



Attn:

Councillor Elizabeth Pelozo  
Chair, Civic Works Committee  
City of London

Ms. Julie Kortekaas  
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**Re: Dundas Place Cycling Configuration**

Dear Ms Pelozo and the Civic Works Committee,

I am writing you to address the **proposed changes to Dundas Place**, making it a one-way roadway with east and westbound cycling lanes on the north and south sides of the street.

I am opposed to the proposed plan, and believe although it has good intentions, it is a poorly thought-out design made without public and professional consultation. We need to do better, making Dundas Place viable for many years to come.

I own Rebel Remedy, a cafe, kombucha brewery, and grocery shoppe with heavy stakes in this conversation. We use the street differently for each aspect of our business, but have endured both construction and a pandemic with success, nevertheless. With a keen eye for urban design because of my background in the Landscape Architecture field for 15 years, I avidly and intently watch how others use the street and how the existing design unfolded. I am also a cyclist who is too scared to cycle to my own workplace due to aggressive drivers, and *I fear for the safety of cyclists and children given the currently presented plan.*

**I recognize that this is a very complex, interconnected project that has many special interest groups, businesses, downtown workers, logistics, and casual users to keep in mind**, and I also recognize that the city does not want to put proper funds towards this project - but I vehemently object to this plan until it is fully and properly realized to **accommodate the diversity of usages before implementation**, unlike the Dundas Place masterplan.

Below are some guiding points that I support as a Dundas Place business owner and want to contribute to the conversation on the City's decision making on this project:

**1. Primarily, we must champion the vibrancy of the commercial community.**

This is the 'why' for people coming to the downtown core. The vitality and sustainability of the street will suffer if the solution doesn't address the real needs of the commercial community who provides the value to all users of the street.

**2. Proper planning for the current needs and increased future usage of the street loading zones must be accommodated to support this commerce.**

Planning ahead is vital; **widespread delivery services**, whether it's shipments, food distributors, couriers, mail, food delivery apps, etc, was NOT accounted for in the original design of Dundas Place. This is a reality that the City of London must come around to. Businesses need to be able to get and give deliveries easily, from pedestrians, cyclists, cars, trucks, and very large transport trucks. The proposed plan grossly conflicts with pedestrian and cyclist safety in this way.

**3. Bike lanes must be protected by a strong car-proof physical barrier.**

Recognize the validity of cyclists demands for protected bike lanes, and treat them with the proper space and respect they deserve as valuable generators of economic activity.

*People cycle downtown to buy things, to commute to work, to meet on a patio, and they need to park their bike somewhere. A clearly delineated physical barrier will prevent cars and delivery trucks from escaping their area and harming people, damaging bike racks (this has already happened on Dundas) scaring people and children, or making people feel uneasy. People who feel uneasy do not spend money, they leave.*

In my personal experience on Dundas Place, I have seen cars drive well beyond the speed limit, aggressively honking and yelling at cyclists, and nearly hitting pedestrians at least every other day. I have seen cars park on the sidewalk DAILY, I've even seen cars fully *drive* on the sidewalk. The cars MUST be corralled with a physical barrier - this is why planners specify curbs instead of reinventing the wheel.

**4. Proper planning for Dundas Place 'Flex' street closures: what happens to cycling lanes when the roadway is closed to cars?**

As presented in the original and existing Dundas Place Flex Street Plan, the street is to close for periodic events and pedestrians days. Does bicycle traffic continue? **Every good designer knows that once you put a cycling lane in, it's very difficult to discourage use and change the pathway.** Cyclists and pedestrians want a direct route just like car drivers want. It would be a mistake to assume cyclists are riding around for pleasure. Oftentimes, a bike is a climate-change aware vehicle.

**5. Pedestrians deserve safety greater than the current bollards provide.**

Pedestrians require **clarity of communication** from the City on whether Dundas Place is a place for them to walk down the centre of the street fancy-free with their kids running around, or whether it is a place of commerce and speed as bikes and cars zoom past on their latest trip (made worse by choosing to make Dundas Place a one-way highway), courier delivery, or a commute. Don't leave out these **important human scale considerations** in favour of cyclists and car-drivers.

If bike lanes and one-way vehicle traffic is implemented, **how does this conflict with the overall Dundas Place Design that encourages meandering**, crossing the street, and a feeling on oneness from one side of the street to the other with no curbs. **How does a pedestrian cross the street with this plan?**

Lastly, and significantly, the existing 'parking spots' are not safe, and currently are essentially driveways for large work vans (i.e. plumbers / electricians etc) to park on the sidewalk for the day. **This happens daily. Fix this.**

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**Below is my proposal that I would like you to consider taken from my interdisciplinary experience relating to street planning, design, urban planning, economics, political science, restaurant ownership, and graphic design:**

- a) Create a singular two-way meandering cycling track. Install this on the SOUTH side of Dundas Place not within the roadway, but within the 15 feet of pedestrians pace on the south side. Both eastbound and westbound cycling directions would be on one track.
- b) Cycling track could be mostly straight but could meander around the trees. This would create design continuity with the physical streetscape as well as the River Paths.

- c) Make this cycling track raised from the sidewalk, and **guarded by regularly specified curbs**. Use sloped curbs at several points in the street for pedestrian and delivery accessibility to ensure safe crossing of bike lanes.
  
- d) Do not make Dundas Place a one-way street. Evidence from other cities shows that if you create a network of one-way streets, its acts as a highway OUT of downtown rather than an invitation to stay. This will not be good for businesses, pedestrians, or cyclists.
  
- e) There are fewer businesses on the south side of the street, more open space, less street trees and street furniture. This is the ideal place for a cycling track.

Let's be future-oriented, and plan for a rich future. We know climate change is an issue, why not create good infrastructure for **safe** cycling, allowing cyclists to then become part of the customer, patron, and delivery ecosystem. We all know if you create a highway it will be used by businesses. Why not bikes?

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I am very happy council is taking up the important conversation of bike lanes and street usage on Dundas Place. You must facilitate access for all, people and businesses and commuters, for now and in the future. Cars, delivery trucks, cyclists, and pedestrians must have clearly defined and protected spaces. You will be making a mistake if you take the easy way out and simply paint lines or install a row of plastic sticks as a barrier, like King Street. **If you keep these points in mind, you have a chance at a vibrant downtown with an alive commercial area that is primed and ready for the future.**

Thank you for your time. I look forward to further discussion and community engagement that has the best interests and safety of pedestrians, cyclists, and businesses in mind.

Regards,  
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