

Safety Review - Mill Street and Cherry Street

Date: March 29, 2021

To: Toronto and East York Community Council

From: Acting Director, Traffic Management, Transportation Services

Wards: Ward 10, Spadina-Fort York; Ward 13, Toronto-Centre

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to respond to Toronto and East York Community Council's direction to review the intersection of Mill Street and Cherry Street and explore potential safety measures for pedestrians, and to report on the findings from the recent Vulnerable Road User Review.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Acting Director, Traffic Management, Transportation Services, recommends that:

1. Toronto and East York Community Council receive this report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

All costs associated with the short-term safety improvements are included in the Transportation Services 2021 Operating Budget.

DECISION HISTORY

On November 10, 2020, Toronto and East York Community Council adopted item TE20.62, which requested Transportation Services to, among other things, review the intersection of Mill Street and Cherry Street to explore potential safety measures for pedestrians.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.TE20.62>

COMMENTS

Existing Conditions

Mill Street is a local roadway that operates two-way east-west traffic on a pavement width of about 11.3 metres. The average daily traffic volume is about 7,500 vehicles and the regulatory speed limit is 30 km/h. Heavy trucks are prohibited at all times on Mill Street between Parliament Street and Cherry Street. Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) service is provided by the "121 Fort York-Esplanade" bus route. The bus stops are located on the north side of Mill Street.

Cherry Street is a collector roadway that operates two-way north-south traffic on a pavement width of about 12.8 metres. The daily average traffic volume is about 20,000 vehicles and the regulatory speed limit is 40 km/h. Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) service is provided by the "504 King" streetcar route on exclusive right-of-way that runs along the east side of Cherry Street. There are bike lanes on both sides of Cherry Street.

The intersection of Mill Street and Cherry Street is enhanced with interlocking pavers. A traffic signal controls the intersection. Northbound right-turns are prohibited at all times, and westbound right-turns on red are prohibited.

A map of the intersection is included in Attachment 1.

Collision History

A review of the Toronto Police Service collision records, with specific emphasis for pedestrian or cyclist collisions at this intersection was undertaken for the five year period ending January 1, 2021. The results of the review are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Collision History (2016 - 2020) at the Intersection of Mill Street and Cherry Street

Collision Type	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Collision involving pedestrian or cyclist	0	0	0	0	1
Eastbound Right Turn Collisions	0	0	1	0	0
Other (rear end, sideswipe, right-turn)	2	2	3	6	2

As shown in the above table, there was one collision involving a pedestrian in 2020. This collision occurred in the early afternoon on November 4, 2020, an eastbound motorist who was turning right at the intersection struck a pedestrian that was crossing in the south leg of the intersection. Pedestrian succumbed to her injuries on scene.

Safety Review and Improvements

Transportation Services' standard operating practice following all fatal collisions is to conduct a site review as soon as possible. These are generally high level reviews, as the specific details of the fatality are generally not available at this time. This initial review was undertaken at the intersection of Mill Street and Cherry Street following the fatal collision.

Transportation Services' review included all aspects of the intersection's operation. The results of this review have been summarized as follows:

A. Signage

The signage at the intersection was found to be in good condition, appropriate and clearly visible to intersection users.

B. Pavement markings

The pavement markings, including zebra stripes, at this intersection were in good condition. These markings, when required, will be refreshed as part of Transportation Services' annual painting program.

C. Sight lines

All sightlines at this intersection were reviewed and there were no impediments identified for intersection users.

D. Sidewalks

Sidewalks on both sides of Mill Street and Cherry Street were in good condition.

E. Signal Hardware and Design

The vehicle and pedestrian signal displays at the intersection were found to be in good condition and clearly visible to intersection users. Audible Pedestrian Signal (APS) is available and functional.

G. Street lighting

Street lighting is the responsibility of Toronto Hydro. However, Transportation Services' review did note that there are street lights provided on all approaches of the intersection of Mill Street and Cherry Street.

H. Signal Timings

The signals at this intersection operate with a semi-actuated mode of control, which means the signals remain green for north-south traffic on Cherry Street, unless a vehicle is detected on Mill Street and/or a pedestrian pushes the button to cross Cherry Street. This is the appropriate mode of control at this intersection, based on the prevailing conditions. Based on the current pedestrian crossing distances, the signal timings provide sufficient time for pedestrians to cross at a comfortable walking speed. Transit Signal Priority is provided for the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) vehicles on Cherry Street. This feature provides timing changes in favor of transit vehicles upon detection.

I. Senior Safety Zone Extension

Transportation Services does not currently have an active program to expand or designate new senior safety zones. The existing Senior Safety Zones and the program as a whole are under evaluation and review. Designation of an area as a Senior Safety Zone is informed by various pieces of data specific to safety of seniors. The evaluation and recommendations are planned to be completed in the near future by Vision Zero.

J. Automated Enforcement

The objective of the Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE) program is to improve safety on roadways in Community Safety Zones near schools. Since there are no eligible schools in the subject area, ASE cannot be implemented at this time.

K. Traffic Agents

Based on the operational aspects of the intersection described above, deployment of traffic agents is not recommended at this time.

Corridor Safety Study

Transportation Services is working in partnership with the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) and relevant City divisions to improve the Mill Street corridor between Parliament Street and Bayview Avenue as part of the Improving The Esplanade and Mill Street project. The primary project goal is to improve safety for everyone; the project also aims to make walking, cycling and taking transit more attractive, and to maintain access to local and citywide destinations (e.g. St. Lawrence Market, Distillery District, Corktown Common, and David Crombie Park). The project includes consideration of how The Mill Street corridor functions with intersecting streets, including Cherry Street. The most recent information about the study, including a video summarizing the proposed improvements, can be found on the study webpage:

<https://www.toronto.ca/the-esplanade-mill-street>

Further safety review of Mill Street including the Cherry Street intersection, will be part of the monitoring and adaptations that will take place as improvements planned through the Improving The Esplanade and Mill Street project are implemented. The proposed changes are scheduled for consideration by the Infrastructure and Environment Committee in May 2021. Implementation along Mill Street is planned for late summer or fall 2021.

Work Zone Coordination

The Work Zone Coordination and Traffic Mitigation Unit (Work Zone Unit) continually works with developers and contractors in the West Don Lands. The safety of road users, with a priority focus on pedestrian and cyclist safety, is of paramount importance in all site management planning activities. The Work Zone Unit works on a daily basis with Toronto Police Traffic Services Construction Liaison Officers to ensure all Provincial requirements are met or exceeded in a context sensitive manner. Toronto Police and Transportation Services will continue to request additional pay-duty Police and Traffic Control Personnel as needed on a site-by-site basis through the Right-of-Way Occupation Permit process associated with Construction Staging Area planning for each site.

Short-Term and Long-Term Improvements

Based on Transportation Services' assessment, a number of short-term and long-term improvements were identified at this intersection. These improvements are summarized as follows:

Short-Term Improvements

- Request for Toronto Police Services enforcement of the heavy truck prohibition on Mill Street.
- Request for the installation of advisory signage for turning vehicles to yield the right of way to pedestrians.

Long-Term Improvements

- Transportation Services, as part of the "St. Lawrence – Distillery" Cycling Project, is proposing to install cycling infrastructure as well as associated improvements for pedestrians and motor vehicle traffic on Mill Street and other streets in this area. If approved, the intersection of Mill Street and Cherry Street will be redesigned and some of the changes being considered are as follows:
 - Mill Street between Cherry Street and Parliament Street will become one-way westbound
 - A bi-directional cycle track will be installed on the south side of Mill Street
 - A fully protected pedestrian phase for the south crosswalk and bike crossing separating these crossings from the westbound left turning vehicles
 - Right turns on red will be prohibited
 - Leading Pedestrian Interval for all the approaches will be reviewed

A report on this cycling project is scheduled to be submitted to the Infrastructure and Environment Committee for consideration in May, 2021.

The Ward Councillors have been advised of the recommendation of this staff report.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Map - Mill Street and Cherry Street: Safety Review

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