



**STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED**

Proposed Traffic Island – Montrose Avenue, North of Harbord Street

Date:	October 21, 2008
To:	Toronto and East York Community Council
From:	Director, Transportation Services Toronto and East York District
Wards:	Trinity-Spadina, Ward 19
Reference Number:	Ts08186te.top.doc

SUMMARY

This staff report is about a matter for which the Community Council has delegated authority from City Council to make a final decision.

Transportation Services is requesting approval from Toronto and East York Community Council to install a modular traffic island on a section of Montrose Avenue, north of Harbord Street. The intent is to separate southbound traffic from the contra-flow northbound bicycle lane on Montrose Avenue and provide a physical barrier to motorists who might inadvertently travel northbound on Montrose Avenue from Harbord Street against the one-way southbound regulation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Transportation Services recommends that Toronto and East York Community Council:

1. Approve the installation of a modular traffic island on Montrose Avenue, north of Harbord Street, generally as shown on the attached print of Drawing No. 421F-9357, dated July 2008.

Financial Impact

Type of funding	Source of funds	Amount
Available within current budget	Toronto Transportation Services 2008 Operating Budget	\$2,000

ISSUE BACKGROUND

At the request of Deputy Mayor Joe Pantalone, staff of Transportation Services investigated options to deter motorists from travelling northbound on Montrose Avenue, from Harbord Street to Bloor Street West, against the one-way southbound regulation on this section of the street.

COMMENTS

Intersection characteristics

Harbord Street and Montrose Avenue form a four road-leg intersection. Harbord Street is classified as a minor arterial road, operating two-way (eastbound and westbound) on a pavement width of about 13 metres. There are bicycle lanes and TTC service on Harbord Street. Montrose Avenue is classified as a local street operating two-way (northbound and southbound), south of Harbord Street, and one-way southbound, north of Harbord Street on a pavement width of about 7.2 metres. Montrose Avenue, north of Harbord Street is one of only eight streets in the City where installation of a northbound contra-flow bicycle lane has been authorized. The intersection of Harbord Street and Montrose Avenue is signalized.

Issue and Investigation

Several residents of Montrose Avenue, north of Harbord Street have contacted Deputy Mayor Pantalone and expressed their concerns about motorists travelling northbound on Montrose Avenue, north of Harbord Street, against the one-way southbound regulation. Prior to 1995, a planter box was situated in the easterly curb lane of Montrose Avenue, north of Harbord Street to deter motorists from inadvertently travelling northbound on the one-way southbound section of the street. The planter was removed to allow for installation of detector loops in the pavement associated with the installation and operation of traffic signals at the Harbord/Montrose intersection.

Residents have requested Transportation Services to consider installing additional signs to identify the one-way regulation or consider other options to encourage motorists' compliance with the one-way regulation. Staff's investigation indicated there are currently a combination of 12 one-way arrows, "Do Not Enter" signs, and signs prohibiting specific turn movements from Harbord Street onto Montrose Avenue clearly displayed at the intersection. This signage is sufficient and complies with Ontario Traffic Manual requirements. No additional signs are required.

However, observations suggest installation of the contra-flow northbound bicycle lane might have unintentionally contributed to increased incidence of motorists travelling the wrong way on the street. Two specific issues associated with the bicycle lane are identified as possible contributing factors:

- the contra-flow bicycle lane is separated from southbound traffic flow by a solid yellow line; and

- traffic signal heads facing south at the intersection of Montrose/Bloor are intended for cyclists but can be seen at certain times of year from Harbord Street.

With respect to the first point, the bicycle lane is 1.7 metres wide. Although there are several signs and pavement markings identifying the bicycle lane, motorists generally associate a broken or solid yellow line as a centre-line marker separating opposing directions of traffic flow. The current yellow line is the correct indication since it separates the northbound bicycle lane from southbound traffic operation. However, it is possible that some less observant motorists interpret the line as meaning there is general two-way traffic operation north of Harbord Street.

With respect to the second point, although Bloor Street West is about 400 metres north of Harbord Street, the traffic signal heads required and intended for display to northbound cyclists approaching Bloor Street West on Montrose Avenue can be seen from Harbord Street at times of the year when there are few leaves on trees overhanging Montrose Avenue. Although generally a moot point, staff acknowledges this could have a minor influence on wrong-way traffic operation.

Resolution

As noted, installation of additional signs indicating the one-way southbound regulation on Montrose Avenue, north of Harbord Street is not necessary and will not deter inadvertent wrong-way traffic operation. Based on operational experience, the presence of a physical object in the path of motorists approaching an intersection is the most practical deterrent to wrong-way traffic flow. Transportation Services recommends installing a 2-metre wide modular traffic island on Montrose Avenue immediately adjacent to the contra-flow bicycle lane, as shown on the attached print of Drawing No. 421F-9357, dated July 2008. The southbound traffic volume on Montrose Avenue (about 700 vehicles daily) can be accommodated in the remaining 3.5-metre lane. It will be necessary to deactivate the most easterly detector loop for the traffic signals but no other modifications to signal plant or timing operation is necessary.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Andrew Koropeski, P. Eng.
Director, Transportation Services

ATTACHMENTS

Drawing No. 421F-9357, dated July 2008

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