



**STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED**

**Gardiner Expressway York/Bay/Yonge Interchange
Reconfiguration – Municipal Class Environmental
Assessment – Supplemental Report**

Date:	August 23, 2010
To:	City Council
From:	General Manager, Transportation Services
Wards:	Ward 20, Trinity - Spadina Ward 28, Toronto Centre - Rosedale
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to respond to Public Works and Infrastructure Committee’s decision to refer a Motion by Councillor De Baeremaeker to the General Manager, Transportation Services, in consultation with the Chief Planner and Executive Director, for a report directly to City Council on the impact of several recommendations related to the York/Bay/Yonge Environmental Assessment (EA) study.

Six of the eight recommendations in the Motion relate to matters that can be addressed outside the EA process. One recommendation relates to a minor design modification that can be incorporated in the EA plans. One recommendation is for further public consultation on the proposed new north-south street between Harbour Street and Queens Quay, east of York Street. Staff agree with that recommendation and propose to conduct further public consultation on the proposal.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Transportation Services Division recommends that:

1. The plans for the new off-ramp from the Gardiner Expressway to Simcoe Street show a three lane cross section with standard shoulder widths. The shoulders should not extend into the north-south pedestrian crossing at the foot of the ramp.

2. Further public consultation be held regarding the proposed new north-south street between Harbour Street and Queens Quay, east of York Street, and that the results of the consultation be presented to Public Works and Infrastructure Committee.
3. Requests to modify the planned lane markings on Harbour Street between Lower Simcoe Street and Yonge Street, on Lake Shore Boulevard between Sherbourne Street and Simcoe Street, and on York Street between Front Street and Queens Quay, to remove the layby at 60 Harbour Street, and to install off peak hour on street parking on Lake Shore Boulevard between Simcoe Street and Sherbourne Street be referred to District Traffic Operations staff for consideration.

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact resulting from the receipt of this report.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting on August 18, 2010, Public Works and Infrastructure Committee, in considering Clause PW35.12, “Gardiner Expressway York/Bay/Yonge Interchange Reconfiguration - Municipal Class Environmental Assessment”, recommended approval of the Staff Report. The Committee also received a submission by Councillor Vaughan (Ward 20, Trinity – Spadina) and decided to refer it as a Motion by Councillor De Baeremaeker to the General Manager, Transportation Services, in consultation with the Chief Planner and Executive Director, for a report directly to City Council on the impact of its recommendations. The Motion proposes to:

1. Modify the Gardiner Expressway eastbound off ramp between Rees Street and Simcoe Street to be a maximum of two lanes with no shoulders.
2. Modify the planned lane markings on Harbour Street between Lower Simcoe Street and Yonge Street, on Lake Shore Boulevard between Sherbourne Street and Simcoe Street, and on York Street between Front Street and Queens Quay.
3. Remove the layby at 60 Harbour Street.
4. Delete the construction of the proposed north south local street between York Street and Bay Street until further public consultation has occurred.
5. Install off peak hour on street parking on Lake Shore Boulevard between Simcoe Street and Sherbourne Street.

The full Motion can be viewed at:

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2010/pw/decisions/2010-08-18-pw35-dd.htm>

COMMENTS

The Motion under consideration has eight parts. Each is set out and responded to below.

- 1) *“Modify the Gardiner Expressway eastbound off ramp between Rees Street and Simcoe Street to be a maximum of two 3.35 metre wide lanes with no 2.5 metre wide south shoulder and no 1 metre wide north shoulder so as to decrease the pedestrian and cyclist crossing distance at Lower Simcoe Street”*

As a design modification, the recommended plan for the north-south pedestrian crosswalk of the ramp terminal at Simcoe Street will show the north and south ramp shoulders deleted in favour of extended curbs. Pedestrians will cross only the three traffic lanes and will not need to cross the shoulder(s) at the crosswalk. Due to the overall width of the intersection the north-south pedestrian crossing of Lake Shore Boulevard at Simcoe Street will occur in two signal phases. There will be ample time for pedestrians to cross the three-lane ramp terminal within one signal phase.

Upstream of the intersection, the shoulders on the new (reconstructed) segment of the ramp itself are to be designed in compliance with the Ontario Bridge Code, which in turn specifies that the design of ramps shall comply with the *MTO Geometric Design Standards for Ontario Highways* or the *Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) Geometric Design Guide for Canadian Roads*, which both recommend shoulders on two lane ramps, with widths of 2.5 m (right) and 1.0 m (left).

The MTO document recommends lane widths of 3.75 m, while the TAC recommendation is 3.70 m. The City intends to use the 3.70 m figure in this instance. These are nationally recognized guidelines based on safety, capacity, and operational experience and are applied throughout the Toronto area. The Gardiner exit ramp functions as part of a high-speed controlled-access expressway system, hence the difference in lane width from the typical range used on city streets.

Two of the lanes on the east side of the intersection will be 3.5 m wide while the third will be 3.0 m in width (due to a Gardiner pier constraint). The west side crossing will therefore be 11.1 m long and the east side crossing will be 10.0 m long.

The number of ramp lanes should remain at three. Two of the ramp lanes are for through traffic; the third is a combined right turn / through lane that would primarily be used for right turning vehicle storage during red lights and while pedestrians are crossing the south leg of the intersection. With a two lane ramp, a single stopped turning vehicle would block the right lane, leaving all through traffic destined to Harbour Street, York Street, Bay Street, and Yonge Street limited, much of the time, to a single left lane. This would pose safety concerns due to the risk of the ramp traffic queuing back to the high-speed main line of the Gardiner Expressway and the inducement of last-minute lane changes on the off-ramp. Three lanes are therefore recommended.

- 2) *“Modify Harbour Street between Lower Simcoe Street and York Street to be a maximum of four 3.35 metre wide lanes with the southerly curb lane being a maximum of 4 metres for the full length of the block in order to be friendly to cyclists.”*

The preliminary plans for a reconstructed Harbour Street show four 3.5 metre wide lanes (i.e. a total pavement width of 14.0 metres) with varying sidewalk widths on the north and south side of Harbour Street. The lanes can be marked as three 3.35 metre wide lanes and one 4 metre wide lane (i.e. a total pavement width of 14.05 metres) without a significant impact on traffic operations or sidewalk width. The final plans will be revised accordingly.

- 3) *“Modify all lanes on Harbour Street between York Street and Yonge Street to be a maximum width of 3.35 metres with the exception of a continuous southerly curb lane which can be a maximum of 4 metres wide and parking lanes with a width of 2.5 metres.”*

The preliminary plans for a reconstructed Harbour Street show four 3.5 metre wide lanes (i.e. a total pavement width of 14.0 metres) with varying sidewalk widths on the north and south side of Harbour Street. The lanes can be marked as three 3.35 metre wide lanes and one 4 metre wide lane (i.e. a total pavement width of 14.05 metres) without a significant impact on sidewalk width. Off-peak period parking is proposed for parts of the south curb lane, and can occur within the 4.0 metre envelope while retaining 1.5 metres for use by cyclists. The final plans will be revised accordingly.

- 4) *“Remove the layby at 60 Harbour Street”*

The presence and operation of the layby at 60 Harbour Street (Harbour Commission building) was not identified as a concern during the Environmental Assessment process and is a traffic operations issue that can be considered separately from recommendations of the York / Bay / Yonge Ramp Environmental Assessment. It does not require EA approval. Similar comments apply to the layby at the provincial building (currently for sale) to the west, at 90 Harbour Street.

- 5) *“Delete the construction of the proposed north south local street between York Street and Bay Street until further public consultation has occurred.”*

Transportation Services have reviewed this point and propose to temporarily delete the recommendation for a new north-south road from the Staff Report to Public Works and Infrastructure Committee (PW35.12, August 18, 2010). Transportation Services will initiate public consultation on the topic. The results could be reported back to Public Works and Infrastructure Committee at the earliest opportunity in 2011. A decision can be made at that time as to whether or not to include the road in the York-Bay-Yonge Environmental Study Report.

- 6) *“Restripe the lanes on Lake Shore Boulevard between the Sherbourne Street and Simcoe Street bike lanes to permit a through curb lane widths of 4 metres in order for the roadway to be friendly to cyclists by second quarter 2011.”*

This is a traffic operations issue and can be considered separately from recommendations of the York / Bay / Yonge Ramp Environmental Assessment. It does not require EA approval. Furthermore, it extends well to the east of the York / Bay / Yonge study area, which had its eastern limit at Yonge Street.

- 7) *“Restripe the lanes on York Street between Front Street West and Queens Quay to permit curb lanes widths of 4 metres in order for the roadway to be friendly to cyclists by second quarter 2011.”*

This is a traffic operations issue and can be considered separately from the recommendations of the York / Bay / Yonge Ramp Environmental Assessment. It does not require EA approval.

- 8) *“Install off peak hour on street parking on Lake Shore Boulevard between Simcoe Street to Sherbourne Street by second quarter 2011.”*

This is a traffic operations issue and can be considered separately from the recommendations of the York / Bay / Yonge Ramp Environmental Assessment. It does not require EA approval.

In conclusion, items 1, 2, and 3 will be addressed to the extent possible in the Environmental Study Report (ESR), items 4, 6, 7, and 8 will be referred to District Traffic Operations staff for review and consideration, and item 5 will be acted on directly, by carrying out further public consultation on the proposed new north-south street. The outcome of the public consultation will be reported to Public Works and Infrastructure Committee in 2011, for consideration whether or not to include the proposed new street in the ESR.

The publication of the Notice of Study Completion and the filing of the ESR will be deferred until item 5 has been addressed.

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