

**From:** [jj@metstrat.ca](mailto:jj@metstrat.ca)  
**To:** [Infrastructure and Environment](#)  
**Subject:** [External Sender] My comments for 2025.IE20.3 on April 9, 2025 Infrastructure and Environment Committee  
**Date:** April 8, 2025 5:40:14 PM  
**Attachments:** [CA Feb 21 TRBOT congestion media release.pdf](#)

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To the City Clerk:

Please add my comments to the agenda for the April 9, 2025 Infrastructure and Environment Committee meeting on item 2025.IE20.3, Congestion Management Plan - 2025 Update

I understand that my comments and the personal information in this email will form part of the public record and that my name will be listed as a correspondent on agendas and minutes of City Council or its committees. Also, I understand that agendas and minutes are posted online and my name may be indexed by search engines like Google.

Comments: Please see attached PDF, a media release from local transportation advocates responding to the congestion management recommendations released by the Toronto Regional Board of Trade in February.

JJ Fueser

## **The Board of Trade commissioned three “expert reports” addressing congestion in Toronto. None recommended removing cycling infrastructure – why did the Board?**

### ***Board “priorities” ignore numerous transit-related recommendations suggested by its own experts, say Toronto transportation advocacy groups***

Toronto, ON, February 21, 2025 - Yesterday, the Toronto Region Board of Trade released an “action plan” to “break gridlock” in the Toronto region, reportedly drawing on “extensive congestion research and analysis from global consultancy and engineering firms.” While offering some commonsense solutions, the Board’s priorities include politically charged recommendations like removing cycling infrastructure on Bloor and reducing CafeTO curb lanes, measures which were not recommended by any of its commissioned experts. Further, expert recommendations to improve transit operations do not make it into the Board’s list of five priority actions.

Toronto transportation advocacy groups who recently launched the Congestion Alternatives Task Force are calling on decision-makers to ground transportation planning on sound research and data, not “vibes.” “The expert reports commissioned by the board clearly show that active transportation infrastructure has successfully reduced vehicle volumes, increased active transportation and improved road safety. It’s equally clear that we won’t get out of this mess until we better promote more alternatives to driving like transit and cycling. No city has solved congestion by prioritizing car traffic,” said Michael Longfield, Executive Director of Cycle Toronto.

#### **Not recommended by experts but suggested by Board:**

“Move bike lanes off dedicated connector roads so that both motor vehicles and bicycles have a dedicated network throughout the city core...Limit curb lane cafés based upon their impact on circulating traffic.”[i]

The Board of Trade began recommending removing safe street infrastructure in June 2024, half a year before expert reports were completed. [ii] This recommendation also contradicted its own polling at the time: only 21% of respondents attributed Toronto’s congestion problems to cycling infrastructure, CafeTo and on-street parking *combined*; most residents believed construction and vehicle volumes were to blame. [iii]

City studies and cycling advocacy groups have pointed out that no feasible alternatives to an east-west cycling connector exist for much of Bloor street, a route also served by a subway.

One report commissioned by the Board notes that Toronto’s cycle tracks have markedly reduced vehicle volumes and increased active modes of transportation; transportation staff were able to alleviate initial vehicle slowdowns through measures such as signal timing. [iv] The most congested central city arterial at peak (Bloor between Avenue and Sherbourne) saw increased motor vehicle travel times of under 5 min– a delay that would make most TTC riders laugh.[v]

#### **Not recommended by Board but suggested by experts (examples):[vi]**

The Board’s report mentions several expert recommendations that don’t, however, make it onto its list of Five Priority Actions:

- “Dedicated transit lanes: Establish exclusive lanes for streetcars and buses to reduce overall person-delays caused by mixed traffic and curbside activities.”
- “Transit signal priority: Expand systems allowing streetcars to request extended green times at intersections, reducing delays caused by signal stops.”
- “Promote active transportation and micromobility options by enhancing infrastructure for walking, cycling, and other non-motorized modes. Expand bike lanes, improve sidewalks, and support bike-sharing programs, cargo bikes, and other micromobility initiatives as outlined in the City's Micromobility Strategy adopted in May 2024.”

### **The elephant in the room: delayed Provincial transit projects**

Media comments by the Board of Trade appear to recommend cycling infrastructure on Bloor be removed at least until major transit projects are completed.

We note these major transit projects were all due to have been completed some time ago; exerting pressure on Metrolinx and Infrastructure Ontario to deliver on regional transit projects should be the single-minded focus of congestion-related efforts, given that these could add approximately **one million additional transit trips** to the region every day.

Notably, the Crosstown offers an alternative East-West transit connector stretching from Scarborough to Etobicoke. Regional railway expansion would give suburban residents options beyond highway driving. These transit projects could have an immediate impact on the bottlenecks responsible for the worst congestion in the city. These are not “solutions for the future,” they are solutions that we should have had yesterday.

***The Congestion Alternatives Task Force was convened in December 2024 to support evidence-based decision-making about transportation and congestion management in the GTA region. It was convened by leading transportation researchers and transportation advocacy groups including [The Institute for Inclusive Economies and Sustainable Livelihoods, University of Toronto - Scarborough Campus](#); [The City Institute at York University](#); [TTC Riders](#); [The Centre for Active Transportation](#); [Cycle Toronto](#); [RideFair](#); [Tri-cities Transport Action Group \(TriTAG\)](#); [Better Way Alliance](#); [Mobilizing Justice Partnership](#).***

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[i] [breaking-gridlock-congestion-action-plan\\_1.pdf](#)

[ii] <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2024/cc/comm/communicationfile-181193.pdf>

[iii] [Congestion Crisis Polling Results](#)

[iv] Parsons Corporation, p. 67

[v] Parsons Corporation, p. 67

[vi] Parsons Corporation, p. 83-85