

## **Market Street Closure between Front Street East and The Esplanade**

**Date:** October 7, 2024

**To:** Toronto and East York Community Council

**From:** Director, Permits and Enforcement and Director, Planning, Design and Management, Transportation Services

**Wards:** 13 - Toronto Centre

### **SUMMARY**

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On October 18, 2023, the Toronto and East York Community Council directed the General Manager, Transportation Services to extend the temporary closure of Market Street between Front Street East and The Esplanade until November 30, 2024 and to report back with recommendations regarding closing this section of Market Street permanently, including working with City Divisions responsible for providing services and community groups to explore possibilities for addressing logistical barriers to permanent closure.

It is recommended that the pedestrianized conditions (i.e. closure to vehicle traffic) be extended until January 18, 2025 to enable animations for holiday shoppers and new year celebrations. It is not feasible to extend the closure to vehicular traffic indefinitely at this time.

This report seeks authorization to extend the closure through to the conclusion of new year celebrations. In addition, this report identifies the policy and formal process development that is required to build the City's capacity to permit long-term pedestrianization of streets.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Director, Permits and Enforcement, Transportation Services and Director, Planning, Design and Management, Transportation Services recommends that:

1. Toronto and East York Community Council authorize the General Manager, Transportation Services to extend the temporary closure to vehicular traffic of Market Street between Front Street East and The Esplanade until January 18, 2025, subject to completion of street event permit application and execution of the permit.

2. Toronto and East York Community Council direct the General Manager, Transportation Services to work with participating organizations to develop and assess solutions for deliveries, waste collection and snow removal, as required, through the permitting of the closure.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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There are no financial impacts resulting from the adoption of the recommendation in this report.

Any financial impacts associated with the removal of the pay-and-display parking are expected to be resolved between the event organizers and the Toronto Parking Authority.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

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On October 18, 2023, the Toronto and East York Community Council directed the General Manager, Transportation Services to extend the temporary closure of Market Street between Front Street East and The Esplanade until November 30, 2024 to report back with recommendations regarding closing this section of Market Street permanently, including working with stakeholders to explore possibilities for addressing logistical barriers to permanent closure.

[Agenda Item History - 2023.TE8.38 \(toronto.ca\)](#)

## **COMMENTS**

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During Spring 2024, City staff met with representatives of the St. Lawrence Market, the Old Town Business Improvement Area (BIA), and St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association to discuss pedestrianization of Market Street. Generally, it is agreed that the seasonal pedestrianization of Market Street is a benefit to all parties and that it is a worthwhile proposal to extend the experience to include the holiday shopping and new year celebration season. At this time staff are able to extend the closure to January 18, 2025.

There is not currently a general agreement between all City staff and the community interest groups listed above that pedestrianization of Market Street would offer a net benefit during winter months when temperatures are low, daylight hours are limited, and tourist traffic is lower and is concentrated indoors. In winter months, vehicular access to the building is a considerable benefit, enabling deliveries and servicing associated with both regular business operations and low-season maintenance processes and initiatives.

Seasonal pedestrianization of Market Street is consistent with the City's current practices for pedestrian streets. The City currently permits long-term pedestrianization

of streets only in cases where there is a proponent (typically the adjacent landowner) that accepts full responsibility for animating the space no longer occupied by vehicle traffic. Gould Street, animated by Toronto Metropolitan University, and Willcocks Street, animated by University of Toronto, are nearby examples.

Staff are working to develop policies and formalized processes addressing the long-term pedestrianization of streets. Staff propose to report to the appropriate committee with a status update in Spring 2025, to coincide with high-season for these types of requests.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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