

February 10th, 2010

Chair Glenn deBaeremaeker and Members of the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee

I am writing to you in my capacity as Executive Director of the Toronto Cyclists Union, to bring to your attention an important article by Christopher Hume that recently appeared in the Toronto Star concerning the poor pedestrian design of a busy downtown intersection. A copy of the article is attached to the bottom of this email.

The intersection of Front Street and Bay Street is very important to cyclists as it is in the centre of the GTA's public transit infrastructure and the gateway to the Toronto Island ferries and the Martin Goodman waterfront trail.

All of these public facilities are major destinations for cyclists year round.

The Toronto Cyclists Union agrees with the critique of the intersection by Mr. Hume – we'd like to know from the Committee what the City is doing to address the real safety issues faced by pedestrians.

We understand that a specific proposal to provide bicycle lanes on Bay Street is forthcoming to the Committee's meeting in April.

We are requesting as part of the PWI Committee's review that staff be directed to redesign the intersection of Front Street West and Bay Street as part of the installation of bicycle lanes on Bay Street so that:

1. The northbound left hand westbound turn lane from northbound Bay Street to westbound Front Street for vehicles be removed.
2. Left hand turns by northbound Bay Street vehicles be prohibited at the Bay / Front Street intersection at all times.
3. The east sidewalk of Bay Street, south of Front Street West be widened so that it can accommodate the existing northbound pedestrian traffic. Currently there are so many pedestrians on this section of the sidewalk at the morning rush hour that pedestrians spill out onto the travelled portion of northbound Bay Street as there is not enough room. This is dangerous to cyclists and pedestrians as most cyclists travel on the far right of the lane closest to this spillover.
4. The streetlight poles on the east side of Bay Street between the Union Station rail corridor and Front Street west be removed and the street lights be relocated and affixed to the building on the east side of Bay Street north of the GO bus terminal and south of Front Street so that the poles do not obstruct the sidewalk and pedestrians.
5. The fire hydrant on the east side of Bay Street south of Front Street be removed from the east sidewalk and that provision for water for fire be installed in the wall of the public building on the east side of Bay Street or to the south of that building.



Finally the Toronto Cyclists Union believes it is critical that any redesign of Bay Street to accommodate bicycle lanes has to require;

- The removal of the southbound double right-hand turn lanes from Bay Street southbound to Lakeshore westbound.

We are requesting the Committee direct staff that any proposal presented for southbound Bay Street bicycle lanes provide for the removal of the double right-hand turn vehicular lanes as was done at the intersection of Harbour Street and Yonge Street from eastbound Harbour Street to northbound Yonge Street.

Thank you for taking the time to review and consider our recommendations.

Sincerely,



Yvonne Bambrick
Executive Director, Toronto Cyclists Union

