

Road Alteration - O'Connor Drive and St. Clair Avenue East

Date: April 24, 2019
To: Toronto and East York Community Council
From: Director, Transportation Services, Project Design and Management
Wards: Ward 19, Beaches-East York

SUMMARY

In support of the Vision Zero Road Safety Plan, Transportation Services is requesting approval to alter the roadway at the intersection of O'Connor Drive and St. Clair Avenue East in order to improve safety and accessibility for pedestrians.

The alterations would include the removal of the westbound right-turn channel to allow for the installation of Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS) at the intersection, the introduction of a dedicated westbound right-turn lane, as well as curb radii reductions at both the northeast and northwest corners. The alterations would also enhance safety for cyclists through the installation of a left turn bike box on the northwest side of O'Connor Drive.

As the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) operates bus service on O'Connor Drive and St. Clair Avenue East, City Council approval of this report is required.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Director, Transportation Services, Project Design and Management, recommends that:

1. City Council authorize the alteration of the intersection of O'Connor Drive and St. Clair Avenue East, including removal of the westbound right-turn channel, designation of a westbound right-turn lane, reduction of the curb radius at the northeast and northwest corners, removal of a westbound bus lay-by and installation of various cycling infrastructure improvements, generally as shown on Drawing 421G-3036, dated February 2019, included in the report entitled "Road Alteration - O'Connor Drive and St. Clair Avenue East", dated April 24, 2019, from the Director, Transportation Services, Project Design and Management.

2. City Council, in conjunction with the completion of road alteration set out in Recommendation 1 of the report dated April 24, 2019, from the Director, Transportation Services, Project Design and Management, designate the northerly westbound lane on St. Clair Avenue East, between O'Conner Drive and a point 30.5 metres east, for westbound right turns only.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The cost associated with the proposed road alteration at the intersection of O'Connor Drive and St. Clair Avenue East is estimated at \$400,000.00.

These funds are available in Transportation Services' 2019-2028 Capital Budget and Plan (Road Safety Plan - Local Geometric Transportation Safety Improvements & School Children / Pedestrian Emphasis Area).

DECISION HISTORY

This report addresses a new initiative.

COMMENTS

In support of the Vision Zero Road Safety Plan, Transportation Services investigated the feasibility of removing the westbound right-turn channel at the intersection of O'Connor Drive and St. Clair Avenue East to improve safety for vulnerable road users, including the installation of APS and new cycling infrastructure to support the 10-Year Cycling Network Plan approved on June 9, 2016 by Toronto City Council.

O'Connor Drive and St. Clair Avenue East is a signalized intersection with O'Connor Drive forming the north and south legs and St. Clair Avenue East forming the east and west legs of the intersection.

O'Connor Drive is a four-lane major arterial roadway with an unposted speed limit of 50 kilometers per hour (km/h). St. Clair Avenue East is a four-lane major arterial roadway with an unposted speed limit of 50 km/h east of O'Connor Drive and a two-lane collector roadway and a speed limit of 30 km/h west of O'Connor Drive. All present traffic operations at this intersection would be maintained as a result of the proposed changes.

TTC service is provided on O'Connor Drive and St. Clair Avenue East and TTC staff have been consulted on the proposed alterations.

Westbound right-turning traffic is not controlled by the traffic signals and operates free flow. Removing the right-turn channel and installing APS at this intersection will improve safety for pedestrians with no or low vision, or who are deaf-blind as they will no longer have to navigate across uncontrolled pedestrian crossings. This change is expected to benefit the residents of the two seniors residences located near this intersection, the St. Clair O'Connor Community and the Canadian Macedonian Place.

In addition, because of the presence of the right-turn channel, pedestrians must presently complete two crossings, first across one leg of the intersection and then across the channel, in order to travel north/south or east/west at the northeast corner. Removing the right-turn channel would enhance safety for pedestrians by eliminating one of the crossings and reducing pedestrian exposure to traffic. The curb radius of the northeast and northwest corners will also be reduced to shorten the pedestrian crossing distance across the south leg which will further improve pedestrian safety at this intersection.

To improve safety for cyclists at this intersection, the road alteration project would include the installation of a left turn bike box at the northwest corner to provide a safe refuge for westbound cyclists waiting to turn left and continue travelling southbound on O'Connor Drive.

Further, within the Ten Year Cycling Network Plan, St. Clair Avenue East was identified as a proposed cycling route between Woodbine Avenue and Victoria Park Avenue. Following further design and consultation, this route is anticipated to be proposed for implementation in 2021.

As part of the reconfiguration of the intersection, the opportunity to introduce cycling infrastructure here in the future is being addressed through:

- Eliminating one eastbound lane on St. Clair Avenue East, east of the intersection for 130 metres;
- Painting a 1.8 metre wide edge line along the curb on both sides of St. Clair Avenue East; and
- Painting an additional 1.0 metre wide buffer along the south curb to allow eastbound traffic to bypass buses stopped in front of St. Clair O'Connor Community Inc.

There is an existing bus stop and lay-by located on the north side of St. Clair Avenue East, approximately 70 metres east of the intersection. While this bus stop will be maintained, it is proposed that the lay-by be removed and the curb extended to align with the curb line on the north side. Removing this lay-by will assist the operation of the westbound Route 70 TTC bus which serves this bus stop and currently must cross two lanes of traffic in order to turn left at the intersection.

Based on traffic modelling conducted, the removal of the right-turn channel at this intersection is not anticipated to result in significant delays for the westbound right-turn movement since it would be replaced with a dedicated right-turn lane and signal timing plans would be updated to optimize traffic signal operations.

The Ward Councillor is aware of the recommendations in this staff report.

The work will be completed in 2019 in conjunction with the road reconstruction on O'Connor Drive and the Basement Flooding Protection Program on O'Connor Drive and Bermondsey Road.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Drawing No. 421G-3036, dated February 2019, St. Clair Avenue East and O'Connor Drive: Proposed Road Alteration

Attachment 1

St. Clair Avenue East and O'Connor Drive - Proposed Road Alteration Plan

