



March 31, 2026

Dear Chair and Members of Toronto and East York Community Council,

Re: TE31.63 - Ossington Street Parking and Traffic Review

I am writing on behalf of the Ossington Business Improvement Area (BIA) regarding Item TE31.63 – *Ossington Street Parking and Traffic Review*.

As one of Toronto's most vibrant main streets, Ossington Avenue continues to evolve as a destination for dining, culture, and small business activity. In 2026, we are seeing a record level of participation in the City's CafeTO program, with 30 approved curblane patio applicants along the corridor. This demonstrates both the economic importance of the program and the continued demand for safe, animated public space.

In light of these conditions, the Ossington BIA is formally requesting that, effective for the 2026 CafeTO season (May 15 to October 15) and annually thereafter, the City remove the rush hour parking restriction fees along Ossington Avenue between Dundas Street West and Queen Street West.

We would like to be clear:

***This request is not for the removal of parking spaces.*

Rather, it is **a request to eliminate the rush hour route designation and associated fees**, which no longer function effectively during the CafeTO season.

The City's own Ossington Avenue Safety and Streetscape Improvements Plan, presented at a public meeting on January 27, 2026, identifies the removal of the rush hour route as a recommended direction. The current conditions on the street, particularly with the high number of patios occupying curb lanes, further reinforce this recommendation.

During the CafeTO season, the rush hour route is operationally ineffective:

- A significant portion of curb lane space is already occupied by patios, limiting its function as a continuous traffic lane
- Enforcement is inconsistent and confusing for users (upwards of \$600 if ticketed AND towed)
- Businesses are burdened with high fees for a designation that does not deliver its intended benefit

This creates an inequitable situation, particularly for non-hospitality and retail businesses, who are required to absorb these costs without receiving meaningful value in return.

Removing the rush hour restriction fees would:

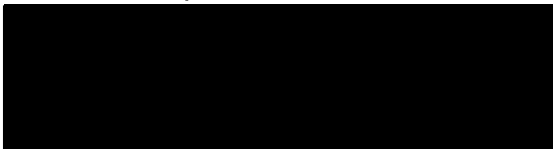
- Better reflect the real-world use of the street during patio season
- Support a more equitable distribution of costs across businesses
- Align with the City's broader goals of complete streets, economic recovery, and vibrant main streets
- Reduce confusion and improve the overall function of the corridor

Ossington Avenue has become a model for how Toronto's main streets can successfully balance mobility, public space, and economic vitality. Updating outdated policies—such as the seasonal rush hour route designation—is a necessary step in continuing that progress.

We respectfully urge Council to support this request as part of the TE31.63 review and to implement this change beginning in the 2026 CafeTO season, with consideration for making it a standard annual approach moving forward.

Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to continuing to work collaboratively with the City.

Sincerely,



Meg Marshall
Manager of the Ossington BIA
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