

November 4, 2008

PUBLIC WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE:

City Council on October 29 and 30, 2008, referred the following Motion to the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee:

MM25.11 The Suspension of Non-Emergency City Construction Work on Significant Religious Holy Days
Moved by Councillor Stintz, seconded by Councillor Feldman

SUMMARY:

On November 14, 1990, the former City of North York adopted a resolution that suspended construction work in specific Wards (Wards 4, 6 and 7) on the Jewish Holy Days of Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashannah. This resolution was not carried over nor extended to other religious groups in the amalgamated City of Toronto.

Certain Wards in Toronto have larger religious communities than others. Wards 10, 15, 16, 21, 22, 24 and 25 are examples of Wards with large Jewish communities. On some occasions, construction projects may be scheduled on significant religious Holy Days. Construction work can be quite disruptive and may negatively impact the observance of these important religious celebrations. Though the work being undertaken may be necessary, it is not necessarily welcome at these particular times. A mechanism should be implemented to suspend non-emergency construction work during significant religious Holy Days in wards with large religious communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That City Council direct the City Manager, in consultation with the Deputy City Manager of Citizen Centred Services, Cluster B, to report to the appropriate Standing Committee on the suspension of construction work in neighbourhoods with large Jewish communities during Jewish High Holy Days. The report should include recommendations on how best to implement this mechanism.

2. That City Council direct the City Manager, in consultation with the Deputy City Manager of Citizen Centred Services, Cluster B, to report to the appropriate Standing Committee on the extension of this special condition to other religious groups and Wards in the City of Toronto.

for City Clerk

M. Toft/cd