

MOVING FORWARD

An Action Plan to Improve Safety and Opportunities for Pedestrians and Cyclists in Ward 11



A report by the Ward 11
Pedestrian Safety and Cycling Committee

March 2018

Acknowledgements:

We would like to thank our local City Councillor, Frances Nunziata, for creating this opportunity for residents to come together to identify ways to make our community safer.

We also acknowledge the guidance and support from Jessica Brigham, Constituency Assistant to Councillor Nunziata.

This report is in large part the legacy of former member and Chair of the Ward 11 Pedestrian Safety and Cycling Committee who worked tirelessly to prepare the initial draft version of this report.

Finally, we gratefully acknowledge the participation of:

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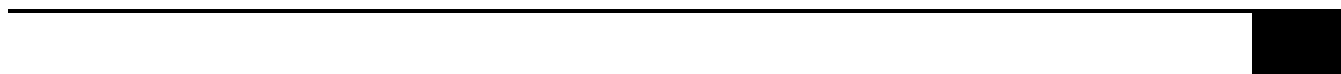
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The benefits of active modes of transportation, such as walking and cycling, are numerous. From the health benefits associated with physical activity, to the environmental benefits as a result of a reduction in the use of vehicles and as a result, a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, it is imperative that the city is one within which one can walk or cycle safely.

The Ward 11 Pedestrian Safety and Cycling Committee (PSCC) was formed in September 2017 with the purpose of identifying ways to create a safe pedestrian and cycling environment within Ward 11.

This report includes a total of 31 recommendations directed at the City on a range of opportunities to enhance the walking and cycling environment in Ward 11. These opportunities are focused on 4 areas:

- 1. A Safe Pedestrian is a Happy Pedestrian** Create a safe walking environment by conducting road safety audits at unsafe intersections to identify retrofits that could be applied to foster a safer walking environment. Reconsidering past requests for pedestrian crossings which have been refused at locations where a high volume of pedestrians continue to cross, would be of benefit. In addition ensuring sidewalks, and clearance widths along sidewalks, are of adequate size, well-lit, and well-maintained will promote a safe walking environment. Finally, advancing the implementation of School Safety Zones will go far towards creating a safe walking environment for school children.
- 2. Share the Road** Gaps are identified in the City's Ten-Year Cycling Network Plan with respect to cycling opportunities on our main roads, as well as on quiet streets. Improvements and/or enhancements to existing routes, including those along off-street trails, will render greater opportunities to cycle, and to do so safely.
- 3. Connecting People to Places (in ways that make sense)** It is important to provide safe walking and cycling routes to key destinations, such as the Weston GO Station and UP Express, the York Recreation Centre, and the future Mount Dennis Station. It should be made convenient for people to access these locations by modes of travel that do not include a vehicle.
- 4. Additional Ideas** Public spaces, including our park pathways, should meet accessibility standards; those that do not should be redesigned to meet these standards. It is also paramount to inform the public of actions being taken to improve safety for road users, including cyclists and pedestrians, so that the public has confidence that the City is taking action to reduce the number of fatalities or injuries due to collisions. Finally, Bike Share Toronto is an asset that should be expanded throughout the city for the use and benefit of all Torontonians as opposed to the full inventory of bicycles and stations being placed downtown.

Together, the recommendations from this report will help foster a safer and friendlier environment for pedestrians travelling throughout Ward 11.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

For ease of reference, all site-specific recommendations are mapped out in Figure 1, found on page 6 of this report.

RECOMMENDATION 1

That the City conduct Road Safety Audits of the following intersections in Ward 11 and report back on measures, both short-term and long-term, that will be taken by the City to increase the safety of pedestrians at these intersections:

- a. Weston Road and Oak Street
- b. Weston Road and Lawrence Avenue West
- c. Weston Road and Eglinton Avenue West
- d. Weston Road and Humber Boulevard
- e. Weston Road and Rogers Road
- f. Weston Road and St. Clair Avenue West
- g. Runnymede Road and St. Clair Avenue West
- h. Mould Avenue and St. Clair Avenue West

RECOMMENDATION 2

That the City review the mode of control for traffic lights in Ward 11 and change those currently operating under a Semi-Actuated Vehicle/Pedestrian mode of control to Fixed Time or Semi-Actuated Pedestrian modes of control.

RECOMMENDATION 3

That the City review the existing pedestrian crossovers at the following locations in Ward 11 to identify additional measures that can be implemented, such as raised walkways, to enhance the safety of pedestrians using the crossovers:

- a. Humber Boulevard and Louvain Street
- b. Scarlett Road and Bernice Crescent
- c. St. Clair Avenue West and Britannia Avenue

RECOMMENDATION 4

That the City reconsider previous requests to install pedestrian crossovers in front of the following locations in Ward 11:

- a. 3559-3561 Eglinton Avenue West
- b. Rockcliffe Middle School – 400 Rockcliffe Boulevard

RECOMMENDATION 5

That the City review sidewalk widths on major roads in Ward 11 for the purpose of identifying those which fall below accessibility standards and develop a strategy to accelerate their widening and/or replacement.

RECOMMENDATION 6

That the City reduce the speed limit on all local streets in Ward 11 immediately surrounding a school to 30 km/hr.

RECOMMENDATION 7

That funding be included in the City of Toronto's 2019 budget to implement "School Safety Zones" around all schools in Ward 11.

RECOMMENDATION 8

That the City conduct a review of public walking trails in Ward 11, in consultation with the PSCC, to identify trails in need of additional lighting, including city trails on Hydro One lands, and allocate the funding required in the City's 2019 budget for their installation.

RECOMMENDATION 9

That all new cycling infrastructure in Ward 11 be physically separated from pedestrian infrastructure where feasible.

RECOMMENDATION 10

That the City investigate the feasibility of installing physical barriers, such as decorative railings, along the following sections of sidewalk in Ward 11 to separate the sidewalk from the curb lane:

- a. Lawrence Avenue Bridge (east of Scarlett Road, west of Little Avenue)
- b. Weston Road underpass (south of Oak Street, north of St. Phillips Road)

RECOMMENDATION 11

That the City develop a pilot project by hiring local youth/students to check the city sidewalks in Ward 11 (or a pre-determined area of Ward 11) for trip hazards which would then be reported for repair.

RECOMMENDATION 12

That the City evaluate the feasibility of bicycle lanes or cycle tracks, and initiate Major Corridor Studies, if required, along the following corridors in Ward 11:

- a. Weston Road-Keele Street, Junction Road to Hwy 401
- b. Jane Street, St. Clair Avenue West to Hwy 401

RECOMMENDATION 13

That the City construct a multi-use trail along the following sections of Jane Street in Ward 11:

- a. East side of Jane Street, from Lambton Avenue to Cornell Avenue
- b. West side of Jane Street, from Eglinton Avenue West to Pinehill Crescent

RECOMMENDATION 14

That the City accelerate the installation of bicycle lanes on St. Clair Avenue West, from Scarlett Road to Runnymede Road, and consult with the PSCC prior to finalizing a design.

RECOMMENDATION 15

That the cycling infrastructure to be installed on Scarlett Road in 2019 be in the form of cycle tracks or otherwise separated from vehicular traffic, and that the PSCC be consulted prior to finalizing a design.

RECOMMENDATION 16

That the City create a bicycle route connecting Runnymede Road to Davenport Road via Ryding Avenue as shown in Figure 6, ensuring safe crossings at Keele Street and at the railway crossing on Old Weston Road, and consult with the PSCC prior to finalizing

RECOMMENDATION 17

That the City investigate the feasibility of installing contraflow bicycle lanes on Bala Avenue, to connect cyclists from Emmett Avenue to Weston Road.

RECOMMENDATION 18

That the City give consideration to installing barriers to prevent vehicular traffic from entering the bicycle lanes on Runnymede Road, as well as improved pavement markings such as painting the bicycle lanes green.

RECOMMENDATION 19

That the City install bicycle lanes on the section of Rockcliffe Boulevard from the Black Creek Trail to Lambton Avenue.

RECOMMENDATION 20

That the City improve the way-finding signage for cyclists at Rockcliffe Boulevard and Terry Drive, and add pavement markings to the bicycle trail along Terry Drive.

RECOMMENDATION 21

That the City install bicycle signals at the intersection of Weston Road and Humber Boulevard as part of the installation of cycling infrastructure on Humber Boulevard and the safety audit of the intersection from Recommendation 1(d) to facilitate crossings from all directions.

RECOMMENDATION 22

That the City formally request that Hydro One include the construction of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure along the length of their corridor in Ward 11, from west of Scarlett Road to the Lavender Creek Trail, as part of the *Power West Toronto* project.

RECOMMENDATION 23

That the City review the road network around the area of Weston Station to identify opportunities for a connection to the station by way of cycling from areas both north and south of the station.

RECOMMENDATION 24

That funding be allocated in the City's 2019 Budget for the implementation of *Weston Neighbourhood Connections*, Project ID-83 from the City's Cycling Network Plan Project List.

RECOMMENDATION 25

That the City of Toronto proceed with installing a bicycle path along the Black Creek Drive corridor, south from Eglinton Avenue West to Weston Road.

RECOMMENDATION 26

That the City of Toronto assess the feasibility of installing a bicycle path or multi-use trail along the Black Creek Drive corridor, north from Eglinton Avenue West to Lawrence Avenue West.

RECOMMENDATION 27

That the City install bicycle lanes on Eglinton Avenue West, between Jane Street and Weston Road, in time for the opening of Mount Dennis Station in 2021.

RECOMMENDATION 28

That the City conduct a review of parks in Ward 11 to identify those which are not fully accessible and develop a plan to retrofit existing pathways or, if necessary, create new pathways to achieve full accessibility for all parks located in the Ward.

RECOMMENDATION 29

That the City update the existing mapping tool on the Vision Zero Road Safety Plan web page to include safety measures implemented in 2017, as well as those planned for 2018 and future years.

RECOMMENDATION 30

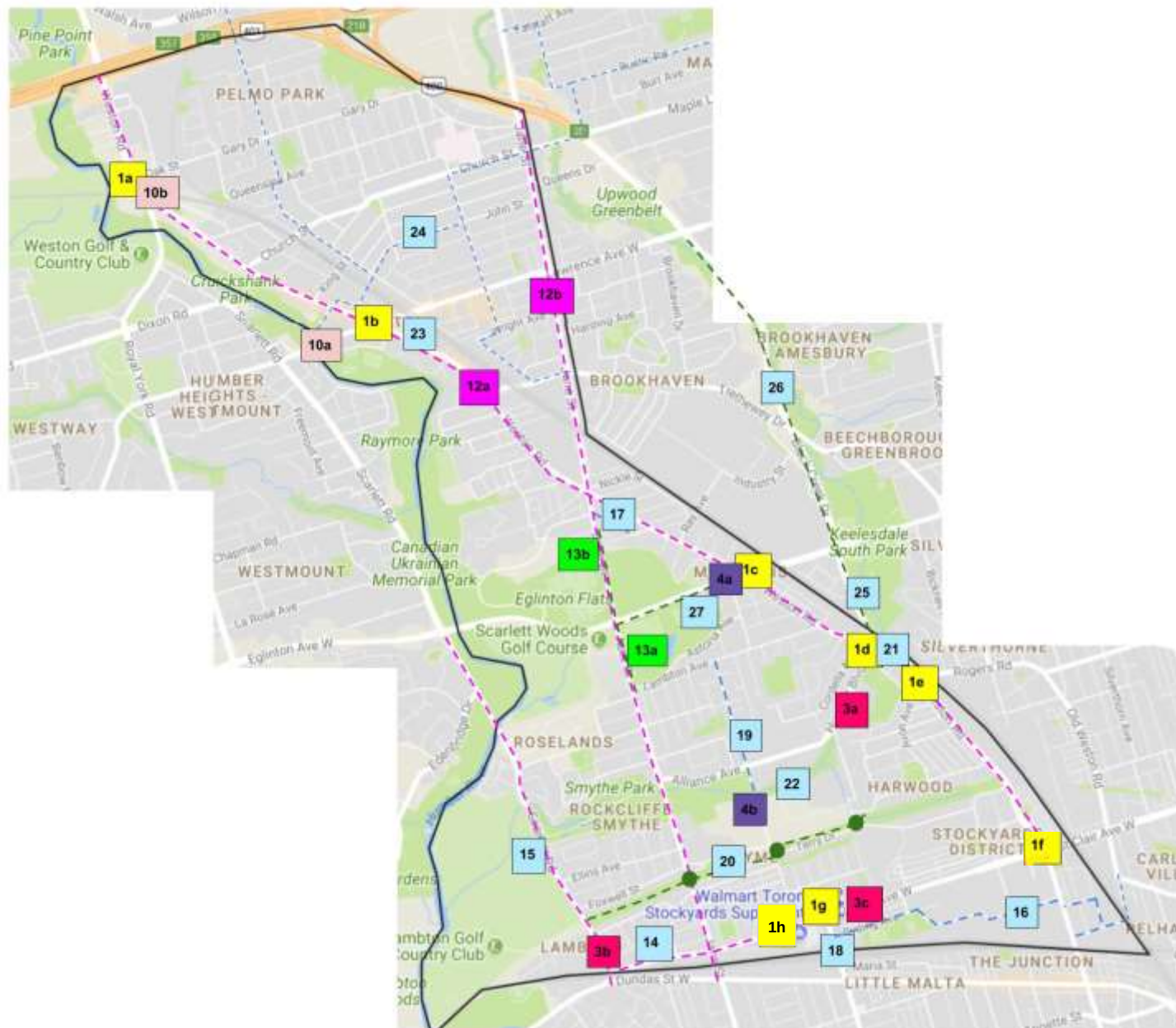
That the City provide the PSCC with a list of measures implemented in Ward 11 to-date under the Vision Zero Road Safety Plan, as well as those planned for 2018, and do so on an annual basis going forward.

RECOMMENDATION 31

That the City work with the Toronto Parking Authority to expand the Bike Share Toronto program into Ward 11, with potential station locations to be identified in consultation with the PSCC.

Figure 1 Site-specific Recommendations

Map of Ward 11 with site-specific recommendations from this report labeled by their respective recommendation number.



MOVING FORWARD: **AN ACTION PLAN** **TO IMPROVE SAFETY AND** **OPPORTUNITIES FOR** **PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS** **IN WARD 11**

INTRODUCTION

It has become common to hear news of pedestrians and cyclists being hit by motorists on the City's streets. While motorists have the benefit of being protected within their vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists are not equally protected. If lucky, a pedestrian or cyclist involved in a collision with a motorist will leave with an injury; however, in many cases, these collisions prove to be fatal. This is true across the City, and Ward 11 is no different having experienced two pedestrian fatalities and one cyclist fatality in recent years.

City-wide Toronto Police Service data¹ from 2016 reveal that there were 163 collisions with pedestrians and cyclists, in which someone was seriously injured; of these collisions, 44 were fatal. It is worth noting that these numbers do not include collisions with pedestrians and cyclists where injuries were minor. At the time of this report, we are 5 weeks into 2018 and the number of fatal collisions in the city is already at 7.

¹ <http://data.torontopolice.on.ca/>

There are numerous benefits from active modes of transportation such as walking and cycling. From the health benefits associated with physical exercise to the positive effect on the environment of reducing emissions by relying less on vehicles, it is vital that we encourage pedestrian and cycling activity in our city. This can only be achieved by ensuring communities are not only well-connected, but safely-connected to transit, employment, educational institutions, and basic needs such as health care, grocery stores, and recreational centres. Encouraging words are not enough to persuade people to leave their cars at home; the City needs to provide the infrastructure to make it possible for people to safely get where they want to go, without a car.

Our streets are not designed to handle the speed and volume of current car use. People are already scared to walk or cycle to places within their own communities, let alone to venture out of them.

This needs to change. The time to move forward is now.

WHO IS THE PSCC?

The Ward 11 Pedestrian Safety and Cycling Committee (PSCC) was created in September 2017 by Frances Nunziata, Councillor, Ward 11 York South-Weston, to provide input, guidance, and advice on behalf of the Ward 11 Community on opportunities to improve pedestrian safety and safe cycling opportunities in Ward 11.

The PSCC is made up of residents from all neighbourhoods of Ward 11 and has met regularly since its creation to develop an action plan for pedestrian safety and cycling in Ward 11, in line with the group's mission statement:

We are committed to making biking and walking safe, enjoyable and efficient for all community members in Ward 11, and connecting the City's current bike and pedestrian infrastructure to our neighbourhoods.

The PSCC has four main goals:

1. To recommend practical, safe improvements to the networks and infrastructure that serve pedestrians and cyclists
2. To foster a safer environment for travel within Ward 11 for pedestrians and cyclists
3. To develop measures to make streets safer by changing speed limits and road design (including sidewalks, intersections, and bike lanes) and advocating for better enforcement and education
4. To develop a network in Ward 11 that makes it possible for people to travel safely and efficiently without needing to drive a car

THE BENEFITS OF ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION TO HEALTH AND WELLBEING

In April 2012 Toronto Public Health published the report *Road to Health: Improving Walking and Cycling in Toronto* which noted that the physical activity involved in active transportation is beneficial to one's physical health. Benefits include reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease, obesity, type II diabetes, and certain types of cancer (Toronto Public Health, 2012). Physical activity has also been found to have a positive effect on certain mental illnesses (depression, for example), and so it would be expected that the same positive impact would be seen among those engaging in active transportation.

Based on 2016 Census data, three of Ward 11's neighbourhoods, representing the majority of Ward 11, have a greater percentage of persons of low income than the city average². It is important that people of low income, who may already face barriers to employment and education, have a safe and affordable way to reach their destinations; a proper network for walking and cycling can serve this purpose.

DEVELOPING THE PLAN

In developing *Moving Forward ("the Plan")*, the PSCC reviewed plans, strategies, and policies already adopted by Toronto City Council to improve pedestrian safety and cycling opportunities across the City including:

- Vision Zero Road Safety Plan (2017-2021)
- Cycling Network Ten-Year Plan
- Toronto Walking Strategy
- Multi-Use Trail Design Guidelines

In addition, the PSCC considered major capital projects, planned or under construction, to ensure that pedestrian and cyclist safety were being taken into account, and that new connections were being created where possible. Projects considered include:

- St. Clair Avenue West Area Transportation Master Plan (City of Toronto)
- Scarlett Road and Dundas Street West Bridge Widening (City of Toronto)
- Mount Dennis Station/West Guideway Multi-Use Path (Metrolinx)
- Power West Toronto (Hydro One, Toronto Hydro)

Finally, in developing the Plan, the PSCC's members referred to their own experiences walking and cycling through Ward 11, as well as the experiences of others in the community.

THE CHALLENGE WE FACE

A 2014 poll of Ontario residents commissioned by the Share the Road Cycling Coalition found that 73% of respondents living in Toronto cited the need for more cycling infrastructure to

² As per the neighbourhood analyses available at <http://www.toronto.ca/wellbeing>

encourage them to cycle³. A lack of cycling infrastructure forces cyclists to share lanes with motorized vehicles which regularly operate at high speeds; it is no wonder that in today's environment, walking and cycling can be perilous.

We believe our community is ready for a cultural shift away from being car-centric to a more walkable, bikeable, and livable area of the city. This shift requires community engagement, political leadership, and enhancements to our streets and sidewalks.

To make strides towards creating a city that is safe for all road users including pedestrians and cyclists as well as motorists, increased funding is needed to accelerate projects already planned for implementation, such as the countermeasures from the *Vision Zero Road Safety Plan (2017-2021)* and the new cycling infrastructure planned through the City of Toronto's *Cycling Network Ten-Year Plan*.

The PSCC acknowledges that the cost of advancing plans to make Ward 11 more cyclist and pedestrian friendly will be high. However, the cost of not doing so will be greater – as measured in lives lost and serious injuries that could have been prevented.

³ <http://www.sharetheroad.ca/files/STR2014Pollingsummary.pdf>

1. A SAFE PEDESTRIAN IS A HAPPY PEDESTRIAN

As documented in *Vision Zero: Toronto's Road Safety Plan*, "a pedestrian is seriously injured or killed every 3 days on Toronto's roads" (Transportation Services, 2017). The PSCC supports the City's efforts to enhance safety for pedestrians of all ages. As advocates for pedestrian safety in Ward 11, we would like to see more Vision Zero countermeasures implemented in our neighbourhoods, with a number of locations identified that we believe should be considered.

1.1 IMPROVING PEDESTRIAN SAFETY AT INTERSECTIONS

Among the new/enhanced safety measures included as part of the Vision Zero Road Safety Plan are road safety audits at locations with a high number of collisions in which pedestrians were killed or seriously injured (KSI). There are a number of intersections in Ward 11 which we believe, from a pedestrian safety lens, are not safe. We urge the City to assess these locations now, not after they reach a high number of KSI collisions and trigger a safety audit. We need to be proactive – not reactive – in conducting safety audits of locations identified by the community as unsafe and/or difficult for pedestrians to safely navigate as a result of challenges. For example, traversing skewed intersections where large numbers of vehicles are attempting to make right turns on red lights.



Figure 2 Skewed intersection at Weston Road and Lawrence Avenue West

By extending curbs as drawn, the crossing distance for pedestrians would be reduced without impact to travel lanes.

RECOMMENDATION 1

That the City conduct Road Safety Audits of the following intersections in Ward 11 and report back on measures, both short-term and long-term, that will be taken by the City to increase the safety of pedestrians at these intersections:

- a. Weston Road and Oak Street
- b. Weston Road and Lawrence Avenue West
- c. Weston Road and Eglinton Avenue West
- d. Weston Road and Humber Boulevard
- e. Weston Road and Rogers Road
- f. Weston Road and St. Clair Avenue West
- g. Runnymede Road and St. Clair Avenue West
- h. Mould Avenue and St. Clair Avenue West

Another pedestrian safety issue at some intersections in Ward 11 is created by the programming of the pedestrian signals, referred to as the mode of control. The City of Toronto uses one of four modes of control at signalized intersections: fixed time (FXT), semi-actuated pedestrian (SAP), semi-actuated vehicle/pedestrian (SAVP), and semi-actuated vehicle (SAV). From a pedestrian safety standpoint, FXT and SAP modes of control are preferred as these are the only modes of control in which a green light for a vehicle will also trigger a “walk” display for pedestrians. For example, the intersections of Weston Road and Lambton Avenue, and Keele Street and Junction Road, both operate on SAVP modes of control. This means that one is required to press the pedestrian push button in order to activate the pedestrian “walk” display; without the press of the button, the pedestrian display will read “Don’t Walk” even if the light is green for vehicles travelling in the same direction as the crossing. This is confusing for pedestrians. The intersection of Weston Road and Birdstone Crescent previously operated under an SAVP mode of control. Thankfully, after the PSCC raised this issue with our local Councillor, the mode of control has since been changed so that the pedestrian signal is automatically activated when the traffic light is green. We would like to see the same change applied to other traffic signals in Ward 11 currently under an SAVP mode of control. This would be in line with the City’s own acknowledgement that an SAP signal “is seen as being pedestrian friendly because it generally reduces the wait time for pedestrians and is in line with the City’s vision of providing a better level of service to pedestrians.”⁴

RECOMMENDATION 2

That the City review the mode of control for traffic lights in Ward 11 and change those currently operating under a Semi-Actuated Vehicle/Pedestrian mode of control to Fixed Time or Semi-Actuated Pedestrian modes of control.

1.2 ENHANCING SAFETY AT EXISTING (OR WITH NEW) PEDESTRIAN CROSSEVERS

Pedestrian crossovers are a useful tool to provide a safer crossing for pedestrians mid-block or in the absence of traffic signals. There are locations however, where even with the existence of a pedestrian crossover crossing can be perilous for pedestrians. Ward 11 is no exception.

In 2008, an elderly man was struck by a school bus while attempting to cross the street at the pedestrian crossover at Scarlett Road and Bernice Crescent. More recently in 2017, a pedestrian was seriously injured when struck by a vehicle while attempting to use the pedestrian crossing at Humber Boulevard and Louvain Street. While these collisions were reported to the police and were reported in the news, members of both communities will attest to the fact that there have been countless near misses, several involving young children attempting to make their way to school.

It is imperative that these locations are assessed to determine what enhanced safety measures can be taken to provide greater protection for pedestrians using the crossovers at these locations.

⁴ <https://www.toronto.ca/services-payments/streets-parking-transportation/traffic-management/traffic-signals-street-signs/traffic-signals-in-toronto/mode-of-control/>

While there have been no documented collisions with pedestrians at the pedestrian crossover located at St. Clair Avenue West and Britannia Avenue, this is another location where attempting to cross the road, as a pedestrian, is dangerous. Similar to the operating speeds of vehicles on Humber Boulevard and on Scarlett Road, vehicles on St. Clair Avenue West have been observed to travel at high speeds, and often fail to yield to pedestrians attempting to use the crossover at Britannia. It would behoove the City to review this pedestrian crossover to determine how the chances of a collision with a pedestrian can be reduced before one happens.

RECOMMENDATION 3

That the City review the existing pedestrian crossovers at the following locations in Ward 11 to identify additional measures that can be implemented, such as raised walkways, to enhance the safety of pedestrians using the crossovers:

- a. Humber Boulevard and Louvain Street
- b. Scarlett Road and Bernice Crescent
- c. St. Clair Avenue West and Britannia Avenue

There are a number of locations in Ward 11 where pedestrians frequently put their lives at risk by crossing the street mid-block, without proper pedestrian crossings. This may be done to get to a mid-block bus stop or to another destination where realistically, one would not walk a distance in one direction just to cross at a signalized intersection and then travel down in the opposite direction to the intended destination. An example of this exists on Eglinton Avenue West, west of Weston Road, where residents living on the east side of the road are known to cross Eglinton Avenue West, in the absence of a pedestrian crossing, to reach the westbound bus stop. Sadly in December 2017, an elderly pedestrian attempted to make this treacherous street crossing and lost her life. A similar situation exists on Rockcliffe Boulevard, where students of Rockcliffe Middle School must cross the street midblock to reach the bus stop on the eastside of Rockcliffe Boulevard. While the City responded to the request for a pedestrian crossing at this location with the installation of a pinch point crossing to reduce the distance for children crossing the road, the PSCC believes that further consideration should be given to this location for a proper pedestrian crossing, as would be supported by the City's Vision Zero Road Safety Plan.

RECOMMENDATION 4

That the City reconsider previous requests to install pedestrian crossovers in front of the following locations in Ward 11:

- a. 3559-3561 Eglinton Avenue West
- b. Rockcliffe Middle School – 400 Rockcliffe Boulevard

And that the intersection of Henrietta Street and Runnymede Road be enhanced with pavement markings and accessibility improvements for crossings.

1.3 UPSIZING OUR SIDEWALKS

The City of Toronto is making strides in installing sidewalks where none previously existed. New sidewalks are being built for accessibility, with the goal of providing clearways of 2.1 m. Unfortunately, many of the existing sidewalks, built decades ago, come nowhere near achieving 2.1 m clearways.



Figure 3 The view north-west on Weston Road, towards Black Creek Drive

The sidewalk on the north side of Weston Road is so narrow, it is difficult for two people to pass at once. This problem is exacerbated by the presence of hydro poles.

In 2019, at the urging of Councillor Nunziata, the City will be widening the sidewalks on Weston Road, from Lawrence Avenue West to Little Avenue, to improve accessibility and to create a more pedestrian-friendly walking environment as part of the planned resurfacing of this section of road. Further south on Weston Road, as well as along other main streets in Ward 11 including Jane Street and St. Clair Avenue West, insufficient sidewalk widths act as a barrier to safety and accessibility, often leading pedestrians or those using mobility devices to use the road. While the PSCC understands that the City intends to correct these design issues as part of future road resurfacing or reconstruction projects, we cannot wait another fifteen to twenty years for these sidewalks, on streets which have been resurfaced within the past decade, to be widened.

RECOMMENDATION 5

That the City review sidewalk widths on major roads in Ward 11 for the purpose of identifying those which fall below accessibility standards and develop a strategy to accelerate their widening and/or replacement.

1.4 PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN

According to *Vision Zero: Toronto's Road Safety Plan*, "a child is seriously injured or killed every 17 weeks on their way to or from school on Toronto's roads" (Transportation Services, 2017). This is a troubling statistic. The PSCC believes that immediate measures should be taken to ensure the safety of children travelling to and from school.

The PSCC believes that the speed limits should be reduced on all our roads. As this may be a point of contention, playing into the argument of the car pitted against the pedestrian (or even the cyclist), the PSCC believes that at a minimum, the speed limits on streets surrounding schools should be reduced.

RECOMMENDATION 6

That the City reduce the speed limit on all local streets in Ward 11 immediately surrounding a school to 30 km/hr.



Speed Reductions

The City has begun installing “School Safety Zones” which include measures such as: reduced speed limits, improved pavement markings, “watch your speed” trailers, and other measures to improve pedestrian safety around our schools. This initiative has already begun for a number of schools in Ward 11.

RECOMMENDATION 7

That funding be included in the City of Toronto’s 2019 budget to implement “School Safety Zones” around all schools in Ward 11.



Flashing Beacon with Timer

Figure 4 School Safety Zone Gateway Features

These images from a September 2017 presentation to the City-School Boards Advisory Committee show some of the tools being used to improve pedestrian safety in school areas.



School Stencil
Pavement Markings
Speed Markings (Optional)

1.5 ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Increased Lighting

When considering pedestrian safety, the PSCC believes that the discussion should not be limited to preventing collisions with motorized vehicles, or even cyclists. It should also include discussion around the walking environment. For example, increased lighting (or any lighting at all) along walking trails would improve a sense of safety for pedestrians, making one likelier to use this mode of active transportation. Similarly, strategically placed benches for those who may need to take a rest from walking would be of benefit.

RECOMMENDATION 8

That the City conduct a review of public walking trails in Ward 11, in consultation with the PSCC, to identify trails in need of additional lighting, including city trails on Hydro One lands, and allocate the funding required in the City’s 2019 budget for their installation.

Separate Spaces for Pedestrians and Cyclists

The discourse around pedestrian safety usually focuses on preventing collisions or near misses with motorized vehicles. We must also address the issue of possible conflict between pedestrians and faster-moving cyclists. The PSCC believes that in general, physically separated paths for pedestrians and cyclists should be provided where sufficient room exists to accommodate both separately. It is only as a last resort that pedestrians and cyclists should use the same trail.



Figure 5 Multi-use trails vs. separated trails

Left: The Lavender Creek Trail is connected to the Black Creek Trail via this multi-use trail along Rockcliffe Boulevard.

Right: Separated trails for pedestrians and cyclists, like these along Eglinton Avenue West, are preferred as they reduce the chances of collisions between pedestrians and cyclists.

RECOMMENDATION 9

That all new cycling infrastructure in Ward 11 be physically separated from pedestrian infrastructure where feasible.

Underpasses and bridges have also been known to be of concern, with pedestrians feeling unsafe due to the speed of vehicles travelling next to them. Consideration should be given to installing physical barriers between the sidewalk and the curb lane along bridges and underpasses to create an improved experience for pedestrians.

RECOMMENDATION 10

That the City investigate the feasibility of installing physical barriers, such as decorative railings, along the following sections of sidewalk in Ward 11 to separate the sidewalk from the curb lane:

- a. Lawrence Avenue Bridge (east of Scarlett Road, west of Little Avenue)
- b. Weston Road underpass (south of Oak Street, north of St. Phillips Road)

Reducing Trip Hazards

One situation to which the PSCC believes attention must be paid is the condition of our sidewalks; specifically, reducing trip hazards from uneven sidewalks. It is understandable that the City does not have the resources within existing staffing levels to patrol all sidewalks, looking for trip hazards. For the most part, this means that City staff rely on the public to report sidewalk trip hazards for repair. The PSCC proposes a pilot project in which job opportunities with the City could

be provided to local youth where students could be hired to walk the sidewalks of their communities and identify trip hazards. If successful, this could become an annual initiative and would help reduce the risk of injuries to pedestrians due to trips and falls. It might even be self-financing through reduced claims against the City for injuries.

RECOMMENDATION 11

That the City develop a pilot project by hiring local youth/students to check the city sidewalks in Ward 11 (or a pre-determined area of Ward 11) for trip hazards which would then be reported for repair.

2. SHARE THE ROAD

Ward 11 is blessed with recreational trails, such as the Humber Trail and the Lavender Creek Trail, which someone might use when taking a leisure stroll or going out for a bike ride. However, people headed somewhere for a purpose (for example work or school), would be more likely to use the most direct route. In Ward 11, this means roads such as Jane Street, Weston Road, and Scarlett Road, all of which have fairly wide lanes and could likely accommodate bicycle lanes.

2.1 GAPS IN THE TEN-YEAR PLAN: CYCLING ROUTES ALONG MAJOR ROADS

Weston Road and Jane Street

Weston Road connects the northwest and southeast corners of Ward 11, with some sections classified by the City of Toronto as a Major Arterial Road, and other sections as a Minor Arterial Road⁵. This corridor includes the Weston Village and Mount Dennis Business Improvement Areas, and major transit stations including the Weston GO Station at the intersection of Weston Road and Lawrence Avenue West, and the future Mount Dennis Station currently under construction at the intersection of Weston Road and Eglinton Avenue West. This is a key corridor where bicycle lanes would provide connections throughout Ward 11 and beyond, including facilitating a connection to the York Recreation Centre, discussed further in section 3 of this report, as well as creating opportunities for connections to the West Toronto Rail Path. The PSCC was surprised to see that Weston Road has been omitted from the City's Ten-Year Cycling Plan, and believes this decision should be revisited.

Figure 6 The cycling experience on Weston Road (between Rogers Road and Black Creek Drive)

Despite the generous road width which could be shared with cyclists, they are forced to use the sidewalk in the absence of bicycle lanes as seen on this image from Google Maps.



The PSCC was similarly surprised to see that Jane Street has been left out of the City's Ten-Year Cycling Plan, as it has the potential of being a north-south artery for cycling. With the absence of alternate routes between Lawrence Avenue West and Lambton Avenue, cyclists must either cycle along Jane Street (with vehicles often speeding), or use the city sidewalk, which is against City bylaws. A cycling route along Jane Street would also link with other routes already planned or in place, making it easier to navigate through Ward 11 by bicycle.

⁵ <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/8f8b-ward11.pdf>

RECOMMENDATION 12

That the City evaluate the feasibility of bicycle lanes or cycle tracks and initiate Major Corridor Studies, if required, along the following corridors in Ward 11:

- a. Weston Road-Keele Street, Junction Road to Hwy 401
- b. Jane Street, St. Clair Avenue West to Hwy 401

The PSCC understands that a Major Corridor Study is a big undertaking and not something that can be completed quickly. For this reason, the PSCC proposes that where sufficient City boulevard exists, such as along Jane Street, between Lambton Avenue and Eglinton Avenue West, multi-use trails be used to facilitate connections with those already in place.

RECOMMENDATION 13

That the City construct a multi-use trail along the following sections of Jane Street in Ward 11:

- a. East side of Jane Street, from Lambton Avenue to Cornell Avenue
- b. West side of Jane Street, from Eglinton Avenue West to Pinehill Crescent

St. Clair Avenue West and Scarlett Road

The PSCC was happy to see that bicycle lanes along St. Clair Avenue West from Scarlett Road to Runnymede Road have already been included in the Ten-Year Cycling Network Plan, connecting to the future bicycle lanes proposed for Scarlett Road. The PSCC would like to see the installation of bicycle lanes on St. Clair Avenue West move forward now, and we strongly believe that the bicycle lanes should be separated or otherwise protected from motorized vehicles due to the high operating speeds of traffic on both roadways.

RECOMMENDATION 14

That the City accelerate the installation of bicycle lanes on St. Clair Avenue West, from Scarlett Road to Runnymede Road, and consult with the PSCC prior to finalizing a design.

RECOMMENDATION 15

That the cycling infrastructure to be installed on Scarlett Road in 2019 be in the form of cycle tracks or otherwise separated from vehicular traffic, and that the PSCC be consulted prior to finalizing a design.

2.2 GAPS IN THE TEN-YEAR PLAN: CYCLING ROUTES ALONG LOCAL/COLLECTOR ROADS**Connecting Runnymede Road to Davenport Road via Ryding Avenue**

The PSCC identified the opportunity for a bicycle route, not included in the Ten-Year Plan, which would pass through the southeast corner of Ward 11 to communities further west. It is proposed that a bicycle route be created to connect the existing bicycle lanes on Runnymede Road with those on Davenport Road, by using Ryding Avenue and other local/collector roads along the way as demonstrated in *Figure 7* on the following page.

Figure 7 Connecting Runnymede Road to Davenport Road via Ryding Avenue

By using local and collector roads, connections can be made between existing bicycle lanes on Runnymede Road and Davenport Road as drawn in purple, with an alternate route in blue.



In creating this proposed route, the City must consider options for cyclists to safely cross Keele Street, as well as possible refinements to the existing railway crossing at Old Weston Road in an effort to prevent bicycle tires from getting caught in the railway tracks.

RECOMMENDATION 16

That the City create a bicycle route connecting Runnymede Road to Davenport Road via Ryding Avenue as shown in Figure 6, ensuring safe crossings at Keele Street and at the railway crossing on Old Weston Road, and consult with the PSCC prior to finalizing

Bala Avenue

The PSCC discussed a suggestion for contraflow bicycle lanes on Bala Avenue to connect cyclists From the large population on Emmett Avenue to Weston Road. Bala Avenue is a small street and home to an elementary school, which is a complication. Nevertheless, we believe it is an idea worth exploring.

RECOMMENDATION 17

That the City investigate the feasibility of installing contraflow bicycle lanes on Bala Avenue, to connect cyclists from Emmett Avenue to Weston Road.

2.3 IMPROVING/ENHANCING EXISTING ROUTES

There are existing cycle tracks in Ward 11 which would benefit from improvement, whether it be by route extensions, better protection from vehicular traffic, or pavement markings. Improvements would be welcome to existing bicycle lanes/trails including those on Runnymede Road, Rockcliffe Boulevard, and Eglinton Avenue West.

Runnymede Road

Far too often, vehicles are seen driving in the bicycle lanes on Runnymede Road. For the safety of cyclists, physical barriers should be installed to prevent this from occurring. Painting the cycle lanes green may also help mitigate this ongoing issue.

RECOMMENDATION 18

That the City give consideration to installing barriers to prevent vehicular traffic from entering the bicycle lanes on Runnymede Road, as well as improved pavement markings such as painting the bicycle lanes green.

Rockcliffe Boulevard

As previously noted, a multi-use trail exists on Rockcliffe Boulevard reaching north to the Black Creek Trail. This bicycle route should be extended to Lambton Avenue for the benefit of cyclists wishing to travel north of Alliance Avenue.

RECOMMENDATION 19

That the City install bicycle lanes on the section of Rockcliffe Boulevard from the Black Creek Trail to Lambton Avenue.

Terry Drive

The multi-use trail on Rockcliffe Boulevard connects to the Lavender Creek Trail via Terry Drive. Unfortunately, many people do not realize this, due to the lack of way-finding signage and the lack of pavement markings on the cycling trail which runs along Terry Drive.

RECOMMENDATION 20

That the City improve the way-finding signage for cyclists at Rockcliffe Boulevard and Terry Drive, and add pavement markings to the bicycle trail along Terry Drive.

Humber Boulevard

While bicycle lanes have not been installed yet on Humber Boulevard, the City plans to install them in 2019. As part of this work, the PSCC would like to see bicycle signals installed at the intersection of Weston Road and Humber Boulevard, to facilitate both north-south crossings as well as east-west crossings. Weston Road and Humber Boulevard is one of the intersections which the PSCC has recommended for a safety audit under Recommendation 1.

RECOMMENDATION 21

That the City install bicycle signals at the intersection of Weston Road and Humber Boulevard as part of the installation of cycling infrastructure on Humber Boulevard and the safety audit of the intersection from Recommendation 1(d) to facilitate crossings from all directions.

Trails along the Hydro One Corridor

The Hydro One corridor spans Ward 11 from west of Scarlett Road to Weston Road. The City has many licence agreements with Hydro One for the use of portions of the corridor, ranging from the community gardens at Marie Baldwin Garden Plots to Woolner Park, to the Lavender Creek Trail. Hydro One is currently undertaking the project *Power West Toronto* which involves significant work throughout their corridor in Ward 11. Discussion has already been initiated with

Hydro One regarding improving the corridor both aesthetically and functionally, with Hydro One having indicated a willingness to work with the City and the community towards this goal.

The PSCC would like to see a trail constructed along the entire length of the Hydro One corridor in Ward 11, to be used by both pedestrians and cyclists. This desire for a continuous path along the corridor, to connect with the Lavender Creek Trail (which is already located on Hydro One lands) has been echoed by the community during discussion and consultation regarding Hydro One's ongoing work along the corridor. A trail of this nature would have to include provision of safe crossings at north-south roads including, but not limited to, Jane Street and Scarlett Road.

Through the Councillor's office, City staff have been engaged with Hydro One regarding the work underway and the desires of the community. The PSCC is supportive of the ongoing discussion and is eager to see a commitment from Hydro One to enhance the existing trails with lighting and to improve east-west connectivity through Ward 11 by creating additional paved trails as part of the *Power West Toronto* project.

RECOMMENDATION 22

That the City formally request that Hydro One include the construction of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure along the length of their corridor in Ward 11, from west of Scarlett Road to the Lavender Creek Trail, as part of the *Power West Toronto* project.

3. CONNECTING PEOPLE TO PLACES (in ways that make sense)

As is the case with roads, bicycle lanes and trails should serve the purpose of connecting people to the places they wish to go. To encourage and promote active transportation, the City must make it a safe mode of travel and on a route that makes sense. There are a number of key locations in Ward 11 which are not conveniently, or safely, accessible by cycling.

3.1 WESTON GO STATION AND UP EXPRESS

The Weston GO Station and UP Express stop ("Weston Station"), located on Weston Road south of Lawrence Avenue West, opened in recent years. With this new, convenient and fast way downtown, travellers could leave their cars behind, alleviating congestion in the downtown core. Forgotten, however, was the way Weston Station could reduce congestion in the area within which it is located.

Many GO/UP riders who are not within walking distance of Weston Station drive there. This is evidenced by the station's parking lots which are often at capacity. We can reduce the number of vehicles driving to the station by creating safe cycling routes to connect to it. Here we find a gap in the City's Cycling Network Ten-Year Plan, with no cycling routes proposed to get to Weston Station.



Figure 8 Cycling Infrastructure Planned around the Weston GO Station and UP Express

This map, taken from the City's Cycling Network Ten-Year Plan, shows existing cycle routes (purple) and proposed routes (green, blue) in the vicinity of Weston Station (green dot). Connections to the station from the north and south are glaringly absent.

As previously noted (see Recommendation 12(a) of this report), the PSCC believes it would be of benefit to undertake a Major Corridor Study of Weston Road. We understand that this process would not be a quick one. In the interim, there may be opportunities to include bicycle lanes as part of the road work already planned for this section of Weston Road in 2019.

RECOMMENDATION 23

That the City review the road network around the area of Weston Station to identify opportunities for a connection to the station by way of cycling from areas both north and south of the station.

Among the long list of projects that were proposed as part of the City's Cycling Network Plan was a 7.4 km "Quiet Street Route" titled *Weston Neighbourhood Connections*. The cost to move forward with this plan would be relatively small, since it requires only simple pavement markings and way-finding signage. This project should move forward now.

RECOMMENDATION 24

That funding be allocated in the City's 2019 Budget for the implementation of *Weston Neighbourhood Connections*, Project ID-83 from the City's Cycling Network Plan Project List.

3.2 YORK RECREATION CENTRE

In 2017, the City of Toronto opened up the new, state-of-the-art York Recreation Centre, located at the southeast corner of Black Creek Drive and Eglinton Avenue West. This long-awaited, fully accessible facility includes a lane pool, leisure tot pool, double-sized gymnasium, weight room, indoor running track, fitness studio, kitchen, and multi-purpose rooms of various sizes. In all, this is a great facility providing free opportunities for the community to be active and socialize. Unfortunately, there is no safe way to cycle there.

With a 70 km/hr speed limit on Black Creek Drive, and vehicles often travelling at high speeds on Eglinton Avenue West, there is an immediate need for a bicycle lane along the Black Creek Drive corridor which could be easily accommodated on the expansive boulevard, particularly west of Eglinton Avenue West.

RECOMMENDATION 25

That the City of Toronto proceed with installing a bicycle path along the Black Creek Drive corridor, south from Eglinton Avenue West to Weston Road.

RECOMMENDATION 26

That the City of Toronto assess the feasibility of installing a bicycle path or multi-use trail along the Black Creek Drive corridor, north from Eglinton Avenue West to Lawrence Avenue West.

3.3 MOUNT DENNIS STATION

Located at the intersection of Weston Road and Eglinton Avenue West, the Mount Dennis Station Mobility Hub, currently under construction, will be the west terminus station for the Eglinton Crosstown. The Hub will feature transfers to the GO Transit Kitchener Line and UP Express, as well as a large TTC bus terminal. A total of 120 bicycle parking spaces will be provided on site, with a direct connection to a new two-way bicycle path being constructed on the north side of Eglinton Avenue West, from Weston Road to Black Creek Drive, as part of this project.

With bicycle paths already installed along Eglinton Avenue West ending at Jane Street, and the new path to be constructed from Weston Road to Black Creek Drive, connectivity to the new station, via Eglinton Avenue West, will be nearly continuous, but for a gap between Jane Street and Weston Road. This gap must be closed in advance of the 2021 opening of Mount Dennis Station.

RECOMMENDATION 27

That the City install bicycle lanes on Eglinton Avenue West, between Jane Street and Weston Road, in time for the opening of Mount Dennis Station in 2021.

RECOMMENDATION 29

That the City update the existing mapping tool on the Vision Zero Road Safety Plan web page to include safety measures implemented in 2017, as well as those planned for 2018 and future years.

RECOMMENDATION 30

That the City provide the PSCC with a list of measures implemented in Ward 11 to-date under the Vision Zero Road Safety Plan, as well as those planned for 2018, and do so on an annual basis going forward.

4.3 SHARE BIKE SHARE

Launched in 2011, Bike Share Toronto has grown from its original inventory of 80 docking stations and 800 bicycles, compared to the 270 stations and 2,700 bicycles available today. Of these stations, not one is located in Ward 11. In fact, not a single station can be found in the north parts of the city.

Advertised as a way to save money, save time, fun, get exercise, and go green⁷, opportunities to utilize Bike Share Toronto should not be limited to downtown Toronto, but should be distributed throughout the city. Let all Torontonians reap the benefits and value of this program.

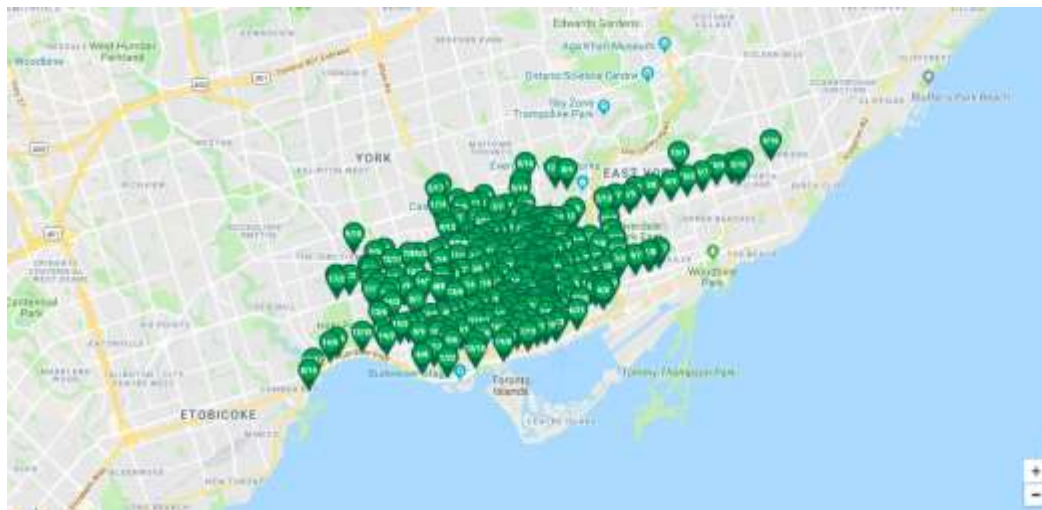


Figure 10 Bike Share Toronto's System Map

This map, taken from Bike Share Toronto's website, shows the locations of their bike stations. Not a single station is located north of St. Clair Avenue West.

RECOMMENDATION 31

That the City work with the Toronto Parking Authority to expand the Bike Share Toronto program into Ward 11, with potential station locations to be identified in consultation with the PSCC.

⁷ As advertised on Bike Share Toronto's website at www.bikesharetoronto.com

6. CONCLUSION

Why would Ward 11 residents use their bikes to get around if they could? Because it is practical, saving time and money, not to mention the added benefits for the environment from reducing emissions.

Through *The Way Forward: An Action Plan to Improve Safety and Opportunities for Pedestrians and Cyclists in Ward 11*, we have brought forward our recommendations for Ward 11 in order to create a safer and friendlier environment for pedestrians and cyclists alike.

The PSCC came together with the common goal of improving safety for pedestrians and cyclists, and identifying additional opportunities for cycling infrastructure to help encourage these modes of active transportation.

With support from the City by way of implementing the recommendations from this report, we will be well on our way towards achieving this goal.

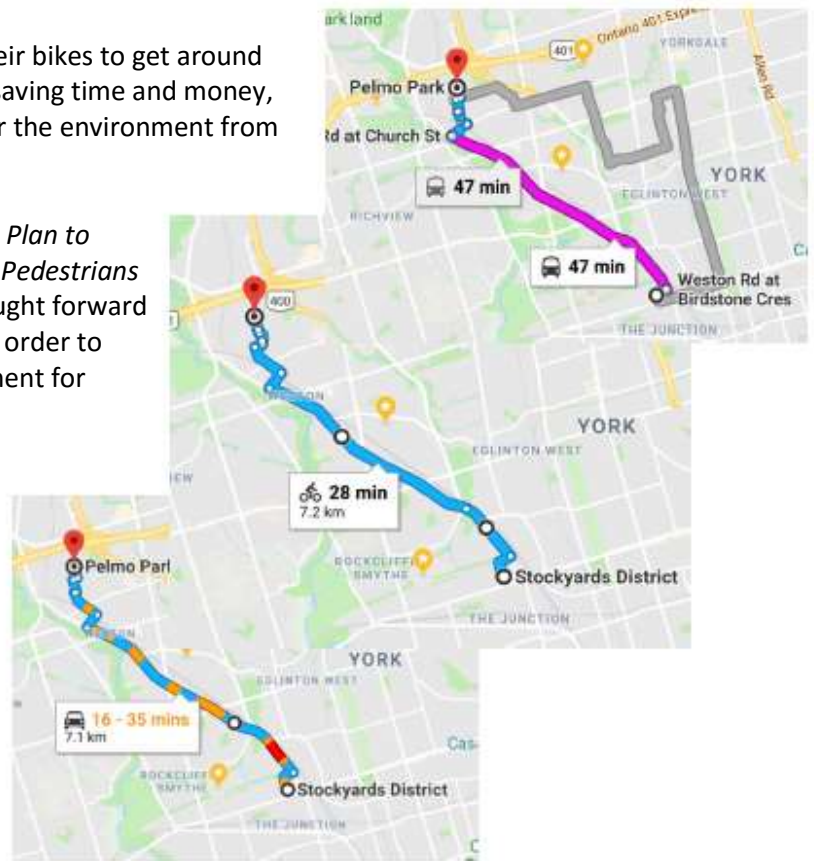


Figure 11 Travel Times Through Ward 11

A comparison of the time it takes to travel from the north end of Ward 11 to the south end of Ward 11 by public transit (upper right), cycling (middle), and driving (lower left).