

Argyle Street Bikeway: Frequently Asked Questions

Proposed Argyle Street Concept

- 1) Argyle Street west of Ossington Avenue has a contra-flow bike lane. Why can't this contra-flow lane be extended to Shaw Street?
 - a) Argyle Street west of Ossington Avenue has a width of 7.2 metres, which is wide enough to accommodate an eastbound travel lane (shared by motor vehicles and bicycles), a parking lane, and a contra-flow westbound bike lane. The block from Givins Street to Shaw Street has the same width and so the same design is proposed on this block.

However, the block from Ossington Avenue to Givins Street is only 6.0 metres wide and cannot accommodate a travel lane, contraflow bike lane, and parking lane. The parking lane would have to be removed to accommodate a contra-flow bike lane. Residential permit parking is heavily used on Argyle Street; parking surveys conducted by staff in fall 2018 observed average utilization of 100% between Shaw Street and Ossington Avenue.

The proposed design would make the street legally two-way, eliminating the need for a contra-flow bike lane along the full length of the block and maintaining the existing nine parking spaces on the north side of the street. A 15 m section of eastbound contraflow bike lane would be installed immediately east of Ossington Avenue, where parking is already prohibited, to prohibit motor vehicle entry from Ossington Avenue. A turn restriction is proposed to prohibit eastbound motor vehicle traffic entering the block from Argyle Place (no right turn from Argyle Place to Argyle Street). Therefore, almost all motor vehicle traffic on this block would be westbound, which would be a reversal of existing conditions.

- 2) Why does the primary flow of motor vehicles on Argyle Street need to become westbound?
 - a) On a one-way street, parking can be either on the left- or right-hand side of the street in the direction of travel. However, on a two-way street, cars must park on the right-hand side. The current parking on Argyle Street between Ossington Avenue and Givins Street is on the north side of the street, which is to the left of eastbound traffic. To keep the parking on the north side of the street, motor vehicles must be able to travel westbound into and out of the block.

Maintaining eastbound motor vehicle traffic by shifting the parking to the south side of the street was considered. However, since there are more driveways on the south side of the street, four on-street permit parking spaces would need to be removed. Also, the volume of eastbound traffic on Argyle Street, particularly in the morning peak hour, is too high (at least 130 vehicles per hour) to implement a two-way street shared by eastbound motor vehicles and bicycles in both directions.



- 3) What type of traffic counts have been collected?
 - a) Historical traffic counts were available for the Argyle Street and Ossington Avenue intersection as well as along Givins Street and Halton Street. Prior to installation, additional traffic counts will be collected and will be used to compare with traffic counts to be collected after implementation. Other operational changes or traffic calming measures may be considered if significant increases in traffic infiltration are observed.

- 4) Has this two-way treatment been used anywhere else in the City?
- a) Yes. Edwin Avenue south of Dupont Street is a two-way street of 6.0 m width with on-street parking, resulting in the same constraint as on Argyle Street. On Edwin Avenue, turn restrictions are implemented to prevent motor vehicle traffic entering southbound from Dupont Street; only bicycles are allowed to enter. As a result, nearly all motor vehicle traffic on the block is northbound. Traffic from midblock driveways can turn either way, resulting in a very small volume of southbound motor vehicle traffic that shares the roadway with northbound motor vehicles and bicycles in both directions. The length of two-way sharing on Edwin Avenue is approximately 300 metres long, which is much longer than the approximately 100-metre block of Argyle Street between Ossington Avenue and Givins Street.

Traffic Access, Flows, Safety

- 5) Will the proposed changes increase traffic on Halton Street and Givins Street?
- a) As with any changes to traffic flows within Toronto, there is a period of time during which traffic patterns adjust. After this adjustment period, the proposed changes to traffic flow are expected to result in a slight increase of traffic volumes on Halton Street between Shaw Street and Givins Street, as residents on Argyle Street and Givins Street (from Argyle to Bruce) would need to use Halton Street to reach their homes and would no longer be able to access the neighbourhood from Ossington Avenue via Argyle Street.

Traffic on Givins Street is also expected to increase slightly as it would be used by local traffic exiting Halton Street or entering Argyle Street.

- 6) Why are Bruce and Rebecca Streets proposed to be reversed?
- a) It is proposed that Bruce Street would be reversed to become one-way eastbound. Reversing Bruce Street would maintain direct access from Ossington Avenue to Argyle Place. Argyle Place is a laneway providing rear parking and/or loading access to buildings along the east side of Ossington Avenue between Bruce Street and Argyle Street, including several commercial businesses and a mid-rise residential condominium. If Bruce Street were not reversed, all traffic destined for Argyle Place would be required to enter the neighbourhood from Shaw Street onto Halton Street, then take Givins Street and Argyle Street, which would likely increase the traffic on these residential streets.

It is proposed that Rebecca Street would be reversed to become one-way westbound. Reversing Rebecca Street would maintain a westbound connection from Givins Street to Ossington Avenue south of Argyle Street and offset the proposed reversal of Bruce Street. No changes to the existing parking regulations on Rebecca Street are proposed.

- 7) Is traffic into laneways going to increase as a result of drivers looking for parking spots or seeking alternate routes to infiltrate through the neighbourhood?
- a) It is possible that some motorists may choose to use laneways, though current conditions in other similar neighbourhoods with one-way street networks and laneways suggests that these volumes are typically low. Future traffic monitoring will include laneways and further operational measures may be considered if significant increases in traffic infiltration are observed.
- 8) The intersection of Givins and Argyle is currently a concern, especially for parents and children of the school/daycare, particularly due to cyclists and drivers not stopping at the intersection. The concern is also magnified by the on-street parking close to the intersection (sight lines). How will safety concerns be addressed at this intersection?
- a) The proposed legalization of westbound cycling on Argyle Street will include the installation of a stop sign for cyclists using the westbound contra-flow bicycle lane. Westbound cyclists would be required to stop similar to a motor vehicle driver. The existing eastbound stop sign would remain, but the proposed traffic changes on Argyle Street would eliminate nearly all eastbound motor vehicular traffic entering the intersection. The relocation of the parking on Argyle Street between Givins Street and Shaw Street from the north side to the south side would improve sight lines for southbound road users. Enforcement of the stop controls at the Givins and Argyle intersection is the responsibility of the Toronto Police Service.

- 9) My child attends daycare and/or the Givins-Shaw Public School. How will this proposal affect us?
- a) The school's drop-off/pick-up zone on Givins Street will not be affected. Parents who drive their children will be able to access the school/daycare from Shaw Street via Halton Street and then Givins Street.

In general, the bikeway proposal will encourage parents and children to bicycle to and from school using the Argyle Street bikeway and other nearby routes.

On-Street Parking

- 10) Can on-street parking spaces that are removed be "replaced" on laneways or Argyle Place?
- a) Traffic Operations indicated that parking in laneways (Argyle Place is a laneway) is prohibited in Toronto. Vehicles are allowed to stop to load/unload as long as they aren't blocking access.

Project Approvals

- 11) If approved, when will the proposed changes be implemented?
- a) A staff report will be submitted to the June 27 meeting of the Infrastructure & Environment Committee. Residents are invited to make a deputation to committee and participate at this meeting. If the staff report is approved at Committee, it will then be presented to City Council for approval. Residents can also submit written communications in advance of the Council meeting.

If approved by City Council, staff will be required to add westbound traffic signals at the Argyle Street and Ossington Avenue intersection to accommodate the new westbound vehicular movements. It is estimated that the time to design and install the new traffic signals will be at least one year after City Council approval. Once the signal changes have been made, then the proposed traffic changes on Argyle Street, Bruce Street, and Rebecca Street can be implemented.