



May 26, 2024

To: Infrastructure and Environment Committee

From: Walk Toronto

Subject: Avenue Road proposed changes in IE14.4 - Cycling Network Plan update

Dear members of the Infrastructure and Environment Committee,

Walk Toronto strongly supports the proposed changes to Avenue Road.

Walk Toronto is a grassroots, volunteer organization dedicated to making Toronto a better city for walking. We have long been supporters of the efforts of the Avenue Road Safety Coalition to transform Avenue Road between Bloor Street and St. Clair Avenue into a safer space for pedestrians.

This part of Avenue Road is one of the most dangerous and intimidating stretches of sidewalk in the old City of Toronto. It consists of narrow sidewalks that are not wide enough to meet basic accessibility standards, with fast-moving vehicle traffic immediately beside them.

The plans to reduce Avenue Road to four lanes, with an additional turning lane in some places, will greatly improve the pedestrian experience on Avenue Road. In addition to the many current residents who rely on these sidewalks, many construction projects on this road are bringing new residents to the area, and they will need safe sidewalks to get to local amenities and destinations. We therefore support the plan to reduce vehicle lanes between Bloor and Davenport to four lanes by adding cycling lanes and pedestrian improvements.

We would also like to emphasize the need to make pedestrian improvements to reduce Avenue Road north of Davenport to Dupont to four lanes (plus turning lanes) at the same time as the implementation of new cycle tracks south of Davenport. There should be no need to delay the pedestrian improvements north of Davenport for further consultations about vehicle parking – there has already been a great deal of consultation, and plenty of parking spaces are included in the current plan. The Ward 12 improvements from Bloor to Dupont form a cohesive unit and should be implemented together, as quickly as possible.

One of the many elements that will help pedestrians is the planned buffer zones. However, we note they are specified as “at grade (road level)”. One of the most significant problems with sidewalks north of Davenport is their narrowness, which do not meet even basic accessibility standards. We request that the Committee and City staff



include sidewalk-level platforms in buffer zones wherever possible to create wider, more accessible sidewalk spaces.

We also hope that the plans for Ward 13 pedestrian safety improvements and lane reductions from Dupont to St. Clair will be finalized as soon as possible.

We look forward to the approval of these plans by the committee and by City Council, and the rapid transformation of this part of Avenue Road into a safer and more attractive main street that is a place where residents and visitors will feel welcome while walking.

Thank you,

Dylan Reid

On behalf of Walk Toronto