

2025 Road Openings and Closures in the Port Lands

Date: December 18, 2024

To: Toronto and East York Community Council

From: Director, Planning, Design and Management, Transportation Services Division

Wards: Ward 14, Toronto-Danforth

SUMMARY

This report recommends the following property dedications as public highway, temporary road closures, and renaming of streets required as implementation of the Port Lands Flood Protection Project progresses towards substantial completion at the end of 2024:

- Dedication of the remaining eastern portion of the Cherry Street right-of-way from south of Commissioners Street to just south of Polson Street that includes a short segment of public sidewalk and lands for a future transit right-of-way.
- Dedication of the remaining southern portion of the Commissioners Street right-of-way from Cherry Street to just east of Don Roadway that includes a new public sidewalk and lands for a future transit right-of-way.
- Extension of previous temporary closures of Villiers Street for continued construction staging activities until December 31, 2025.
- Renaming New Cherry Street between the Keating Channel to Commissioners Street to "Cherry Street".
- Renaming Cherry Street between the Keating Channel to Commissioners Street to "Ookwemin Street".
- Renaming a remnant portion of Cherry Street between the Gardiner Expressway and the Keating Channel to "Lake Shore Boulevard East".
- Classifying Cherry Street between Lake Shore Boulevard East and Commissioners Street and Commissioners Street between Cherry Street and Ookwemin Street as Collector Roads in the City's Road Classification System.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. City Council authorize public highway designation for the lands set out in Attachment 3 to the report (December 18, 2024) from the Director, Planning, Design and Management, Transportation Services, to be dedicated in name as Cherry Street, to take effect on the date that the last of the interest in lands identified in Attachment 3 is conveyed to the City.
2. City Council authorize public highway designation for the lands set out in Attachment 5 to the report (December 18, 2024) from the Director, Planning, Design and Management, Transportation Services, to be dedicated in name as Commissioners Street, to take effect on the date that the last of the interest in lands identified in Attachment 5 is conveyed to the City.
3. City Council authorize the extension of each of the previous temporary full closures to all road users of Villiers Street, between a point 144 metres east of Munition Street and Don Roadway, and of Villiers Street, between Don Roadway and Saulter Street, to December 31, 2025, inclusive, to allow for continued construction staging activities in the Port Lands.
4. City Council, having previously approved an exemption to Section 3.6 of the City's Street Naming Policy, approve the renaming of "New Cherry Street" between the Keating Channel and Commissioners Street to "Cherry Street."
5. City Council approve the renaming of a portion of "Cherry Street" between the Keating Channel and Commissioners Street to "Ookwemin Street."
6. City Council approve the renaming of a portion of "Cherry Street" between the Gardiner Expressway and the Keating Channel to "Lake Shore Boulevard East."
7. City Council approve the classification of Cherry Street between Lake Shore Boulevard East and Commissioners Street and Commissioners Street between Cherry Street and Ookwemin Street as Collector Roads in the City's Road Classification System.
8. City Council authorize the appropriate City officials to take all steps necessary to implement each of the proposed dedications referred to in Recommendations 1 and 2 above, including requesting the City Solicitor to prepare and submit the relevant bills and to pay any costs necessary to register the resultant by-laws, if required.
9. City Council authorize the General Manager, Transportation Services, in issuing any requisite permits as delegated in Municipal Code Chapter 743, Streets and Sidewalks, Use of, to include additional permit terms as the General Manager of Transportation Services deems necessary and appropriate in the interim.
10. City Council authorize the appropriate City officials to submit directly to Council at the appropriate time any necessary bills to amend the City of Toronto Municipal Code, including City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 886, Footpaths, Pedestrian Ways,

Bicycle Paths, Bicycle Lanes and Cycle Tracks, and City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 950, Traffic and Parking, to update references therein as a result of the renaming in Recommendations 4, 5 and 6.

11. City Council authorize the appropriate City officials to submit directly to Council at the appropriate time any necessary bills to amend the effective date of any dedication by-law(s) and/or traffic and parking regulation by-law(s) made in connection with the report (December 18, 2024) from the Director, Planning, Design and Management, Transportation Services, to, among other things, insert a specific effective date.

12. City Council authorize the City Solicitor to introduce the necessary bills to give effect to City Council's decision, including the necessary bills to amend City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 886, Footpaths, Pedestrian Ways, Bicycle Paths, Bicycle Lanes and Cycle Tracks, and City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 950, Traffic and Parking, and City Council authorize the City Solicitor to make any necessary clarifications, refinements, minor modifications, technical amendments, or by-law amendments as may be identified by the City Solicitor or General Manager, Transportation Services, in order to give effect to Recommendations 1 to 11, inclusive.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no funding impacts to capital funding from this report.

Operations and maintenance of new permanent infrastructure to be assumed by the City (re-aligned Cherry Street and Commissioners Street) will be undertaken and funded by the City, in accordance with the January 22, 2024 Port Land Flood Protection (PLFP) Handover Protocol that has been established between Waterfront Toronto and the City.

Funding required for ongoing maintenance costs including those related to modifications to the traffic signage at time of handover from Waterfront Toronto would be included as part of future years' operating budget submissions for Transportation Services.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer have reviewed this report and agree with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

In November 2024, City Council adopted item EX18.3 - Naming the New Island and Park in the Port Lands", which named the new island created by the Port Lands Flood Protection Project "Ookwemin Minising" (Place of the Black Cherry Trees) and the new parkland on both the north and south sides of the new river "Biidaasige Park" (Sunlight Shining Towards Us). These names were lifted up by an Indigenous Advisory Circle,

comprising Elders, Knowledge Keepers, language speakers, youth, and community members from broader First Nations, and Metis communities. The report also noted that a new name for the remaining portion of 'Old' Cherry Street between Villiers and Commissioners Streets had been identified and would be reported to the January 14, 2025 meeting of Toronto and East York Community Council. A link to this report and Council decision can be found here:

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.EX18.3>

In November 2023, City Council adopted Item IE7.5 "2023 Road Openings and Closures in the Port Lands" with amendments, authorizing dedication and opening of New Cherry Street, interim opening of Commissioners Street, and temporary full closure of Villiers Street and Old Cherry Street; and parking regulation amendments on Cherry Street and New Cherry Street, Commissioners Street, Don Roadway, and Villiers Street.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.IE7.5>

In May 2023, City Council adopted Item TE5.25 "Port Lands Flood Protection and Enabling Infrastructure - Construction Staging Time Extension," authorizing the time extension of the temporary full closure of Commissioners Street and Don Roadway; and parking regulation amendments on Commissioners Street, Don Roadway, Villiers Street and Saulter Street South to October 31, 2023.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.TE5.25>

City Council, at its meeting on May 10, 2023, adopted item EX4.1 - "Port Lands Flood Protection – Update". In addition to providing an overall update on the Port Lands Flood Protection Project, including key milestones going forward to the end of 2024, the report set out the process for the handover of completed assets and projected operating and maintenance costs. The report also described real estate issues and recommended that City staff be given delegated authority to enter into agreements for land transactions that are required for the operation of assets such as roads. The report also set out a high-level dredging strategy for the Keating Channel and next steps in the revitalization of the Port Lands.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.EX4.1>

In March 2023, City Council directed City staff to consult with Treaty partners and urban Indigenous communities, and report back to Executive Committee in the first quarter of 2024 with an approach to naming civic assets in the Villiers Island Precinct, including public parks and streets. The Members Motion can be found at this link: Agenda Item History - 2023.MM5.3 (toronto.ca)

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.MM5.3>

In July 2022, City Council adopted item TE34.4 - "Port Lands Flood Protection - New Cherry Street and Commissioners Street Interim Road Opening" to allow the interim road opening of Cherry Street, south of Commissioners Street and Commissioners Street, west of existing Cherry Street.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2022.TE34.4>

In May 2020, City Council adopted Item CC21.16 "Port Lands Flood Protection - Cherry Street Temporary Diversion Road and Traffic Control Signals" authorizing a temporary closure of the two southbound lanes on Cherry Street, between a point 55 metres south of Commissioners Street and a point 393.5 metres further south, to accommodate a construction staging area, from June 29, 2020 to February 28, 2022.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.CC21.16>

In November 2019, City Council adopted Item TE10.29 "Construction Staging - Port Land Flood Protection and Enabling Infrastructure Project" authorizing a temporary full closure of Commissioners Street, between Cherry Street and a point 120 metres east of Don Roadway; and Don Roadway, between Villiers Street and Commissioners Street to accommodate construction staging.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.TE.10.29>

In December 2017, City Council adopted as amended Item PG24.6 "Port Lands Planning Initiatives – Final Report" to guide the revitalization of the Port Lands.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.PG24.6>

In November 2016, City Council adopted Item 2016 EX18.3 "Port Lands Flood Protection Due Diligence Review and Next Steps" authorizing the start of Essroc Quay Lake Filling and Naturalization capital project to be created with the Waterfront Revitalization Initiative Capital Program.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.EX18.3>

COMMENTS

Project Status

The Port Lands Flood Protection (PLFP) initiative is one of North America's most significant urban regeneration projects. Together with associated projects, it will flood protect over 240 hectares of land in the Port Lands. Funded by all three levels of government, the \$1.42 billion project includes 23 sub-projects. In addition to flood protection, it will remediate contaminated land, deliver new streets, bridges, servicing infrastructure, and public parks, and create a new naturalized mouth of the Don River. Flood protection infrastructure is the cornerstone of the City of Toronto's plans to renew and revitalize the central waterfront.

The following sections outline the PLFP transportation infrastructure discussed in this report. Attachment 1 illustrates the PLFP street network, while Attachment 2 illustrates the PLFP pedestrian and cycling networks.

Cherry Street, between Commissioners Street and Polson Street

In January 2024, the realigned Cherry Street between Lake Shore Boulevard East and Commissioners Street was completed, handed over to the City by Waterfront Toronto, and was fully opened to all road users. In Fall 2022, the segment of Cherry Street between Commissioners Street and Polson Street was opened in an "interim condition" to accommodate ongoing area construction in the Port Lands by Waterfront Toronto. This segment of Cherry Street has now been fully constructed and will be handed over to the City as shown in Attachment 4. The property Parts to be acquired fee simple from CreateTO/Toronto Economic Development Corporation (TEDCO) and dedicated as Cherry Street right-of-way are identified in the table in Attachment 3.

The realigned Cherry Street, from Lake Shore Boulevard East south to Polson Street, features new bridge crossings, one northbound and one southbound vehicular traffic lane, and a multi-use trail (MUT) and sidewalk located on the west side of the street. The portion of the street along on the east side of Cherry Street will be a grassy landscaped area designated for a future dedicated transit right-of-way for TTC streetcars or buses. There is also a new all-way stop controlled intersection at Cherry Street and Polson Street, where the MUT crosses to the east side of Cherry Street and continues further south of Polson Street to Unwin Avenue and Cherry Beach.

Together, the completion and opening of the entire realigned Cherry Street, between Lake Shore Boulevard East and Polson Street represents a major milestone for the Port Lands Flood Protection Project.

Commissioners Street, between Cherry Street and Don Roadway

In January 2024, Commissioners Street, from a point 37 metres east of Cherry Street to a point 120 metres east of Don Roadway, including the new bridge crossing, was opened in an interim condition with one westbound and one eastbound vehicular traffic lane, cycle tracks on both sides of the street, and a sidewalk and tree plantings on the north side of the street.

In December 2024, the street will be opened in its final configuration, which will now include a new public sidewalk adjacent to a wide grassy boulevard for a future dedicated transit right-of-way on the south side of the street, as shown in Attachment 6.

The final street right-of-way configuration is comprised of property previously dedicated as Commissioners Street right-of-way and additional property currently being leased from CreateTO/TEDCO that is being acquired fee simple by the City to be dedicated as Commissioners Street right-of-way. The new property Parts being dedicated as public highway are listed in the table in Attachment 5.

Extension of Temporary Closures of portions of Villiers Street

In January 2024, a portion of Villiers Street, between Don Roadway at a point 144 metres east of Munition Street was temporarily closed to facilitate construction of the new Don River valley lands to the Keating Channel. Accordingly, the east end of Villiers

Street became a dead-end roadway for all road users. A staff report will be submitted at a later date to permanently close the segment of Villiers Street east of the U-turn. In the future, a new street will connect Villiers Street southwards to Commissioners Street.

The segment of Villiers Street between Don Roadway and Saulter Street was also previously temporarily closed from November 30, 2023, to December 31, 2024, for construction staging purposes.

Both these temporary road closures need to be extended until December 31, 2025, to accommodate continued construction staging activities in the area.

Renaming New Cherry Street, between Keating Channel and Commissioners Street

New Cherry Street between Keating Channel and Commissioners Street (Segment 1A on the key map in Attachment 1) opened in January 2024. In November 2023, City Council previously approved an exemption to Section 3.6 of the City's Street Naming Policy and directed staff temporarily name this segment of "New Cherry Street", pending broader engagement with First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and urban Indigenous communities on place names on the island. Following the conclusion of these consultations and the recommendation to rename (Old) Cherry Street "Ookwemin Street," the segment is now to be renamed "Cherry Street."

Renaming (Old) Cherry Street, between Keating Channel and Commissioners Street

As a result of the westerly realignment and opening of Cherry Street and the removal of the old lift bridge over the Keating Channel, there is an operational requirement to rename the remainder of the former alignment (Segment 3 on the Key Map in Attachment 1) between Keating Channel and Commissioners Streets.

In March 2023, City Council directed City staff to consult with First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and urban Indigenous communities and propose a name for the island, new public parks, and streets. City staff, in collaboration with MinoKamik Collective and LURA Consulting, facilitated an Indigenous community engagement process to discover, reflect on, and determine Indigenous names for the new island, the new park, and (Old) Cherry Street.

Through EX18.3 - Ookwemin Minising and Biidaasige Park: Naming the New Island and Park in the Port Lands, City Council approved the names Ookwemin Minising and Biidaasige in November 2024. The report also advised City Council that in addition to the two names brought forward in the report, a new name for a portion of Cherry Street that was not realigned, between Commissioners Street and the Keating Channel, was determined by the Indigenous Advisory Circle and would be recommended to the Toronto East York Community Council as part of a staff report on road openings related to PLFP.

Through this engagement, the Indigenous Advisory Circle recommended “Ookwemin Street” for the former alignment. The name, meaning "Black Cherry Street," honours the historic connection to Cherry Street while celebrating the Indigenous and ecological heritage reflected in the name of the island. Selecting "Ookwemin" ensures clarity by avoiding potential confusion between street and "Ookwemin Minising," the island, giving the street a unique identity that remains tied to the broader place-keeping narrative.

This renaming aligns with the City's Guiding Principles for Commemoration, emphasizing reconciliation and cultural recognition and adherence to appropriate Indigenous practices or protocols.

This renaming impacted numerous municipal addresses with the majority owned by Toronto Port Lands Company (TPLC) (managed by CreateTO), and the remainder by two private owners. The impacted address points are:

TPLC (CreateTO)

- 201 Cherry Street
- 238 Cherry Street
- 242 Cherry Street
- 256 Cherry Street
- 281 Cherry Street
- 312 Cherry Street
- 325 Cherry Street

Private

- 275 Cherry Street
- 309 Cherry Street

City staff met with the landowners on September 9, 2024, to discuss the Indigenous naming process established by City Council, and on December 10, 2024, to discuss the Indigenous Advisory Circle's recommendation to name the street "Ookwemin Street." TPLC (CreateTO), which owns 7 of the 9 (78%) impacted address points, provided formal documented support for the naming.

City staff consulted with the Ward Councillor (Ward 14) who provided support for the Indigenous Advisory Circle's recommendation.

Renaming Remnant of Cherry Street, between Gardiner Expressway and Keating Channel

In January 2024, Cherry Street, between Lake Shore Boulevard East to Villiers Street, was temporarily closed to facilitate demolition of the Keating Channel Bridge so efficient dredging of the Keating Channel could take place. It was determined that a small portion of property adjacent to the Lake Shore Boulevard East right-of-way, north of Keating Channel, was previously dedicated as Cherry Street right-of-way (shown as Segment 6 on the key map in Attachment 1). This report seeks to rename this small

parcel of property from Cherry Street to Lake Shore Boulevard East, as it is currently functionally part of Lake Shore Boulevard East.

Traffic and By-Law Regulations

Traffic and parking by-law amendments related to the street renamings will be enacted upon Council endorsing the street names.

Next Steps

After construction is completed, the handover process for these assets will be initiated from Waterfront Toronto to the City of Toronto in early 2025, in accordance with the PLFP Handover Protocol previously established.

The City and Toronto Parking Authority will also be exploring potential opportunities to add new on-street paid parking on some local streets in the area to be brought forward to Toronto and East York Community Council in a future staff report.

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Key Map
Attachment 2: Pedestrian and Cycling Key Map
Attachment 3: Cherry Street - Lands to be Dedicated as Public Highway
Attachment 4: Cherry Street - Street Design
Attachment 5: Commissioners Street - Lands to be Dedicated as Public Highway
Attachment 6: Commissioners Street - Street Design

2025 PLFP Road Openings and Closures