



February 24, 2021

Inspector Paul Rinkoff,  
Toronto Police Service  
40 College St.  
Toronto, ON M5G 2J3

Dear Inspector Rinkoff,

RE: February 17, 2021 Meeting

We thank you and your colleagues for meeting virtually with us, acting in our capacity as representatives of the Toronto Community Bikeways Coalition (TCBC), on February 17, 2021. During the meeting, we explained our concerns regarding illegal bike lane parking enforcement, including the apparent absence of nighttime and weekend enforcement. For your convenience, below we have included a bulleted list of topics covered in the meeting (albeit not necessarily set forth in the chronological order in which they arose), our understanding of key points, our responses, and further requests.

By way of background, the TCBC is a community-based campaign group advocating for 100 km of bikeways to mirror the busiest TTC subway and bus routes. It was formed in 2020 by a group of volunteers who believe Torontonians require safe alternative transportation options, particularly during this unprecedented time as our society grapples with the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **1. Nighttime Enforcement**

- We raised the issue of nighttime enforcement, or the lack thereof;
- It appears motorists are aware that there is little if any nighttime bike lane parking enforcement, resulting in significantly higher incidents of illegal bike lane parking;
- The problem is exacerbated by the fact that many people bike at night, particularly food delivery persons, whose safety is placed at greater risk by the increased number of cars parking in bike lanes;
- Further compounding the problem, the decreased visibility at night makes riding even more dangerous for cyclists and delivery persons;
- We requested that TPS ensure bike lane parking is enforced at night, and that sufficient patrols are deployed to enforce the law and deter further violations (as often a single illegally parked car will quickly induce others to follow suit);
- We also suggest that such nighttime bike lane enforcement patrols consist of police bike patrols, so as to convey solidarity with cyclists and show that cyclists and their right to safe road space will not be disregarded.

## **2. Delivery Drivers and Cyclists**

- We acknowledge, understand, and are sympathetic to the fact that many businesses are facing hardships at this time as our society copes with the catastrophic economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic;
- As such, we understand the pressures TPS and politicians are facing from businesses trying to continue service with delivery drivers, who benefit from being able to park in bike lanes while making deliveries;
- Nonetheless, those drivers' benefit comes at the expense of the many delivery persons making deliveries by bike or scooter, and who are endangered by the illegal behaviour of delivery drivers parking in bike lanes;
- Compounding the problem, delivery drivers flouting the law obtain a business advantage over others who comply with the law by parking on sidestreets, in alleyways, or in other legal parking spots;
- We urge TPS to ensure that all businesses understand that delivery drivers should not benefit at the expense of non-motorist delivery persons' safety by enforcing the bike lane parking laws against delivery drivers.

## **3. Public Communication**

- We discussed several means by which the public may be made more aware of Toronto's bike lane parking laws and their enforcement;
- Such means discussed included publishing details of daily bike lane parking tickets served (distinguished as between different parts of the day), and continuing to place physical tickets on illegally parked cars (where and when it is safe for officers to do so);
- We would also appreciate seeing TPS use its social media channels and other avenues of communication with the public to ensure greater awareness of the law prohibiting bike lane parking, and pro-active enforcement of the law (we recently discussed this issue with Transportation Services as well);
- We respectfully recommend that TPS devise ways by which cyclists may more easily, effectively and timely communicate the location of illegally parked cars to enforcement units, including through the use of:
  - A Twitter and/or Instagram account similar to @freebikelanesTO (e.g., @TorontoBikelaneEnforcement) that would allow cyclists to tweet @ bike lane enforcement units and let them know about illegally parked cars in real time with photos;
  - A phone number that allows those reporting illegally parked cars to immediately make the report without going through various other call options; and
  - Any other innovative means TPS may devise.
- We note that our end-goal is to prevent illegal parking in bike lanes which compromises the safety of city residents who cycle, and note that such illegal parking has significant potential to catalyse unpleasant interactions - even violent altercations - between illegally parked motorists and cyclists.

We would be happy to continue our dialogue with TPS with regard to all of the aforementioned points, and work with TPS to achieve the outcomes that will most benefit and ensure the safety of Toronto cyclists. We appreciated and accept your offer to revisit these issues in a month's time.

We are also very pleased to see TPS's February 22 announcement on Twitter that officers have been assigned to patrol bike lanes in the evenings and on weekends. This is a very welcome change for the safety of residents who get around the city by bicycle.

Sincerely,

Albert Koehl  
Marc Z. Goldgrub

Toronto Community Bikeways Coalition

cc: Tina Rajkumar  
Scott Baptist  
Brian Moniz