

## **NOTICE OF MOTION**

### **Moving Forward with Transform Yonge: Visionary Public Realm and Cycling Gains, without losing a lane - We want it all!**

**Moved by:**            **Councillor Lily Cheng**

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**Seconded by:**      **Mayor Olivia Chow**

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#### **SUMMARY:**

We must seize this once-in-a-generation opportunity to reimagine North York's stretch of Yonge Street and ensure provincial policies do not stall the long-overdue addition of safe, protected bike lanes. In December 2020, City Council adopted the REimagining Yonge Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Study, outlining road-safety improvements, cycle tracks, and public-realm upgrades between Sheppard Avenue and Finch Avenue, a vision years in the making that must now be realized.

Yonge Street between Sheppard and Finch is the backbone of North York's downtown, home to the highest concentration of office towers outside Toronto's core and a critical route for drivers, pedestrians, transit riders, businesses, cyclists, and micromobility users. Transform Yonge represents one of North York's most significant public-realm upgrades. Delaying it now would jeopardize community health and safety.

This reconstruction offers a rare chance to widen sidewalks, add greenery and amenities, improve crossings, and deliver protected bike lanes that meet the needs of a modern urban centre. While the 2020 plan proposed removing a lane in each direction, since then the Province of Ontario has amended the Highway Traffic Act to prohibit the reduction in the number of vehicular lanes for the purpose of a bicycle lane, except as permitted by regulation. To move forward, cycling and pedestrian upgrades must be delivered while keeping all current vehicle lanes.

The need is urgent. E-bikes, scooters, and other micromobility devices are pushing riders onto sidewalks, creating dangerous conditions for pedestrians, particularly seniors and other vulnerable populations, including those with disabilities. Timely reconstruction is also critical for the Highway 401 interchange redesign, which depends on Transform Yonge's completion, and delays could have regional impacts.

Future growth adds to the urgency: the proposed North York at the Centre Secondary Plan anticipates roughly 100,000 new residents. This intensification requires a safer, more walkable, and multimodal Yonge Street that can support residents, workers, visitors, and tourists alike.

An updated feasibility study is essential, one that preserves all vehicle lanes while expanding sidewalks and adding protected bike lanes. This approach ensures Transform Yonge can proceed in a timely manner, comply with new provincial requirements, improve safety today, and deliver

the vibrant, accessible, and revitalized urban heart that North York deserves.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. City Council direct the General Manager, Transportation Services, to:
  - a. explore the feasibility of modifying the recommended “Transform Yonge” design to maintain public-realm and cycling improvements without eliminating vehicular lanes, and
  - b. explore the feasibility of extending the plan north to Steeles Avenue to align with the Yonge Street North Secondary Plan,
2. To provide a report back to the appropriate committee in Q1 2027.

Date: December 16, 17 and 18, 2025