

RapidTO Bathurst Interim Steps

Dupont to Bathurst Station

Tuesday, June 10, 2025

Fast, reliable, predictable transit is essential for the economy and quality of life in Toronto. University of Toronto studies have demonstrated that every dollar of investment in the TTC creates seven dollars in public benefits. Improving transit contributes to many city objectives, including reducing inequality and climate pollution while improving affordability, air quality and health.

Unfortunately, surface transit in Toronto is frequently slow, unpredictable, and unreliable because buses and street cars are trapped in general traffic. Traffic volumes have surged since Covid with population growth and larger personal vehicles. High traffic volumes, combined with construction, have slowed both general traffic and TTC vehicles, often to a crawl.

That is why I strongly support RapidTO, particularly the current proposal to create exclusive transit lanes on Bathurst and Dufferin. Both streets have very heavily used transit services that are choked in traffic, and will be even more crucial to mobility during FIFA. I look forward to the dedicated Bathurst Street streetcar lane from Lakeshore to Bloor being installed as soon as possible.

However, we need to take a more measured approach for the three blocks of Bathurst south of Dupont, where there is a high concentration of small businesses who depend on access to some street parking and loading, and have little to no access to off-street or side street parking. Time of day bus lanes in this area have substantial community support, but we do not currently have an inexpensive and effective way of making them work. Further research on this question will take some time.

I have been working hard with my community to identify interim steps that could preserve these valued businesses while speeding up TTC busses (and general traffic) between Bathurst Station and Dupont. I therefore intend to propose the following compromise to Council:

1. Defer until after the next election installation of a permanent 24/7 TTC bus curb lane between Bathurst Station and Dupont, which would require permanent 24/7 removal of all street parking. I would support a temporary dedicated lane in this area if needed during FIFA.
2. During this time, work with Toronto universities and other transit systems to study technical and enforcement options for possible time-of-day dedicated bus lanes for these few blocks.

3. Starting as soon as possible, speed/smooth bus and general traffic and discourage infiltration by the following interim steps:
 - a. banning all left turns between Bathurst Station and Dupont (except by transit and emergency vehicles)
 - i. Northbound, from 3:00 pm-7:30 pm Monday – Saturday;
 - ii. Southbound, from 7:00am to 10:00am Monday-Saturday
 - b. expanding afternoon no-stopping times Monday to Saturday.
 - i. East side (northbound) from 3 pm to 7:30 pm
 - ii. West side (southbound) from 4 pm to 7 pm
 - c. increasing Bathurst on-street parking rate to \$6 per hour, to increase turnover and better reflect value of public space
 - d. prohibit parking 7 am to 9 pm, Monday-Saturday, on east side of Bathurst between Bloor and Wells.
4. Continue to allow parking on Dupont for 2 blocks east of Bathurst 10 am to 4 pm, Monday – Saturday, to provide another parking option for east side businesses.
5. Continue to work with the TTC to improve management of bunching and gapping.
6. Carefully monitor the impact of these changes on TTC bus speed, reliability, and predictability.