



Avenue Road Safety Coalition

Working for Safe Sidewalks on Avenue Road between Bloor St. & St. Clair Ave.

May 24, 2024

Re: Infrastructure and Environmental Committee Meeting 14 - IE 14.4 Cycling Network Plan - 2024 Cycling Infrastructure and Missing Sidewalk Installation - Third Quarter

Dear IEC Chair McKelvie and members of IEC,

We are writing to request meaningful changes addressing the dangerously narrow Avenue Road sidewalks north of Davenport Road. (see photo below)

The Avenue Road Safety Coalition (ARSC) has worked for seven years to address dangerous conditions along Avenue Road between Bloor St. and St. Clair Avenue West. We are pleased that work has finally begun to address some of our safety concerns on Avenue Road with the construction of bike lanes from Bloor St. to Davenport Road. We fully support the bike lanes. They represent an important step towards meeting our goals. However, we were disheartened and alarmed to find that the IE 14.4 - Avenue Road Report does not include meaningful pedestrian sidewalk safety improvements north of Davenport Rd in Ward 11 and further extended to St. Clair Avenue West in Ward 12.

We have been advised that the City intends to retain the majority of existing parking in this area. The City's reasoning is that on-street parking can provide physical protection for pedestrians from fast-moving vehicles. While this may help with speed reduction when cars are actually parked, it does nothing to address the dangerously narrow sidewalks, some less than a meter wide, and will not solve the issues highlighted in the city's Avenue Road Study, which confirmed that the current road design:

- Does not provide adequate infrastructure for the vulnerable road users
- Does not meet minimum provincial requirements specified in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and City of Toronto guidelines
- Encourages speeding

The dangerously narrow sidewalks north of Davenport Road lack accommodation for vulnerable pedestrians, especially those using mobility devices and pushing strollers. Under the City's current proposals, pedestrians will continue to be forced off the sidewalk and onto the roadway/parking lanes to navigate narrow sections blocked by permanent obstructions such as parking meters or snow and garbage/recycling bins on collection day. See photo below.

The Avenue Road Safety Coalition requests that pedestrian-focused safety improvements for the section of Avenue Road between Davenport Road and Dupont Street be added to the Avenue Road Study interim staff update report and presented for consideration at Toronto and East York Community Council on June 11, 2024, for implementation in 2024/2025.

The following minimum measures are essential for improving pedestrian safety and aligning with the City's Vision Zero and TransformTO goals.

- Reducing vehicle lanes between Davenport and Dupont from 6 to 4 and providing turning lanes at Davenport and Dupont.
- Prioritizing the use of the two curb lanes to create a broader and safer buffered space for pedestrians, including those using wheelchairs and strollers, rather than using all of this space for long-term parking.
- Maintaining some loading zones and short-term parking spaces to serve local businesses.
- Adding curb extensions and radii reductions (where needed) to improve pedestrian safety
- Installing a new safe signalized crosswalk mid-block between Davenport and Dupont at the entrance to Ramsden Park to provide a safe crossing in this busy area.

Thank you for considering the City's cycling infrastructure. The Avenue Road Safety Coalition is confident that the committee will also recognize the importance of prioritizing pedestrian safety on Avenue Road in this decision-making process. These recommended pedestrian-focused safety improvements are crucial for ensuring safety and mobility for all.

Arlene Desjardins & MH Spence for
The Avenue Road Safety Coalition
M5R 3T6



Let's make Avenue Road from Bloor Street to St. Clair a more people-friendly, climate-friendly, and inclusive transportation corridor that is safe for everyone!