

Road Alterations - Wellington Street East, Church Street, and Front Street Intersection

Date: November 1, 2016
To: Toronto and East York Community Council
From: Director, Public Realm Section, Transportation Services
Wards: Ward 28 - Toronto Centre-Rosedale

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to modify the intersection of Church Street, Front Street, and Wellington Street East, as well as the existing north lane of Wellington Street East between Yonge Street and Church Street. Proposed modifications along Wellington Street include a widened boulevard, curbside TTC loading area, reduced crossing distances for pedestrians, and a parking lay-by. The widened boulevard will provide an opportunity for significant tree infrastructure to be incorporated in the boulevard, will provide widened pedestrian clearways, and space for patios and street furniture.

The streetscape work is part of a larger coordinated project that involves upgrading a watermain (Toronto Water), streetcar track replacement (TTC), utility upgrades (Hydro, Bell), and resurfacing this section of Wellington Street East.

This proposal aligns with the 2015 St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood Business Improvement Area (BIA) Master Plan to guide public realm improvements within its boundaries. The BIA has been requesting the boulevard widening since 2007.

On-street parking on the north side of Wellington Street East, between Church Street and Yonge Street, will be reduced in order to accommodate the proposed modifications. The net result will be a loss of ten parking spaces. However the eight parking spaces created in the proposed lay-by will have extended hours of operation.

As the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) operates a transit service on Wellington Street East, City Council approval of this report is required.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Director, Public Realm, Transportation Services recommends that:

1. City Council approve the modifications to the intersection of Church Street, Front Street, and Wellington Street East, as well as the existing north lane of Wellington Street East between Yonge Street and Church Street, as shown on Attachment 1.
2. City Council rescind the parking regulations outlined in Attachment 2 – By-laws to be rescinded.
3. City Council approve the parking regulations outlined in Attachment 3 – By-laws to be enacted.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

This proposal has been incorporated into the larger road reconstruction plan and funding is included in the 2016-2025 Capital Budget and Capital Plan for Transportation Services. All costs associated with the recommendations are included within the Engineering and Construction Services 2017 Capital Budget. Funding for the streetscape enhancements is being provided by from Economic Development & Culture/St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood BIA, Urban Forestry, Transportation Services and Section 37 contributions.

It is estimated that Toronto Parking Authority net revenue would be reduced by \$114,833 annually (inclusive of HST) based on the proposed changes to on-street paid parking, described in this report.

DECISION HISTORY

Toronto East York Community Council, at its meeting of August 12, 2014, approved Item TE34.213 entitled, "Road Alteration and Parking Amendments - Scott Street, between Front Street East and Wellington Street East," and further requested that the Director, Transportation Services, Toronto and East York District to review and report to Toronto and East York Community Council on additional pedestrian and traffic safety improvements in the Berczy Park and Scott Street precincts, including pedestrian crossing at Scott Street and Front Street East, removal of left-hand, turning lane layby at Church Street and Front Street East, widening of sidewalk on north side of Wellington Street between Church Street and Yonge Street, and tabletop raised intersection at Scott Street and The Esplanade. The Committee decision can be viewed at:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2014.TE34.213>

COMMENTS

Issue Background

The St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood BIA has worked with City staff, the TTC, and a local developer to redesign the right-of-way to improve the pedestrian realm and implement the vision of its 2015 Master Plan. The proposed modifications will widen the boulevard, reduce crossing distances for pedestrians, provide an opportunity for significant tree infrastructure as well as widened pedestrian clearways and space for patios and street furniture.

A dedicated parking lay-by will be created mid-block on Wellington Street, and the streetcar will operate along the new proposed curb lane with a curbside stop at Yonge Street.

The TTC has been consulted throughout the process to ensure that the design addresses operational criteria for the new streetcars. Toronto Parking Authority has also been consulted on the removal of metered parking.

Wellington Street East Boulevard Modifications

Wellington Street East between Yonge Street and Church Street is a four-lane, one-way westbound collector road with two through travel lanes, TTC tracks and metered parking on both curb lanes with am peak parking prohibitions. The abutting land uses are primarily commercial, including a number of heritage buildings with Berczy Park on the south side between Scott Street and Church Street. Toronto Water will be upgrading the watermain along this corridor and the TTC will remove the abandoned track in the south through lane and reconstruct the second track in the north through lane. The streetscape transformation is bundled with this project to capitalize on reconstruction efficiencies and to limit the amount of disruption to residents, businesses and road users.

The boulevard on the north side of Wellington Street from Church Street to Leader Lane will be widened into the existing north curb lane. The section to the west, between Leader Lane and Scott Street, has also been designed to incorporate a wider sidewalk and a dedicated lay by for parking and loading purposes. The lay by will be available for parking and loading on a 24-hour basis, providing a space for vehicles to pull over, out of the way of streetcars. Between Scott Street and Yonge Street, the north boulevard will similarly be widened by removing a travel lane and incorporating a streetcar stop at the corner of Yonge Street. The enlarged boulevard will provide widened sidewalks to meet the clearway guidelines currently under development by Transportation Services. The remaining boulevard space will accommodate a double row of trees, opportunities for seating, bike parking street furniture and patio animation.

The boulevard area along Wellington Street East, north of Berczy Park is a protected park for sun exposure and provides a unique opportunity to maximize the street tree canopy in the downtown core. The widened boulevard will allow the street trees to be set back from the building face, and the enhanced soil capacity proposed will allow these trees to grow to their full potential. The tree canopy along with cafes and pedestrian clearway will help to animate the streetscape.

Church /Front/Wellington Intersection Improvements

Front Street east of Church Street is a four lane collector (two lanes in each direction) separated by a median. Where the road intersects Church Street, the eastbound and westbound lanes separate around the iconic Flat Iron building. The westbound section widens into four lanes at the intersection with the left and right curb lanes accommodating through movements and turns and on street parking after the morning rush period. The two centre lanes continue straight through the intersection.

Front Street west of its intersection with Church Street currently has four traffic lanes - two through lanes, a channelized left turn only lane and a right turn only lane. Parking is permitted in the curb lane. The north curb lane also accommodates parking except during the PM rush period.

The wide four lane cross sections of Wellington Street and Front Street west of Church Street combined with the existing short bullnose at the east end of the Flatiron building requires diagonal crosswalks and creates considerably longer crossing distances which in turn require extended 'Walk' times for pedestrians.

The intersection redesign will improve the eastbound Front street traffic movements by:

- Removing the left turn channel and utilizing the north curb lane for these movements;
- Aligning the through lanes on the east and west sides of Church Street; and
- Eliminating the confusion caused by the existing right turn only lane.

The redesign will also improve westbound traffic movements by:

- Creating a right turn channel at the intersection;
- Allowing the second and third lanes to proceed through the intersection; and
- Allowing the fourth lane to serve left turns and through traffic during peak hour.

The southeast corner of Church Street will also be modified to better align the traffic lanes and expand the pedestrian waiting area at the corner. The curb radii and lane width guidelines have been applied on all corners where adjustments are being made.

These changes will improve vehicle and pedestrian movements with little or no impact on the level of service of the intersection.

Traffic Impacts

The St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood BIA commissioned a traffic impact study, reviewed by Transportation Services staff, which demonstrated that removal of the north lane of Wellington Street and the intersection improvements listed above would not have a negative impact on traffic operations in this area.

These corridors and the Front/Wellington/Church intersection operate well under their capacities. Cycling staff have provided support to this project recognizing that this segment is not anticipated for enhanced cycling infrastructure.

Parking Considerations

Although there will be a reduction of 15 parking spaces on the north side of Wellington Street East between Yonge Street and Church Street (7 of these have been eliminated for the past 2-years during the construction of the development at 88 Scott Street), this reduction will be partially offset by the addition of 5 new parking spaces, 2 on the south side of Wellington Street and 3 on the north side of Front Street created by curb extensions and lane reconfigurations. The net loss of parking will be 10 parking spaces. The reduction in on-street parking to create a more animated, pedestrian friendly streetscape is supported by the St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood BIA. It is estimated that Toronto Parking Authority net revenue would be reduced by \$114,833 annually (inclusive of HST) based on the proposed changes to on-street parking described in this report.

TTC Transit Stop

After consideration of a number of alternatives, a preferred design was developed with a continuous dropped curb along the length of the transit stop. This design will allow transit riders to access the streetcar from the curb side, permit the accessible ramp to deploy without issues, allow occasional access to the lane way and provide a wide enough curb lane to allow cyclist to travel between the curb and the track.

The design has been developed in cooperation with the TTC, resulting in a curbside track for the segment from Church Street to Yonge Street. A curbside stop location at Yonge Street and Wellington Street East will provide direct access for riders from the sidewalk.

The local Councillor has been advised of the recommendations of this staff report.

CONTACT

Elyse Parker
Director, Public Realm
Transportation Services
Tel: 416-338-2432
E-mail: eparker@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Elyse Parker
Director, Public Realm Section, Transportation Services

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Road Alteration and Intersection Modifications Drawing

Attachment 2: Appendix A: By-laws to be Rescinded

Attachment 3: Appendix B: By-laws to be Enacted

Attachment 1
Road Alteration and Intersection Modifications Drawing



Attachment 2

By-Laws to be Rescinded

Parking Machines

Highway	Side Parking	Between	Hours	Fee/Time Limit	Max. Parking Period
Wellington Street East	North	Church Street and Scott Street	9:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Mon. to Fri.; 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Sat.; 1:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Sun	\$3.00 per 1 hour	3 hours

No Stopping

Highway	Side	Between	Prohibited Times and/or Days
Wellington Street East	North	Church Street and Scott Street	7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. Mon. to Fri.
Wellington Street East	North	Scott Street and a point 71.8 metres west	Anytime
Wellington Street East	North	Yonge Street and a point 71.8metres west of Scott Street	7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. Mon. to Fri. except public holidays

Attachment 3

By-Laws to be Enacted

Parking Machines

Highway	Side Parking	Between	Hours	Fee/Time Limit	Max. Parking Period
Wellington Street East	North	Leader Lane to Scott Street	8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Mon. to Sat.; 1:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Sun.	\$3.00 for 1 hour	3 hours

No Stopping

Highway	Side	Between	Prohibited Times and/or Days
Wellington Street East	North	Yonge Street and Scott Street	Anytime
Wellington Street East	North	Leader Lane and Church Street	Anytime