

March 30, 2026

City of Toronto

Toronto & East York Community Council
Toronto City Hall 100 Queen Street West,
Floor 2
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Attention: Ms. Cathrine Regan, Administrator

Dear Chair and Council Committee Members:

Re: Staff Report for 1 to 7 Yonge Street, South Block – Zoning By-law Amendment (Hotel Conversion) – File No. 25 258901 STE 10 OZ – EWCA Concerns and Recommendations

On behalf of the East Waterfront Community Association (EWCA), I write regarding the March 13, 2026 staff report recommending approval of a Zoning By-law Amendment to convert the existing 25-storey office tower at 1 to 7 Yonge Street (south block) into a 487-suite hotel.

The ***East Waterfront Community Association*** includes the municipal area of East Bayfront, bounded on the south by the Waterfront just south of Queens Quay E., on the west by Yonge Street, on the North by Lake Shore Blvd East, and Cherry Street on the east. This area encompasses the following existing and under-development condominium buildings: Pier 27, Monde, Artscape, Aqualina, Aquavista, Aquabella, Aqualuna, Pinnacle One, Menkes Sugar Wharf, Daniel's Lighthouse West & Lighthouse East, Empire Quay House, Lakeside Residences, 307 Lake Shore Boulevard East, and Quayside.

We acknowledge that the conversion to a hotel in this economic environment is a good and beneficial pivot for the applicant. While we also acknowledge that, according to the staff report, hotel use was previously permitted on this site through By-laws 753-2023 and 754-2023, and that this application represents an adaptive reuse of an existing building, **we have significant concerns about the traffic, mobility, and safety impacts of this interim hotel conversion that were not adequately addressed in the staff report or during the community consultation process.**

These concerns are grounded in the lived experience of East Waterfront residents, the technical issues raised during the February 16, 2026 community consultation meeting for the related phases 4 and 5 residential proposal (file no. 25 239794 STE 10 OZ), and the City's own Lower Yonge Precinct Environmental Assessment and Transportation Master Plan objectives.

1. Community consultation focused on residential phases, not hotel impacts

The staff report notes that the December 8, 2025 community consultation meeting "also included the application for a new, larger mixed-use development consisting of 80 and 85 storey towers," and that "the majority of the comments raised were related to the larger, future mixed-use development."

This framing obscures a critical issue: The community consultation process did not provide adequate opportunity for residents of the East Waterfront Community Association and the York Quay Neighbourhood Association to understand and respond to the **specific traffic and operational impacts of a 487-suite hotel**.

Hotel operations generate fundamentally different traffic patterns than office or residential uses:

- **Continuous taxi, Uber, and Lyft pickup/dropoff activity** throughout the day and evening, concentrated at building entrances and curb zones.
- **Guest turnover traffic** (check-in/check-out surges) generate vehicle trips (generating 4 trips/visit) that residential buildings do not (2 trips/visit).
- **Event and tourism-related peaks** that coincide with waterfront event surges already straining the area's streets and transit.

During the February 16, 2026 consultation on phases 4 and 5, residents raised detailed concerns about:

- **Freeland Street driveway conflicts** with cyclists and pedestrians, given the concentration of all parking, loading, and pickup/dropoff access at a single point serving approximately 1,091 parking spaces plus hotel-related ride-hail trips.
- **Event-related congestion and noise**, with one resident describing heavy traffic and **horn honking until 2 a.m.** during waterfront events, arguing that adding hotel density will worsen livability consequences.
- **Queens Quay mobility and safety challenges**, particularly for pedestrians navigating narrow, congested sidewalks during winter and event conditions.

These concerns apply directly to the hotel conversion, yet the staff report dismisses them as relating primarily to the "larger, future mixed-use development" and provides no analysis of hotel-specific traffic generation, curb usage, or pedestrian/cyclist conflicts.

2. Incomplete transportation impact assessment

The staff report states that "Transportation Review staff reviewed the Transportation Impact Study submitted with the application" and found "the proposal appropriate from the perspective of traffic impact, site circulation, and the provision of parking and loading."

EWCA requests that Council require a more rigorous, hotel-specific transportation analysis before approval, addressing:

A. Hotel trip generation and curb demand

- The existing site has **20 vehicular parking spaces** for a 487-suite hotel. This severe undersupply will drive **intensive reliance on taxis, ride-hail services (Uber/Lyft), and curbside pickup/dropoff zones**.
- Has the TIS modeled **peak curb demand** during check-in/check-out periods, event days, and evening restaurant/entertainment hours?
- Where will ride-hail vehicles queue at the hotel, and how will conflicts with **cycling routes on Yonge and Downes** and **bus operations on Queens Quay** be managed?

B. Cumulative traffic from concurrent developments

During the February 16 meeting, a resident noted that the Transportation Impact Study for phases 4 and 5 reviewed **9 condominium communities but omitted approximately 10 others** in planning, under construction, or recently built (including Monde at 12/16 Bonnycastle, and projects east toward Parliament), representing roughly **6,000 additional residential units plus ~10,000 m² of retail**.

The hotel conversion TIS must incorporate these cumulative background conditions, particularly given that:

- The hotel will operate **simultaneously with ongoing construction** of One Yonge phases 2 and 3, the conversion of Yonge/Harbour on the north block, the future phases 4 and 5 towers, and the Waterfront East LRT on the same south block.
- This creates **two concurrent construction zones** (north and south blocks) plus active hotel operations, generating overlapping truck movements, lane closures, detours, and pedestrian/cyclist disruptions.

C. Interim conditions without Waterfront East LRT

The Transportation Impact Study for phases 4 and 5 assumes the **Waterfront East LRT Freeland station will be operational at occupancy**—an assumption residents challenged as unrealistic, given that the LRT is only just funded but unlikely to open until the early-to-mid 2030s.

The hotel will operate in this interim "no-LRT" environment. Without rapid transit capacity:

- Bus reliability and cycling comfort on Queens Quay will be degraded by added hotel and cumulative development traffic.

- The Lower Yonge EA's transit-and-cycling-first network objectives cannot be achieved if private vehicle trips (including hotel ride-hail) dominate.

EWCA requests an interim "no-LRT" traffic scenario showing realistic near-term impacts on:

- Intersection performance at Yonge/Queens Quay, Freeland/Queens Quay, and Yonge/Harbour (Downes).
- Bus operations and cycling level of service on Queens Quay and planned Downes cycle path.
- Pedestrian safety and comfort, particularly at the Queens Quay "pinch-points" staff acknowledge requires improvement.

3. Queens Quay pedestrian safety and mobility

The staff report notes that "concern was raised by members of the public regarding the existing sidewalk condition along Queens Quay East, specifically in regards to a pinched-point where traversal, particularly during snowy days, can be difficult," and that "Transportation staff are reviewing and considering opportunities to improve this condition on an interim basis."

We appreciate staff's acknowledgment of this issue, but "interim" improvements are insufficient given:

- The hotel will generate **continuous pedestrian traffic** between the building entrance, transit stops, waterfront destinations, and nearby restaurants/retail.
- During the February 25, 2026 consultation with community groups, **residents raised serious concerns about existing mobility issues along Queens Quay East for safe pedestrian travel.**
- The Lower Yonge EA explicitly calls for **ample sidewalk capacity and high-quality public realm** as foundational to complete-community goals.

EWCA requests that Council require, as a condition of approval:

- **Immediate sidewalk widening and barrier removal** at the Queens Quay pinch-points before hotel occupancy.
- **Clear pedestrian wayfinding and accessible routes** connecting the hotel to Union Station, waterfront parks, and community facilities.
- **Commitment to winter maintenance standards** ensuring safe passage during snow and ice conditions.

4. Cyclist and pedestrian safety at access points

The staff report describes an **"existing pick up / drop-off" zone** and **"existing ramp down to basement"** on the site plan, but provides no detail on how hotel operations will interact with:

- **Planned cycling infrastructure on Yonge Street** (raised cycle tracks on both sides, per the Lower Yonge EA).
- **Planned two-way cycle path on Downes Street** (Harbour Street extension, south side, per the EA).
- **Existing and future pedestrian flows** along Yonge, Queens Quay, and Freeland.

During the February 16 meeting, the applicant's transportation consultant confirmed that **all parking, loading, and pickup/dropoff access for the future phases 4 and 5 will use a single driveway on Freeland Street**, and noted that Freeland is **not a designated cycling route** but acknowledged that residents use it in practice as a north-south connection to the Martin Goodman Trail.

The hotel conversion introduces immediate, high-frequency vehicle-pedestrian-cyclist conflicts at these same access points, yet the staff report contains no analysis of:

- **Sightlines, daylighting, and conflict zones** at pickup/dropoff areas and ramp entrances.
- **Physical separation measures** (raised crossings, curb extensions, protected intersection treatments) to prioritize vulnerable road users.
- **Operational curb management** (no-stopping zones, signed priorities, enforcement) to prevent taxi/ride-hail queuing from blocking sidewalks and cycle tracks.

EWCA requests that Council require detailed site plan conditions securing:

- **Protected pedestrian and cyclist crossings** at all driveway and curb access points.
- **Clear separation** between hotel vehicle queuing areas and active transportation routes.
- **Traffic calming and low-speed design** (tight curb radii, raised crossings, signage) prioritizing people on foot and bike, consistent with EA objectives.

5. Concurrent construction impacts: two construction zones, one neighbourhood

The staff report acknowledges that "a surface parking lot and construction staging area associated with Phase 2 of the 1-7 Yonge Street development is north of the site," and that "eventually the south block is proposed to undergo a more substantive change" through the phases 4 and 5 application.

This creates a scenario where residents and hotel guests will experience:

- **Phase 2 construction on the north block** (underway or imminent).
- **Hotel operations on the south block** (if this application is approved).
- **Future demolition and construction of phases 4 and 5 on the same south block** (replacing the hotel with 80- and 85-storey towers).

EWCA is deeply concerned about the cumulative construction impacts on:

- **Pedestrian and cyclist route closures and detours**, fragmenting the emerging Lower Yonge active transportation network.
- **Truck traffic, noise, and dust** affecting livability in adjacent residential towers and businesses (Menkes Sugar Wharf School, Pinnacle One phases 1-3, Pier 27, Redpath Sugar Refinery).
- **Access to waterfront destinations, parks, and transit** during multi-year construction phasing.

The staff report provides no construction management plan or mitigation strategy for this overlapping scenario.

EWCA requests that Council require:

- **A comprehensive construction coordination and mitigation plan** addressing:
 - Truck haul routes and scheduling to minimize conflicts with school, transit, and event times.
 - Pedestrian and cyclist route continuity and wayfinding during construction phases.
 - Noise, dust, and vibration monitoring and complaint response protocols.
- **Public reporting** on construction impacts and mitigation performance, with regular updates to EWCA and neighbouring residents.
- **Holding provisions or phasing requirements** ensuring that hotel operations do not commence until adequate pedestrian/cyclist routes and public realm conditions are secured.

6. Lower Yonge EA objectives and complete-community goals

The Lower Yonge Precinct Environmental Assessment and Transportation Master Plan, approved by Council and integrated into the Central Waterfront Secondary Plan and OPA 487, established clear objectives for this area:

- **Transit-and-cycling-first streets**, with priority corridors on Yonge (raised cycle tracks), Harbour/Downes (two-way cycle path), and Queens Quay (WE LRT and multi-use path).
- **High-quality, generous public realm** supporting safe, comfortable pedestrian and cycling connections between downtown and the waterfront.
- **Balanced traffic management** that accommodates growth without overwhelming local streets or undermining active transportation and transit performance.

The hotel conversion, as currently presented, risks undermining these EA objectives by:

- Generating intensive curb demand and vehicle conflicts at a critical node (Yonge/Queens Quay/Freeland) without adequate design mitigation.
- Operating in an interim "no-LRT" environment where transit capacity is insufficient to absorb hotel and cumulative development trips.
- Adding to event-time congestion and noise that already degrades livability and public realm quality.

EWCA urges Council to ensure this application advances, rather than compromises, the EA's vision by requiring:

- **Explicit consistency review** against EA transportation and public realm standards.
- **Mitigation measures** (parking reductions, TDM programs, curb management, physical design improvements) securing EA-aligned outcomes.
- **Monitoring and adaptive management** commitments, with performance metrics and enforcement mechanisms.

7. Recommendations

EWCA respectfully requests that Toronto and East York Community Council:

A. Defer approval pending additional information

1. **Require a revised Transportation Impact Study** that:
 - Models hotel-specific trip generation, curb demand, and peak-hour conflicts.
 - Incorporates cumulative background traffic from all known developments in the Lower Yonge/East Bayfront area.
 - Includes an interim "no-LRT" scenario showing realistic near-term impacts on traffic, transit, cycling, and pedestrian safety.
2. **Require a detailed construction coordination and mitigation plan** addressing overlapping construction on north and south blocks, truck haul routing, pedestrian/cyclist route continuity, and public reporting.
3. **Require site plan drawings and conditions** showing:
 - Protected pedestrian and cyclist crossings at all vehicle access points.
 - Curb management strategies preventing ride-hail queuing from blocking sidewalks and cycle tracks.
 - Traffic calming and low-speed design elements prioritizing vulnerable road users.

B. Impose strong conditions of approval

If Council proceeds with approval, EWCA requests the following binding conditions:

1. **Immediate Queens Quay sidewalk improvements** (widening, barrier removal, winter maintenance standards) completed before hotel occupancy.

2. **Parking supply reductions and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) requirements**, including:
 - Reduced parking allocation (below the proposed 20 spaces) to discourage private vehicle use.
 - Hotel guest transit pass programs and partnerships with bikeshare/carshare operators.
 - Real-time ride-hail pickup/dropoff management using designated zones away from high-conflict pedestrian/cyclist routes.
3. **Event-day traffic and curb management protocols**, coordinated with Transportation Services' potential "Community Events Hub" designation, including:
 - Traffic agents during major waterfront events.
 - Temporary no-stopping zones protecting transit and cycling routes.
 - Public information and wayfinding for hotel guests and visitors.
4. **Monitoring and reporting requirements**, with annual public reports on:
 - Hotel traffic generation and mode split.
 - Pedestrian and cyclist safety incidents at site access points.
 - Construction coordination and mitigation performance during phases 2, 4, and 5 build-out.

C. Coordinate with phases 4 and 5 review

1. **Ensure consistency** between the hotel conversion approval and the ongoing review of phases 4 and 5 (file no. 25 239794 STE 10 OZ), particularly regarding:
 - Cumulative traffic and transportation network impacts.
 - Section 37 community benefits negotiations (affordable housing, public realm contributions, TDM measures).
 - Construction phasing and mitigation strategies.

Conclusion

EWCA supports the adaptive reuse of existing buildings and recognizes the hotel use, as per the staff report, was previously permitted on this site and beneficial for the area. However, **approval of this hotel conversion must not proceed without rigorous analysis and mitigation of its traffic, mobility, and safety impacts**—impacts that were not adequately addressed in the staff report or during a community consultation process focused primarily on the future residential towers.

The East Waterfront is at a **critical connectivity threshold**. The City's own Lower Yonge EA established a vision for safe, transit-oriented, pedestrian-and-cyclist-friendly streets that support a complete waterfront community. This hotel conversion, with its intensive curbside demand, concurrent construction challenges, and operation in an interim "no-LRT" environment, risks fragmenting that emerging network unless strong conditions and mitigation measures are secured now.

We urge Council to **defer approval until the requested information and conditions are provided**, ensuring that this interim hotel use upholds—rather than undermines—the complete-community goals our neighborhood has been working toward for decades.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these concerns with Council members, staff, and the applicant's team, and look forward to continued collaboration on this and the related phases 4 and 5 application.

Sincerely,

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Michael Bethke.

Michael Bethke
President
East Waterfront Community Association

The East Waterfront Community Association used AI-assisted drafting to prepare this letter. The content has been independently reviewed, revised, and approved by EWCA representatives with direct knowledge of the local context and issues before being submitted.

CC:

- Deputy Mayor/City Councillor Ausma Malik (Ward 10)
- George Pantazis, Senior Planner, Community Planning
- Transportation Services – Transportation Planning & Review
- Waterfront Business Improvement Area
- York Quay Neighbourhood Association