

In Regards To The Opposition of the Bloor St. Integrated Project

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Good morning, members of Council, my name is Nicholas and I live very close to Bloor. I decided to become more politically involved just around the time I was in College when I took a Politics and a Critical Thinking[] course and saw that what was being taught did not reflect reality and the history around said politics was wrong. Whether it was the program coordinator or the professor at fault, I'm not sure, but the latter course really made me realize how polarizing reality was. Since then I've noticed things using a common human skill called "Pattern recognition" and soon realized that our governments and elected – or installed- officials do not heed the word of the people nor have their overall interests at heart, as the insignificant few outweigh the vast majority of people these days. The Alternatives 5 and 6 both are undesirable to many myself included, as demonstrated having attended meetings and debates on the matter of changing Bloor St.

That said, I've seen policies lead to things becoming worse: crime, economics, culture, platforms and media, and even the very places we live in. More recently, speedbumps where none are needed or necessary. I understand one or two by a school, but a speedbump every 10-15 metres on an inactive stretch of road is pointless and a waste of time, and it damages vehicles. Changing major streets from two lanes each way, or down to two lanes each way, on very busy roads like Dundas is simply an awful decision. Take an hour on a weekday like Monday or even Friday, maybe even Saturday noon and see how busy any given major road can get. You'll see thousands of cars. Reducing those major roads by one or two lanes is nonsense. Going down Bloor at 9am and even 2pm is very busy and construction reducing the lanes to one each way (ie when bridgework was being done on Bloor just at Queen Frederica) grinds traffic to a halt.

I've been to Japan – twice in fact – and the streets in Tokyo are either one-way only or one lane each way. The gridlock is, in no shortage of the word, insane. Cars there have a very low maximum speed and very weak engines because they drive nowhere very fast and the reason for that is: dedicated turn lanes or a bus lane, a huge bicycle lane, and only one driving lane. Cars are at the mercy of fellow cars or any other number of factors but it changes not the fact that roads are slow due to being one-way only. However bikes work in Japan as their modern culture is built around it and their cities are designed to be accessible to bicycles and transit (best public transit system in the world, by the way, unlike Mississauga's or the TTC) since factors like **crime on public transit** and **bicycle theft** are unheard of. Mississauga, much like Toronto, was never designed to be a biking- or a transit-based community, it is a driving community. You need to drive to get to places. Tokyo and most of Japan simply walk, bike, or take transit to get from place-to-place because their dense cities are built around those systems. One feels very safe walking at night, taking transit alone at night, because of their own homogeneous culture which makes Japan, well, Japan.

What is the intent of all these speedbumps and road dieting plans being put in place all of a sudden? Surely it is not that funny net-zero emissions goal as stalled traffic and longer time spent on the road in a car creates more waste. Electric cars consume incredibly more resources and cause more pollution and environmental damage than normal petrol cars and are still quite unreliable. Mayhap ruining streets and roads, destroying retail and erecting massive glass and steel concrete spires ad infinitum to house waves of invading bodies is part of the 15-Minute Cities plan? Regardless, in the now, I and many others oppose these changes to our roads, the roads and streets we use on a daily basis and are yet uninformed by changes nor are asked for our direct input. Go around and ask people within

1km of Bloor St and I'd bet you the key to the city that over 90% of people would reject these proposals as I and others have experienced by having conversations with residents in our area.

I'd like to end my opposition's text with a parable: Many years ago, the Chernobyl Reactor exploded, and with it all the radioactive debris and toxins in the air. Two workers were trying to escape and upon reaching a safe spot on a roof, they pointed out – and later reported on – having seen graphite on rooftops. The graphite in question, was some of the most radioactive materials from the explosion. Upon reporting, a man named Anatoly Dyatlov (presumably) had simply insisted they look again as “there is no graphite on the rooftops,” defending his job and capability. This accurately represents our sitting council and overall government for the last 14 years: they are told something very obvious by the people and the ones in charge insist and reject that their way – their opinion based on nothing or on the word from higher up – is reality and you are simply a liar who knows nothing. The people who actually live in places affected by awful policy are the ones in the wrong and the ones in ivory towers and gated communities are correct having never set foot into areas outside of their own. Do not believe your lying eyes, so it's said. The point of this is to possibly illuminate any one of you into seeing that the word of the people – the people who elect individuals to represent them – are the word of the people and their wishes seemingly are never taken as “the will of the people” by their own representatives to government. If 107 out of 110 people say “No.” to a project then in a right and just democracy, that plan would be scrapped or taken into review *with the people* as they have spoken in overwhelming opposition and not in favour-of which seems to happen anyways.

Is it sheer incompetence? pure malevolence? which drives policy and decisions forward? We might never know for sure, but we do know that our representatives, whether we voted for them or not, do not seemingly get input or feedback from the people in which they serve. After all, politicians are in service for the people, not the other way around. Sometimes it's easy to just see where government and corporations collude and conspire to do as they please with zoning and planning where it's not desired or liked. I sincerely hope that this scrap of words finds its way into your minds and makes you see the value of the people living here, and that we have our say and should be taken seriously. All in all, I, and many hundreds of others living here, vehemently oppose the changes to Bloor street and the best way to “change” Bloor is to simply and properly repave and maintain it regularly. Thank you and take care.