

Closure of a portion of westbound Fleet Street, between Bathurst Street and Iannuzzi Street to Improve Road Safety and Public Realm

Date: June 17, 2019

To: Toronto & East York Community Council

From: Director, Project Design and Management, Transportation Services

Wards: 10 (Spadina - Fort York)

SUMMARY

Transportation Services is requesting approval to close to vehicular traffic the northerly westbound lane on Fleet Street, between Bathurst Street and Iannuzzi Street, in order to improve safety and public realm. This change would simplify the intersection for motorists and pedestrians alike by eliminating a redundant right-turn movement at a busy intersection, shorten the north-south pedestrian crossing distance on the west side of Bathurst Street, and accommodate public realm improvements.

This project is consistent with the City Council approved Fort York Neighbourhood Public Realm Plan, the Fort York and Railway Lands West Neighbourhoods Class Environmental Assessment Study, the Bathurst Quay Neighbourhood Plan Study, the Waterfront Transit Network Plan, and the Vision Zero Road Safety Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. City Council authorize the permanent closure to vehicular traffic the northerly westbound lane on Fleet Street, between Bathurst Street and Iannuzzi Street, as shown in Attachment 1 - Layout Plan attached to the report dated June 17, 2019 from the Director, Project Design and Management, Transportation Services; and
2. Subject to the approval of Recommendation 1, City Council authorize the amendments to traffic regulations set out in Attachment 2 of the report dated June 17, 2019 from the Director, Project Design and Management, Transportation Services.

3. City Council authorize and direct the appropriate City Officials to take the necessary action to give effect to the recommendations above, including the introduction of any Bills that may be required.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Costs associated with the permanent closure to vehicular traffic the northerly westbound lane on Fleet Street, between Bathurst Street and Iannuzzi Street, can be accommodated within the 2019 approved Capital Budget for Transportation Services.

DECISION HISTORY

The Fort York Neighbourhood Public Realm Plan, 2004, includes plans for Fleet Street which "reflects Community Council's direction for enhanced landscaping, improved appearance of Fleet Street, and emphasis on its role as the "front door" of the Fort York Neighbourhood", including, "the westbound lane between Bathurst Street and Street 'E' would be eliminated to minimize external traffic" (Note that Street 'E' is now known as Iannuzzi Street): [Fort York Neighbourhood Public Realm Plan](#).

On September 25, 2006, City Council adopted the report "Infrastructure Improvements in the Fort York and Railway Lands West Neighbourhoods Class Environmental Assessment Study". The Recommended Design within the aforementioned Class Environmental Assessment Study includes the "Closure of westbound Fleet Street from Bathurst Street to the future Iannuzzi Street by expanding the existing boulevard to provide additional landscaping".
<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2006/agendas/committees/wks/wks060911/it012.pdf>

On July 7, 2015, City Council requested that the Director Community Planning, Toronto and East York District as part of the refinement of the Bathurst Quay Neighbourhood Plan to further investigate the feasibility of closing all or part of Fleet Street between Bathurst Street and Bastion Street to vehicular traffic in consultation with the appropriate City Divisions:
<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2015.TE7.60>

On July 12, 2016, City Council adopted the Road Safety Plan 2017-2021, a comprehensive five year (2017-2021) action plan focused on reducing traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries on Toronto's streets:
<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.PW14.1>

On January 31, 2018, City Council requested that the General Manager, Transportation Services, in partnership with the Toronto Transit Commission undertake a review to improve transit operations in the interim at the intersection of Bathurst-Fleet-Lake Shore, including the previously approved closure of westbound Fleet Street to automobiles between Iannuzzi Street and Bathurst Street:
<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2018.EX30.1>

On May 22, 2019, Toronto and East York Community Council considered a letter from Councillor Cressy requesting Transportation Services to report directly to the June 18,

2019 meeting of City Council regarding the pedestrianization of Fleet Street between Bathurst Street and Iannuzzi Street to be implemented during the summer of 2019: <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.TE6.61>

COMMENTS

The Bathurst Street / Lakeshore Boulevard West / Fleet Street intersection is an important gateway to the downtown to/from the west. As a complex, five-legged intersection, the atypical intersection design can be confusing for all road users and may present a number of safety issues including long and multi-phased pedestrian crossings. A near-term and longer-term strategy to address this is outlined below.

In the near term, it is proposed that a portion of Fleet Street, the northerly westbound lane between Bathurst Street and Iannuzzi Street, be closed to vehicular traffic in order to improve safety and public realm. This change would simplify the intersection for motorists and pedestrians alike by eliminating a redundant right-turn movement - reducing conflicts between right-turning vehicles and pedestrians, shortening the north-south pedestrian crossing distance on the west side of Bathurst Street, and accommodating public realm improvements. Traffic on Bathurst Street would be required to continue further south to Lake Shore Boulevard West where southbound right-turns will continue to be permitted.

In addition, geometric modifications would be made to the island median at the corner of Fleet Street and Bathurst Street. This median has been struck previously by large vehicles and the modification would provide more space for trucks to safely make southbound right-turn movements from Bathurst Street onto Lake Shore Boulevard West and provide pedestrians with a safer crossing environment.

Westbound Fleet Street, between Bathurst Street and Iannuzzi Street, has an average width of 3.5 metres and operates one-way westbound with one lane of traffic, carrying approximately 900 vehicles a day. Stopping is currently prohibited at all times on this section of Fleet Street. As such, no on-street parking spaces will be eliminated with the implementation of this proposal. Westbound Fleet Street runs adjacent to the Lake Shore Boulevard West transit right-of-way. TTC bus service operated on the 307 Bathurst overnight route, and any temporary buses on the 511 Bathurst route, would have a minor routing change in the southbound/westbound direction that is acceptable to the TTC.

Based on 8-hour turning movement counts conducted on March 26, 2019, the existing southbound right-turn volumes at the intersections of Bathurst Street and Fleet Street, and Bathurst Street and Lake Shore Boulevard West are not significant, even during peak periods. There may be some redistribution of traffic through the residential road network northwest of Bathurst Street and Fleet Street, however the current traffic volumes suggest this would be minimal. Most traffic on Bathurst Street destined westbound on Lake Shore Boulevard West or to the Fort York neighbourhood, uses Fort York Boulevard instead of travelling south to Fleet Street or Lake Shore Boulevard West.

Staff from Transportation Services (Traffic Planning, Traffic Operations, Neighbourhood Projects), City Planning (Transportation Planning, Waterfront Secretariat), Toronto Transit Commission (TTC), and Fire Services have been consulted on the proposed closure.

The proposed closure technique would improve public realm through moveable and low-cost elements, such as planter boxes / vegetation and street furniture. The new pedestrian zone will be delineated with special pavement treatments.

Public consultation on the proposed closure of Fleet Street has been an integral part of the study process for the City Council approved Fort York Neighbourhood Public Realm Plan, the Fort York and Railway Lands West Neighbourhoods Class Environmental Assessment Study, the Bathurst Quay Neighbourhood Plan Study, and the Waterfront Transit Network Plan.

Additional consultation with local stakeholders will be undertaken in finalizing the design, and a public notice will be distributed prior to implementation. The Ward Councillor supports the recommendations of this report. Local stakeholders such as the Waterfront Business Improvement Area have also expressed support. Subject to Council approval, implementation of the closure and public realm improvements is anticipated to take place in summer 2019.

As a longer term strategy, more significant improvements to the intersection would require that a broader study including multi-modal analysis and preliminary design be undertaken. Elements considered as part of this study may include the relocation of the eastbound left turn lane from Fleet Street to Lake Shore Boulevard West, wider pedestrian infrastructure, and normalizing the intersection for all road users.

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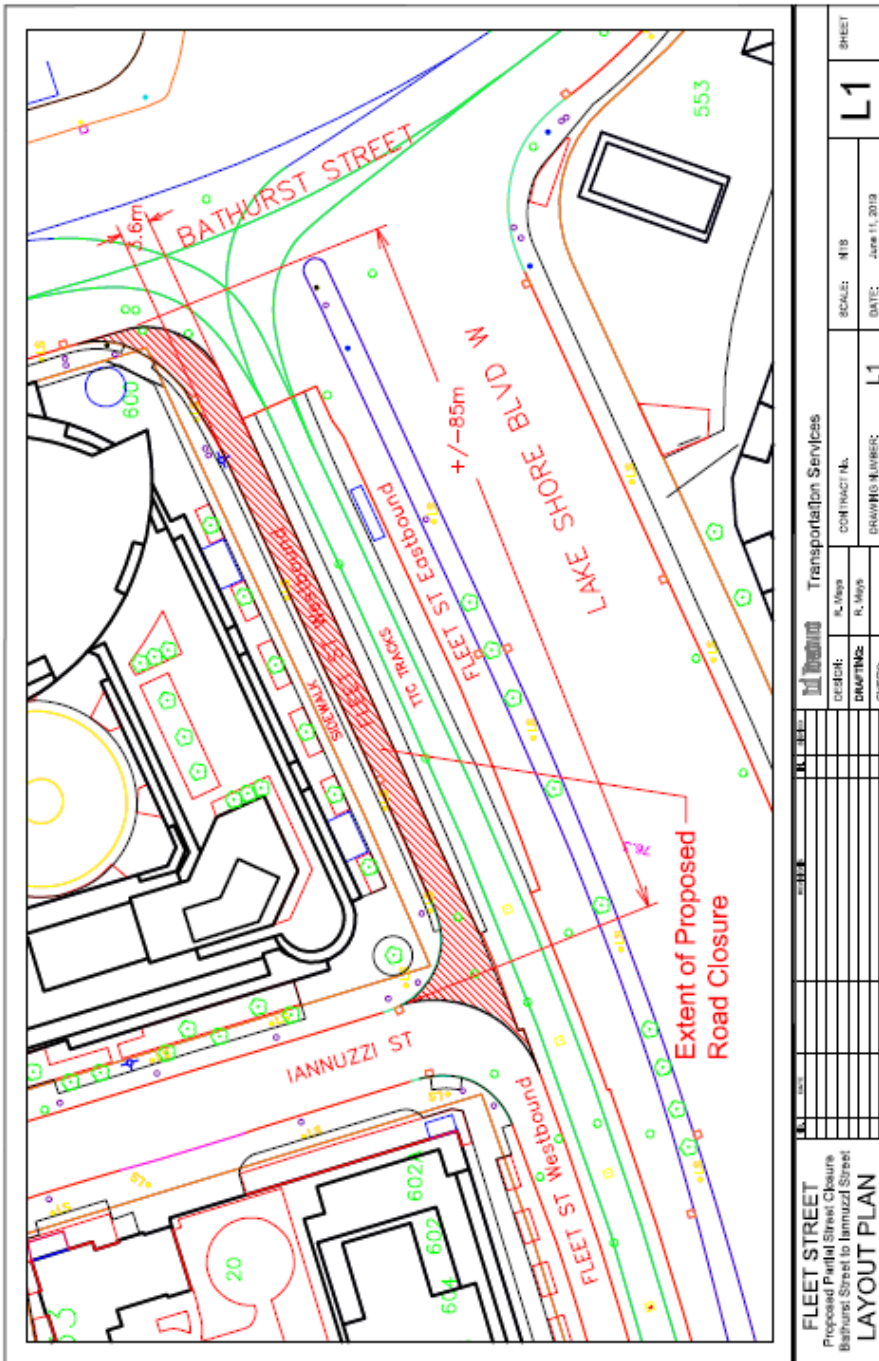
Jacquelyn Hayward
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Transportation Services

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Layout Plan

Attachment 2 - Amendments to Traffic Regulations

Attachment 1 - Layout Plan



Attachment 2 - Amendments to Traffic Regulations

By-Law(s) to be rescinded:

One-Way Traffic Lanes

Highway	Between	Lanes	Time and/or Days	Direction
Bathurst Street	Fleet Street and a point 30.5 metres north	Westerly Southbound	Anytime	Southbound right-turning

By-Law(s) to be enacted:

One-Way Traffic Lanes

Highway	Between	Lanes	Time and/or Days	Direction
Bathurst Street	Lake Shore Boulevard West and a point 30.5 metres north	Westerly Southbound	Anytime	Southbound right-turning

Prohibited Turns

Intersection or Portion of Highway	Direction	Turns Prohibited	Times and/or Days
Bathurst Street and Fleet Street	Southbound	Right	Anytime (TTC vehicles excepted)