

# 17th Street Extension Project – March 2023 Update

## ISSUE

As part of the planning work completed in 2004 and 2005 to facilitate expansion of the Water Treatment Plant, it was determined closing portions of Avenue H and 11<sup>th</sup> Street was required to enable the expansion. Subsequent planning and studies recommended installing or modifying transportation infrastructure to mitigate the potential shortcutting of traffic through the adjacent neighbourhoods as a result of the street closures. Since 2004, the Water Treatment Plant has expanded, road closures have been completed, and most of the recommendations to modify or install transportation infrastructure have been implemented. The 17<sup>th</sup> Street extension project is one of the remaining recommendations. Does the need and desire still exist within the local neighbourhoods for the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Extension Project?

## BACKGROUND

At its Regular Business Meeting held on June 27, 2022, City Council considered the West Industrial Area – 17<sup>th</sup> Street Extension Project Review report, and resolved:

“That the Administration report back with options to fund the expanded scope of work with this project.”

The report defined the expanded scope of work as Neighbourhood Planning working with Transportation and other internal departments to update the 2008 West Industrial Concept Plan.

Outlined in this report was the following next step specific to Transportation:

“Transportation will review the engineering assessment and engage with King George and Holiday Park residents and stakeholders to determine if the need and desire for the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Extension Project remains. If the need and desire for the extension of 17<sup>th</sup> Street is identified, Transportation will move forward with detailed design work and tendering of the project. It is anticipated the construction tender could be released in late 2022 to early 2023.”

At the 2023 Preliminary Business Plan and Budget Meeting held on November 28, 2022, City Council considered the West Industrial Area – Expanded Project Scope report, and resolved:

“That the West Industrial Area – Expanded Project Scope report be brought forward in the 2024/25 budget process.”

## CURRENT STATUS

During November and December 2022, Administration engaged with residents of Holiday Park and King George. The goals of engagement were to:

- Understand residents’ opinions and preferences for the 17<sup>th</sup> Street extension project.
- Understand if shortcutting is still a concern for residents.
- Provide clear communication on project timelines and decision-making process.

Engagement activities included a public drop-in engagement event (see Appendix 1 – Drop-in Session Boards), paper survey, online survey for residents, and an Engage webpage with project and contact information. Flyers were sent to residents of the Holiday Park and King George neighbourhoods with project information and a paper copy of the survey (see Appendix 2 – Project Flyer).

### Engagement Summary

A majority of local residents living in the Holiday Park and King George neighbourhoods believed shortcutting was still a concern in the area. Concerns were heard about rush hour traffic at peak commuting times, noise, and existing truck traffic through the neighbourhoods. Residents outside of these neighbourhoods were slightly less likely to believe that shortcutting was a concern. Responses from participants living outside of Holiday Park and King George noted they sometimes shortcut through the neighbourhood to reach downtown, Montgomery Place and other destinations.

Participants were mixed in their support of the proposed 17<sup>th</sup> Street extension. Some residents of the neighbourhoods believed the 17<sup>th</sup> Street extension would streamline traffic flow, reduce shortcutting and provide a more direct route through the neighbourhood. Others feared the extension would bring additional traffic, heavy trucks and industry, and cause safety concerns for pedestrians and cyclists in the area. Residents of King George and other neighbourhoods opposed the extension more frequently than residents of Holiday Park, who were mainly in favor of the extension.

A significant portion of participants had other concerns including ensuring active transportation routes through the neighbourhood were included and protected, better signage for drivers and pedestrians crossing 17<sup>th</sup> Street, improving access to the Gordie Howe sports complex, and impacts to businesses and residents along 11<sup>th</sup> Street.

The main themes heard during the engagement are summarized as follows:

- Improved traffic flow: The top theme noted by participants who supported the extension was improved traffic flow through the neighbourhood. Respondents noted the extension would provide a direct route to and from destinations to the west and east of 17<sup>th</sup> Street such as downtown, Circle Drive, and neighbourhoods to the west of Holiday Park and King George.
- Desire for active transportation in the area: Support for a multi-use pathway connection towards both downtown and 11<sup>th</sup> Street was a common theme, as well as ensuring protected spaces for walking and cycling through the area, in the event the extension is built, to ensure pedestrian and cyclist safety.
- Speeding and traffic volume: Several responses described residents' frustration with the current traffic volumes and speeds in the area. Some participants worried that the 17<sup>th</sup> Street extension could bring more traffic to the area and increase dangerous speeding along 17<sup>th</sup> Street and adjacent streets. Others felt the extension would divert drivers that are currently speeding and shortcutting

through residential streets near 11<sup>th</sup> Street and 12<sup>th</sup> Street to a more suitable route.

- Truck traffic: Many responses mentioned the need to deal with truck traffic in the area. Several participants noted the existing truck traffic can be dangerous on narrow residential streets and some trucks have trouble navigating the area. These respondents felt the extension would divert existing truck traffic away from neighbourhood streets. An equal number of responses were strongly opposed to any increased truck traffic in the area and believed that building the extension would increase truck traffic along 17<sup>th</sup> Street and attract unwanted heavy industrial traffic.
- Will reduce neighbourhood traffic: A similar theme was heard regarding improving traffic at intersections throughout the neighbourhood. Participants noted the extension of 17<sup>th</sup> Street would relieve traffic at 11<sup>th</sup> Street and Avenue P and improve the safety of crossing 11<sup>th</sup> Street. These responses saw the benefit of the extension in helping divert shortcutting traffic at peak times.
- Pedestrian safety: The safety of pedestrians along 17<sup>th</sup> Street and in the neighbourhoods was also a common theme raised by participants. The crossing at 17<sup>th</sup> Street and Spadina Crescent was viewed by several residents as being particularly dangerous and a few people requested additional signage for drivers at this crossing. Others felt that if the extension were to proceed, protected pedestrian crossings would be important to consider along 17<sup>th</sup> Street as the route is currently used by many residents to access the river, parks, and downtown.
- Other concerns: Other feedback received noted various concerns with the potential 17<sup>th</sup> Street extension, such as potential adverse affects to businesses currently on 11<sup>th</sup> Street if there is less traffic due to the new road, improving access to the Gordie Howe sports complex, the need for better signage along 17<sup>th</sup> Street to direct traffic, and the need to preserve trees along 11<sup>th</sup> Street.

The project's engagement summary report can be found in Appendix 3.

### Land Procurement

The City must purchase a parcel of land and a small portion of another parcel to complete the construction of the 17<sup>th</sup> Street extension project as presented in this report.

### West Industrial Local Area Plan

This project and its construction align with the West Industrial Local Area Plan. Transportation and Neighbourhood Planning will work together to identify suitable strategies for addressing outstanding Local Area Plan recommendations related to traffic, parking and circulation.

## **DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS**

The 17<sup>th</sup> Street extension project is expected to cost \$7 to \$10 million. The concept and typical cross-section can be found in Appendix 4. This future street will consist of four driving lanes, two in each direction, with an adjacent multi-use pathway and sidewalk.

The current and future truck routes for the area are presented in Appendix 5. The current truck route consists of the following:

- 11<sup>th</sup> Street from Circle Drive to Avenue P
- Avenue P from 11<sup>th</sup> Street to 17<sup>th</sup> Street

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

For the 17<sup>th</sup> Street extension project, the following funding was approved and is in place under Capital Project P.02020 - 17<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Extension:

- 2021 - \$773,000 for the detailed design
- 2022 - \$7,750,000 for the construction

Part of the detailed design project will be to complete a refined cost estimate. If the cost estimate exceeds available funding, then further reporting to City Council would be required.

## **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

There are no privacy, legal, social, or environmental implications identified.

## **NEXT STEPS**

Unless directed otherwise, Administration will proceed with land procurement and the detailed design work. An output of the detailed design will be a refined construction cost estimate. If the construction cost estimate is within the allocated funding, Administration will proceed with construction. If the construction cost estimate exceeds the allocated funding, Administration will report back to City Council.

## **APPENDICES**

1. Drop-in Session Boards
2. Project Flyer
3. 17<sup>th</sup> Street Extension: What We Heard – Engagement Summary
4. 17<sup>th</sup> Street Extension Project – Concept and Typical Cross-Section
5. Truck Route

### **Report Approval**

Written by: Sheliza Kelts, Senior Transportation Engineer

Reviewed by: Jay Magus, Director of Transportation  
Lesley Anderson, Director of Planning and Development  
Angela Gardiner, General Manager, Utilities and Environment  
Lynne Lacroix, General Manager, Community Services

Approved by: Terry Schmidt, General Manager, Transportation and Construction