

## **Construction Staging Area – 160 Front Street West (Simcoe Street) Underground Tunnel**

**Date:** May 31, 2021  
**To:** Toronto and East York Community Council  
**From:** Acting Director, Traffic Management, Transportation Services  
**Wards:** Ward 10, Spadina - Fort York

### **SUMMARY**

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This staff report is about a matter that Community Council has delegated authority from City Council to make a final decision.

PCL Constructors Canada Incorporated, is constructing an underground pedestrian tunnel under Simcoe Street that will connect 160 Front Street West to 200 Front Street West as part of the new building being constructed at 160 Front Street West (also known as 156-174 Front Street West and 43-51 Simcoe Street). In order to facilitate the construction of the underground tunnel, Simcoe Street between Front Street West and Wellington Street West will be closed to vehicular traffic.

Transportation Services is requesting authorization to close the entire roadway of Simcoe Street including the east side and west side sidewalks, between Front Street West and a point 70 metres north, for a period of 17 months (i.e., August 20, 2021 to January 30, 2023) to accommodate the construction of the underground tunnel.

Pedestrian movements on the east side of Simcoe Street will be restricted and pedestrians will be directed to a pedestrian walkway, located on private property, on the west side of Simcoe Street. Traffic lanes on Simcoe Street, abutting the site, will be restricted. However, bike lanes for both northbound and southbound cyclists will be maintained at all times throughout the project.

In addition, it is recommended that the eastbound curb lane on Wellington Street West, between Simcoe Street and John Street be closed for a period of 17 months (i.e., August 20, 2021 to January 30, 2023). This closure was deemed the most appropriate way to ensure eastbound vehicles do not become trapped at the intersection of Simcoe Street and Wellington Street West due to the closure, the existing one-way southbound operation of Simcoe Street north of Wellington Street West, and the one-way westbound operation of Wellington Street West east of Simcoe Street.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. Toronto and East York Community Council authorize the closure of the east sidewalk, west sidewalk and all of Simcoe Street, between Front Street West and a point 70 metres north, from, August 20, 2021 to January 30, 2023.
2. Toronto and East York Community Council authorize the closure of the eastbound curb lane on Wellington Street West between Simcoe Street and John Street, from, August 20, 2021 to January 30, 2023.
3. Toronto and East York Community Council designate Wellington Street West, between Simcoe Street and John Street as one-way for westbound traffic only at all times.
4. Toronto and East York Community Council prohibit southbound left turns and northbound right turns at all times, at the intersection of John Street and Wellington Street West.
5. Toronto and East York Community Council direct the applicant to pressure wash the construction site and adjacent sidewalks and roadways weekly, or more frequently as needed to be cleared of any construction debris and made safe.
6. Toronto and East York Community Council direct the applicant to ensure that the existing sidewalks and/or any proposed pedestrian walkways have proper enhanced lighting to ensure safety and visibility at all times of the day and night.
7. Toronto and East York Community Council direct the applicant to clearly consult and communicate all construction, parking and road occupancy impacts with local business improvement areas and resident associations in advance of any physical road modifications.
8. Toronto and East York Community Council direct the applicant to install appropriate signage and converging mirrors to ensure that pedestrians, cyclists and motorists safety is considered at all times.
9. Toronto and East York Community Council direct the applicant to provide a sufficient number of traffic control persons as determined by the Work Zone Traffic Coordinator and Toronto Police Construction Liaison Officer, on a daily basis to control construction vehicle access and egress to and from the site and maintain a safe environment for the public.
10. Toronto and East York Community Council direct the applicant to provide a sufficient number of pay-duty Police Officers as determined by the Work Zone Traffic Coordinator and Toronto Police Construction Liaison Officer, during large scale

concrete pours and large scale material deliveries to control vehicle access and egress to and from the site and maintain a safe environment for the public.

11. Toronto and East York Community Council direct the applicant to post a 24-hour monitored construction hotline number on the hoarding board, which must be prominently placed and legible from 20 metres and on all elevations from the construction site.

12. Toronto and East York Community Council direct the applicant to provide and install public art, including mural artwork, onto every elevation of the hoarding board with adequate spotlighting for night-time illumination, at their sole cost, to the satisfaction of the Ward Councillor.

13. Toronto and East York Community Council direct that Simcoe Street, Wellington Street West and John Street be returned to its pre-construction traffic regulations when the project is complete.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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There is no financial impact to the City. PCL Constructors Canada Incorporated is responsible for all costs, including payment of fees to the City for the occupancy of the right-of-way. Based on the area enclosed and projected duration of the proposed closures on Simcoe Street, these fees will be approximately \$1,580,000.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

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City Council, at its meeting on City Council on August 25, 26, 27 and 28, 2014, adopted Item TE34.10 entitled "156-174 Front Street West and 43-51 Simcoe Street - Zoning Amendment Application" which amended Zoning By-laws 438-86, for the lands municipally known as 156-174 Front Street West and 43-51 Simcoe Street.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2014.TE34.10>

## **COMMENTS**

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### **The Development and Timeline**

A 46-storey commercial building with ground floor retail and four levels of underground parking is being constructed by PCL Constructors Canada Incorporated. The site is bounded by a 13-storey commercial building (145 Wellington Avenue West) to the north, a seven-storey commercial building (144 Front Street West) to the east, Front Street West to the south and Simcoe Street to the west. As part of the development, a 20 metre long underground pedestrian tunnel is proposed and is intended to be part of the PATH network connecting 160 Front Street West to 200 Front Street West under Construction Staging Area - 160 Front Street (Simcoe Street) Underground Tunnel

Simcoe Street. In order to construct the underground tunnel a 10 metre deep open cut excavation is required for the full width of Simcoe Street just north of Front Street West. The construction of the tunnel will be completed in two phases, allowing for bike lanes to be maintained in both directions on Simcoe Street.

Major construction activities and associated timelines are described below:

- Excavation and shoring: August 2021 to July 2022;
- Concrete work: January 2022 to December 2022; and
- Finishing Phase: June 2022 to January 2023.

## **Existing Conditions**

Simcoe Street between Front Street West and Wellington Street West is characterized by the following conditions:

- It is a 2-lane, north-south collector roadway
- Bike lanes are located on both sides of the street
- It operates two-way traffic on a pavement width of approximately 14 metres
- It has a regulatory speed limit of 50 km/h
- There are sidewalks located on both sides of the street
- There is no TTC service on the subject section of Simcoe Street
- Stopping is prohibited at all times on both sides of street

Simcoe Street between King Street West and Wellington Street West is characterized by the following conditions:

- It is a 2-lane, one-way southbound collector roadway
- A contra-flow bike lane is located on the east side of the street and sharrows are located within the southbound curb lane
- It has a regulatory speed limit of 50 km/h
- There are sidewalks located on both sides of the street

Wellington Street West is characterized by the following conditions:

- It is a 4-lane, east-west minor arterial roadway
- It operates two-way traffic on a pavement width of approximately 14 metres, between Simcoe Street and John Street (3 lanes westbound and 1 lane eastbound)
- It operates one-way westbound, east of Simcoe Street and west of John Street
- It has a regulatory speed limit of 50 km/h
- There are sidewalks located on both sides of the street
- There is no TTC service on the subject section of Wellington Street West

## **Proposed Construction Staging Area**

Construction staging operations on Simcoe Street will take place within the existing boulevard allowance and the entire roadway fronting the site. Subject to approval, both sidewalks and the entire roadway will be closed, between Front Street West and a point 70 metres north, from August 20, 2021 to January 30, 2023.

As part of the development at 160 Front Street an underground pedestrian tunnel will be constructed to connect 160 Front Street West to 200 Front Street West and will form part of the PATH network. 160 Front Street West is located on the northeast corner of Simcoe Street and Front Street West. 200 Front Street West is located on the west side of Simcoe Street directly opposite 160 Front Street West.

The proposed tunnel will be located under Simcoe Street, immediately north of Front Street. In order to construct the tunnel, the excavation requires a full road closure, including the sidewalks on both sides of Simcoe Street.

Simcoe Street and both sidewalks will be closed from Front Street West to a point 70 metres north for the entire duration to accommodate the construction staging area. Pedestrians will be accommodated on private property within a walkway on the west side of Simcoe Street for the entire duration of the closure.

The excavation will be to a depth of 10 metres and will be completed by open cut in two phases that will maintain the bike lanes in both directions. During Phase 1, the bike lanes will be located along the west side of Simcoe Street. The northbound bike lane will be located in the existing southbound curb lane and the southbound bike lane will utilize the existing sidewalk on the west side of the street.

During Phase 2, both bike lanes will be realigned and located within the current northbound lane and the staging area will be located on the westerly side of Simcoe Street.

Given the requirements to safely operate the staging area, a pedestrian walkway could not be maintained on the west side of Simcoe Street. As a result, pedestrians will be advised of this temporary sidewalk closure by appropriate advanced warning signage that will be installed to clearly inform pedestrians to use the temporary walkway located on the west side of Simcoe Street, at the signalized intersections of Simcoe Street at Front Street West and Simcoe Street at Wellington Street West.

In addition, it is recommended that the eastbound curb lane on Wellington Street West, between Simcoe Street and John Street be closed and eastbound traffic be prohibited. This lane closure was determined to be the best option to prevent vehicles from being "trapped" at the intersection of Wellington Street West and Simcoe Street. Currently, Wellington Street West between Simcoe Street and John Street is comprised of three westbound lanes and a single eastbound lane. Wellington Street West, east of Simcoe Street and west of John Street operates one-way westbound roadway. In addition, Simcoe Street north of Wellington Street West operates one-way southbound. Since

eastbound traffic on Wellington Street West is currently required to turn right on Simcoe Street, the closure would leave motorists trapped with nowhere to go. Although several options were reviewed the option to prohibit the eastbound movement and temporarily designate Wellington Street West one-way was determined to be the best solution. In addition, staff recommend that northbound right turns and southbound left turns be prohibited at the intersection of Wellington Street West and John Street to reinforce the temporary one-way designation of Wellington Street West between John Street and Simcoe Street.

Given the impacts of the proposed closures, additional communications have taken place with area properties to minimize the impacts of the required closure. It should also be noted that 160 and 200 Front Street West, the two properties most impacted, share the same ownership.

Finally, a review of the City's Five-Year Major Capital Works Program indicates that there are no capital works projects planned in the vicinity of the site. Therefore, the proposed construction staging area is not expected to conflict with the City's capital works projects.

Through ongoing dialogue with the developer, Transportation Services is satisfied that PCL Constructors Canada Incorporated has looked at all options to minimize the duration and impact of the construction staging area on all road users.

The Ward Councillor has been advised of the recommendations of this report.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Roger Browne, M.A.Sc., P. Eng.  
Acting Director, Traffic Management, Transportation Services

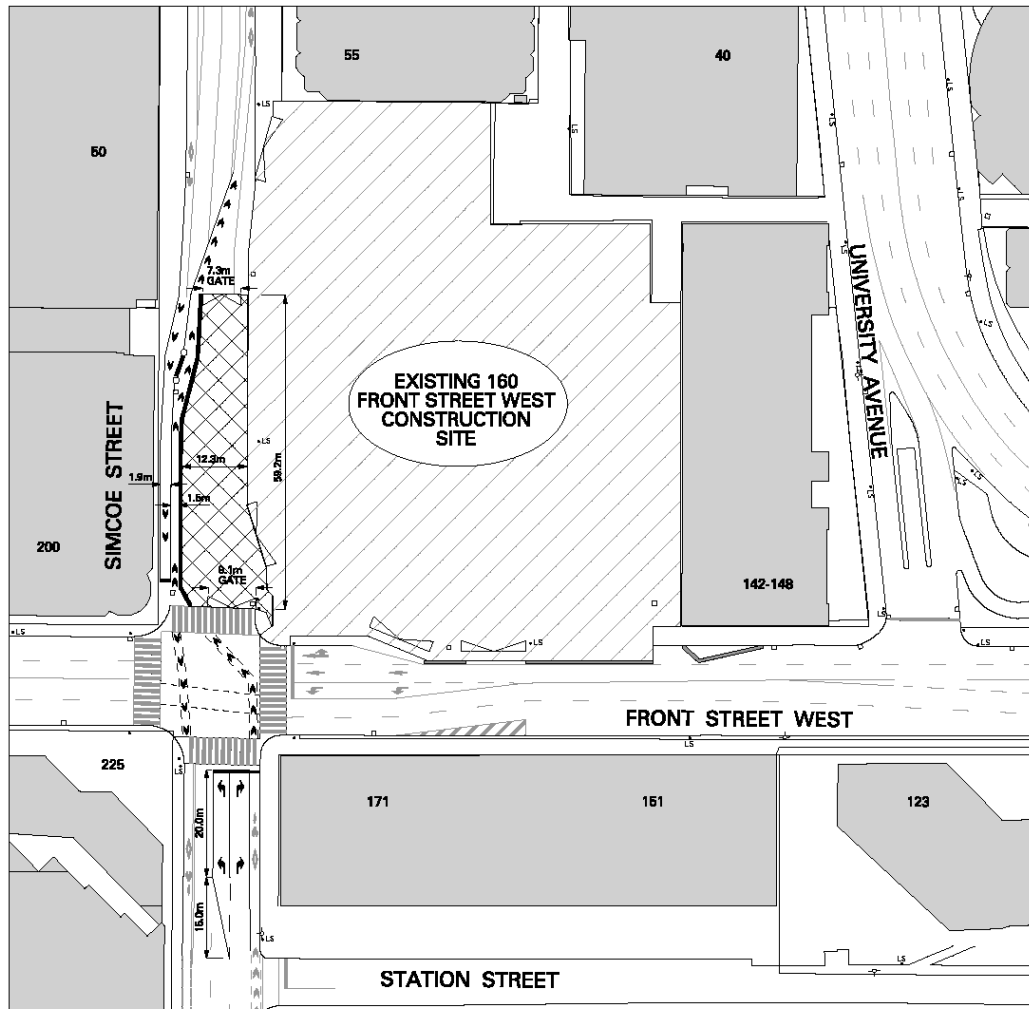
## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Attachment 1: Proposed Construction Staging Area - 160 Front Street West (Simcoe Street) - Phase 1

Attachment 2: Proposed Construction Staging Area - 160 Front Street West (Simcoe Street) - Phase 2

Attachment 1: Proposed Construction Staging Area - 160 Front Street West (Simcoe Street) - Phase 1



**LEGEND:**

- PROPOSED JERSEY BARRIER
- ▨ PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION STAGING AREA
- ▧ EXISTING CONSTRUCTION SITE
- ▩ PROPOSED COVERED PUBLIC LANEWAY
- PROPOSED FAST FENCE
- PROPOSED ENERGY ATTENUATOR
- PROPOSED TC-54 FLEXIBLE DRUM

**NOTE:**

1. ALL DIMENSIONS ARE APPROXIMATE.
2. ALL PROPOSED PAVEMENT MARKINGS TO BE INSTALLED BY CONTRACTOR.
3. INFORMATION ON THIS PLAN IS BASED ON OFFICE RECORDS AND IS SUBJECT TO FIELD VERIFICATION.
4. PROPOSED PAVEMENT MARKINGS ARE DEPICTED IN BLACK. EXISTING PAVEMENT MARKINGS ARE DEPICTED IN GREY.

## 160 FRONT STREET WEST : PHASE 1 PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION STAGING AREA



FILE NO. 421T - 0165

SCALE : N.T.S.

DRAWN BY : O. K.

DATE : MAY 2021



Attachment 2: Proposed Construction Staging Area - 160 Front Street West (Simcoe Street) - Phase 2

