



April 21, 2022

Barbara Gray
General Manager, Transportation Services Division
Toronto City Hall, 24th Floor E
100 Queen St. West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Barbara Gray,

Re: Illegal Parking in Bike Lanes, Safety, and Infrastructure Concerns

This letter to you follows our recent meeting on April 6th with Toronto Police Parking Enforcement Operations Supervisor Brian Moniz.

In our recent meeting with Mr. Moniz, we discussed Toronto Police Service bike lane enforcement efforts, which in our view are ineffective, particularly after 6 PM and on weekends when the bicycle unit parking patrol does not operate. As a result, during the busiest commuter and delivery cycling times, Toronto cyclists must constantly contend with drivers illegally parked in the bike lane.

We believe addressing this problem must also be a Transportation Services priority, given that illegal parking undermines the city's investment in cycling infrastructure as well as efforts to facilitate more active transportation among residents.

Where existing infrastructure does not include separation, police and Transportation Services must work collaboratively to address the problem. Clearly, however, the issue of illegal bike lane parking must first and foremost be addressed by better, more secure, and more comprehensive Toronto bike lane infrastructure.

Hence this letter to you.

Toronto's bike lane infrastructure has improved notably in recent years, particularly with the introduction of dividers along key cycling arteries like Richmond, Adelaide, and Bloor in the downtown. But too much of this infrastructure is piecemeal, often *directing* cars to park in long and inexplicably unprotected areas (*e.g.*, Adelaide east of Spadina, between Bay and Yonge) rather than outright preventing illegal parking and protecting cyclists.

Furthermore, dividers once installed must be maintained, which is not currently the case. Concrete divider blocks are constantly knocked by cars into the very lanes they are supposed to be protecting, then seemingly left there indefinitely. Flimsy plastic spoke dividers are continuously run down.

The City of Toronto can and must do better, just as numerous other cities in North America and Europe have already demonstrated is possible. Accordingly, we are calling for the immediate implementation of:

- **Concrete dividers wherever possible along bike routes, particularly as a replacement for all remaining plastic spoke dividers, along with regularly scheduled maintenance. Where dividers are not feasible, police and Transportation Services must devise a collaborative plan of action that protects the safety of city residents who have a reasonable expectation that bike lanes created for cyclists will not be subject to illegal parking;**
- **Comprehensive cycling infrastructure that closes all unnecessary gaps in protection along cycling arteries, and provides a consistent network of protected bike lanes across the city; and**
- **A broad education campaign directed at motorists, delivery and rideshare drivers, as well as their contracting companies, including Uber and Lyft (who have displayed complete indifference to the problem), clarifying that parking in bike lanes and interfering with such infrastructure is illegal, subject to substantial fines and civil liability.**

Among those who would, but currently do not commute by bike in Toronto, fear is the pervasive retort as to why. They do not perceive biking as safe in downtown Toronto – and for good reason. Namely, poor cycling infrastructure constantly blocked by cars.

The lack of adequate cycling infrastructure thereby contributes to overcrowded public transit, ever-worsening automobile traffic, increased air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, as well as a constant state of anxiety for the thousands of tax-paying city residents who bike for transportation, recreation, and delivery work in Toronto and are daily forced to fear for their safety by drivers with a sense of ‘road entitlement’.

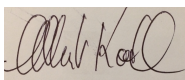
This state of affairs is unacceptable.

We look forward to your response. We are happy to answer any questions regarding our concerns and this letter - and would be eager to assist the city in bringing about the changes necessary to protect Toronto cyclists.

Sincerely,



Marc Goldgrub



Albert Koehl

on behalf of the Toronto Community Bikeways Coalition

cc Members of the Infrastructure & Environment Committee

Brian Moniz, Toronto Police Service, Parking Enforcement Operations Supervisor