

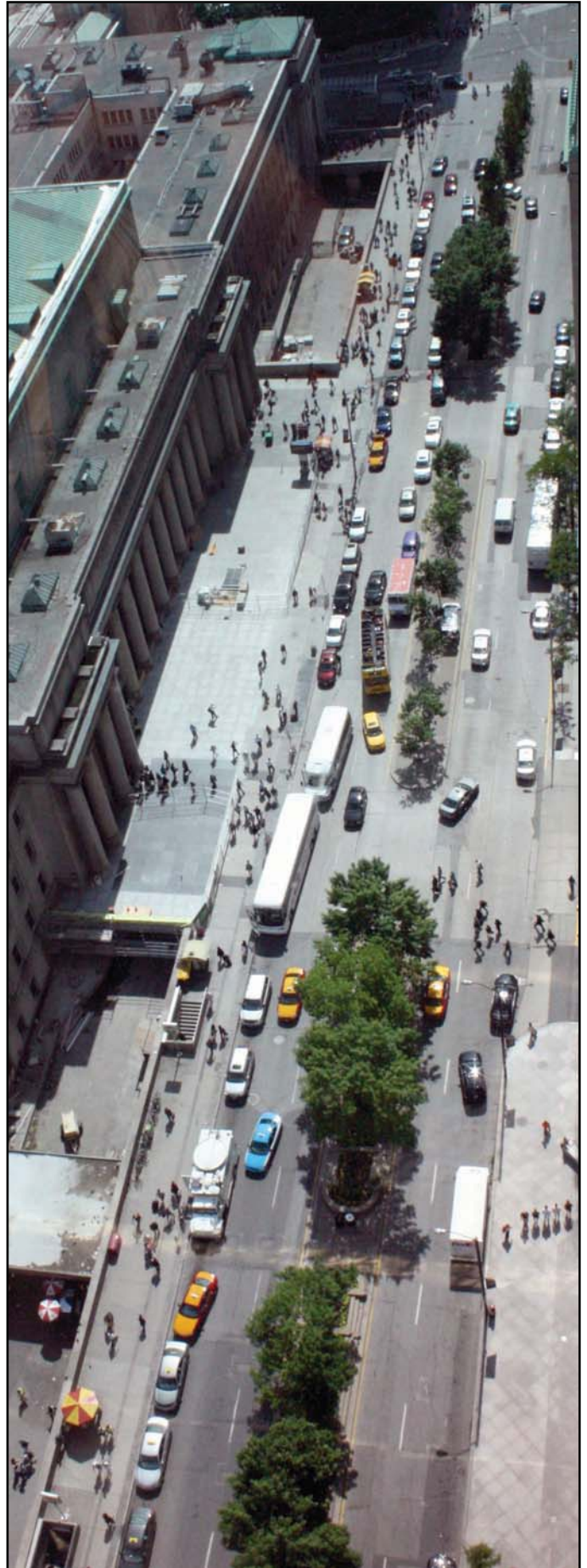
Changes to Front Street at Union Station

The City of Toronto is studying options to reconfigure Front Street West from Bay Street to York Street.

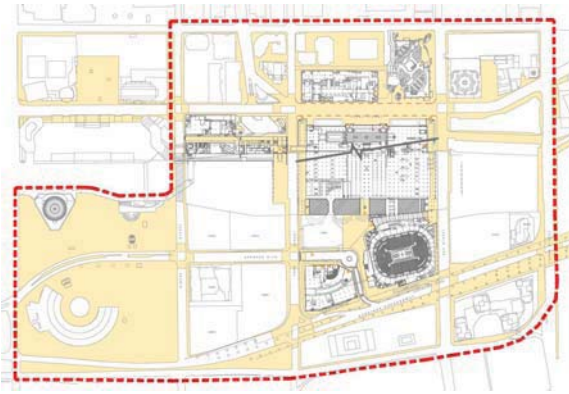
Important opportunities to transform the street include:

- Designing a grand civic plaza
- Creating a mid-block pedestrian crossing
- Widening sidewalks and improving the intersections for pedestrians
- Considering traffic lane reductions
- Modifying the layout of taxi stands and pick-up/drop-off areas

We invite you to learn more about this important project and to share your feedback.

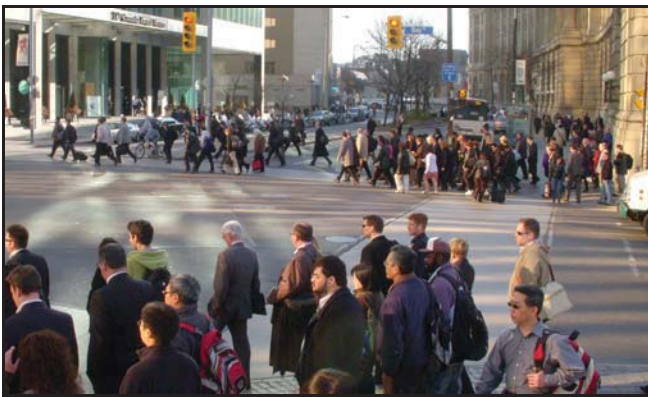


Why Does Front Street at Union Station Need to Change?



Street reconfiguration is part of a larger plan

The *Union Station Master Plan (2004)*, *District Plan (2006)* and *Revitalization Recommended Approach (2007)* address the needs for improving the flow of passengers, restoring historical elements, ensuring a safe, clean and beautiful environment, and providing vibrant retail opportunities in Union Station and the surrounding area. This Front Street study is one part of realizing these plans



Sidewalks are at capacity

During peak hours the sidewalks in front of Union Station are extremely busy. On a daily basis pedestrians are flooding onto the roadway at both the Bay Street and York Street intersections. Wider sidewalks and other intersection modifications will improve safety and convenience for pedestrians.



Pedestrian activity is expected to double

Every business day, Union Station serves more than 165,000 GO Transit passengers, along with thousands of TTC and VIA Rail customers. Over the next 10-15 years, pedestrian activity at Union Station is expected to double as a result of GO Transit expansion along with proposed frequent train service to Pearson Airport and improved TTC services. Major changes to Front Street are required in order to accommodate future increased pedestrian activity.



Non-commuter visits are also increasing

Outside of the weekday commuter peak periods, Union Station is already very busy with a number of cultural, entertainment, and sporting events in and around the area. In addition, a new retail shopping level will be added as part of the *Union Station Revitalization* (see page 7), which is sure to draw additional streams of pedestrians throughout the week.

The Aims of the Study



“Imagine a European inspired plaza – a splendid open space accommodating pedestrians and vehicles framed by landmark buildings. Front Street Plaza will become one of the great places to linger in the City of Toronto.”
- Union Station Master Plan, December 2004

“Proposed improvements to Front Street are based primarily on the reinstatement of a monumental civic pedestrian realm from building face to building face. ... Nowhere else in Toronto will such a large, formal outdoor urban space be so intimately tied with the daily life of the city.”

- Union Station District Plan, May 2006

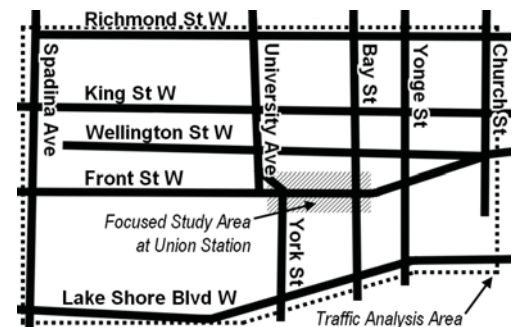
Problem and Opportunity Statement

The existing Front Street configuration between Bay Street and York Street provides inadequate pedestrian crossing capacity and as such creates unsafe conditions for pedestrians. This conflicts with the District Plan objectives, which prioritize pedestrian activity over vehicular activity. In conjunction with the construction of a second subway platform in TTC Union Station, the reconfiguration of Front Street is a unique opportunity to support the revitalization of Union Station and the Union Station District Plan objectives while accommodating increasing passenger demand. The objectives are to:

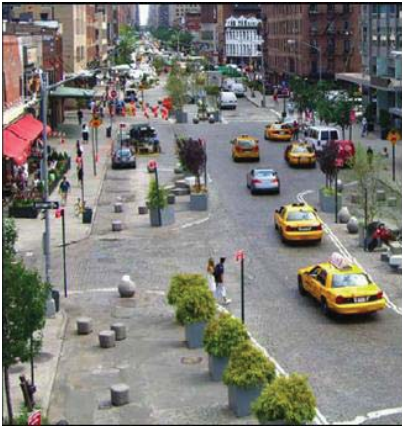
- Accommodate increased development and passenger growth associated with Union Station
- Achieve city building objectives through urban design opportunities including expanded sidewalks and a grand civic plaza
- Effectively manage traffic operations on Front Street, including taxis, buses and passenger pick-up/drop-off
- Prioritize the role of pedestrian activity
- Reorganize Front Street to better balance pedestrian, cyclist and vehicle activities, and
- Preserve and enhance civic and heritage features.

Study Area

The primary focus of the study is the portion of Front Street from Bay Street to York Street. The traffic analysis area is bounded by Richmond Street to the north, Lake Shore Boulevard to the south, Spadina Avenue to the west, and Church Street to the east.



Creating a Pedestrian Priority Zone



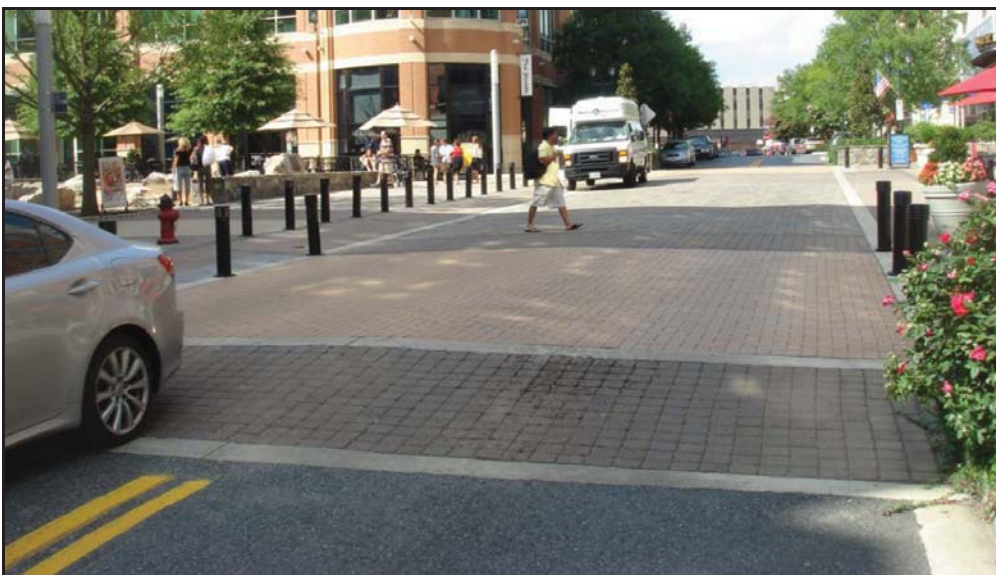
Example Pedestrian Priority Zone, New York City, NY, USA

On Front Street between Bay Street and York Street pedestrians outnumber vehicles 10 to 1 during the peak periods. Following directions from the *Union Station District Plan*, the City is considering the creation of a “Pedestrian Priority Zone” which is an area designed and operated in a way that indicates to other road users that they are traveling through an area where the status of pedestrians is elevated. Elements and treatments may be implemented to give pedestrians a higher measure of protection and influence drivers to slow down or stop for pedestrians.

A pedestrian priority zone does not require the separation of motor vehicles and pedestrians. This area may be defined by a raised platform crossing area, change in road texture, extended curbs, signage and markings.

Raised Platform Mid-block Crossing Area

To help ensure vehicles slow down and stop for pedestrians crossing Front Street in the mid-block, the City is proposing to build a raised section of the street in front of the Union Station main entrances. It would be similar to an 80 meter long speed bump inviting pedestrian to walk across the street mid-block without the standard overhead crosswalk lights and signals. Known as an “implicit pedestrian crossing” these modern urban features are well established in Europe and are growing in popularity in North America.



Example Raised Platform Mid-block Crossing, Rockville, MD, USA

Further details about how the mid-block crossing could be created and other design opportunities will be investigated during the design phase of this study.

Other Pedestrian Improvement Opportunities

Below are further examples of opportunities to transform Front Street into a prime pedestrian destination from both an urban design and transportation perspective.



Wider Sidewalks



Curb Extensions



Scramble Crossing



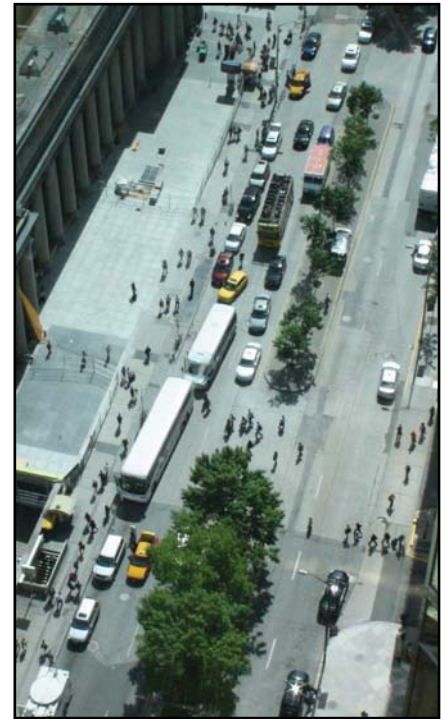
Tactile Paving

Current Conditions

Some of the essential issues that exist on Front Street at Union Station:

- There is a high frequency of passenger pick-up and drop-off from taxis, buses and private vehicles.
- U-turns are very common (approximately 200 within a peak hour).
- Mid-block pedestrian crossing accounts for about one third of the approximate 8000 pedestrian crossings on Front Street during a peak hour. That is about 42 mid-block crossings every minute.
- As rush hour commuters arrive there is pedestrian congestion on the sidewalks and at intersections.
- Short term “double parking” often blocks one of two traffic lanes.
- There is a need for greater organization of the parking lane used by buses, taxis, private vehicles and others.

Traffic analysis information is included in the Public Information Centre #1 panels available for download at www.toronto.ca/union_station/front



Front Street PM rush hour

The Study Process

The study is being carried out as a *Schedule “C” Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (Class EA)*, which includes identifying the problem/opportunity to be addressed, developing and evaluating a reasonable range of alternative solutions, and providing opportunities for public input at key stages.

The project team evaluated 14 different alternative solutions for Front Street at Union Station, including combinations of:

- No change to the traffic lanes, the medians, or assigned parking (currently there are 4 lanes of traffic)
- 4 traffic lanes; 2 traffic lanes; 2 traffic lanes, one-way only; 1 traffic lane, one-way only; or a full street closure resulting in a complete urban plaza
- With or without median, and
- Single or double lay-by parking, or parking in the median for taxis.

The 14 alternatives were carried forward directly from the *Union Station District Plan*, approved by Council in 2006. Detailed drawings for all 14 alternatives can be downloaded at www.toronto.ca/union_station/front

Evaluation Criteria

All 14 alternatives were evaluated against a wide range of criteria, under six key objectives:

1. Provide improved pedestrian facilities
2. Support/encourage a pedestrian culture
3. Contribute to overall city building initiatives and urban design
4. Provide a high level of design quality
5. Provide improved loading areas (taxi, buses, passenger pick-up/drop-off)
6. Minimize impacts (e.g. vehicle traffic, air quality, noise, property access, costs)



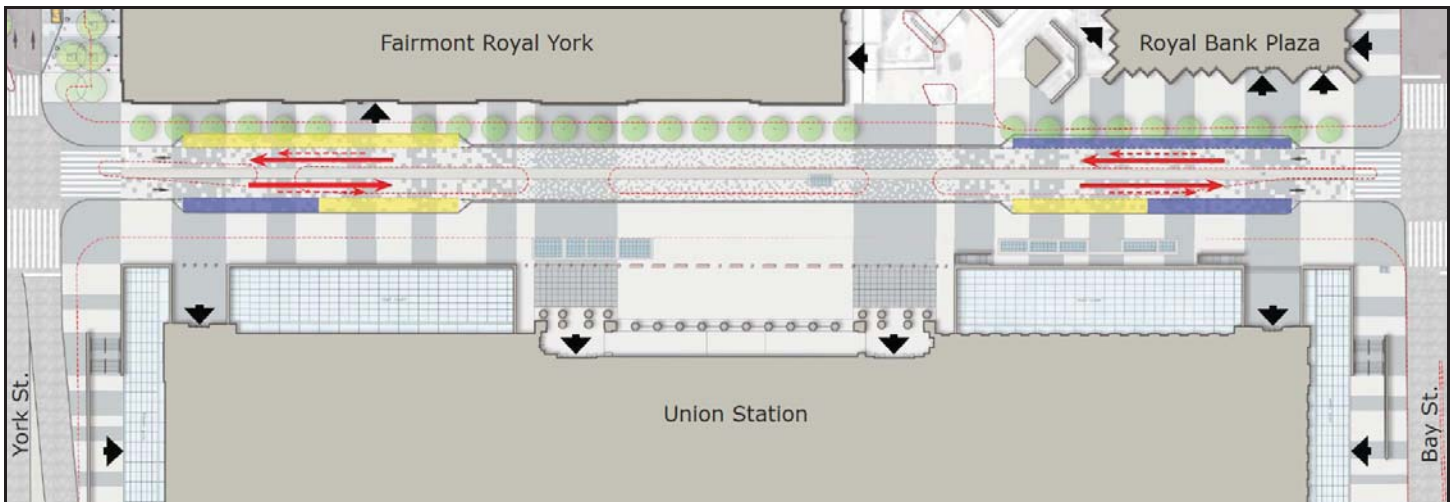
A preliminary evaluation has identified a preferred solution that best meets the study criteria.

A New Design for Front Street

Below is the *Preliminary Preferred Alternative* (Alternative 2B) for changes to Front Street at Union Station.

Features of this Alternative

- 2 traffic lanes (one eastbound, one westbound), each wide enough to be shared by both vehicles and bicycles
- A median that provides pedestrians with a refuge when crossing the street
- Significant sidewalk expansion on both the north and south sides
- Widened crosswalks at intersections and minimized crossing distances
- No changes to the current vehicle turning options at each intersection
- Sufficient sidewalk space for providing trees on the north side
- Potential vehicle U-turns over a mountable median
- Lay-by parking for taxis and pick-up and drop-off that does not obstruct the central plaza and mid-block crossing area
- An opening up of the sweeping panoramic view of Union Station and the Dominion Public Building along the south side of Front Street



Other Features Included in All Alternatives

- New central plaza and mid-block crossing
- New stairs and expanded sidewalk space to either side of Union Station (facilitated by the alteration of the moat walls, part of the Revitalization)
- Integrated security measures around the building perimeter
- Incorporation of the required TTC vents
- Coordinated light and dark paving patterns that integrate with existing and planned pavement treatments to enhance the distinctive quality of the area

LEGEND

- Existing Curb
- ▼ Building Entrance
- ← Bicycle Lane
- ← Traffic Lane
- ← Shared Lane
- Taxi Stand
- Pick Up/Drop Off

Traffic Lanes Reduced from Four to Two

Traffic studies have shown that lane reductions in this section of Front Street West would provide acceptable east west access and traffic flow in the area. Some of the benefits of the lane reductions include expanded boulevards and additional pedestrian facilities.

Related Projects

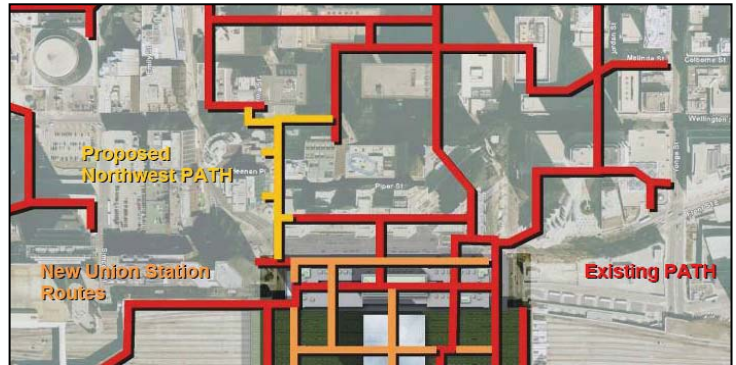
Union Station Revitalization

This project will bring the entire building into a state of good repair with new pedestrian routes and direct connections to transit facilities. Work includes a “dig down” for two new GO Transit Concourses featuring a pedestrian retail and promenade level. Work is underway and targeted to be completed in 2015.



Northwest PATH connection

A new underground pedestrian connection from Union Station to the existing PATH system in the Wellington Street area. Also includes street level improvements around a new entrance on York Street. The first phase to Fairmont Royal York is targeted to be completed in 2012. The second phase is expected to be completed by early 2015.



TTC Subway Second Platform and Concourse Improvements

Construction of a second platform and improvements to the concourse level at TTC Union Station are to commence Summer 2010 and are expected to be completed by 2013. The second platform expansion will accommodate future passenger flows, which are expected to increase 80% to 90% by 2021. Pedestrian access and movement through the TTC Station and PATH will be improved.



Union Station Southern Entrance at Union Plaza

A new entrance from outside of the Air Canada Centre now provides additional access to train platforms and Union Station.

Bicycle Lanes on Bay Street

Dedicated bicycle lanes are planned on Bay Street south of Front Street on both sides. They will be installed within the existing roadway width.

John Street Corridor Improvements

John Street between Front Street West and Stephanie Street has been identified as a Cultural Corridor by the City. Opportunities are being investigated to enhance the cultural significance and improve pedestrian facilities along this street.

York-Bay-Yonge Interchange Reconfiguration Class Environmental Assessment

A study is underway to investigate the feasibility of reconfiguring the Gardiner Expressway's York-Bay-Yonge Interchange, including the off-ramp from the Eastbound Expressway to York, Bay and Yonge Streets, and the on-ramp from Bay Street to the Eastbound Expressway.

Links to related project web pages can be found at www.toronto.ca/union_station/front

Next Steps

A Public Information Centre was held in Union Station on July 5, 2010. At the close of the commenting period for this first phase of the study (July 27, 2010) the preferred alternative will be finalized based upon input received from stakeholders and members of the public.

In the next phase of the study, alternative design options for the preferred alternative will be developed and evaluated. The project team will be looking at design details such as:

- Dimensions of sidewalk, median, and lay-by parking
- Design of the pedestrian mid-block crossing
- Potential turning restrictions
- Taxi marshalling and the potential for offsite taxi queuing
- Wayfinding signs (e.g. arrows to the CN Tower, Rogers Centre, Air Canada Centre, TTC)
- Sidewalks and lane configurations just east of Bay Street and west of York Street
- Potential pedestrian scramble at Bay Street and Front Street (not possible at York Street)
- Street furniture (e.g. benches, bike posts, lighting, newspaper boxes)
- Placement of trees and any other landscaping
- Plans for street food vendors
- Pavement treatments and other materials

The Preliminary Preferred Design Option will be presented at Public Information Centre #2, tentatively scheduled for this winter. The Preferred Design Option will be finalized and included in a draft Environmental Study Report in the Spring of 2011 followed by a report to a City of Toronto Standing Committee and Council mid 2011. Following Council approval, a Notice of Completion of Environmental Study Report will be published including a 30 day public review period.

We Would Like to Hear From You

What do you think about the proposed changes to Front Street at Union Station described in this newsletter?

What suggestions can you share with the project team?

Please send in your comments by July 27, 2010 using one of the following options:

Postal: **"Front St at Union Station" C/O Jason Diceman
City of Toronto, Metro Hall, 19th Floor
55 John Street
Toronto, ON M5V 3C6**

Voicemail: **416-338-2848**
Fax: **416-392-2974**
TTY: **416-397-0831**

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Join the discussion on our facebook group: "Changes to Front Street at Union Station"



Subscribe to the project e-mail list at the web address below.

Call with your mailing address to be added to the postal mailing list.

For more information, including drawings and evaluations of all 14 alternatives, please visit our web page:

www.toronto.ca/union_station/front

Information will be collected in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. With the exception of personal information, comments will become part of the public record. Personal information such as your name, phone number or e-mail address are not be included in the public record. If you have any questions about this collection, please contact Senior Public Consultation Coordinator Jason Diceman at 416-338-2848