



June 23, 2026

To: Toronto City Council

Re: MM42.39 - Creating a Pedestrian Streets Program for Toronto

Dear Mayor Chow and City Councillors,

Walk Toronto strongly supports the motion by Councillor Matlow to establish a pedestrian streets program for Toronto. Walk Toronto is a volunteer, grassroots advocacy group working to make Toronto a better city for walking.

Toronto's limited experiments with pedestrian streets, both permanent and seasonal, have been very successful. Gould Street on the campus of Toronto Metropolitan University became a permanent pedestrian street thanks to the success of the initial pilot program. Market Street, beside St. Lawrence Market, was so successful as a summer pedestrian street that it was extended through the Christmas season last year.

Other temporary pedestrian streets have been so popular that they are almost victims of their own success, such as Kensington Market Pedestrian Sundays and the Do West Fest on Dundas West that was very crowded this year. Meanwhile, other single-weekend street festivals across the city regularly attract large and animated crowds and bring significant benefits to local businesses. The popularity of these events shows that there is huge demand for pedestrian streets in Toronto that is not being fully met.

However, each time a new pedestrian street is proposed, whether it is one weekend, seasonal, or permanent, it has to go through a difficult approval process as if it is the first time the city has attempted to make this happen. This creates an unnecessary barrier for local residents and businesses that wish to create a pedestrian street of their own.

It is high time for the City of Toronto to have a coherent program in place to assist and support proposals for pedestrian streets, rather than getting in their way.

While some drivers may be inconvenienced by and complain about these pedestrian streets, many more people participate in them as pedestrians enjoying the vibrant vehicle-free atmosphere. Each of those people is showing, by their participation, their support for pedestrian streets.

We urge City Council to approve this long-needed proposal.

Dylan Reid  
On behalf of Walk Toronto