



March 19, 2025

Dear Members of the Executive Committee,

Re: EX. 21.1 – Review of Winter Maintenance Program

On behalf of The Eglinton Way BIA, I would like to commend Mayor Chow for proposing a comprehensive review of the City's current Winter Maintenance Program.

For far too long, snow clearing and the absence of removal when it piles up has been a long-standing issue on Eglinton because snowbanks act as unsafe barriers to pedestrians and deter access to customers that want to support our 'Main Street' businesses. The practice of pushing snow on to sidewalks and into side street intersections has always been an unsatisfactory practice that has only gotten worse as the City now compounds the problem by creating additional snowbank barriers caused by the addition of bike lanes to the roadway. This new 'Complete Street' configuration means that when snow in the bike lanes is plowed, it not only adds snow to the piles on the sidewalk, but it also creates a new snow barrier between the bike lane and parking lane making it extremely difficult for people to navigate through, over or around those barriers if they plan to reach the safety of the cleared section of sidewalk. As a result, there are more barriers to access on Eglinton. In response to complaints, staff advise that these practices adhere to Council-directed guidelines. Clearly, those guidelines represent inferior practices and are need of review.

When Council approved adding bike lanes and associated infrastructure to Eglinton last May, Council recognized that the new complete street configuration could compound long-standing issues that have plagued our businesses in the past and requested staff to consult with the Eglinton BIAs to discuss snow clearing and removal practices in light of the changes to the street that supports our businesses. This consultation never occurred.

Perhaps as part of this review of the Winter Maintenance Program, Council could be more assertive in directing staff to consult on current practices and properly adjust them to fix long-standing issues and new ones that create the need for better plowing practices and/or a more aggressive approach to snow removal. Snowbanks that make the street unsafe and preclude business operations to commercial areas such as our BIA and others should receive increased attention, especially after enduring over a decade of construction activities that severely impacted the livelihoods of so many business owners.

Your support for this review and a fresh look at the impact of bike lanes on snow plowing AND removal is encouraged and most welcome.

Sincerely,

Maureen Sirois, Chair, The Eglinton Way BIA

CC: Deputy Mayor & Councillor Mike Colle

CC: Councillor Josh Matlow