

April 5, 2013

## GM 21.10 – Nathan Phillips Square Bicycle Station

Dear Chair Ainslie and Members of the Government Management Committee,

My name is Jared Kolb and I'm Executive Director of Cycle Toronto. Cycle Toronto is a diverse, member-supported organization that advocates for a healthy, safe, cycling-friendly for all. On behalf of our over 2,350 members **I urge you to re-instate the Nathan Phillips Square Bicycle Station.**

Cycle Toronto was disappointed to learn that the Nathan Phillips Square Bicycle Station was deferred by City staff thanks to an estimated \$70,000 in lost revenue by the Toronto Parking Authority – a project that has already received council approval.

According to a [recent study](#) conducted by the City, 70% of commuter cyclists don't have access to shower and change facilities. What's more, 18% of recreational cyclists say that "inconvenience" is the number one reason they don't ride to work. Through the provision of shower facilities and secure bike parking, bike stations have the ability to address these concerns and promote more Torontonians cycling to work.

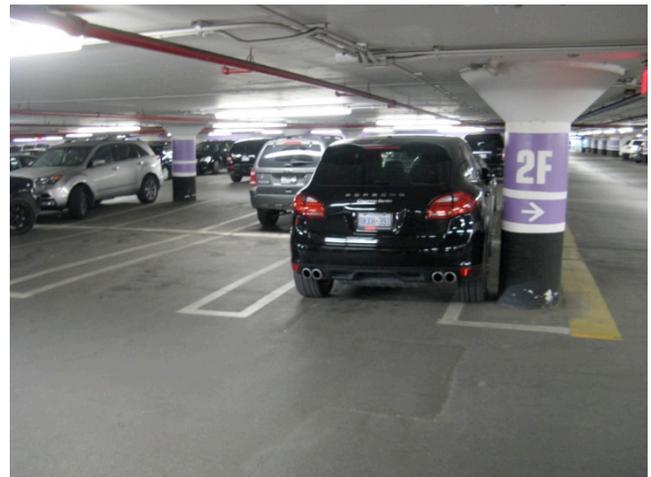
With the provision of secure, 24-hour bicycle parking for approximately 380 bicycles that will include shower and change facilities, personal lockers, tire pumps, and tools for minor bike maintenance, the bicycle station will help motivate more people to ride more often. Like at other [Bicycle Stations in Toronto](#), users must pay service fees for usage. 24 of the garage's 2,400 spaces are required to make the NPS Bicycle Station a reality. 24 spots, representing 1% of the garage's supply, could make way for 380 bicycles. That's a significant return on investment.

The report suggests that the Toronto Parking Authority will lose \$70,000 in revenue. I visited the Nathan Phillips Square parking garage on Tuesday June 26<sup>th</sup> 2012 at 2:30pm to examine occupancy rates. I found that while the first floor was quite full, the further I travelled downwards, the fewer and fewer occupied parking spots I found. This culminated on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor which I found to be virtually empty (see Pictures 1-4 below).

Picture 1



Picture 2



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Picture 3



Picture 4

The nature of this evidence is anecdotal, but it challenges the \$70,000 estimate. There is no doubt in my mind that at least 24 of the parking garage's 2,400 parking spots sit unused all day. The TPA makes nothing on unused spaces.

The Toronto Parking Authority had revenues in excess of \$116 million in 2010 and more than \$127 million in 2011. They can afford \$70,000.

However, there are other options. As City Manager Mr. Joe Pennachetti [states](#), "the design has been completed and construction could be undertaken in the future when the operating budget pressure could be justified." Considering that the City is enjoying a budgetary surplus, Transportation Services can afford to compensate the Toronto Parking Authority. For a project with council approval and in a city with a budgetary surplus, we can afford this project.

Additionally, as the seat of government for our city, Nathan Phillips Square should represent the best in urban planning. What better way to support sustainable transportation than to implement these improvements for cyclists at such an important location?

On behalf of Cycle Toronto, I ask you to recommend one of the following:

- **Recommend that the Toronto Parking Authority forgo this \$70,000 estimate and commence building this project; or**
- **Based on the city's surplus, direct Transportation Services to allocate and compensate the Toronto Parking Authority by the requested amount.**

I implore you to get this project moving. Let's not let a \$70,000 squabble stop this important project from happening.

Sincerely,

Jared Kolb



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