

Road Alteration - King Street East at George Street

Date: February 3, 2025

To: Toronto-East York Community Council

From: Acting Director, Engineering Review, Development Review and Director,
Planning, Design and Management, Transportation Services

Wards: Ward 13, Toronto Centre

SUMMARY

As the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) operates a transit service on King Street East, City Council approval of this report is required.

Transportation Services and Development Review are requesting approval to permit the closure of the eastbound curb lane on King Street East within the site frontage of the development proposal at 175-185 King Street East, in order for road space to be repurposed as an expanded boulevard in accordance with the City's Lane Width, Curb Radii Guidelines, and Curb Extension Design Guidelines and AODA requirements.

The expanded boulevard would function as an extension of the existing eastbound King Street East curb lane closure to the west at Jarvis Street, which accommodates a permanent streetcar transit stop along the south side of the street. A space large enough to accommodate a curbside parking space or loading zone would be created between the existing streetcar transit stop and the new expanded boulevard. A depiction of the entire city block is included in this report as Attachment 1.

The proposed road alteration aims to improve the public realm, acknowledging the limited vehicular use of the existing curb lane in this block of King Street East, the significant number of pedestrians in the area today, and the anticipated pedestrian growth in future. The proposed road alteration will enable the developer to finalize the detailed design of the public realm improvements at this location and allow for the implementation of the improvements at no cost to the City through the construction of the development.

A subsequent report will be submitted to Toronto and East York Community Council to address curbside parking regulation changes that will be required following the completion of the detailed design.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Acting Director, Engineering Review, Development Review and Director, Planning, Design and Management, Transportation Services recommend that:

1. City Council authorize the closure to vehicular traffic of the southerly eastbound lane on King Street East, between George Street East and a point 38 metres west, as generally shown in Attachment 1, to the Report (February 3, 2025) from the Acting Director, Engineering Review, Development Review and the Director, Planning, Design and Management, Transportation Services.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial implications associated with the adoption of this report, as the civil, functional (pavement marking and signage), and traffic signal work will be the responsibility of the proponent of the 175-185 King Street East development proposal.

DECISION HISTORY

This report addresses a new initiative.

This site is subject to Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) Interim Order No. OLT-23-000244, dated May 23, 2024, and the approved City Council motion Item CC16.19, adopted on March 20 and 21, 2024.

[Agenda Item History - 2024.CC16.19 \(toronto.ca\)](#)

COMMENTS

As per the most recent plans for the subject site at 175-185 King Street East (dated July 16, 2024), the development proposal now contemplates a 46-storey mixed-use building containing 437 residential dwelling units and 434 square metres of retail gross floor area (GFA). As per the terms of the OLT settlement and Council decision, the site is required to provide a minimum of one (1) on-site car-share parking space and no other on-site parking spaces.

In consultation with the Old Town Business Improvement Area (BIA), formerly known as the St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood BIA, the applicant has submitted civil and landscape plans illustrating the provision of curb extensions along George Street and King Street East, provided in accordance with the City's Lane Width, Curb Radii Guidelines, and Curb Extension Design Guidelines.

The proposed curb extension along George Street does not remove a travel lane. The expanded boulevard will make space for an improved public realm and decrease the crossing distance for pedestrians, while making no change to permitted vehicular movements.

The proposed curb extension on King Street East would expand the boulevard along the entire building frontage making space for an improved public realm. The expanded boulevard would require the closure of the curb lane to motor vehicles, reducing King Street East to one lane with a shared left-through-right configuration at the eastbound approach to the intersection of King Street East and George Street.

Currently, the vehicular space functions as a de facto right-turn lane since there is a streetcar transit stop on the same block immediately upstream (to the west) of the segment under review, and on-street parking -- seasonally converted to a CaféTO patio -- on the far side of the intersection immediately downstream of the segment under review (to the east). Existing conditions are detailed below.

A depiction of the entire city block is included in this report as Attachment 1.

Existing Conditions

King Street East is characterized by the following conditions:

- For the segment abutting the site, it is a four lane, east-west, major arterial roadway.
- It operates two-way traffic on a pavement width of approximately 12.5 metres.
- The daily two-way traffic volume is approximately 9,000 vehicles.
- The speed limit is 40 km/h.
- There is TTC service provided by the 503, 504, 504A, and 508 Streetcar routes.
- There are sidewalks located on both sides of the street.
- This road segment is adjacent to the eastern terminus of the King Street Transit Priority Corridor.

To the west of the subject site, at its intersection with Jarvis Street, King Street East does not function as a four lane roadway. In the eastbound approach, the existing streetcar transit stop is located within the curb lane as part of the King Street Transit Priority Corridor. Vehicles travelling in both the eastbound and westbound directions are not permitted to drive straight-through at Jarvis Street.

The movement/turn restrictions along King Street East in the vicinity of the subject site are summarized as follows:

- At Jarvis Street, eastbound through movements and left-turns are prohibited at all times; westbound through movements are prohibited at all times; and westbound left-turn movements are prohibited from 3:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m., Monday to Friday.
- At George Street, eastbound left-turn movements are prohibited 7:00 a.m.-9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m., Monday to Friday, and westbound left-turn movements are prohibited 7:00 a.m.-9:00 a.m., Monday to Friday.
- To the east of the subject site, east of George Street, King Street East provides metered on-street parking along the south side of the street during off-peak hours (9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. from Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Saturday, and 1:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Sunday).

- As part of the City's 2024 CaféTO program, a patio was licensed and installed in the eastbound curb lane to the immediate east of George Street.

There was found to be a low volume of vehicular traffic movements using the segment today. Data collected on Tuesday, October 29, 2024 notes that eastbound right-turn volumes are currently at their highest in the order of approximately 24 and 44 vehicles during the peak hours (8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.), respectively. This is compared to 269 and 132 through movements and 7 and 32 (illegal) left-turn movements during the same respective peak hours.

There are currently approximately 3-4 metered on-street parking spaces and a No Stopping/No Parking zone on the block. Previously, transit operations occurred at the southwest corner of King Street East and George Street. The TTC has confirmed that the transit stop has been discontinued.

Requested Changes

The proposed road alteration seeks to recognize the existing reality that the curb lane of King Street East between Jarvis Street and George Street does not function as a travel lane. The proposed change is for the curb lane on the south side of King Street East between Jarvis Street and George Street to be permanently closed as a vehicular travel lane along the entire length of the block, in order for expanded boulevard to be provided by the developer of 175-185 King Street East, and to enable the streetcar transit stop on the southeast corner of King Street East and Jarvis Street to be upgraded in future.

If approved, the new expanded boulevard will extend approximately 38 metres westward from George Street. The existing eastbound curb lane closure accommodating the streetcar transit stop extends approximately 40 metres eastward from Jarvis Street. There would curb lane space in the midblock that could accommodate approximately 1-2 metered on-street parking spaces. Alternatively, the space could be converted to a loading zone for commercial and ride-sharing vehicles.

In all, the closure of the eastbound curb lane would require the following:

- The reduction of on-street pay-and-display parking to 1-2 spaces (from approximately 3-4 spaces), or conversion of on-street parking to a loading zone for commercial and ride-sharing vehicles.
- The closure of the de facto eastbound right-turn lane from King Street East on George Street, which would consolidate all eastbound traffic into one lane for left-turn, through, and right-turn movements.

All other movement and turn restrictions at both Jarvis Street and George Street along King Street East would be maintained.

Further to the completion of the detailed design of the proposal, a follow-up staff report will be submitted to a subsequent meeting of the Toronto and East York Community Council to address curbside parking regulation changes along King Street East and George Street.

A map of the area and the proposed changes is included in Attachment 1.

Operational Review and Benefits

Based on the heritage building retention required along the King Street East site frontage, the widest pedestrian clearway that can be provided without altering the road along the proposed site frontage is 2.05 metres, which does not meet Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) guidelines nor the City's minimum and pedestrian priority standards. The proposed expansion of the boulevard would provide space for pedestrian clearways that exceed City's target minimum of 2.5 metres, along with additional furnishing/planting zones along King Street East.

Prioritizing pedestrian access and mobility at the site frontage is consistent with the pedestrian-oriented nature of the building which has zero (0) parking provision, with the exception of one (1) on-site car-share parking space. Pedestrian priority at this site is supported by the City's Development Review team and is consistent with the City's Official Plan and TransformTO Net Zero policies, along with our Lane Width, Curb Radii, and Curb Extension Design guidelines. Pedestrian-priority is also consistent with existing and projected conditions, given the site/intersection context adjacent to a George Brown College campus, other development sites, and transit service. There is considerable existing and projected future pedestrian demand in this area and along the King Street East corridor.

Due to through traffic prohibitions at the Jarvis Street/King Street East intersection, vehicles are only able to access the impacted segment of King Street East by making northbound right-turns and off-peak southbound left-turns from Jarvis Street. As a result, the traffic volumes along this segment of King Street East are generally limited to local traffic today. The proposed alteration will reinforce existing conditions, with many drivers using alternate or more direct routes through the area.

As confirmed in the submitted Traffic Analysis Update, dated December 5, 2024 by BA Group, traffic operations at the King Street East/George Street intersection with a shared left-through-right lane configuration will result in average delays of 7.1 seconds for the eastbound approach, as compared to free-flow conditions. This represents a nominal increase of an additional 0.5 seconds of average delay to vehicles, as compared to existing peak hour conditions.

Conclusion

The proposed road alteration would reinforce the expected behaviour of motorists in the area and is projected to have a minimal impact on traffic operations. The expanded boulevard enabled by the road alteration would provide significant benefits to road safety, streetscape design, and pedestrian mobility, in line with the City's priorities and policies for the area.

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

CONTACT

Lukasz Pawlowski, Manager Transportation Review, Development Review
416-392-7713, Lukasz.Pawlowski@toronto.ca

Michelle Berquist, Manager Area Transportation Planning, Transportation Services
416-338-7149, Michelle.Berquist@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Grace Tesa
Acting Director, Engineering Review
Development Review

Jacquelyn Hayward
Director, Planning, Design & Management
Transportation Services

Attachment 1: Map - Road Alteration - King Street East and George Street

ATTACHMENTS

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