



Infrastructure and Environment Committee  
Toronto City Hall  
100 Queen Street West  
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Thursday, May 23, 2024

Dear Members of the Infrastructure and Environment Committee:

**Re: IE14.4 - Cycling Network Plan - 2024 Cycling Infrastructure and Missing Sidewalk Installation - Third Quarter Update // Avenue Road from Bloor Street West to Davenport Road, uni-directional cycle track**

The ABC Residents Association is a volunteer organization committed to enhancing the quality of life in our neighbourhood through active participation in municipal issues. We serve the residents living in Toronto's Yorkville / North Midtown community between Yonge Street west to Avenue Road and Bloor Street north to the CPR tracks.

ABCRA wants to thank Councillor Saxe for her leadership and advocacy in addressing the unsafe conditions along Avenue Road through the Avenue Road Safety Plan. While the proposed cycle tracks between Bloor and Davenport *may* offer protection for cyclists, it also creates, in the words of a traffic engineer, "multiple points of conflict" at the 6 or 7 development sites on this short stretch of Avenue Road where cycle lanes will intersect with construction traffic movement.

Of equal urgency, it is also vital to address the safety of vulnerable road users, especially for individuals using wheelchairs and pushing strollers along the dangerously narrow Avenue Road sidewalks between Davenport and the CPR tracks.

**ABCRA is writing today to insist that the interim update report on the Avenue Road Study being considered at Toronto and East York Community Council on June 11, 2024, include specific pedestrian safety interventions between Davenport Rd and the CPR tracks.**

ABCRA has consistently supported cycle tracks where they make sense, and we recognize their importance. However, our concern persists due to the safety implications associated with the numerous construction sites currently underway and planned along this 700-meter stretch of Avenue Road. In response to the recent tragic incident, we aim to prevent heightened tensions between cyclists and motorists near construction zones. Instead of relying solely on private traffic wardens, we encourage Transportation staff to revisit the May 2020 Council resolution

which directed Transportation Services to assess the feasibility of installing cycle tracks on Avenue Road north of Bloor Street West **once development construction lane occupancies have been cleared.**

Additionally, ABCRA is concerned that the next steps proposed in the interim update report on the Avenue Road Study overlook the urgent pedestrian needs between Davenport Rd and Dupont

For context, The Toronto Police Service's all-collision database shows 3000 collisions between Bloor St and St. Clair Avenue in the last 10 years - a shocking average of 300 collisions per year, on only 2.1km of roadway. A disproportionately high number of those crashes—one-third—occurred between the railroad tracks and Davenport Rd. This alarming statistic underscores the urgent need for speed calming and improved pedestrian infrastructure in this area to prevent further fatalities.

In light of these numbers, it is both baffling and frustrating that effective measures to address the dangerously narrow sidewalks between Davenport and Dupont are not included in the interim report's site-specific pedestrian-focused safety improvements between Davenport Road and St. Clair Avenue West.

The transportation staff have proposed a solution to address pedestrian safety along this stretch: allowing 24-hour on-street parking to provide a buffer between motorists and pedestrians. However, we consider this solution to be severely insufficient, especially given the presence of dangerously narrow sidewalks less than a meter wide. ABCRA strongly believes that prioritizing the current TPA pay-and-display street parking over meaningful improvements to pedestrian safety in this area is unacceptable.

ABCRA urges the committee to direct City Staff to include the following actions in their upcoming report:

- Reducing vehicle lanes between Davenport and the CP tracks from 6 to 4 and providing turning lanes at Davenport and Dupont.
- Prioritize the two curb lines to create a wider and safer buffered space for pedestrians, including those using wheelchairs and strollers not for long-term parking,
- Maintaining some loading zones and short-term parking spaces to serve local businesses.
- Curb extensions and radii reductions (where needed) to improve pedestrian safety
- Installing a new crosswalk midblock between Davenport and Dupont at the entrance to Ramsden Park to provide a safe crossing in this busy area.

ABCRA has provided Transportation Staff with an alternative design proposal that would allow for immediate and low-cost interventions to improve safety along this stretch, which we have included below. These measures also align with the City's Vision Zero and TransformTO goals.

## IMPLEMENTATION: DUPONT TO DAVENPORT



### SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS

This portion of Avenue road makes notable improvements with a dedicated focus on sidewalk widening, addressing the ongoing challenges posed by narrow and obstructed walkways along this stretch. This initiative enhances pedestrian safety while also creating a more accessible environment for all. Additionally, the proposed improvements include the addition of extra parking spaces near the newly envisioned park between Roxborough Street and Pears Avenue, ensuring convenient access for visitors and maximizing the utilization of green space. The widened sidewalks also present an opportunity for activating extended portions as pedestrian zones, providing more leisure space.

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One obstacle identified by Transportation Staff to implementing this proposal is the reduction of paid on-street parking spots.

The ABCRA recognizes the need for parking to support Ave Rd businesses and feels strongly that the parking garages and 540 public parking spots at Yorkville Village, along with strategically placed loading zones and short-term parking spaces near local businesses, will ensure convenient access within a 5-minute walk.

Unfortunately, the Toronto Parking Authority is resisting efforts to remove parking in this area. However, their stance jeopardizes our ability to create meaningful improvements to pedestrian safety. We urge the committee to resist this resistance and prioritize the safety of our residents.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. Let us work together to make Avenue Road safer for everyone.

Sincerely,

on behalf of the ABC Residents Association,  
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Co-Chair  
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