



City of Toronto Falling Behind on Commitments to Expand Safe Cycling, Threatening Progress on Vision Zero and Climate Goals

Toronto, January 3, 2023 — The City of Toronto is again falling behind on its commitments to install dozens of kilometres of protected bike lanes, according to an [analysis](#) by [Toronto Community Bikeways Coalition \(TCBC\)](#). Increasing the number of protected bike lanes is a key component of City plans to meet its climate and Vision Zero road safety goals.

Albert Koehl, spokesperson for TCBC, said “City Council’s approved [2022-2024 Near-Term Implementation Program](#) calls for the [installation of 100 km of new bike lanes](#) by the end of 2024 – an average of 33 kilometres per year. At the end of the plan’s first year, however, only 13.1 kilometres of new bike lanes had opened. At this rate, the City will clearly fail to meet its road safety, cycling, and climate goals.”

The TCBC analysis shows that critical bikeways needed for a city-wide cycling network are behind schedule. Notably, the project to extend the Bloor Street bike lane westward from its terminus at Runnymede Road to Royal York Road, slated for completion in 2023, has not seen public consultations on any design proposal.

“On the one hand, it’s hard to understand why these delays are occurring,” said Koehl. “City Council made clear in December 2021 that it wanted many more kilometres of protected bikeways. The cycling department’s annual capital budget has been raised to \$20 million (compared to \$8 million in 2015) while staffing numbers have doubled to 28 positions. Yet there is no proportionate increase in the number of kilometres of bike lanes in Toronto.”

“On the other hand,” added Koehl, “these delays are consistent with [recent media reports](#) about the city’s inability to provide basic services under John Tory’s administration. In his first two terms as mayor (2015-2022), an average of only 12.5 km of bike lanes were installed per year (including a one year pandemic jump spurred by public pressure), far short of what the City had said it would install. Plans, platitudes, and promises are of little value without action.”

TCBC points out that other jurisdictions with similar road safety and climate goals have made safe cycling infrastructure a priority. Montreal, despite a smaller road network and colder climate, installed about 40 km of new bike lanes in the past year alone, part of its [ongoing commitment to cycling safety](#) and an already extensive cycling network.

Businesses favourable to bike lanes

TCBC canvassing of shops and businesses along Bloor Street West shows [strong support](#) for the installation of bike lanes not only west to Royal York Road, but to connect with [planned Bloor Street bike lanes in Mississauga](#) that would complete an east-west cycling route that has been four decades in the making. A Bloor extension to the western city border would also connect to existing north-south bikeways on the Humber River, Royal York Road, and Renforth Drive.

Studies after the installation of Bloor bike lanes between Avenue Road and Shaw Street found positive economic impacts. [Two separate City of Toronto studies](#) showed a post-installation increase in the average number of customers and a rise in customer spending. Specifically, people who biked or walked spent more per month than those who drove.

Today's TCBC analysis comes as the popularity of cycling in Toronto continues to grow, demonstrated by the [substantial increase in Bike Share usage](#), the proliferation of deliveries of food and other products by bike, and a surge in the use of electric bikes.

“We’re calling, again, on Mayor Tory and City Council to honour their commitments by increasing the pace of bikeway installations under the 2022-2024 plan,” said Mark Fernando, a TCBC organizer and Etobicoke resident. “This would be a win-win: increased safety for pedestrians and cyclists combined with a major contribution to the City’s goal, under its [accelerated climate action strategy](#), to reduce the city’s greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2040.”

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