



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Road Alterations - Bloor Street Transformation Project

Date:	May 21, 2008
To:	Toronto and East York Community Council
From:	Director, Transportation Services Toronto and East York District
Wards:	Toronto Centre-Rosedale, Ward 27 and Trinity Spadina, Ward 20
Reference Number:	Ts08017te.top.doc

SUMMARY

Transportation Services is seeking authority from City Council for roadway alterations on Bloor Street, between Avenue Road and St. Paul's Square (east of Church Street). This work is proposed as part of the Bloor Street Transformation Project. The prime element of the Project includes narrowing the curb-to-curb pavement width of Bloor Street resulting in wider sidewalks. A wide range of enhanced streetscaping, planting, surface treatments and other features will be provided under this project.

The proposed narrowing of the roadway will establish a high quality, safe and comfortable environment for pedestrians on Bloor Street with relatively minor impacts to the level of service for motorists. In conjunction with this work and at the request of the Bloor Yorkville BIA, a "No Stopping" prohibition on Bloor Street, from Avenue Road to St. Paul's Square will be introduced to reduce congestion and improve the overall environment for all stakeholders.

Related reports to enable implementation of this project, which has been previously endorsed by City Council, namely related to financing details and award of the contract, are being submitted for concurrent approval by Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Transportation Services recommends that City Council:

1. Approve altering Bloor Street by narrowing the pavement, generally as shown in the attached prints of Drawing Nos. 421F-9190 to 9197, dated January 2008.
2. Amend the parking regulations as outlined in Appendix 1, upon completion of the construction of the proposed road alterations identified in Recommendation 1.

Implementation Points

The Bloor Street Transformation Project will be completed in two phases during 2008 and 2009. The first phase will include Yonge Street to St. Paul's Square. The second phase, in 2009, will include Avenue Road to Yonge Street. The Technical Services Division is proceeding separately to award the contract.

The proposed parking regulation changes will be implemented as each phase of construction is complete.

Financial Impact

The financial arrangements for the Bloor Street Transformation Project were approved in principle by City Council in 2005 (A Proposed Financing Model for the Bloor Street Transformation Project), with considerable contribution from the BIA. Funding is available in the approved 2008 Transportation Services Capital Budget, WBS Element CTP 806-27 – Bloor Street Transformation. The Chief Financial Officer and Deputy City Manager is submitting a report detailing the financial and legal agreements to the Executive Committee.

DECISION BACKGROUND

City Council at its meeting of July 19, 20, 21 and 26, 2005 adopted without amendment Clause No. 48 of Report No. 7 of the Policy and Finance Committee entitled "A Proposed Financial Model for the Bloor Street Transformation Project". In doing so, Council directed staff to take the necessary steps to create a new Business Improvement Area (BIA) within the current Bloor Yorkville BIA, supported advanced financing by the City of the capital costs including recovery measures, directed Transportation Services to include the project in its Capital Budget and authorized design and construction work.

Previously, Council directed, among other things, Transportation Services to submit a highway alteration report to authorize the narrowing of Bloor Street, upon the advice of the Commissioner of Economic Development, Culture and Tourism that funding for the project had been secured (Clause No. 31 of Report No. 1 of the Policy and Finance Committee, adopted by Council at its meeting of February 4, 5 and 6, 2003, entitled "Financial and Operational Implications of the Bloor Street Transformation Project, Bloor Yorkville BIA).

COMMENTS

Existing Conditions

The Bloor Street Transformation Project, developed by the Bloor Yorkville BIA, in conjunction with Councillor Kyle Rae, and staff of a number of City Divisions, proposes a significant improvement to the pedestrian environment along Bloor Street, between Avenue Road and St. Paul's Square. The proposal is to increase the width of the sidewalks by narrowing the roadway resulting in improved streetscaping/pedestrian space. The plans have evolved over the past several years.

Bloor Street, between Avenue Road and St. Paul's Square is a generally four-lane major arterial roadway with eastbound and westbound left-turn lanes provided at Avenue Road, Bay Street and Church Street. Left turns are prohibited at Yonge Street. The pavement width is 16.5 metres throughout, however, east of Yonge Street the pavement widens slightly to 16.7 metres. Daily traffic volumes are in the 30,000 vehicle range. The Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) provides night bus service on Bloor Street.

Bloor Street, between Avenue Road and St. Paul's Square, is regulated by the following parking controls (shown in attached Drawing No. 421F-9280 and 9281, dated May 2008):

No Stopping - both sides, from 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. and 3:30 P.m. to 6:30 p.m., Monday to Friday.

Pay and Display – both sides from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., between Avenue Road and St. Thomas Street, on the north side only, between Park Road and Church Street and on both sides, between Church Street and St. Paul's Square.

On all other sections of both sides of Bloor Street parking or standing is prohibited at all times.

Additionally, there are taxicab stands which are located west of St. Thomas Street on the south side of the road, and 128.5 metres east of Yonge Street on the north side of the road within a lay by.

Proposed Road Alterations

The proposed work entails repositioning the curbs on both sides of Bloor Street resulting in a wider sidewalk. The proposed curb realignment will widen sidewalks by 1.2 metres on each side of Bloor Street, resulting in a curb-to-curb pavement width of 16.8 metres at signalized intersections. Midblock sections will be a width of 14 metres. Centre through lanes will be 3.1 metres and curb lanes will be 3.9 metres in width. At all intersections where left turn lanes exist (except at Yonge Street) a 3 metre wide left-turn lane will be provided.

In conjunction with the physical roadway alterations, the Bloor-Yorkville BIA has requested that stopping be prohibited at all times on both sides of Bloor Street.

Transportation Services has assessed of the impacts of the proposed changes on Bloor Street.

Pedestrians

The proposed improvements should result in a more comfortable and improved environment for pedestrians. The widened sidewalks will provide additional space for placement of various enhanced streetscape features and increased capacity for pedestrians.

Traffic Operations

The level of service currently provided at signalized intersections will not be significantly affected. According to traffic signal modelling software, Transportation Services staff

has determined that east/west delays should not increase. In fact, the proposed introduction of the stopping prohibition may contribute to an improvement to traffic flow between signals on Bloor Street as disruptions caused by parked vehicles and manoeuvres into parking spaces will be reduced.

Parking Regulations

The proposed parking regulations are shown in the attached Drawing No. 421F-9282 and 9283, dated May 2008. For the most part, stopping is prohibited at all times.

The proposed stopping prohibition will require the removal of all approximately 46 on-street “pay-and-display” parking spaces.

Lay-bys have been incorporated into the design at 2 locations on the north side of Bloor Street. A 20 metre-long lay-by is proposed in front of No. 50 Bloor Street West (Holt Renfrew). To address loading needs of businesses in this area, a “commercial loading zone” will be established in this lay-by to operate between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday to Friday. At all other times, a “No Standing” regulation will enable passenger pick up/drop off activities. An additional lay-by designated for taxicabs only will be provided outside No. 88 Bloor Street East (Marriott Hotel). This lay-by is proposed to be 20 metres in length for 3 taxicabs. Furthermore, because the lay-bys have been reduced to 3-taxicab maximums, all other activities such as mobile vending, will need to be removed. The lay-bys do not provide for any short or long term parking opportunities for the general public.

Also, a discrepancy involving Schedule IV “Stands for Taxicabs”, Chapter 400 of the former Toronto Municipal Code, and the signage on Bloor Street will be rectified as part of this report.

Vending

Any vending operations along this section of Bloor Street will be suspended during the construction phase. Staff of Municipal Licensing and Standards will determine the impact on the return of the vendors and will report as necessary.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Andrew Koropeski, P.Eng.
Director, Transportation Services

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix 1 – Bloor Street Transformation, Parking Regulation Amendments
Drawing Nos. 421F-9190 to 9197 – Road Alterations, dated January 2008
Drawing Nos. 421F-9280 and 9281 – Existing Parking Regulations, dated May 2008
Drawing Nos. 421F-9282 and 9283 – Proposed Parking Regulations, dated May 2008

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