

January 29, 2024

Via Email

Executive Committee
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, Ontario M5H 2N2

Dear Mayor Chow and Members of the Executive Committee:

Re: 2024.EX11.8 – RapidTO: Surface Transit Network Plan

Tenblock has developed and managed multi-family apartment buildings in Toronto for over sixty-five years. We are making this submission as the property owner and developer of 1875 Steeles Ave. W.

As a company, we are deeply committed to building sustainable, complete communities. This includes consistently promoting public transit and connectivity options in all the communities that we serve.

We wish to express our strong support for expediting RapidTO implementation on Steeles Ave. W.

We would request that the Executive Committee advance RapidTO studies and community engagement for Steeles Ave. W. concurrently with other priority RapidTO initiatives in 2024.

The implementation of bus priority measures on Steeles Ave. W. between Yonge Street and Pioneer Village Station will benefit households and employment hubs in North York and have a citywide impact by:

1. Creating Connectivity

a. Increasing Reliability and Commuting Speed

Steeles Ave. W. is a major roadway that straddles the City of Toronto and York Region. The corridor is home to major employers, priority neighbourhoods, one of Canada's largest universities, and many current and planned apartment communities.

Currently, bus routes in this corridor share lanes with all other vehicle types. This has led to lengthy headways, bunching, and increased delays when there is heavy traffic or construction. For transit riders, the Steeles Ave. W. buses are the 'last mile' to and from the subway. Slow speeds and unreliable travel times mean that many residents and employees decide to forego using public transit to meet their daily needs.

Transit quality on Steeles Ave. W. would substantially benefit from roadway configurations that prioritize buses. Elsewhere in Toronto solutions like dedicated bus lanes have reduced headways and improved reliability without worsening car traffic. A [Transit Network Expansion Update](#) to the TTC Board on November 22, 2023 found that the Eglinton Ave. E. bus rapid transit route created a travel time savings of five minutes and average reliability improvement of 10% during peak periods. At the same time car volumes and travel times remained the same, or lower, than the fall 2019 baseline (pg.23). Steeles Ave. W. has the advantage, when compared to other RapidTO corridors, of a wide, straight right-of-way that can provide ample room for bus prioritization measures.

b. Increasing Network Capacity and Resilience

Service disruptions on Line 1 frequently close major sections of the network. With few higher-order east-west connections in North York, riders needing to access operating portions of Line 1 are left dependent upon shuttle buses, the St. Clair streetcar, and Line 2 connections. Roadway improvements that prioritize buses would be a



significant achievement for residential neighbourhoods like Newtonbrook and Westminster-Branson, large institutions like York University, and employment areas like the DuKe Heights BIA.

Connecting the northern portions of Line 1 via enhanced bus service on Steeles Ave. W. would improve daily commuting options for local riders and, in the event of service disruption, make it easier to get from one side of Line 1 to the other. This level of connection strengthens our citywide network capacity and resilience making it a key 'win' for our entire transit network, with a benefit that extends far beyond the catchment area of the corridor.

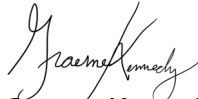
2. Reducing Car Dependency

Across Toronto, more and more young people are choosing to forego car ownership. Others (of all ages) do not want to have to rely on a car for their daily trips and commutes. To reduce congestion and change driving habits transit needs to be reliable, it needs to be quick, and it needs to be consistent. Implementing enhanced bus service options on a corridor that connects Line 1 can help to make taking the bus a more attractive option. For many households enhanced bus service could mean being able to live in more affordable apartments along Steeles Ave. W. without feeling like they need to own a car.

In pursuit of a more sustainable city, we should seek to reduce car dependency in as many communities as possible. Accelerating enhanced bus service on Steeles Ave. W. is a valuable change that should be prioritized for implementation as soon as possible.

Please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned with any questions or to discuss further.

Sincerely,
Tenblock



Graeme Kennedy
Senior Associate, Development
gkennedy@tenblock.ca
416-322-4110

cc: Councillor Jamaal Myers, Ward 23 – Scarborough North
Councillor Anthony Perruzza, Ward 7 – Humber River-Black Creek
Councillor Lily Cheng, Ward 18 – Willowdale
Councillor James Pasternak, Ward 6 – York Centre

