglintonTOday Complete Street Project is planning the installation of streetscape improvements from Bicknell Ave. to Mt. Pleasant Rd. for the year 2026. We hope that this timeframe will not be subject to delay — a problem that has plagued the Crosstown initiative from the beginning.

A decade ago, members of Walk Toronto participated in discussions regarding streetscape design at several Eglinton Connects stakeholder meetings. We would like to see the ideas that came out of those consultations incorporated into the actual installations that will take place under the aegis of EglintonTOday. These will include: pedestrian-friendly street furniture; planters, street trees and parkettes that enhance the walking experience and do not crimp the pedestrian clearway; public art such as murals and pavement paintings; water fountains; provision for the collection of garbage from businesses that does not obstruct pedestrians; curb extensions; and wider sidewalks that are free of cracks and which are separated from cycle tracks in a way that is detectable for pedestrians who are blind or have low vision.

Another recommendation that we very much approve of is the proposed speed limit reduction from 50 km/hr to 40 km/hr all the way from Bicknell Ave. to Mt. Pleasant Rd. This change will make Eglinton Ave. safer for all road users and is certain to save lives.

Also worthwhile is the proposal to develop a plan for snow clearance suitable for the new Complete Street, with special consideration for pedestrian safety. A distinction should be made between CLEARING snow (which usually involves plowing, blowing or shovelling) and REMOVING snow (which entails melting, or trucking it away). We support the Eglinton Way BIA's suggestion that the City consider the relatively expensive snow removal option during high snowfall periods at strategic locations on Eglinton Ave. where excessively massive windrows impede the path of pedestrians. That being said, we caution that the allocation of funds to snow removal on arterials such as Eglinton should not be at the expense of providing a similar targeted service on residential streets that have high pedestrian traffic levels (in particular, near schools, seniors homes, or in apartment neighbourhoods).

Yours truly,

Michael Black

(On behalf of the steering committee, Walk Toronto)

Walk Toronto is a grassroots pedestrian advocacy group that works with various levels of government, community groups and citizens to improve walking conditions and safety in Toronto.