

2025 Road Openings and Closures in the Port Lands: Don Roadway and Villiers Street

Date: June 19, 2025

To: Toronto and East York Community Council

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

Wards: Ward 14, Toronto-Danforth

SUMMARY

This report recommends the following property dedications as public highway, temporary road closures, and traffic by-law changes as the implementation of the Port Lands Flood Protection Project continues in 2025:

- Extension of previous temporary closure of Don Roadway for continued construction staging activities;
- Opening of reconstructed Don Roadway between Lake Shore Boulevard East and Commissioners Street, which is located on top of a new flood protection landform;
- Permanent closure of Villiers Street from east of Munition Street to Don Roadway, which will become part of adjacent new city parkland and river valley; and
- New interim cul-de-sac of Villiers Street, east of Don Roadway, as a result of the grade change of the flood protection landform.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. City Council authorize the extension of the previous temporary full closure to all road users of Don Roadway, between Lake Shore Boulevard East and Commissioners Street, to December 31, 2025, inclusive, to allow for completion of the construction of the Don Roadway.
2. City Council authorize public highway designation for the lands set out in the tables in Attachment 4 to the report (June 19, 2025) from the Director, Planning, Design and Management, Transportation Services, to be dedicated in name as Don Roadway, Lake Shore Boulevard East, and Commissioners Street, to take effect on the date that the last of the interest in the lands set out in the tables in Attachment 4 to the report (June

19, 2025) from the Director, Planning, Design and Management, Transportation Services is conveyed to the City.

3. City Council amend City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 950, Traffic and Parking, for Don Roadway, generally as described in Attachment 5 to the report (June 19, 2025) from the Director, Planning Design & Management, Transportation Services, to take effect upon dedication of Don Roadway, in accordance with Recommendation 2 above.

4. City Council authorize the permanent closure of Villiers Street, between a point 144 metres east of Munition Street to Don Roadway, as described in Parts 4-5 and 9-12 in Plan 66R-33606 and as outlined in the table in Attachment 6 to the staff report dated June 19, 2025 from Director, Planning Design and Management, Transportation Services.

5. City Council amend City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 950, Traffic and Parking, for Villiers Street, generally as described in Attachment 7 to the report (June 19, 2025) from the Director, Planning Design & Management, Transportation Services, to take effect upon dedication of Don Roadway, in accordance with Recommendation 4 above.

6. City Council authorize the appropriate City officials to take all steps necessary to implement the proposed dedications referred to in Recommendation 2, 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.

7. 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.

8. 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 (June 19, 2025) from the Director, Planning, Design and Management, Transportation Services, to, among other things, insert a specific effective date.

9. 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 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 9, 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 (reconstructed Don Roadway) 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 for the reconstructed Don Roadway, at time of handover from Waterfront Toronto would be included as part of future years' operating budget submissions for Transportation Services.

In May 2023, City Council adopted item EX4.1 "Port Lands Flood Protection - Update", which approved, in principle, a funding strategy and preliminary costs related to the City's ongoing operations of new "unique infrastructure" elements within the Port Lands, including the flood protection landform under the Don Roadway.

DECISION HISTORY

In February 2025, City Council adopted item TE19.1 "Road Openings and Closures in the Port Lands, and Renaming of Streets, with Amendments", authorizing the dedication of portions of Cherry Street and Commissioners Street, the extension of previous temporary closures of Villiers Street, and associated street renamings of New Cherry Street and Ookwemin Street (formerly Cherry Street):

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.TE19.1>

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>

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.

Reconstruction of Don Roadway, between Lake Shore Boulevard East and Commissioners Street

The Don Roadway between Lake Shore Boulevard East and Commissioners Street is being reconstructed on top of a new flood protection landform along the east side of the new Don River Valley.

The Don Roadway is currently closed for reconstruction and the current temporary road closure permit is required to be extended to December 31, 2025 to allow for the reconstruction work to be completed, as well as construction work associated with the Don Roadway and Lake Shore Boulevard East intersection being undertaken through a separate project.

The final design of the reconstructed Don Roadway is generally shown in Attachment 3 and will have three traffic lanes, (one through traffic lane in each direction and a left-turn lane); a sidewalk, multi-use trail (MUT), and street trees along the west side of the street; and an asphalt pathway within the Hydro One corridor along the east side of the street. There will also be some vehicle lay-by spaces on the east side of the street, a new pedestrian crossover (PXO), TTC bus stops, and new underground municipal servicing infrastructure.

The property Parts to be acquired by the City from CreateTO/Toronto Economic Development Corporation (TEDCO) or Ports Toronto and dedicated as Don Roadway, Lake Shore Boulevard East, and Commissioners Street public highway are identified in the tables in Attachment 4.

The City will own the flood protection landform, the majority of which is located within the footprint of the Don Roadway public street right-of-way. A Restricted Covenant will be placed on title for the lands that comprise the footprint of the flood protection landform in favour of the Toronto and Region Conservation Area (TRCA) to restrict certain activities, such as excavation, in order to protect and conserve the structural and functional integrity of the landform.

The changes in traffic and parking by-law regulations associated with the reconstructed Don Roadway are outlined in Attachment 5.

Villiers Street, Permanent Closure West of Don Roadway

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 an interim dead-end roadway for all road users. In February 2025, this temporary road closure was extended until December 31, 2025, to accommodate continued construction staging activities in the area.

As the construction of the Don River valley lands and the Don Roadway concludes later in 2025, the parcels of land comprising the Villiers Street right-of-way, east of the dead-end to Don Roadway, will no longer be required for construction staging and will be permanently closed and undedicated as public highway, as shown in Attachment 6. The associated amendments to the City's traffic and parking by-laws are shown in Attachment 7.

In the future, a new public street will connect Villiers Street southwards to Commissioners Street.

Villiers Street, Interim Cul-de-Sac East of Don Roadway

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

When reopened later in 2025, the new elevation of the Don Roadway on top of the new flood protection landform will no longer permit a functional street connection with Villiers Street, east of Don Roadway. As a result, an interim cul-de-sac will be implemented on Villiers Street east of Don Roadway to allow vehicles on Villiers Street to turn around, as shown in Attachment 7.

When the adjacent lands redevelop in the future, the grade of Villiers Street is intended to be raised to reconnect with Don Roadway.

Traffic and Parking By-Law Regulations

Traffic and parking by-law amendments related to these initiatives will be enacted by Council to take effect on the date that the last of the interest in the lands to become public highway is conveyed to the City.

Next Steps

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

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Key Map
Attachment 2: Pedestrian and Cycling Key Map
Attachment 3: Don Roadway - Street Design
Attachment 4: Lands to be Dedicated as Public Highway
Attachment 5: Don Roadway - Amendments to Traffic and Parking Regulations
Attachment 6: Villiers Street, West of Don Roadway - Permanent Road Closure
Attachment 7: Villiers Street, West of Don Roadway - Permanent Road Closure -
Amendments to Traffic and Parking Regulations
Attachment 8: Villiers Street, East of Don Roadway - Interim Cul-de-Sac Design