



REPORT FOR ACTION

Metrolinx Finch West Light Rail Transit: Temporary Delegation for Long Term Road Closures - Highway 27

Date: May 21, 2020

To: City Council

From: General Manager, Transportation Services

Wards: Ward 1 - Etobicoke North

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval to delegate authority to the General Manager, Transportation Services, to temporarily close to pedestrian and vehicular traffic portions of Highway 27, between 500 metres north of Finch Avenue West and 500 metres south of Humber College Boulevard, for a period up to and including 365 consecutive days, but ending no later than August 31, 2023, inclusive, as required for the purposes of construction of the Metrolinx Finch West Light Rail Transit (FWLRT).

Without this delegated authority, reports would be required seeking Council approval to grant road/lane and sidewalk closures lasting more than 30 days. The scope of the FWLRT project and planned new transit infrastructure on Highway 27 requires multiple lane closures that will extend beyond 30 days. Delegating this authority will minimize the chance of project delay and significantly reduces the administrative burden on City of Toronto staff, enabling them to focus on working with Metrolinx, contractors, local ward Councillors, and the community.

As the General Manager, Transportation Services does not have any authority to close Highway 27 for third party work for any period of time, this report is critical to ensure that work on the FWLRT can continue.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager, Transportation Services recommends that:

1. City Council amend City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 937, Temporary Closing of Highways, by deleting Section 937-3.12, Closures of travel lanes on Highway 27 for hydro infrastructure relocation part of early works for the Finch West LRT project.

2. City Council amend City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 937, Temporary Closing of Highways, to delegate to the General Manager, Transportation Services, until August 31, 2023 inclusive, despite Section 937-4 of Code Chapter 937, the authority to temporarily close to pedestrian and vehicular traffic portions of Highway 27, between 500 metres north of Finch Avenue West and 500 metres south of Humber College Boulevard, for a period up to and including 365 consecutive days but ending no later than August 31, 2023 inclusive, as required for the purposes of construction of the Finch West Light Rail Transit and exempt the General Manager, Transportation Services, in carrying out this delegated authority from Section 937-5 of Chapter 937, that being the requirement to notify the local Ward Councillor of the pending closure and the requirement to report on the proposed closure if so requested by the local Ward Councillor.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact to the City of Toronto associated with the recommendations in this report. Metrolinx's contractors are responsible for all costs required to implement all traffic management recommendations as conditions of permit approval.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

City Council, at its meeting of May 22, 2018, delegated to the General Manager, Transportation Services, the authority to temporarily close to pedestrian and vehicular traffic highways or portions of highways for a period up to and including 365 consecutive days, until March 31, 2020 with the exception of those highways listed in section 937-4 of Chapter 937, as required for the purpose of the construction of the Metrolinx Finch West LRT corridor. The Council decision can be found at:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2018.PW29.1>

City Council, at its meeting of May 14 and 15, 2019, amended Section 937-3.8 of City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 937, Temporary Closing of Highways, to delete the date of March 31, 2020 and replace it with the date of August 31, 2023 such that the General Manager, Transportation Services will be delegated the authority to temporarily close to vehicular and pedestrian traffic highways or portions of highways for a period up to and including 365 consecutive days, until August 31, 2023, with the exception of those highways listed in Section 937-4 of Chapter 937, as required for the purposes of the construction of the Metrolinx Finch West Light Rail Transit corridor, and to exempt the General Manager, Transportation Services in carrying out this extended delegation from Section 937-5 of Chapter 937, Temporary Closing of Highways, that being the requirement to notify the local Ward Councillor of the pending closure and the

requirement to report on the proposed closure if so requested by the local Ward Councillor.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.IE4.3>

City Council, at its meeting of October 2, 2019, delegated to the General Manager, Transportation Services, from October 3, 2019 to May 31, 2020, the authority to temporarily close to pedestrian and vehicular traffic portions of travel lanes on Highway 27, up to one lane per direction, between 200 metres north of Finch Avenue West and 200 metres south of Humber College Boulevard, daily between 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m., as required for the purpose of hydro relocation work for the Finch West Light Rail Transit project and exempted the General Manager, Transportation Services in carrying out this extended delegation from Section 937-5 of Chapter 937, Temporary Closing of Highways, that being the requirement to notify the local Ward Councillor of the pending closure and the requirement to report on the proposed closure if so requested by the local Ward Councillor.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.EY8.14>

COMMENTS

The FWLRT line will connect the Finch West Station on Line 1 Yonge-University to Humber College North Campus located on Highway 27. The LRT line will extend for 11 kilometres and consist of 18 transit stops, including below-grade stops at Humber College and the TTC Finch West Subway Station. The project is currently in the design phase and construction is expected to be complete by 2023.

Major infrastructure upgrades along Highway 27 will include construction of the transit portal, below-grade LRT vehicle guideway, below grade LRT stop at Humber College and associated streetscape. Construction of the new transit infrastructure will require road/lane and sidewalk closures on Highway 27 within the project limits.

The implementation of any type of road closures on Highway 27 requires Council approval. Given that Council report cycles are numerous months in duration, there is a risk that the City of Toronto approval process could delay the construction schedule and Transportation Services' ability to expeditiously issue the required permits.

In addition, the volume of reporting would detract Transportation Services staff from reviewing plans, working with stakeholders (Metrolinx, contractors, affected Ward Councillors and the local communities) and conducting work zone coordination to minimize construction impacts on the local communities and the travelling public. The adoption of the recommendations within this report will significantly reduce the number of reports required in support of road/lane closures on Highway 27 and remove a large source of schedule risk.

In order to ensure the responsiveness this project requires, it is recommended that the General Manager, Transportation Services, be given the delegated authority until Metrolinx FWLRT: Temporary Delegation for Long Term Road Closures - Highway 27

August 31, 2023 inclusive to temporarily close to pedestrian and vehicular traffic portions of Highway 27, between 500 metres north of Finch Avenue West and 500 metres south of Humber College Boulevard, as required for the purposes of the construction of the FWLRT, for a period up to and including 365 consecutive days but ending no later than August 31, 2023. It is also recommended that, in carrying out this delegation, the General Manager, Transportation Services, be exempt from Section 937-5 of Chapter 937, that being the requirement to notify the local Ward Councillor of the pending closure and the requirement to report on the proposed closure if so requested by the local Ward Councillor. As is the usual process, Councillors will continue to be updated on a regular basis as work proceeds by City staff and Metrolinx. More information about this is included below.

As the General Manager, Transportation Services does not have any authority to close Highway 27 for any period of time, this report is critical to ensure that work on the FWLRT can continue.

Councillor Engagement Process

Through its work on the FWLRT project, Metrolinx has developed and implemented a comprehensive communications program utilizing a variety of meeting techniques to keep City Councillors and their staff apprised of plans and developments related to the project. Metrolinx facilitates regular monthly councillor and stakeholder meetings (including local Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs), local Councillors, Metrolinx staff, project partners and City staff) across the project corridors. Key stakeholders, such as TTC staff, are updated and consulted frequently, often several times each week.

The Metrolinx consultation strategy includes one-on-one briefings with Councillors to address specific milestone events and emerging issues. Community outreach and Business Improvement Area (BIA) meetings, plus Construction Liaison Committee meetings (which include BIAs and local businesses), are scheduled throughout the long-term construction period to provide information and address current concerns and issues as they arise. Broad construction traffic management strategies are shared with the attendees at these meetings by way of presentations made by members of third-party project delivery teams, Metrolinx and City staff.

Specific details of the traffic management plans are discussed with the local Councillors as they are prepared and evolve. Metrolinx, project partners and City staff will work with local Councillors to address these issues in a timely manner. Specifically, City staff will hold one-on-one briefings with the local councillors to provide information and advice on concerns related to the project. Briefings will be provided prior to any significant road closure required for project construction work. Further, City staff will liaise with Metrolinx and Project Co. to minimize disruption during construction activities.

Details of the complex staging and discussions of lane closures are the subject of the monthly stakeholder meetings, routinely attended by Councillors and their staff. Similarly, the construction phasing at various station sites is an agenda item

during monthly stakeholder meetings, and the subject of direct and frequent email communication between Transit Infrastructure Projects Unit office and the project team.

In all cases, when a significant change is planned at any of the construction sites, Metrolinx issues public notices in advance of the work, both on their website and delivered door-to-door. Major changes are also widely reported on television and radio and through social media platforms.

Metrolinx also operates community offices, which are positioned in key areas along the corridor. These offices work with residents, businesses and stakeholders to identify and respond to issues and find ways to mitigate against construction impacts.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Finch West Light Rail Transit - Location Plan