

Councillor H. Gough – Formalized Pedestrian Crossing Near 19th Street

ISSUE

This report provides an update on the motion for a formalized pedestrian crossing to address an apparent desire line between 19th Street West and Avenue N South.

The Administration has approached Canadian Pacific (CP) Rail about a pedestrian rail crossing near 19th Street West and this report provides information on the discussions to date.

BACKGROUND

At its meeting held on August 9, 2021, the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation considered a motion of Councillor Gough, and resolved:

“That the Administration approach CP Rail on the formalization of a pedestrian crossing near to 19th Street West and report back to the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation.”

Currently there is an informal path from Avenue N South to 19th Street West that crosses the CP rail lines (there is the primary CP rail line, and then an immediately adjacent spur line) as illustrated in Appendix 1.

A segment of the West Central Multi-Use Corridor (WCMUC) is planned for construction in 2023. This segment will be aligned immediately adjacent to, and north of, the CP rail line. The segment to be constructed in 2023 will begin at 20th Street West and continue past Avenue N South connecting with an existing multi-use pathway. As part of the All Ages and Abilities (AAA) cycling network outlined in the Active Transportation Plan is cycling infrastructure on 19th Street beginning at Avenue M South and continuing easterly. A connection over the CP rail lines will also fill a gap in the AAA network by connecting the WCMUC with a future cycling facility on 19th Street West. The planned AAA network in this area is illustrated in Appendix 2.

CP has voiced trespassing concerns of pedestrians along their right-of-way including at this location. Concerns were also raised by residents about this location during the Gordie Howe Management, West Industrial and Southwest Industrial Areas Neighbourhood Traffic Reviews.

According to the Transport Canada and the SGI Collision databases, there have been no reported collisions between trains and pedestrians at this location.

CURRENT STATUS

Upon receiving City Council direction, CP was contacted to discuss the formal pedestrian crossing and their initial response was generally supportive. Subsequently, two crossing concepts were submitted to CP for comments:

- Concept A - Constructing a new multi-use pathway connection along the existing Avenue N South rail crossing to a new multi-use pathway along the south edge of CP right-of-way.
- Concept B - Following the existing desire line across the tracks, perpendicular to the rail lines.

The two crossing concepts are illustrated in Appendix 3.

CP rejected the direct connection following the existing desire line (Concept B) and recommended that the City pursue a lease for the proposed pathway (Concept A), and then move forward with a design assuming the lease could be acquired.

A lease agreement has been successfully negotiated based on the desired concept. The proposed functional design has not yet been approved by CP.

A proposed design has been completed (Appendix 4) and will be submitted to CP for review. Highlights of the proposed design includes:

- 3.0 metre wide multi-use pathway along the east side of the Avenue N South right-of-way, crossing the rail tracks, approximately 23 metres long.
- 2.5 metre wide multi-use pathway from Avenue N South towards the corner of Avenue M South and 19th Street West along the south limit of CP right-of-way, approximately 40 metres long.
- 3.0 metre wide multi-use pathway from the corner of Avenue M South and 19th Street West towards Avenue N South, approximately 55 metres long.
- 1.5 metre wide pedestrian sidewalk from the WCMUC to the existing sidewalk further north on the east side of the Avenue N South right-of-way, approximately 18 metres long.
- One new pedestrian rail crossing signal.
- 100 metres of fencing between the new multi-use pathway and the tracks, and along the southern edge of the pathway adjacent to private property.
- 2.0 metre wide curb extension along the east side of Avenue N South, crossing the rail tracks, approximately 25 metres long.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The following work is yet to be completed:

1. The functional design will be submitted to CP for review.
2. The Grade Crossing Application will be prepared and submitted which includes the sidewalk on the west side of Avenue N South and the pathway on the east side of Avenue N South.
3. CP will provide comments on the functional design and request an independent rail safety assessment.
4. The design will be refined to reflect CP comments.

5. This project will be prioritized against other Transportation projects and a request for funding in the 2024-2025 budget cycle may or may not occur based on the outcome of the prioritization.
6. Once funded, the Transportation department will complete the required rail safety assessment with an external engineering consultant through the standard procurement process.
7. The Transportation department will submit the finalized crossing package to CP for acceptance.
8. Pending acceptance from CP, the project will be tendered and constructed using the standard procurement process.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Construction costs are estimated to be \$400,000 and a rail crossing safety assessment \$50,000 for a total estimated project cost of \$450,000.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

This improvement alleviates existing trespassing concerns across CP property. It also provides a safe and accessible connection between neighbourhoods, schools, and businesses.

NEXT STEPS

The Transportation department will prepare and submit the Grade Crossing Application and functional design to CP for review and initial comments.

APPENDICES

1. Aerial Map of Existing Conditions
2. AAA Network at Avenue N Connection
3. Crossing Concepts Proposed to CP
4. Proposed Design - Avenue N CP Rail Crossing

Report Approval

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