



Date: February 19, 2015

To: The City Clerk, Public Works and Infrastructure Committee

Re: Item 2015.PW2.2, Evaluation and Changes to Pedestrian Priority Phase Signal (Scramble Crossing) at Bay Street and Bloor Street

From: Walk Toronto

Walk Toronto is very disappointed to learn that Transportation Services is recommending the removal of the pedestrian scramble crossing (“Pedestrian Priority Phase signal”) at the intersection of Bay St. and Bloor St. W. As the report itself shows (Fig. 8), pedestrian scramble crossings are strongly supported by pedestrians as well as many other road users. Scramble crossings have become an icon of the vibrancy of downtown Toronto.

Downtown Toronto has been experiencing an ever-growing number of pedestrians on its sidewalks, who have brought increasing prosperity, sales and jobs to the downtown while diverting congestion from streets and transit. Various initiatives have sought to accommodate and encourage this increasing number of pedestrians, including scramble crossings.

It is vital to continue the momentum towards a better pedestrian experience in the downtown and elsewhere in Toronto. The best way to do that, if the Bay-Bloor scramble crossing is removed, is to quickly replace it with one or more additional pedestrian scramble crossings at intersections that better meet the City’s criteria. The scramble pilot projects at Dundas and Yonge and at Bloor and Yonge have been successful, and prove that if a suitable location is selected, a scramble will work well for most street users.

Recommendation:

Walk Toronto recommends that PWIC direct staff to identify alternative intersections that meet the criteria for pedestrian scramble crossings and begin the process of establishing pedestrian scramble crossings at those intersections as soon as possible. Walk Toronto further recommends that the scramble crossing at Bay and Bloor not be removed until at least one has been installed at an alternative location.

Following this recommendation will reassure Toronto pedestrians that the City of Toronto remains committed to encouraging walking and enhancing the pedestrian experience.

Walk Toronto is a grassroots walking advocacy group dedicated to making Toronto a better city for walking.

Thank you,

Dylan Reid and Michael Black
Steering Committee, Walk Toronto