

DEPUTATION RE: BLOOR ST**July 31 2024**

I would like to thank Mayor Parrish, all councillors and staff for hearing me out today. Also once again very much appreciate the assistance from the legislative coordinators. Great people.

I begin by saying the AAHRA (AHR) has now very cleverly taken advantage of the deputation process. I guess I should tip my hat to their cleverness. I have learned a new technique for future deputations.

Unfortunately for the sake of time I will not read the following paragraph but we cyclist would like to acknowledge Sam Rogers among his peers. “Cyclists never get heard to the extent AAHRA has except in some instances where the likes of Sam Rogers has effectively communicated and met with us. Sam we cyclists appreciate your efforts, respect you and whole heartly thank you. And congratulations on your well-deserved promotion**”**

The AHR had 1 deputation to make today on a single matter but broke it into 4 segments, assigned 4 presenters, thereby creating 4 deputations and was afforded 20 minutes of speaking time on a single matter. Very disrespectful of the process but to be expected from the AHR based on their history. I respectfully ask the chair for some lenience if I go a little over the 5 minutes I am provided to balance time out.

I am very surprised to see Bloor St yet again on the agenda at all let alone during summer council shut down. This matter has been approved by council and cyclist fully support alternative 6 as a very safe and VZ compliant road diet. Bloor St is busy arterial roadway running through a residential area.

One that would normally use a limited access design with the goal of safety in mind. Alternative 6 delivers bike lanes in the safest possible way, with better traffic management, especially at intersections.

If I understand what the AHR wants now is to not reduce Bloor St to 2 lanes. Their presentations provided an overwhelming amount of data but little information. May I suggest the AHR take time to read a very detailed, approximately 30-page scientific study, with Q&A's by "Transportation and Research Interdisciplinary Perspectives" researching the impacts of 4-3 lane conversions.

It would be an informative read for members of the AHR but with their minds made up unlikely to change their biased thinking. Road safety cannot be an afterthought or a biased decision.

The AHR claim 2 lanes will slow traffic down when what it really accomplishes is slowing down speeders making no difference to those who obey speed limits. Additionally, the above research report shows no increase in EMS response time. In fact, this road diet lessens travel times. AHR concerns - increased congestion, delayed EMS, negative impact on businesses - are not supported by scientific studies, in fact scientific studies indicate the opposite as recent as Toronto's report last month.

Councillor Reid and I have similar stories that relate to speeders aggressively driving behind us, we both experienced on Aquitaine's single lane. I will let him share with council.

AHR issue has always been about not wanting bike lanes in front of their houses. To refresh councils' memory on January 19, 2022, council meeting AHR presented their first petition

"explicitly against the bike lane component of the Bloor Street Improvement Plan, citing many reasons they came up with including "safety concerns".

Their claim does not hold water. It is NYMBISM. In some instance's AHR does not want to lose city owned boulevard parking space they currently enjoy. They claim safety concerns leaving their property arise with bike lanes. If bike lanes cause the AHR drivers such an issue with their driving ability maybe the AHR members themselves should take up cycling.

Let's take a walkthrough of the time wasted, 3 years, and cost, nearly \$900K, incurred to date getting to where we are today with zero to show for it while Toronto starting after Mississauga approved A6 are more than 1/2 done

June 23, 2021. The Bloor St project launched. A community kick off and fact-finding meeting was held.

October 27, 2021. Staff came back with 4 alternatives. 3 alternatives maintained 4 lanes and 1 alternative with 3 lanes, and they all included bike lanes. The AHR's argument was focused against bike lanes. In and around this time the AHR made a public statement bike lanes were against their "Charter of Rights". You cannot make this up, and

Mississauga became an international laughingstock making local and international news and featured on comedy shows.

March 9, 2022. Staff came back with alternative 5 which maintained 4 lanes and included bike lanes. Once again the AHR fought this on bike lanes.

November 29, 2022. Staff came back yet again with alternative 6 which reduced through lanes to 2 with a turn lane and maintained bike lanes. Council approved A6. Now for the moment AHR's focus is with lane reduction. Let me say here there are ample statistical articles extolling the benefits and speed control of 4 - 3 conversions around the world but the AHR never references such articles either because they do not take the time to research to become informed or they know but don't want their false claims blown up.

This is wording from their current petition.

Agreeing to support city staff to work with *loyal residents* to find another alternative (would that be #7, 8, 9...) that will be in the best interest and safety for all users of Bloor St.

Alternative 6 accomplishes above

If agreed to it will take another 3+ years of time, 100's of thousands of dollars in city lost opportunity and cost taxpayers another \$900K of hard earned and dwindling disposable income.

All above being said, and through the mayor, I have questions for council or staff

- 1) Council is the Corporate Management team of the city residents. They are elected to maximize return on investment. Our tax dollars. **Will this council finally take a firm stand on their decision on Bloor St, stop the endless waste of time and money and stop folding to NIMYISM? Will this council cut to the chase, albeit 3+ years later, and move forward with their approval of the well thought out alternative 6?** In my corporate world days “time was money” and, on this project, a hell of a lot of both have gone down the drain. The city must start running itself like the business it is.

- 2) **This may be a takeaway, but will council identify where the nearly \$900K spent to date was taken from? It is not a bottomless pit. Can council identify if it was taken from cycling budget allocation and what other city work did not start or get done because of this miss use of precious resources?**