

July 30/2024

Mayor Carolyn Parrish and Members of Council

RE: Bloor Street Cycling Lanes

As a resident of ward 4, I wasn't aware of this road conversion until Councilor John Kovack asked me in 2023 about it and what impact would it have on transit. I believe I said there maybe impact somewhat, but don't see much for Route 3 that runs along it.

I have requested traffic data and lane capacity this past week and have yet to receive it that I have done vehicle counting while riding Route 3 in both directions at various times of the day. I also have used my experience sitting on Waterfront Toronto committees for transit, transportation and urban projects since 2002 to present time.

As part of the EA Team who wrote the term of reference for the EA for the Redevelopment of Queens Quay West, we looked at numerous things including reducing the number of lanes from the current 4 lanes to 2 lanes along with a streetcar ROW and the Martin Goodman Trail. When the plan went to the public, it was not well received that we went back and had a second look based on the feedback from the public.

Traffic was the main issue along with losing 2 lanes of traffic. To deal with traffic, a 3rd party was brought in to look at traffic for 3 months by not only counting vehicles, but to obtain license plate numbers to see where they were from as well where they were going past the 4 check points.

Based on plate numbers, we found 68% of driver bypassing the Lake Shore Blvd excluding the ones who parked there for the events at the Roger Centre and time on the waterfront along with local residents.

On average, 650 vehicles per hour in each directions used Queens Quay West, well under the 900 vehicles per hour per lane for a 50 km zone. This reinforced our views to remove 2 lanes as well modify our plans based on public feedback to go back out to the public a year later. We used the traffic data proving there was more than enough traffic capacity per lane to justify the removal of 2 lanes as well making the road for locals.

At various times of the year and day, the road is max out due issue with the Gardiner Expressway and events that the eastern section will be built the same way as well the extension by 2030.

My counting this past week was seeing about 500 vehicles per hour between Cawthra Road and Dixie Road, 450 per hour between Dixie Rd and Toronto and 300 between Central Parkway and Cawthra Road.

As for traffic been interfere with the lane reduction, there is non as traffic will be interfere by transit. Bloor Street is a 50 km road, yet buses travel around 30 km to 40 with an average speed of 21.2 km per hour. Bus travel is a lot slower this year than in the past to the point at peak time you can have 2 buses either playing follow the leader to hop scotch each other to the point one will sit up to 5 minutes at a stop.

There are days my bus will sit 2-5 minutes at a stop not at an intersection while doing 30 km.

It is very common to miss a bus at Dundas and Acukland at peak time to get on another one within 5 minutes of the first one. In some cases, the next schedule bus catches up to the one in front before Central Parkway and been like that way for years.

Unless speed of bus travel is increased from today travel, they will slow the traffic down to the point some driver will use the turning lane to get around them.

As with all bike lanes, you will have vehicles park in them from time to time from deliveries, couriers and someone visiting a place.

I am not a fan of having buses stopping in bike lanes and attaching a photo I shot in Toronto of an new bus stop and bike lane I came upon in Toronto on Avenue Road that just got cycling lanes in June. The other option is doing a bump out platform for a bus stop that allows a cycles to ride over like the ones found on Roncesvalles in Toronto for TTC streetcars that were first built in 2011.

It is time to review stop spaces as some are too close to each other and this will help to improve bus service as well traffic flow.

I do caution council that once construction starts on the Dundas BRT/LRT, that Dundas Steet West, west of Cawthra to Hurontario will be a pitch point for the next years or less until the single of traffic is increase to 2 lanes with redevelopment to allow the widening of the road in various areas to handle the 4 lanes of traffic and the BRT/LRT ROW. It very possible Dundas traffic will move to Bloor St and Central Parkway to get around the pitch points or the Queensway as the plan bypass will not handle the increase of traffic

David Fisher