



**#BuildTheVisionTO**  
**SAFE AND ACTIVE STREETS FOR ALL**

# #BUILD THE VISION TO SAFE AND ACTIVE STREETS FOR ALL

Toronto's population is growing and changing, and it's time our streets did too. We have never had more people walking, cycling, and using transit in our city than we have today.

Our streets account for over 25% of Toronto's public space. Like our parks and plazas, our streets belong to all of us. For too long they have been measured using one priority - the movement of cars. To build a prosperous, healthy and equitable city we need to break free of this thinking and build safe and active streets that work for everyone.

Streets have many roles to play in our city. They are conduits for the movement of people and goods, they are the lifeblood of thriving local businesses, they are places for physical activity and social engagement, but most of all they need to be safe and accessible places for Torontonians of all ages and abilities.

Unfortunately, when it comes to safety, our streets are failing. Toronto's streets are "in crisis," a description used by our Mayor and many other civic leaders.

In July 2016, Toronto City Council approved the Vision Zero Road Safety Plan, a five-year plan to eliminate traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries on Toronto's streets. While a laudable goal, Vision Zero is nowhere close to being achieved.

In 2017, the first year of implementation of the Vision Zero Road Safety Plan, 40 vulnerable road users (people on foot and bicycle) died on our streets, only four fewer than the 44 that were killed in 2016. This year (2018) Toronto has seen a surge in deaths of vulnerable road users. The City is on pace to have one of its deadliest years ever.

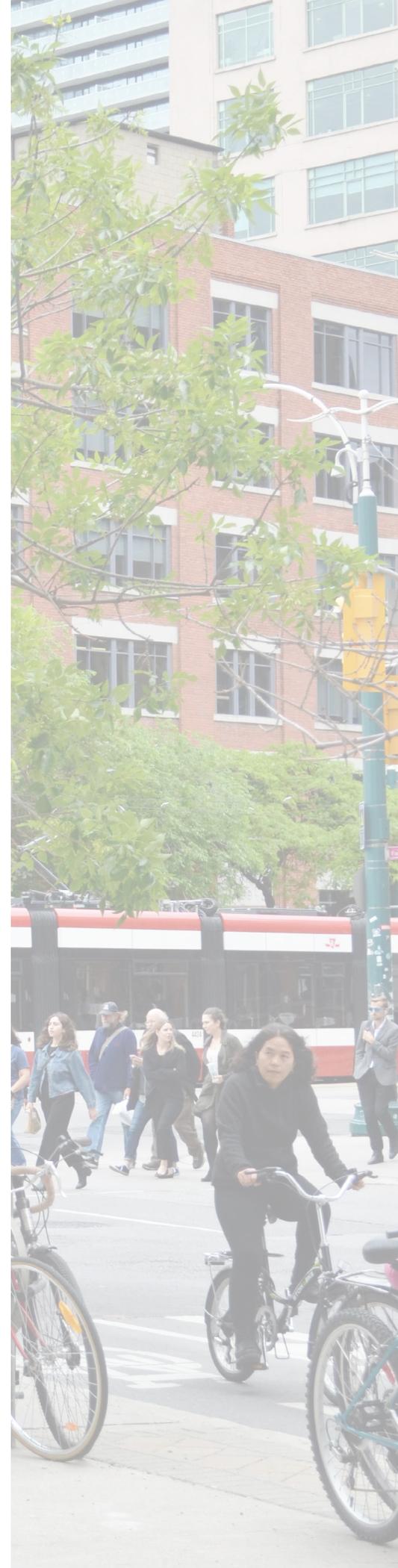
Each and every one of these deaths was preventable. We know the proven solutions now. We know how to build streets that are safe and accessible - streets that can save lives.

We need the next term of Council to step up and take immediate action.

We have identified 15 priority actions within 7 themes to improve road safety, increase physical activity, and get Toronto moving to build safe and active streets for all.



Front image: Richmond Street West at Spadina Avenue  
Photo Credit: Jiya Benni



# MOVING AT HUMAN SPEED

## 01 IMPLEMENT A CITY-WIDE DEFAULT SPEED LIMIT OF 30 KM/H ON ALL RESIDENTIAL STREETS AND 40 KM/H ON ALL ARTERIAL AND COLLECTOR ROADS

Speed kills: [A pedestrian struck by a vehicle travelling 50 km/h is five times more likely to die than if they are hit at 30 km/h.](#) [Bill 65, the Safer School Zones Act](#), passed in 2017, enables municipalities to create Community Safety Zones with blanket default speeds lower than the current default of 50 km/h. Implementing lower city-wide default speed limits is a critical component in preventing traffic fatalities. In June 2018, the Public Works & Infrastructure Committee adopted a [staff report](#) to designate all K-8 schools as Community Safety Zones. While an important first step, every Torontonians is at risk on streets across the city where excessive motor vehicle speed is permitted. Implementing lower city-wide default speed limits is a critical component in preventing traffic fatalities. We need to move Toronto closer to a city-wide speed limit of 30 km/h on all streets other than expressways.



*A neighbourhood street with a speed limit of 30 km/h  
Photo Credit: Katie Wittmann*

## 02 STREAMLINE THE TRAFFIC CALMING PROCESS IN TORONTO

Traffic calming is the deliberate slowing of traffic on residential streets by making physical changes such as adding speed humps or narrowing lanes. Traffic calming has been [proven to slow traffic and reduce collisions](#), yet the process in Toronto is [time-consuming and confusing](#). In May 2018, [City Council delegated to Community Councils](#) the authority to waive onerous petition and polling requirements, but there remain many barriers to implementation, including restrictive technical warrants and a complaints-driven process. Toronto needs to continue to reform and streamline its traffic calming process.



*A traffic calmed street with curb extensions  
Photo Credit: Katie Wittmann*

## 03 IMPLEMENT TRAFFIC CALMING IN ALL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ZONES BY 2022

Pedestrian injuries are one of the leading causes of injury related deaths for children. In June 2018, the Public Works & Infrastructure Committee adopted a [staff report](#) to designate safety zones around all elementary schools. Fines will be increased, the zones will be eligible for safety cameras (pending provincial approval), and traffic calming will be considered site-by-site. While an important first step, [signage](#) has little effect on driver behaviour. Speed humps, bulb-outs, raised crosswalks, and narrowing lanes have been proven to reduce collision rates and save lives. We need to build these solutions starting now to make the entire city safe for walking to school.



*Children using a crosswalk on the way to school  
Photo Credit: Katie Wittmann*

# SIDEWALKS FOR EVERYONE

## 04

### BUILD SIDEWALKS ON EVERY STREET BEING RECONSTRUCTED

Sidewalks are an essential piece of the City's transportation infrastructure, providing accessibility and safety for all, including children, seniors, and people with disabilities. But [nearly 25% of all local streets in Toronto don't have a sidewalk and many more only have a sidewalk](#) on one side of the street. Where sidewalks are missing, people have no alternative but to walk on the roadway or on unimproved road shoulders. The City's [road classification criteria](#) recommends a sidewalk on at least one side of all local roads. Road reconstruction presents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to add a missing sidewalk and is the most cost-effective and efficient approach to doing so. The City's Disability, Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee [endorsed this approach for accessibility, safety and walkability reasons](#). But local councillors [frequently oppose adding sidewalks](#) and this results in decisions that deviate from City policy. Every street in Toronto needs a sidewalk.



*Children walking on a street without sidewalks  
Photo Credit: City of Toronto*

## 05

### ENSURE SIDEWALKS HAVE A MINIMUM 2.1 METRE PEDESTRIAN CLEARWAY ON ALL ARTERIAL AND COLLECTOR ROADS

Sidewalks that are sufficiently wide allow people to walk as their primary means of transportation, in turn reducing vehicular congestion. But many of Toronto's sidewalks are too narrow for the large volume of people that use them. Sidewalks should be open and inviting to all, regardless of age or ability. Sidewalks must accommodate people that are moving at different speeds, that are stationary, as well as people who use different kinds of mobility devices. Toronto's [Complete Streets guidelines](#) set a minimum clear space on sidewalks of 2.1 metres to provide a safe, universally accessible path. This minimum width allows one person to pass two people walking together, and space for two wheelchairs to pass. Wider, unobstructed sidewalks benefit everyone.



*A senior navigating a crowded sidewalk with wheelchair  
Photo Credit: 8 80 Cities*

# BUILD THE GRID: A VIBRANT CYCLING CITY FOR ALL

## 06 BUILD PROTECTED BIKE LANES ON MAIN STREETS, INCLUDING THE MAJOR CORRIDORS IN THE CYCLING NETWORK PLAN

According to a [2018 Nanos poll](#), 11 percent of people in Toronto ride a bike every day and two-thirds of Torontonians would ride more if there was more and better infrastructure in their community. City Council adopted a city-wide [10 Year Cycling Network Plan](#) in 2016 and it will be updated in early 2019. While the Plan included Bloor Street, Yonge Street, and Danforth Avenue as critical elements to connect the network, studies for Danforth, and Yonge St, and other major corridors were put on hold and subsequently removed from the implementation plan by Council. Torontonians across the city need a network of safe, protected bike lanes.



Protected bike lanes on Adelaide St. W.  
Photo Credit: John Greenfield

## 07 BUILD SAFE, CONNECTED ROUTES IN EVERY WARD

In addition to mainstreets, Toronto's diverse neighbourhoods need safe cycling infrastructure that connects them to schools, shopping, and other destinations. [Close to half](#) of trips made in Toronto are under 5 kilometres, making them ideal for cycling if safe, connected routes are in place. Torontonians need safe cycling infrastructure across the entire city, connected to places they need to go, [as identified in the 10-Year Cycling Network Plan](#) and Vision Zero Road Safety Plan.



Traffic calming on Yukon Street bikeway in Vancouver  
Photo Credit: Dylan Passmore

## 08 ACCELERATE THE CYCLING NETWORK PLAN TO BE BUILT IN THE NEXT FOUR YEARS

An [Angus Reid Forum poll](#) shows that 86% of Torontonians support a safe cycling network. The City is currently [studying](#) the cost of accelerating the Cycling Network Plan to be built by 2022 i.e installing [335 kilometres](#) of on-street protected bike lanes and 190 kilometres of bike boulevards in six years. For comparison, New York City installed 643 kms ([400 miles](#)) of bike lanes in six years. We estimate that a \$25 million annual capital budget could [make the 2022 target a reality](#). This could be achieved from 2019 forward with the City Council-approved commitment of \$16 million per year plus \$8 million already committed to Toronto by the Province. Speeding up implementation of the Cycling Network Plan will save lives and prevent life-altering injuries.

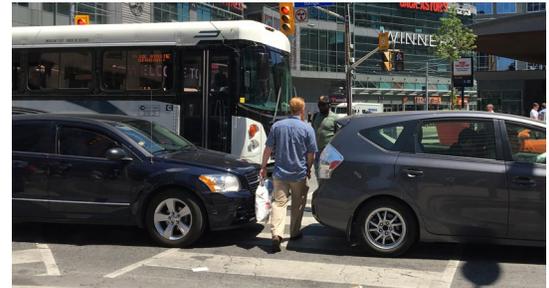


10 Year Cycling Network Plan  
Source: City of Toronto

# CROSSING WITH CONFIDENCE

## 09 INCREASE THE USE OF AUTOMATED TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT SAFETY CAMERAS

Red light cameras, first introduced in Toronto in 2000, have been reported by the City of Toronto to reduce instances of crashes and injury [by up to 60%](#) in the intersections where they've been implemented. Toronto's [Vision Zero Road Safety Plan](#) increases the number of safety cameras at red lights from 77 to 153 by 2021. The goal of the plan, as [adopted by Council](#), is to “reduce the number of road fatalities and serious injuries to zero as part of the five-year Road Safety Plan.” Accelerating the implementation of automated safety cameras would save lives.



Cars blocking the crosswalk at Yonge and Dundas  
Photo Credit: Jiya Benni

## 10 PRIORITIZE THE SAFETY OF VULNERABLE ROAD USERS BY OUTLAWING MOTOR VEHICLE RIGHT TURNS ON RED

Drivers who make a right turn on a red light without coming to [a complete stop first, as established in the Highway Traffic Act](#), create a particularly dangerous environment for vulnerable road users, especially people with visual impairments, children and seniors. As drivers look left for a gap in traffic, they are more likely to strike a pedestrian or bicyclist crossing on their right. The third most common type of collision is when a motor vehicle turns right while the pedestrian was crossing with the right of way at intersection: 13% of pedestrian injuries or fatalities were the result of [right-turning vehicles](#). Other large cities in North America such as New York, Montreal and Mexico City have implemented a city-wide [ban on right turns on red](#). Prohibiting turning right on red in Toronto would make intersections safer for pedestrians.



A senior crossing the street using a mobility device  
Photo Credit: 8 80 Cities

## 11 IMPLEMENT CONTROLLED CROSSINGS AT ALL BUS AND STREETCAR STOPS

In some parts of Toronto, the [distance between traffic signals is 1 km or more](#). Many important destinations, such as transit stops, are midway between traffic lights requiring a detour of 15 minutes or more on foot to access a safe crossing point. In January 2018, a 21-year-old student was killed at such a location as she was trying to cross from a TTC bus stop on Steeles Ave. E., 300 metres away from the closest signalized intersection, with no sidewalk. Inaccessible bus stops far from crossings and with no adjacent sidewalks are not uncommon in several parts of the city, [including near schools](#). Every TTC stop needs a safe way for people to cross the street.



A TTC stop with no safe crossing on Steeles Avenue.  
Source: Google Maps

# COMPLETE STREETS THE DEFAULT

## 12 CREATE AN IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY FOR TORONTO'S COMPLETE STREETS GUIDELINES

In August 2014, [Toronto City Council adopted a Complete Streets policy within its amended Official Plan](#) and in January 2017, Toronto's [Complete Streets Guidelines](#) were released. These guidelines are an excellent resource to ensure that the needs of all road users of all ages and abilities are reflected in street design. However, the City does not have dedicated staff responsible for developing an implementation plan. Toronto needs a Complete Streets implementation strategy, including training for staff and contractors involved in this new approach to street design



*Richmond Street West at Spadina Avenue  
Photo Credit: Jiya Benni*

## 13 SUPPORT THE TRANSFORM YONGE OPTION FOR YONGE STREET BETWEEN SHEPPARD AND FINCH AVENUES

The population density between Finch and Sheppard Avenues has become comparable to Toronto's downtown core, resulting in high volumes of people moving by all modes. North York Centre continues to [grow](#) and requires a multi-modal Complete Street that will accommodate increasing numbers of pedestrians and cyclists, yet still allow for the efficient movement of vehicles. In the [Reimagining Yonge environmental assessment study](#), City staff recommended the "Transform Yonge" option that would reduce six vehicular lanes to four, install bike lanes, and increase sidewalk widths. In March 2018, City Council deferred consideration of the Reimagining Yonge staff report to a later date. By adopting the "Transform Yonge" option, Council would make Yonge Street safer and more accessible for vulnerable road users and provide active transportation options that will help generate significant health, economic and other benefits.



*A rendering of Yonge Street as proposed in Transform Yonge with wider sidewalks and reduced number of vehicular lanes  
Photo Credit: City of Toronto*

# ZERO TRAFFIC DEATHS

## 14 MATCH NEW YORK CITY'S PER-CAPITA FUNDING FOR TORONTO'S ROAD SAFETY PLAN

The City of Toronto has committed \$80.3 million over five years, or \$6 per capita per year, to its Vision Zero Road Safety Plan (2016-2021). New York City has committed [\\$1.3 billion over four years](#) (2017-2021) to its Vision Zero capital budget, or \$38 per capita per year. In 2017, New York experienced its [fourth consecutive year of declining traffic fatalities](#) (the fewest number of lives lost since 1910) while Toronto's number of deaths is on the rise. Toronto needs to move more quickly to implement the Vision Zero Road Safety Plan.



*A vigil for victims of road violence in Toronto  
Photo Credit: Jun Nogami*

# STREETS FOR PEOPLE

## 15 SUPPORT AND FUND A MONTHLY OPEN STREETS TORONTO PROGRAM FROM MAY TO SEPTEMBER IN 2019 AND BEYOND

Open Streets are programs that temporarily open streets to people by closing them to cars for people to walk, bike and be physically active. Since 2014, [Open Streets Toronto](#) has collaborated with the City of Toronto, community organizations and sponsors, to deliver a grassroots program, which opens a 6 km stretch of Yonge and Bloor Streets to people for 2-3 Sunday mornings per year. The most successful international examples have significant funding from their City governments and are regularly occurring programs. The City of Toronto has contributed only about 8% of the total program budget in 2017 (the cost of one open street is \$150,000). A regularly occurring Open Streets program, with sustainable funding from the City would provide economic, health, and environmental benefits on an underused asset - our streets.



*Open Streets program in Toronto  
Photo Credit: 8 80 Cities*