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Toronto Police Services Board
30 College Street
Toronto, ON M5G 2J3

Chairman Mukherjee and Members of the Toronto Police Services Board:

I am writing to you as a year round cyclist who has been riding a bicycle on Toronto streets on a daily basis for the better part of 35 years.

During that time tremendous strides have been made by the City of Toronto in providing cycling infrastructure to provide greater protection for cyclists thus encouraging more members of the public to cycle in their daily routine.

35 years ago it was very lonely riding on Toronto streets particularly in the winter. There are now occasions where on dedicated cycling routes such as St George Street and Beverly Street located in Councillor Vaughan's Ward there are sometimes more cyclists than cars waiting at intersections.

It is my observation that police enforcement of parking regulations on bicycle lanes has not kept up with the provision of such facilities and one of the primary functions of such lanes is as a lay by for motorists, taxis, couriers, utility companies and other public agency vehicles for short term parking.

Two Saturdays ago my family and I rode our bicycles up the Sherbourne Street bicycle lane to visit my brothers family for dinner on a Saturday evening. We started at Queens Quay and Sherbourne and rode all the way up to Bloor Street East.

This is the only continuous bicycle route that connects Bloor Street to Lakeshore in the entire downtown area.

My wife and I had our 5 and 7 year old children on the backs of our bicycles.

Between Bloor and Queens Quay there were 5 cars illegally stopped blocking the bicycle lane.

This endangered my family as every time we came to an illegally parked car we had to risk veering out into traffic to go around the cars which were not about to move for our family.

We rang our bells etc no response.

We then got just south of Bloor.

Motorists northbound turning east onto Bloor Street East completely blocked the bicycle lane for a distance of about 30 metres. The bicycle lane was completely ignored.

In the last week I have observed, Canada Post vehicles, private courier companies van, too many taxis to count and utility company vehicles, etc. all obstructing bicycle lanes throughout the downtown.

Unfortunately the City of Toronto has not adopted bicycle lanes protect by curbs and bollards as in Holland and numerous progressive North American cities and is content to pretend that a painted line on the road is protection for cyclists. Failing the actual physical separation of these lanes from vehicular traffic the only way to address the problem is better enforcement and higher fines.

The following relevant excerpts can be found in the Toronto Police Service 2009-2011 Business Plan

Priority: Ensuring Pedestrian and Traffic Safety

The safety of pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers and the safe and efficient flow of traffic are, therefore, of significant concern to the Toronto Police Service.

Performance Objectives/Indicators:

- ◆ decrease in number of road-related injuries to pedestrians
- ◆ decrease in number of road-related injuries to cyclists
- ◆ increase in pedestrian perception of safety
- ◆ increase in cyclist perception of safety

I am requesting that the Police Services board to adopt the following recommendations for action

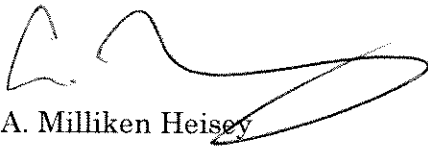
1. Direct the Toronto Police Service to develop a policy and protocol as to when it is permissible for a Service vehicle to park within a bicycle lane perhaps providing that unless a Service member is on a true emergency where time is critical and being parked in such a location warrants the risk in endangering cyclists they are to leave the bicycle lane unobstructed and block the vehicular lane.

As an example when a police car pulls over a vehicle over the side of the road should they pull over to the curb and obstruct the bicycle lane, or pull over and leave the bicycle lane unobstructed?

2. Request the Toronto Police Service to report on the enforcement of no parking in bicycle lanes by the Service and how it could be improved
3. Re-examine the proposal by Vice Chair McConnell and myself made over 5 years ago when I was on the board to achieve changes to provincial legislation to allow photo monitoring of transit and bicycle lanes and the imposition of fines for illegal stopping and parking based on photo evidence like red light cameras. This proposal was endorsed as feasible in a report by the Toronto Police Service but was unfortunately defeated by the Board at that time.
4. Determining what role there is or could be at the Toronto Licensing Commission to assist the Toronto Police Service in enforcing the observance of parking regulations in bicycle lanes and transit routes by the Toronto Taxi and Courier industries.
5. Examine the fine structure for parking illegally in dedicated bicycle lanes and recommend higher fine levels to City Council that would achieve higher levels of compliance. I find it ironic to be obstructed and endangered in bicycle lanes by Ambulances and Wheeltrans Vehicles. Parking in such a location helps ensure that more cyclists will have the need of these services as a result of accidents arising from what I believe is a dangerous practise by emergency and public transit providers for cyclists.
6. Undertake a Board review whether physically separated bicycle lanes create greater cyclist safety and if so, recommend to the City of Toronto the greater implementation of separate bicycle lanes.

Thanks for your consideration.

Yours very truly,



A. Milliken Heisey

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Cc: Toronto Cyclists Union