

Permanent Closure to Vehicular Traffic of the Blue Ridge Road Cul-de-sac Update

Date: October 27, 2023
To: North York Community Council
From: Deputy General Manager, Transportation Services
Wards: Ward 17, Don Valley North

SUMMARY

At its meeting of November 4, 2020, North York Community Council directed the General Manager, Transportation Services to investigate the permanent stop-up and closure to vehicular traffic of the cul-de-sac at the northerly terminus of Blue Ridge Road.

Transportation Services staff prepared a report, dated February 4, 2022 recommending against the closure of the cul-de-sac to vehicular traffic. At its meeting of February 23, 2022, the local ward Councillor amended the report (Item 2022.NY30.31) and North York Community Council directed the General Manager, Transportation Services to develop a plan to close the cul-de-sac to vehicular traffic.

At its meeting of June 28, 2022, North York Community Council authorized the General Manager, Transportation Services to temporarily close the cul-de-sac on Blue Ridge Road and to bring a final report on the permanent closure of the cul-de-sac to North York Community Council by the first quarter of 2023.

Transportation Services is providing an update and recommends that this report be received for information.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Deputy General Manager, Transportation Services recommends that:

1. North York Community Council receives this report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The recommendation in this report has no financial impact.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting of November 4, 2020, North York Community Council directed the General Manager, Transportation Services to investigate the permanent stop-up and closure to vehicular traffic of the cul-de-sac at the northerly terminus of Blue Ridge Road.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.NY19.17>

Transportation Services staff prepared a report, dated February 4, 2022 recommending against the closure of the cul-de-sac to vehicular traffic. At its meeting of February 23, 2022, Councillor Carroll made a motion to amend the report (Item 2022.NY30.31) and North York Community Council directed the General Manager, Transportation Services to develop a plan to close the cul-de-sac to vehicular traffic.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2022.NY30.31>

At its meeting of June 28, 2022, North York Community Council authorized the General Manager, Transportation Services to temporarily close the cul-de-sac on Blue Ridge Road and to bring a final report on the permanent closure of the cul-de-sac to North York Community Council by no later than the first quarter of 2023.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2022.NY33.63>

COMMENTS

Blue Ridge Road is a local road extending north of Sheppard Avenue East and located approximately mid-way between Leslie Street and Bayview Avenue. The request pertains to the section of Blue Ridge Road north of Howard Drive (shown in Attachment 1 to this report). Six residential properties have frontage on this section of road (44 to 49 Blue Ridge Road). A turning circle (cul-de-sac) measuring approximately 19 metres in diameter is provided at the north terminus of street.

Parking is presently prohibited within the cul-de-sac, under the general provisions of Chapter 950 of the Municipal Code. Signage in accordance with this restriction was installed in 2021. Illegal parking is subject to parking enforcement.

The Blue Ridge Road cul-de-sac is bounded by Blue Ridge Park to the north. A pedestrian walkway extends from the cul-de-sac eastward through the park to the adjacent cul-de-sac at the south limit of Clarinda Drive.

The local ward Councillor has raised concerns regarding illegal parking within the cul-de-sac and disruptive activity in the area and through NY19.17, requested the temporary closure of the cul-de-sac on Blue Ridge Road. A temporary hammerhead style closure, as shown in Attachment 2 of the cul-de-sac was installed on July 13, 2022.

The temporary hammerhead style closure was implemented in place of a full closure to address some of the concerns raised by City departments. While the hammerhead style design addressed concerns regarding a turn-around facility brought forward by Solid Waste Management Services, Transportation Services staff identified challenges with the temporary closure related to snow storage and potential water drainage issues during the winter months.

In February 2023, Transportation Services staff raised concerns regarding erosion issues on the reverse slope at the northwest corner of the cul-de-sac. In response to these concerns, staff installed barricades to restrict travel over that portion of the cul-de-sac to ensure public safety. On February 9, 2023, staff adjusted the jersey wall placement used in the temporary hammerhead closure to effectively close off access to a majority of the cul-de-sac.

In addition to the erosion related closure, the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) are currently occupying the entire cul-de-sac in order to facilitate works including channel erosion control and valley slope stabilization along a tributary of the East Don River, from the storm water outfall located west of the Blue Ridge Road cul-de-sac for approximately 205 meters. This occupation is expected to continue until approximately May-June 2024.

Following the TRCA occupation, our understanding is that Asset Management will require that a portion of the cul-de-sac remain closed to ensure continuing public safety. The portion that is to remain closed may negate the functionality of any potential turn-around facility, essentially amounting to a full closure.

Dead-end segments of public roads are designed to provide a turnaround area for larger vehicles. In accordance with the City's Development Infrastructure Policy & Standards (DIPS), as adopted by City Council at its meeting of December 5, 6 and 7, 2005, turning circles for dead-end public local residential streets will have a minimum radius of 12.5 metres to the curb (25 metre diameter) and the boulevard will be a minimum of 2.75 metres wide, see Drawing No. DIPS-5 (provided as Attachment 3). This City standard has been developed to ensure that streets can receive all municipal services, including but not limited to, municipal waste and recycling collection, street sweeping and winter maintenance.

Permanently stopping-up and closing of the cul-de-sac to vehicular traffic would remove the ability for larger vehicles to turn around and would result in larger vehicles having to back up upon exit from the street. Municipal solid waste and recycling collection in the area is undertaken using single operator vehicles by mechanical automated collection from the passenger side of the vehicle. Closing the cul-de-sac to vehicles would require the solid waste and recycling vehicles to service the east side of the street, then back out of the street, make a three-point turn within the Howard Drive/Blue Ridge Road

intersection and reverse back into Blue Ridge Road in order to service the west side of the street. These multiple reversing manoeuvres would make collection less efficient. They would also increase the hazard to other road users including pedestrians in the area. Solid Waste Management had switched to a rear load truck with a flag person in February of 2023, to address the challenge of collection without a cul-de-sac. Street sweepers and snow ploughs, likewise, require a turnaround area and their operation would also be negatively affected. Solid Waste Management Services, does not recommend closing the cul-de-sac to vehicular traffic.

The Blue Ridge Road cul-de-sac provides access to Blue Ridge Park, and is used by Parks Forestry and Recreation (PF&R) Operations. Closing the cul-de-sac will also negatively impact waste collection from the waste and recycling receptacles within the park. PF&R does not recommend closing the cul-de-sac to vehicular traffic.

Toronto Fire, has indicated that the closure of the cul-de-sac to vehicular traffic could be considered, provided that (a) emergency access was maintained, i.e., the closure could be implemented by use of a pad-locked chain which could be cut by first responders in an emergency situation; (b) access to the existing fire hydrant located in front of No. 49 Blue Ridge Road was not obstructed; and (c) provisions were made for snow storage/removal to maintain access to the existing fire hydrant.

The full closure of the cul-de-sac associated with the TRCA work and erosion issues will allow Transportation Services staff to assess and compare the impacts of a partial hammerhead style closure to a full closure, discuss the options with Solid Waste Management Services, Transportation Operations & Maintenance, Toronto Fire, and EMS among others, and determine the best path forward. We expect to report back on the permanent closure of the Blue Ridge Road cul-de-sac in the third quarter of 2024, once the TRCA work related closure is complete.

CONTACT

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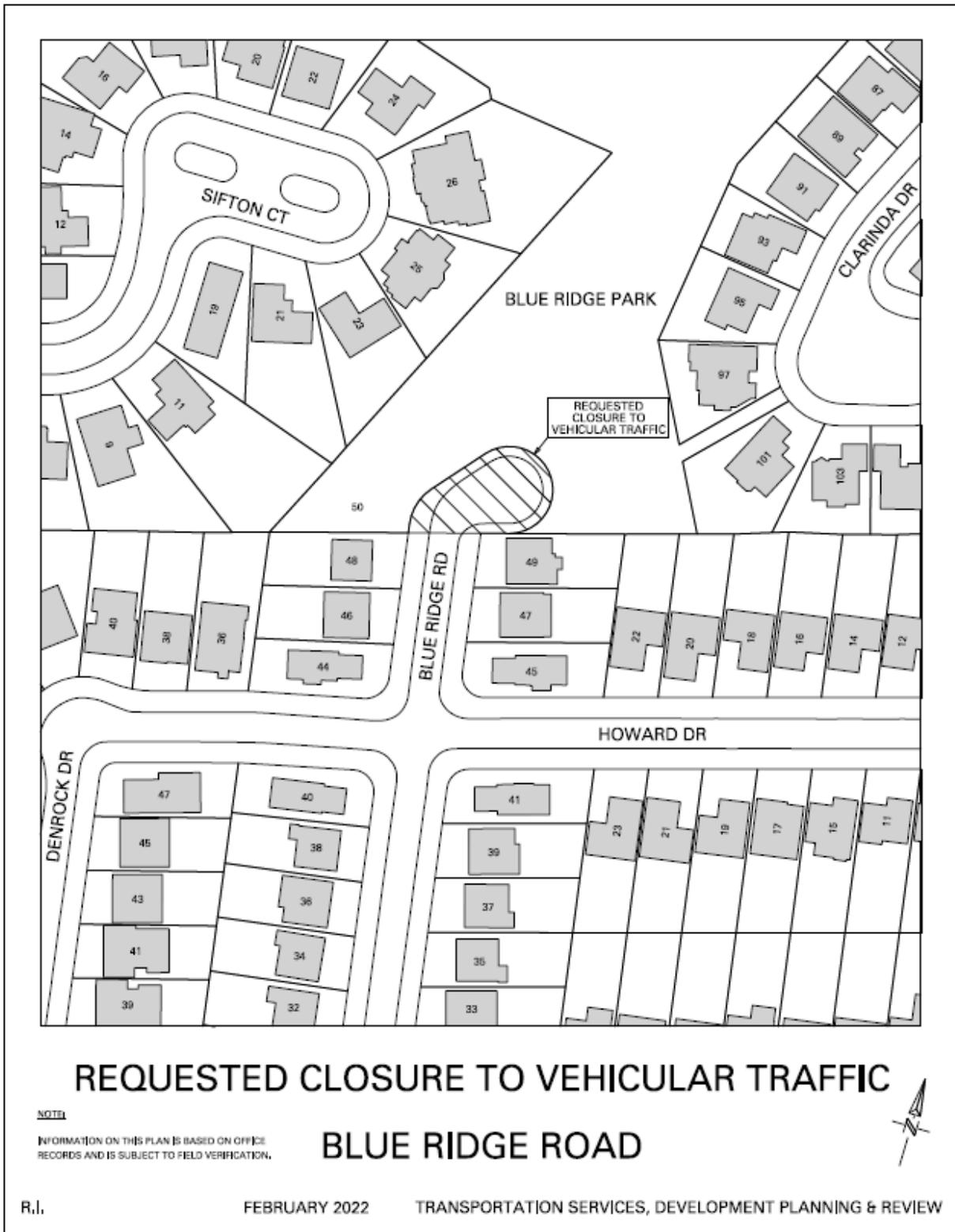
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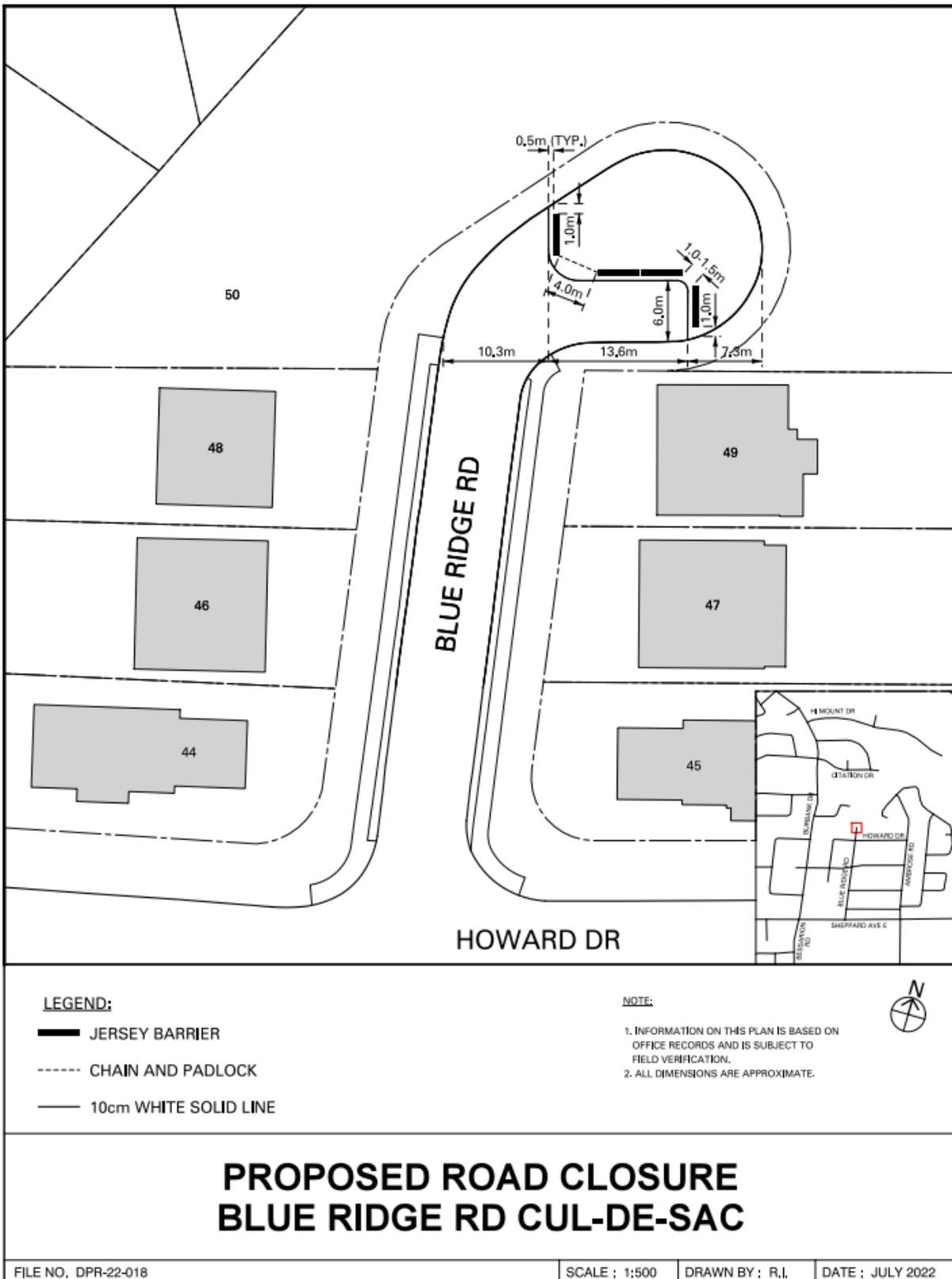
Ashley Curtis, Deputy General Manager
Transportation Services

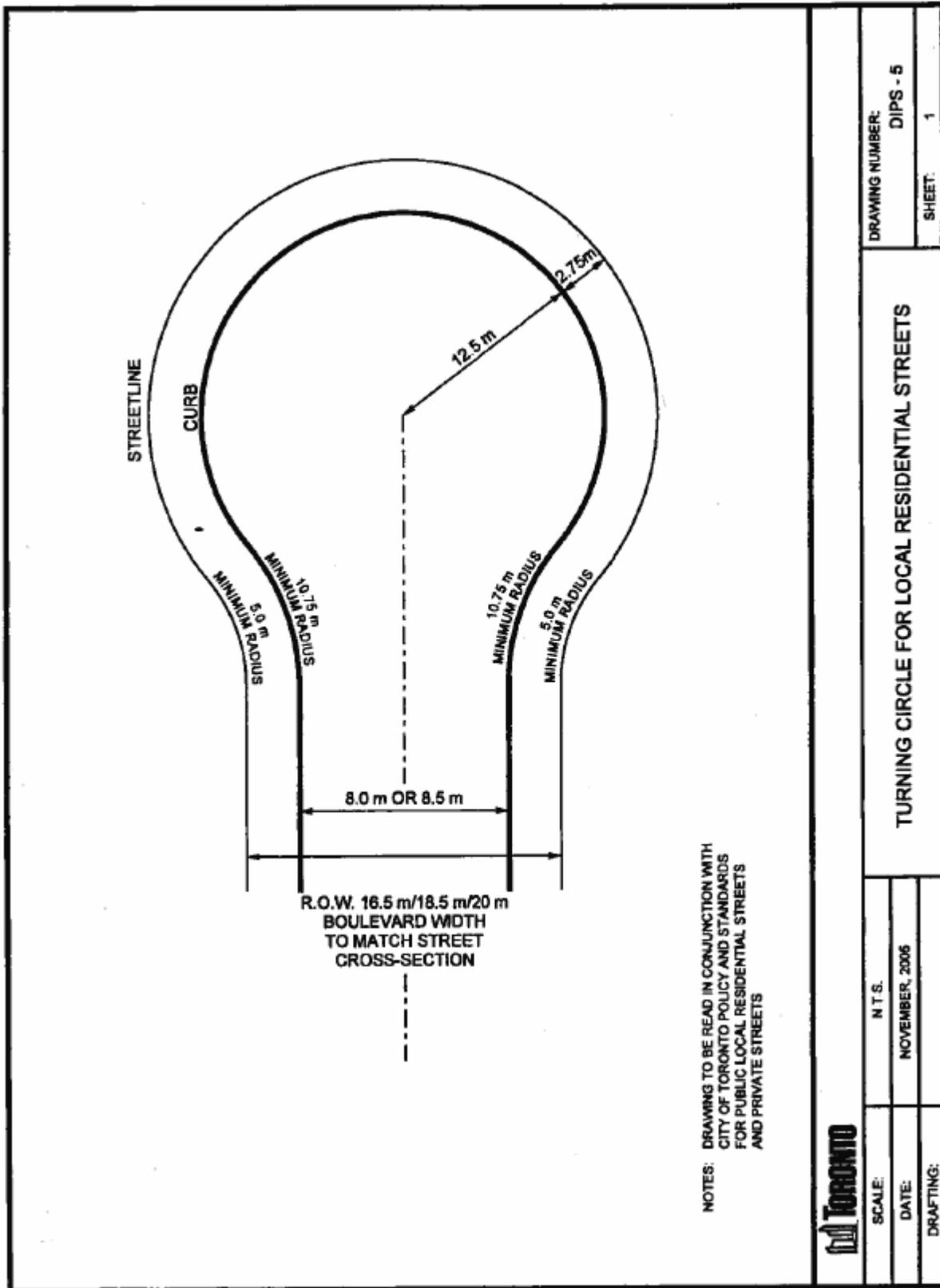
ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Location Plan
Attachment 2 - Hammerhead Closure
Attachment 3 - Drawing Number DIPS-5

Attachment 1 – Location Plan







SCALE:	N T.S.	DRAWING NUMBER: DIPS - 5
DATE:	NOVEMBER, 2006	
DRAFTING:		
TURNING CIRCLE FOR LOCAL RESIDENTIAL STREETS		SHEET: 1