

Regent Park Traffic Safety Review - Final Report

Date: December 14, 2021

To: Toronto and East York Community Council

From: Director, Planning & Capital Program, Transportation Services

Wards: Ward 13, Toronto-Centre

SUMMARY

This comprehensive review of traffic safety in Regent Park was initiated by request from Toronto and East York Community Council in fall 2019. The review was subsequently suspended in spring 2020 due to the reallocation of staff to Covid-19 response programs. However, efforts to understand and improve traffic conditions in Regent Park continued through several separate initiatives that are outlined in this report. The comprehensive review recommenced in 2021 and included a synthesis of improvements to the street undertaken since fall 2019. For the purpose of this review, Regent Park is defined as the area bounded by River Street to the east, Shuter Street to the south, Gerrard Street East to the north and Parliament Street to the west.

Safety improvements were made as a direct result of this study, above and beyond the improvements that were achieved through separate initiatives during the same time period. Traffic safety improvements included: enhancements to signals; signage; planned streetscapes and pavement markings; as well as by-law housekeeping updates (i.e. parking and speed limits). Most notably, an additional set of traffic lights was added to the signals facing southbound traffic on River Street at Gerrard Street, as well as a 'Signals Ahead' warning sign with flashing beacons to provide motorist warning of the signals before they are visible around the River Street curve. It is expected that these changes will mitigate collisions involving southbound vehicles at River Street and Gerrard Street East, which was found to be an area of unresolved safety concern.

This report is provided to ensure all the gathered information is available for the public record and can serve as a benchmark for on-going and planned work in the neighbourhood, whether street design-oriented projects, or broader interdisciplinary planning initiatives. Staff responsible for this report will also serve as the Transportation Services division representatives on an interdivisional team supporting the Neighbourhood Revitalization Plan for the Dundas and Sherbourne area as directed by Council (2021.PH21.2).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Director, Transportation Services, Planning and Capital Program recommends that:

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

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact resulting from the adoption of the recommendation in this report.

DECISION HISTORY

On November 24, 2021, Toronto and East York Community Council directed staff to make changes and investigate the possibility of further changes to traffic management on Shuter Street as part of the on-going adjustment to new conditions introduced as part of the 2020 reconstruction of Shuter Street, which included cycle tracks protected by on-street parking on the south side of Shuter Street.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.TE29.78>

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.TE29.61>

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.TE29.62>

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.TE29.63>

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.TE29.64>

On September 9, 2021, Toronto and East York Community Council authorized the designation of one-way roadways, curbside by-laws, speed limits and compulsory stops on St. Bartholomew Street, Sutton Avenue, St. David Street, Sackville Street, Regent Park Boulevard and Sumach Street. These designation were in accordance with Regent Park's revitalization functional plans and included additional housekeeping updates.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.TE27.101>

On February 24, 2021, Toronto and East York Community Council authorized the designation of one-way roadways, curbside by-laws, speed limits and compulsory stops on Nicholas Avenue, Wyatt Avenue, Tubman Avenue, Dreamers Way and Oak Street, in accordance with Regent Park's revitalization functional plans. Subsequent to this, on May 19, 2021, the item was reopened to upgrade the parking prohibitions to standing prohibitions.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.TE23.87>

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.TE25.51>

On October 15, 2020, Toronto and East York Community Council authorized the designation of curbside by-laws, speed limits and compulsory stops on Sumach St.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.TE19.54>

In May 2020, City Council authorized the installation the ActiveTO cycling projects, which included bike lanes on both sides of Dundas Street East, from Sackville Street to Broadview Avenue. The ActiveTO projects also included bike lanes on River Street,

from Gerrard Street East to Bayview Avenue which is not within Regent Park, but serves as a main route to and from Regent Park.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.CC21.20>

On September 16, 2019, Toronto and East York Community Council directed Transportation Services staff to work with the Regent Park community to evaluate traffic concerns and develop a Traffic Safety Plan that improves traffic flow and safety for both pedestrians and vehicles.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.TE8.85>

COMMENTS

This Regent Park Traffic Safety Review was conducted in a similar manner to the practice known as an In-Service Road Safety Review. It included: a detailed collision analysis for the entirety of study area drawing on 5-years' worth of individual collision reports; a detailed analysis of all available traffic speed and volume data that characterized conditions prior to the Covid-19 pandemic; and several site visits to observe both road design and road user behaviour in different conditions.

For this area, staff sought to identify collisions trends and mitigate them where possible either by providing input to anticipated development projects and civil works with potential to make major change, or by making immediate spot-improvements such as signage, pavement markings, and speed limit updates. During the time period of this study, transformational changes were made to Dundas Street East, and there is early indication that these changes have significantly improved conditions in the part of the network which inspired the initial request for this review. As a result of these combined efforts, improvements have been implemented or planned for including traffic signals, cycling infrastructure, curbside regulations, speed limit reductions, pavement markings, school zones, and other signage.

Below is a summary of the analysis of pre-pandemic conditions, and the recent or anticipated improvements to the street network.

RECENT CONDITIONS

Study Area

The study area was defined as the area bounded by River Street to the east, Shuter Street to the south, Gerrard Street East to the north and Parliament Street to the west. The area is primarily high-density residential, containing homes, schools, parks, a community centre, athletic grounds, an aquatic centre, Centennial College's Performing Arts Commons, and local-scale service/retail businesses. A map of the Study Area is provided as Attachment 1.

Over the last two decades, the area has transitioned from a medium-density neighbourhood of community housing to a high-density, mixed-use, mixed-market neighbourhood. Currently, the Regent Park revitalization project is within its third phase of five phases; the majority of the remaining development is concentrated in the north,

along Gerrard Street East, between Parliament Street and River Street. The road network in Regent Park is being updated in coordination with the revitalization.

The Regent Park road network is comprised of major arterial, minor arterial and local roadways. Boundary roads are all minor arterial roads; Dundas Street East, running east-west through the center of the study area, is a major arterial roadway. All other roads are either classified as local roads, or will become classified as local roads once assumed by the City. TTC service is provided within the study area on Dundas Street East by the 505 Dundas streetcar; on Gerrard Street East by the 506 Carlton streetcar; and on Parliament Street by the 65 Parliament bus.

Traffic Volume, Speed and Existing Traffic Calming

The following is a summary of best available traffic data at the time of analysis. All traffic counts discussed within this report were conducted prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Dundas Street East carried the highest volume of traffic of all roads in the study area. It operated two-way east-west traffic, with two lanes in each direction on a pavement width of approximately 14 metres. Peak eight-hour bidirectional vehicular volume counts ranged from 7,300 vehicles to over 10,000 vehicles, with volumes increasing towards the east end of the study area. The presence of Don Valley Parkway access on Dundas Street East, east of the study area, contributes to this pattern. The second most traveled intersection by vehicles in the study area is Dundas Street East at River Street. Dundas Street East also carried the most cyclists within the study area, with volumes ranging from approximately 500 to 800 cyclists within the peak eight hours. Since the time of data collection, traffic patterns have changed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and as a result of the reconfiguration of Dundas Street East which occurred in summer 2020; it has changed from two vehicle lanes in each direction to one vehicle lane and one bike lane in each direction, including narrowing the vehicle lanes to current standards. The reconfiguration was undertaken as part of the ActiveTO program, which has been evaluated and reported on separately through Item [IE26.10](#).

The characteristics observed in all other arterial roads are summarized in Table 1. Traffic count data was collected in various years ranging from 2015 to 2020. There is no available traffic data for the local roads.

Table 1. Pre-pandemic Characteristics of Minor Arterials in Regent Park

Minor Arterials	Average Pavement Width (m)	Configuration	Vehicular volumes (8-hour bidirectional)	Key Observations
Gerrard Street East	12.8	Two vehicle lanes in each direction (east-west)	7,000 - 10,000	- Increasing vehicle volumes towards the east end of study area. - Westbound movement at intersection with River Street is most traveled segment. - First and third most traveled intersection for vehicles are Gerrard Street East at River Street and Parliament Street respectively.
Parliament Street	14	Two vehicle lanes in each direction (north-south)	5,000 - 7,000	- Increasing vehicle volumes towards the north end of study area. - Top three most traveled intersections for pedestrian crossings on Parliament Street are located at: - Gerrard Street East (4207 in 8-hour period), - Dundas Street East (3326 in 8-hour period), and - Shuter Street (2976 in 8-hour period)
River Street	14	One vehicle lane and one bike lane in each direction (north-south)	5,000 - 8,700	Increasing vehicle volumes towards the north end of study area.
Shuter Street	13.5	One vehicle lane and one bike lane in each direction. (east-west)	Approximately 3,300	Increasing vehicle volumes towards the east end of study area.

Speed data had also been collected at select locations along Parliament Street, Dundas Street East and Shuter Street in 2019 and 2020. Data for these roads are summarized

in Table 2 below. The table includes the 85th percentile speed which refers to the speed at which 85% of vehicular traffic is travelling at or below.

Table 2. Observed speed of traffic at select locations in Regent Park

Road	Segment	Direction	Posted Speed Limit (km/h)	Average Speed (km/h)	85th Percentile Speed (km/h)
Parliament Street	Dundas Street East to Gerrard Street East	Northbound	40	30.5	40.5
Parliament Street	Dundas Street East to Gerrard Street East	Southbound	40	30.5	42
Dundas Street East	Parliament Street to River Street	Eastbound	40	27	41.5
Dundas Street East	Parliament Street to River Street	Westbound	40	31	45.7
Shuter Street	Parliament Street to	Eastbound	40	34.5	43.5
Shuter Street	Parliament Street to	Westbound	40	31.5	41.5

Speed limits have been lowered to 40 km/h on all arterial roads in Regent Park. As of September 9, 2021, all local roadways have had their speed limits reduced to 30 km/h in the by-law, with signage updates to follow. Existing traffic calming measures include: curb bump-outs on the north side of Cole Street; electronic 'Watch Your Speed' signs along the frontage of Nelson Mandela Park Public School on Shuter Street; a deployment of the rotational speed camera program on Parliament Street north of Oak Street; textured road surface along the entirety of Regent Park Boulevard; and raised intersections at four locations (Sackville Street at Oak Street, Sackville Street at St. David Street, Sumach Street at Oak Street, and Sumach Street at St. David Street). Temporary speed humps have been used on Oak Street, between Sackville Street and River Street, to manage construction traffic. In addition to traffic calming measures, a red-light camera is permanently located at the intersection of Dundas Street East and River Street.

Collision History and Analysis

For the purpose of this study, all collisions recorded by the Toronto Police Services in the five year period ending March 16, 2020 were reviewed. There were 777 collisions within the Regent Park area, with four collisions resulting in serious injury and two resulting in fatalities. Detailed analysis identified two movements disproportionately associated with collisions: 1) eastbound movements on Dundas Street East, between

Regent Park Blvd and River Street, and 2) southbound movements at the intersection of River Street and Gerrard Street East. Available speed and volume data, roadway geometry, curbside regulation, and the surrounding roadway network were considered to identify possible contributing factors to these two trends.

Eastbound movements on Dundas Street East

On Dundas Street East, eastbound vehicles were involved in the majority of collisions. The majority of collisions involved eastbound vehicles at all three of Dundas Street East's intersections between Regent Park Boulevard and River Street: four of six collisions and three of three injury-causing collisions at Regent Park Boulevard; 16 of 26 collisions at Sumach Street; and 54 of 81 collisions and 9 of 18 injury-causing collisions at River Street. Eastbound vehicle speeds were found to be higher than westbound speeds; this was most prominent prior to Covid-19, when the 85th percentile speed for westbound traffic was 41.5 km/h and 45.7 km/h for eastbound traffic. As discussed above, eastbound vehicular volumes on Dundas Street East were notably higher than westbound, which is likely to contribute to greater occurrences of collisions. Peak hour volumes were compared to the time specific aggregates of collisions to determine whether periods of higher volumes were contributing to occurrence of collisions. The results indicated a correlation exists between afternoon peak hour volumes and the occurrence of collisions.

Until summer 2020, the segment of Dundas Street East within Regent Park had a pavement width of approximately 14.4 metres featuring curb lanes widths of 4.0 or more metres (as compared to the latest minimum standard of 3.3m). Wider lane widths are generally correlated with more aggressive driving behavior, since the road is perceived to be more accommodative to high speeds. As noted above, motorists traveling eastbound on Dundas Street East are traveling toward an access to the Don Valley Parkway. Transient traffic, such as those traveling towards an expressway, is generally understood to be more aggressive than local traffic. The reconfiguration of the street in 2020 is expected to discourage transient traffic from speeding through the area.

Southbound movements at the intersection of River Street and Gerrard Street East

Within the examined five-year period, 12 of 21 injury-causing collisions at the intersection involved southbound vehicles; five of these 12 collisions were between southbound left-turning motorists and east crosswalk pedestrians. As noted above, southbound vehicle volumes at River Street at Gerrard Street were measured to be considerably high prior to Covid-19. Peak hour volumes were compared to the time specific aggregates of collisions to determine whether periods of higher volumes were contributing to occurrence of collisions. The results indicated a correlation exists between p.m. peak hour volumes and the occurrence of collisions. Speed data was not available for analysis. However, field observations established that the majority of southbound motorists onto River Street have merged in free-flow from Bayview Avenue, which has expressway-like design characteristics and a posted speed limit of 60 km/h. The roadway geometry of River Street leading up to the intersection with Gerrard Street East, is significantly curved and on an incline which restricts visibility of the signalized

intersection to approximately 85 metres upstream. Interventions have been made as a direct result of this analysis and are described in the final section of this report.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS

Several independent initiatives which advance traffic safety have taken place since this safety review was requested, including implementation of cycling infrastructure, roadway reconstruction, traffic regulations and school zone safety improvements.

The painted bikeways on River Street, between Gerrard Street East and Queen Street East, were upgraded to protected bikeways 2017. In 2020, the painted bikeways on Shuter Street, between Sherbourne Street and River Street, were upgraded to protected bikeways. In addition, temporary protected bikeways were installed on Dundas Street East, from Sackville Street to Broadview Avenue, and on River Street just outside the study area, from Gerrard Street East to Bayview Avenue, as part of the [ActiveTO program](#). The protected bikeways provide dedicated space for cyclists, buffered by curbs and bollards that prevent vehicles from entering the bikeway. In addition to providing space to cyclists, bikeways also create safer conditions for pedestrians by separating sidewalks from fast-moving vehicles, and for people driving or riding in a vehicle by narrowing (and in some cases reducing) travel lanes which cues drivers to drive carefully. On-going monitoring of the bikeways will help determine whether the new configuration has addressed the collision trends previously associated with eastbound travel on Dundas Street East and southbound movements at the intersection of River Street and Gerrard Street East.

The roadway reconstruction on Shuter Street which included the upgrade of bikeways also refreshed pavement markings at all pedestrian crossings on Shuter Street within the study area. Refreshing of signs and pavement markings also takes place throughout the area as part of routine maintenance practices.

City staff continue to work with the local Ward Councillor to improve regulation of on-street parking within the study area. In addition, staff are working to ensure traffic control and curbside by-laws are implemented in accordance with the Council-approved functional road plan associated with the revitalization initiative. This work has been reported on separately through several items listed above in the Decision History section.

Lastly, as part of the Vision Zero - School Safety Zone program, both schools within the study area, Nelson Mandela Park Public School and Lord Dufferin Junior and Senior Public School, have received enhanced School Zone warning signage that carry flashing beacons. The signs and flashing beacons reinforce school zone awareness to motorists.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS

The on-going revitalization within Regent Park is resulting in significant change throughout the neighbourhood. In addition to development associated with TCHC revitalization and other development projects, several City-led civil works are also

scheduled, including: cycling infrastructure; road reconstruction; and transit stops enhancements.

Street Improvements Planned within Revitalization Project

The Toronto Catholic District School Board has indicated there is a possibility of future change to the site at the north-west corner of Shuter Street and Regent Street. Upon submission of a site plan, opportunities for further traffic safety features for school routes would be explored as part of the City's review of the plans.

Regent Park is currently in the third phase of its planned five-phase revitalization. The remainder of the development is contained within the boundaries of Gerrard Street East to the north, Oak Street to the south, Parliament Street to the west and River Street to the east. Outside of the revitalization plans, there is a small cluster of developments on the east side of River Street, between Dundas Street East and Shuter Street, with active development applications. These developments are responsible for construction management and restoration of any damage to the street, but do not anticipate significant change to the right-of-way. Similarly, there is a development application under review on the west side of Parliament Street, south of St. David Street, which does not currently propose any significant change to the right-of-way.

Planned City-led Street Improvements

Several improvements are currently programmed in Regent Park over the coming 3 years. Watermain replacement and road reconstruction is scheduled to begin on Gerrard Street East, between Sherbourne Street to Parliament Street, through which an upgrade of the painted bikeways to protected bikeways is planned. The segment of Gerrard Street East between Parliament Street and River Street is anticipated to gain bikeways in coordination with the completion of the Regent Park revitalization. On-street bikeway pavement markings will be consulted on for potential installation on Sackville Street and Sumach Street, between Wellesley Street East and Shuter Street. North of the study area boundaries, contra-flow lanes will be considered within the one-way segments of Sackville Street and Sumach Street as part of that work. Street furniture installation is planned for the intersection of Dundas Street at River Street at the south-west corner transit stop. Each initiative will be consulted on and communicated through regular channels as each project progresses.

IMPROVEMENTS RESULTING FROM THIS SAFETY REVIEW

Several improvements have been made or planned for as a result of this safety review, including enhancements to signals, signage, planned streetscapes and pavement markings, as well as a by-law housekeeping review (i.e. parking and speed limits).

An additional set of traffic lights was added to the signals facing southbound traffic on River Street at Gerrard Street, as well as a 'Signals Ahead' warning sign with flashing beacons to provide motorist warning of the signals before they are visible around the River Street curve. It is expected that this will help mitigate the collision trend involving southbound vehicles at River Street and Gerrard Street East.

City staff responsible for making street improvements through the development process will consider the suitability of including traffic control signals at the intersection of Parliament Street and Oak Street, as part of Phase 4 or Phase 5 of Regent Park's revitalization. Signalization may be deemed appropriate based on the increased density of the neighbourhood, and promotion of safe crossings for students attending Lord Dufferin Junior & Senior Public School on the west side of Parliament Street at Oak Street. Additionally, there may be opportunities to update Gerrard Street East streetscape during Phase 5 of the revitalization.

A thorough by-law review indicated several housekeeping amendments were required, specifically for speed limit reductions on local streets, curbside regulations and corresponding by-laws for existing traffic controls. Due to the un-assumed status of several of the local roadways within the study area, their speed limits were not included in the previous lowering of local roadway speed limits to 30 km/h. In order to arrange for implementation of the lower speed limits, street segments with speed limits over 30 km/h were identified and reduced through Item [TE27.101](#).

Finally, a number of other minor improvements were also initiated or planned for as a result of this area study, including signage and pavement marking improvements.

CONCLUSION

This traffic safety review has resulted in strategic improvements in locations found to have collision trends. The information and analysis provided in the report can serve as a benchmark for on-going and planned work in the neighbourhood, whether street design-oriented projects, or broader interdisciplinary planning initiatives. For example, staff responsible for this report will also serve as Transportation Services' representatives on an interdivisional team supporting the [Activating a Revitalization Plan for the Dundas Sherbourne Neighbourhood \(2021.PH21.2\)](#) initiative. The data here also serves as a baseline of comparison for measuring changes before-and-after the pandemic and/or resulting from reconfiguration, such as anticipated speed management and mode share shift on Dundas Street East.

There are several ways that community members in the study area can continue to participate in the design of streets. Spot treatments for traffic management, such as, for example, curbside regulations and corresponding signage and markings, signal timing changes, or other modifications can continue to be pursued by request through the Ward 13 Office. There will be opportunities for community members to have input on road reconstruction and resurfacing projects, especially those that will propose new lane configurations such as the addition of cycling infrastructure, at the time of each individual project. Participation in public meetings and engagement processes associated within development, including Phase 4 and 5 of the revitalization, can influence how developments reshape the street. Finally, traffic calming measures, such as speed humps, Watch Your Speed boards, and Slow Down lawn sign campaigns can be pursued by request.

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Map of Regent Park Study Area

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