

# Councillor Frances Nunziata

Council Speaker

Ward 11 York South—Weston



May 5, 2016

**To: Chair and Members of Etobicoke-York Community Council**

**Re: City laneway running from Macdonald Avenue to Lawrence Ave. West, east of Ralph Street**

**SUMMARY:**

The City laneway which runs from Macdonald Avenue to Lawrence Avenue West, east of Ralph Street, is used by abutting property owners to access their private garages by way of easement agreements over the laneway. Vehicles are prevented by driving through the entirety of the laneway with guard rails in the middle to prevent through-fare; as a result of the limited vehicular traffic, the laneway also serves as a walkway for pedestrians, and students of the local schools.

In 2008 my office was contacted by a number of property owners whose homes abut the public laneway that runs between Macdonald Avenue and Lawrence Avenue West, with the request that the City close the laneway to the public due to issues with pedestrians vandalising their private property, conducting illegal activity in the laneway, and throwing garbage and debris over the fence onto private property. After meeting with area residents, Transportation Services explained that they would not close the public lane; however, they could declare the land surplus if all eight abutting property owners agreed to purchase the portion adjacent to their properties at fair market value plus all costs incurred by the City as a result of the transaction (i.e. closing costs, transaction fees, cost of relocating utilities, etc.). Consensus could not be reached among the eight abutting property owners so the laneway remained open to the public and in 2009 this laneway which was previously scheduled for reconstruction, was reconstructed.

In 2012 I was asked by area residents to revisit the request to close the laneway; at that time, all property owners abutting the section of the laneway from Boyd Avenue to Lawrence Avenue West indicated their willingness to purchase the sections of the laneway abutting their properties. After considering the request, Transportation Services reported that they would no longer consider declaring the land surplus due to the City's recent (2009) investment in reconstructing the laneway, as well as wanting to maintain the pedestrian connection from Lawrence Avenue West into the community.

Earlier this year, the request to close the laneway resurrected once more as problems with vandalism, loitering, and disruptive activity in the laneway have continued to persist; in response, a community meeting was held with representatives from Transportation Services. Residents in attendance expressed frustration with the negative affect the pedestrians using the laneway are having on their private property and on their ability to enjoy their property. Residents expressed the desire to see the City maintain ownership over the laneway, but to replace the existing guardrails with fences so that pedestrians would not have through-access and consequently, would no longer use the laneway.

.../2

# Councillor Frances Nunziata

**Council Speaker**

*Ward 11 York South—Weston*

---



## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That Etobicoke York Community Council:

1. Request that the Director, Public Realm Section, Transportation Services, in consultation with the Director, Transportation Services, Etobicoke York District, report to the June 14, 2016 meeting of Etobicoke York Community Council with an analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of preventing pedestrian through-traffic on the public laneway running from Macdonald Avenue to Lawrence Avenue West by replacing the existing guard rails with fencing.

Sincerely,

Frances Nunziata  
Councillor, Ward 11