



## STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

### Mid-block Pedestrian Traffic Control Signal – Yonge Street, south of Eglinton Avenue East/West

<b>Date:</b>	March 3, 2009
<b>To:</b>	Toronto and East York Community Council
<b>From:</b>	Director, Transportation Services Toronto and East York District
<b>Wards:</b>	St. Paul's, Ward 22
<b>Reference Number:</b>	Ts09049te.top.doc

#### SUMMARY

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Transportation Services is requesting authority from City Council to install a mid-block pedestrian traffic control signal on Yonge Street, between Soudan Avenue and Eglinton Avenue East/West.

The installation of a mid-block pedestrian traffic control signal on Yonge Street, between Soudan Avenue and Eglinton Avenue East/West will provide a safe and effective crossing area for pedestrians wishing to cross Yonge Street.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

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**Transportation Services recommends that City Council:**

1. Approve the installation of a mid-block pedestrian traffic control signal on Yonge Street, at a point approximately 145 metres south of Eglinton Avenue East/West.

#### Financial Impact

The estimated cost of installing a pedestrian traffic control signal on Yonge Street, between Eglinton Avenue East/West and Soudan Avenue is about \$110,000. Funds in the amount of \$2,450,000 have been allocated in the 2009 Transportation Services Capital Budget for installation of traffic control signals. This work would be subject to competing priorities and available funding.

## **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

Transportation Services was requested by Councillor Michael Walker to investigate and report on the installation of a mid-block pedestrian traffic control signal on Yonge Street, between Eglinton Avenue East/West and Soudan Avenue to enhance crossing safety for pedestrians.

## **COMMENTS**

### **Previous History**

In 1981, traffic control signals were installed on Yonge Street at the exit driveway from the Eglinton subway station (about 135 metres south of Eglinton Avenue East/West). The traffic control signals were installed as the result of recommendations made by a joint Metro Transportation/TTC committee. The intent of the signals was to provide TTC buses with controlled and safe access to Yonge Street and generally enhance transit operations. Signs were also posted in the vicinity of the signals indicating “No Pedestrian Crossing” of Yonge Street. This stipulation was not supported by a by-law and has never been enforceable.

The Eglinton subway station bus terminal has been decommissioned and the bus operations moved to a temporary facility. The bus exit to Yonge Street is no longer required on a day-to-day basis and has been gated. TTC staff has advised Transportation Services that the design of the new bus terminal at Eglinton subway station and construction of the Eglinton Cross-town LRT means there is little likelihood the exit driveway onto Yonge Street will be required in the future. The current signals were deactivated and partially dismantled during the construction of the condominium development on the east side of Yonge Street, opposite the TTC exit driveway.

### **Current conditions**

Yonge Street, between Soudan Avenue and Eglinton Avenue East/West, is a north-south, four-lane major arterial roadway that operates with a road width of approximately 16.5 metres. It has a daily two-way traffic volume of about 32,000 vehicles and has a maximum speed limit of 50 km/h. Transit service is provided by the “97-Yonge” bus. There are now no traffic signals or pedestrian crossing controls along Yonge Street, between Soudan Avenue and Eglinton Avenue East/West, a distance of about 267 metres. Standing or Stopping is prohibited on this section of Yonge Street.

The minimum recommended spacing between adjacent traffic control devices is 200 metres. This is often reduced in the central area of the City out of necessity (major intersections in closer proximity to one another), because traffic generally operates at slower speeds, and because a combination of factors suggest providing a safer environment for pedestrians is advisable.

### **Investigation**

Transportation Services has undertaken traffic studies on Yonge Street at the location of the former TTC bus exit. The studies were used to determine the need to provide

pedestrian crossing control on Yonge Street at a mid-block location, between Eglinton Avenue East/West and Soudan Avenue.

Installation of a Pedestrian Crossover (PXO) is not an appropriate control measure on Yonge Street. However, installation of traffic control signals may be considered at locations where PXO's are technically warranted, but their installation is unsuitable or unsafe due to operational conditions. Therefore, our investigation only considered installation of traffic control signals.

### **Observations**

Pedestrian surveys conducted over a peak eight-hour period recorded about 850 pedestrians crossing Yonge Street in the vicinity of the former TTC exit driveway. This occurred despite the advisory signs posted indicating "No Pedestrian Crossing". Observers noted that over 70% of the pedestrians crossing Yonge Street in this area experienced delays at the curb of more than 10 seconds before being able to start crossing Yonge Street. Many pedestrians also had to stop mid-way to allow vehicles to pass before continuing to the other side of the street.

A review of the Toronto Police Service collision data indicates one mid-block collision was reported in the past three-year period ending December 31, 2008 involving a pedestrian. The pedestrian was not seriously hurt, but deemed at fault.

Pedestrians crossing Yonge Street are not concentrated specifically in one area, but are fairly evenly distributed immediately to the north and south of the former TTC exit driveway. Numerous office buildings, condominiums, small businesses along Yonge Street, an entrance to Canada Square mall, and an entrance to the Eglinton subway station generate the pedestrian activity. Further development and increased residency of a nearby condominium will further increase pedestrian crossing demand in this area.

### **Resolution and recommendation**

The findings of our investigation support the installation of a controlled crossing area for pedestrians on Yonge Street in the block between Eglinton Avenue East/West and Soudan Avenue. It is expected that installation of a mid-block pedestrian traffic control signal will concentrate pedestrian crossing activity to the signalized location and create a much safer environment for pedestrians and motorists.

Staff recommends installing mid-block pedestrian traffic control signals at a point about 145 metres south of Eglinton Avenue East/West. This is about 10 metres south of the former TTC exit driveway and generally at a location where motorists on Yonge Street have been accustomed to seeing signals in the past. Although the spacing between adjacent traffic control signals is not ideal (about 120 metres north of Soudan Avenue and about 145 metres south of Eglinton Avenue East/West), it is manageable. No parking spaces are impacted by this proposal.

Given the volume of pedestrians crossing Yonge Street in this area, the east/west “walk” signal is likely to be called on a regular basis and vehicle queuing on Yonge Street is expected. Signal operation and timings will be optimized to enhance safety for all road users. The location of the proposed mid-block pedestrian traffic control signals is shown on the attached print of Drawing No. 421F-9581, dated March, 2009.

Subject to approval of this proposal by City Council, installation of the signals, signage and pavement markings would be scheduled subject to competing priorities and available funding.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

Peter Noehammer, P.Eng.  
Director, Transportation Services

## **LIST OF ATTACHMENTS**

- (1) Drawing No 421F-9581, dated March 2009

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