

# Completing the puzzle

## TRANSPORTATION

### Study looks at near misses in bike lanes on Bloor



**May Warren**  
Metro | Toronto

When the city evaluates the Bloor bike lane pilot this fall, they'll be able to look not just at accidents but another crucial piece of the road safety puzzle.

Researchers at University of Toronto have partnered with Kitchener-based traffic analytics company Miovision to analyze video footage of "near misses" before and after the bike lanes were installed to get a more complete picture of what's happening.

When you assess safety based on accidents alone, you're not getting the full picture, said Matthew Roorda, a professor in civil engineering



**Matthew Roorda and Nancy Hui** hope their research looking at near misses, not just crashes, will help the city evaluate the success of the Bloor Street bike lanes pilot. **EDUARDO LIMA/METRO**

at the university's Transportation Research Institute. "There's just not that many of them" to help pinpoint problem areas, he said. Miovision provided video

footage and has the software to make analysis easier, said CEO Kurtis McBride.

There's data on potentially dangerous situations — ranging from cars passing too

closely to bikes, to pedestrians jumping out in front of cyclists — from different locations all through the bike lanes, he added, making for a "much better statistical sample" than

## + OPENING

- Bike lanes along a 2.6-kilometre stretch of Bloor West between Shaw and Avenue opened in August after years of planning and debate.

just looking at accidents.

The project looks at whether bike lanes have improved the safety of the street as well as if they have created any unintended danger zones.

Graduate student Nancy Hui said results will be shared with the city to contribute to the discussion on how to move forward with the pilot.

The project relates to a complete streets philosophy, which advocates for streets to be designed to be safe for all users not just drivers.

As a Torontonian who walks, takes public transit and sometimes drives, the research hits home for Hui.

"I really do feel that a street should be safe no matter what mode you choose," she said.

## Toronto digest

### Medical officer seeks \$300k to fight drug overdoses

The city's acting medical officer of health is requesting \$300,000 in additional funds this year to tackle the growing number of drug overdoses.

Provincial funding would cover 75 per cent of the total cost, requiring the city to pitch in \$74,000. Still, the late request will add further pressure on council, which is currently trying to close a \$91 million budget gap in the 2017 budget.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

### Housing corporation to board up subsidized units in need of repairs

Toronto Community Housing is on track to board up one unit per day in 2018 if more funding for repairs can't be secured, the head of the social housing corporation told Torstar News Service. An estimated 425 units are set to close in 2017, pushing the total of boarded-up subsidized units to nearly 1,000 with more than 177,000 people on the waitlist.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

### U of T teaches lost language

A language that hasn't been spoken for more than 1,000 years is being taught this semester at the University of Toronto.

The ancient Ethiopian language of Ge'ez is written in a script that's read left to right and has 26 letters. Letters have variations for the vowels that go with them, meaning students have to learn 26 characters in seven different ways.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

## Ontario names veteran officer first female sergeant-at-arms

Ontario's new sergeant-at-arms is the first woman to hold the position in the province's history.

Veteran police officer Jackie Gordon, who spent 34 years with the Halton force — the last 12 as an inspector — told reporters Monday she will first spend some time listening and

learning, meeting with staff to "talk about their roles and responsibilities, and then I'll begin to ask questions, and I hope that those questions will help identify and lead to some priorities. And then from there, we'll establish funding and figure out what we can and can't do."

Gordon, who also worked for two years with the Ministry of Education in building and fire codes compliance, feels she's spent her professional life preparing for her new job — which also includes heading the precinct properties branch that operates and maintains the legislative building.

She is the province's 10th sergeant-at-arms, and didn't want to dwell on the fact that she is the only female since Confederation to hold the post.

Gordon replaces Dennis Clark, who held the post for 19 years and in 2015 earned \$171,119. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



**Jackie Gordon spent 34 years as an officer in the Halton region.** TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE