

City Council

Motion without Notice

MM7.15	ACTION			Ward: 10
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Preserving the Cycle Track on Richmond Street - by Councillor Joe Cressy, seconded by Councillor Mike Layton

**** Notice of this Motion has not been given. A two-thirds vote is required to waive notice.
* This Motion is subject to referral to the Infrastructure and Environment Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.
* This Motion has been deemed urgent by the Chair.***

Recommendations

Councillor Joe Cressy, seconded by Councillor Mike Layton, recommends that:

1. City Council direct the General Manager, Transportation Services to preserve the dedicated cycle track along Richmond Street from John Street to Bathurst Street for the duration of the watermain reconstruction.
2. If the General Manager, Transportation Services deems it is not possible to preserve the dedicated cycle track, City Council direct the General Manager, Transportation Services to provide an alternative westbound protected route as a detour from John Street to Bathurst Street, for the duration of the watermain reconstruction.

Summary

In 2019, after a five year pilot, City Council made the bike lanes on Richmond and Adelaide Streets permanent. These bike lanes are an unprecedented success – they now carry a third of all traffic on Richmond and Adelaide and move more people per lane at rush hour than the motor vehicle lanes. These tracks form the core of the City's safe cycling infrastructure.

They may be the busiest bike lanes in North America - in 2017, Burrard Bridge in Vancouver was the busiest, with an average of 3,100 trips per day. Our numbers from September 2018 put the average daily volume on Richmond and Adelaide streets at 6,160 trips – nearly double. That's more people than many arterial roads and TTC stations. These are safe connections for cyclists to the 480,000 jobs in the core, and are an essential part of the City's policies on traffic management and Vision Zero.

The watermain running beneath Richmond Street West, between York Street and Bathurst Street, will be replaced this summer, with construction scheduled to begin in June 2019 and end in August 2020. Due to the location of the watermain beneath the roadway, which is relatively narrow in places, City staff have advised that it will not be possible to maintain a safe,

protected cycle track along the length of Richmond Street for the entire duration of the project. Instead, cyclists will be directed to ride in the single remaining lane of mixed traffic with motor vehicles. A closure of the cycle track impacting two summer seasons is unacceptable. A safe route for cyclists must be maintained.

The current plan involves preserving one merged lane of traffic in 200 metre to 300 metre stretches during each phase of work, with no safe detours planned to reconnect to the cycle track. For cyclists, this amounts to the elimination of an arterial lane.

If we are committed to Vision Zero, and committed to moving people around the City, we must be bold. Like we would not propose a two hundred metre hole in the Gardiner and expect people to portage their cars, we cannot expect thousands of people to ride in mixed traffic in an active construction zone. While other cities are enacting bold policies on safety and traffic management, we're taking steps backwards.

The repairs to the Richmond watermain are essential work, and cannot be unnecessarily delayed. However, this work cannot put people at risk of collisions and injuries, and it cannot put people on bikes back into cars or on overcrowded public transit.

This motion is urgent as the work is scheduled to begin in June.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM7.15