

## Report to Community and Protective Services Committee

**To:** Chair and Members  
Community and Protective Services Committee

**From:** Kelly Scherr, P. Eng., MBA, FEC Deputy City Manager,  
Environment & Infrastructure

Cheryl Smith, Deputy City Manager, Neighbourhood and  
Community-Wide Services

**Subject:** Dundas Place Traffic Management

**Date:** December 2, 2024

## Recommendation

That on the recommendation of the Deputy City Manager, Environment and Infrastructure and the Deputy City Manager, Neighbourhood and Community-Wide Services, the following report on Dundas Place Traffic Management **BE RECEIVED** for information, it being noted that the actions described herein can be implemented administratively.

## Executive Summary

Council directed the Civic Administration to provide options for ongoing traffic diversion for Dundas Place and to report back with an operational plan. Traffic configuration options were consulted on with Dundas Place visitors and businesses. A traffic management plan is described herein that identifies:

- More consistent road closures for planned activations in the evenings from Thursday to Saturday and in the day on Sundays;
- Addition of more loading zones for improved ease of access and additional drop-off and pick-up opportunities;
- Minor infrastructure changes such as additional bollards to improve parking and loading compliance and enforceability; and,
- Removal of most Dundas Place turn restrictions to improve driver access and egress.

Implementation of the seasonal traffic diversion is not recommended at this time based on feedback from Dundas Place businesses.

## Linkage to the Corporate Strategic Plan

The following report supports the 2023 to 2027 Strategic Plan through two strategic areas of focus: **Economic Growth, Culture and Prosperity** by supporting London's Core Area to be a vibrant neighbourhood and attractive destination and **Mobility and Transportation** by supporting Londoners of all identities, abilities, and means to move throughout the city safely and efficiently.

## 1.0 Background Information

### 1.1 Previous Reports Related to this Matter

- Civic Works Committee – February 20, 2019 – Downtown OEV East – West Bikeway Corridor Evaluation
- Civic Works Committee – March 2, 2021 – Dundas Place – Temporary Bicycle Lanes and Revised Parking Limits
- Civic Works Committee – March 30, 2021 – Dundas Place – Temporary Bicycle Lanes
- Civic Works Committee – November 2, 2021 – Dundas Place Temporary Traffic Diversion Monitoring and Consultation
- Civic Works Committee – March 19, 2024 – 2024 Renew London Infrastructure Construction Program and 2023 Review
- Community and Protective Services Committee – September 9, 2024 – Special Events Policy Update

### 1.2 Purpose

This report responds to a Spring 2024 Council resolution directing staff to provide options for ongoing traffic diversion for Dundas Place between Wellington Street and Ridout Street in the Downtown neighbourhood. The report describes the context, community and business consultations, and the planned traffic management and activation of Dundas Place.

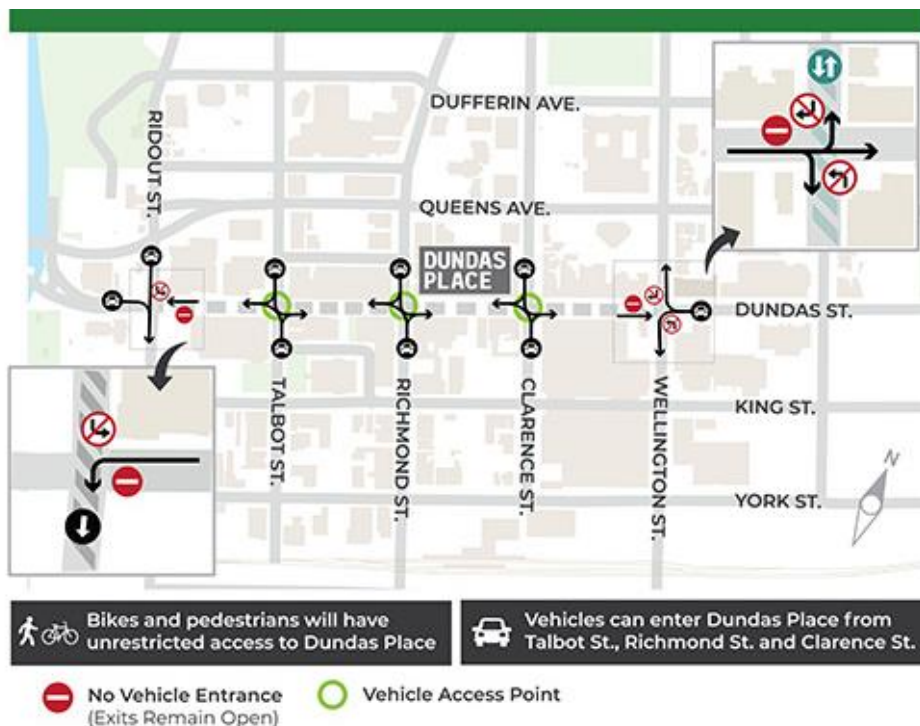
### 1.3 Context

Dundas Place is a destination for shopping, dining, art, and celebration. From Wellington to Ridout Streets, Dundas Place is a flexible street shared by pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists. With extra wide sidewalks and no curbs, parking spaces can easily transform into patios, be used for sidewalk sales, or by street performers. Dundas Place can be closed to vehicles for special events and programming. Since 2021, Dundas Place has hosted over 800 events and activations including large multi-day festivals, film screenings, dance parties, concert series, and sidewalk pop-ups. It is also an important link and destination within the Downtown-OEV East-West Bikeway.

Dundas Place Management has been informed by public and business engagement, operational experience, and learnings from other cities since it opened in December 2019. The goals have been to support business success, facilitate community gatherings, and provide safe connections for road users. The 2021 construction season introduced the potential for temporary deflection of traffic from parallel routes through Dundas Place. Options considered at the time included traffic diversions and bicycle lane arrangements. The implementation of traffic diversions was directed by Council on April 13, 2021 as a temporary change to address potential transportation impacts for all modes and to support the goal of Dundas Place as a destination and activation space. These changes were made in tandem with a suite of complimentary business supports focused on supporting Dundas Place, including free one-hour parking (without the use of a meter), additional temporary park and pick-up locations, expanded patios, opportunities to host sidewalk sales on municipal property in front of businesses, programming, and activations.

An assessment of the temporary traffic diversion arrangement was reported to Civic Works Committee on November 2, 2021. This included an evaluation of alternatives including seasonal diversion installations, year-round diversion installation and diversion only at Ridout Street. The seasonal traffic diversion was implemented again during the 2022 and 2023 construction seasons as a construction mitigation measure. Figures 1 and 2 illustrate the previous traffic diversion arrangement.

**Figure 1: Previous Dundas Place Traffic Diversion Graphic**



**Figure 2: Previous Dundas Place Traffic Diversion arrangement at Wellington Street**



The March 19, 2024, report to Civic Works Committee on the 2024 Renew London Infrastructure Construction Program identified that the traffic diversion arrangement would not be implemented in 2024 as a construction traffic mitigation measure because construction on the parallel Queens Avenue and King Street routes was largely complete. Modifications implemented in 2024 included lowering of the speed limit to 20 km/hr with supporting centreline gateway signage and removal of the right-turn restrictions from Richmond Street onto Dundas Place.

Upon receipt of the March 19, 2024 report, Council subsequently made the following resolution: “the Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to provide options for ongoing traffic diversion for Dundas Place between Wellington Street and Ridout Street, and to report back to Civic Works with an operational plan in Q4 2024. (2024-T04)”.

## **2.0 Discussion and Considerations**

### **2.1 Traffic Management Options**

This report summarizes the findings of monitoring and consultation, with a focus on identifying how traffic on Dundas Place should be configured beginning in Spring 2025.

The options explored through consultation and engagement were:

- Reinstating the traffic diversion at Ridout Street and Wellington Street from May to October
- Consistent weekend road closures from May to October
- More road closures for events
- Fewer road closures for events
- Changes to parking and loading

### **2.2 Consultation**

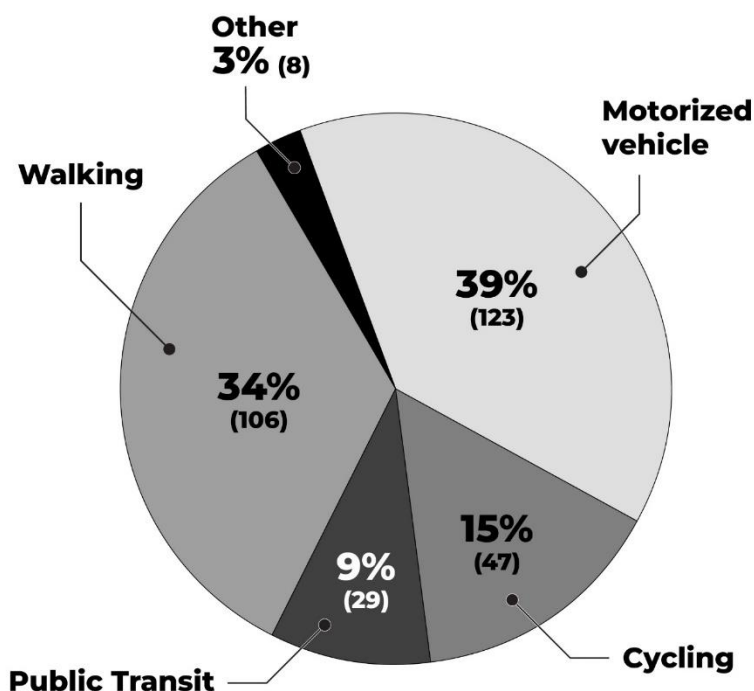
#### **2.2.1 Visiting Dundas Place Feedback**

Using the City’s Get Involved online public engagement platform, Civic Administration published a webpage about the Dundas Place traffic changes as well as a feedback form for Londoners to submit their experiences and share preferences with respect to travelling on the flex street. Feedback was collected between July 31, 2024, and September 23, 2024.

The consultation opportunity was promoted through social media, printed posters and postcards, digital billboards and face-to-face outreach along Dundas Place by Dundas Place staff. Promotional efforts targeted people who travel along the street by walking, by bike, and by driving. Promotion of the feedback opportunity also targeted visitors to Dundas Place, residents along the street, and people who work on the street. The feedback form received 318 responses, and the Get Involved webpage saw a total of 846 visits during the time the feedback form was available.

When asked to indicate how they most often travelled to and on Dundas Place, 39% of respondents noted they drive, followed by 34% of those who walk. A graphical summary of the survey responses for this question is illustrated in Figure 3.

**Figure 3: General Survey: How do you most often travel to Dundas Place?**



The most common reasons respondents identified for visiting Dundas Place, in order of frequency, was:

- special events;
- dining;
- London Public Library; and,
- shopping.

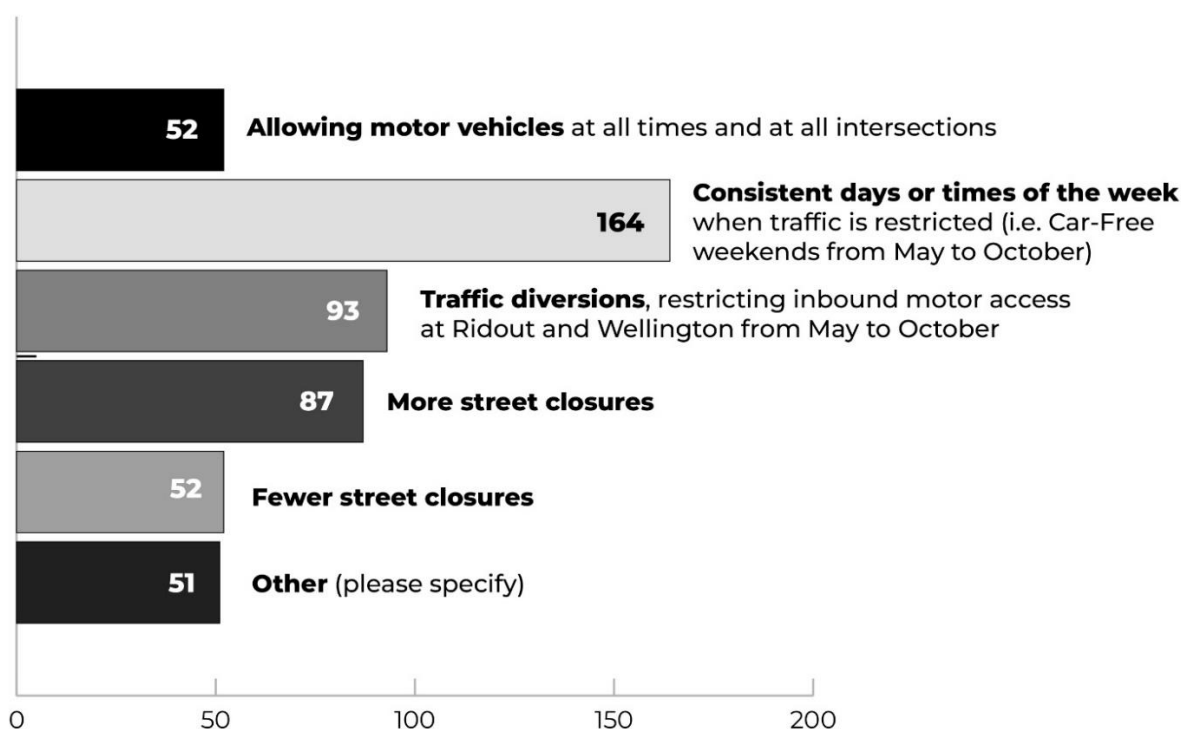
When asked what features would make respondents most likely to visit Dundas Place, the most common responses, in order of popularity, were:

- more patios;
- large-scale events;
- more greenery/flowers;
- more street vendors;
- more small-scale events; and,
- fewer vehicles.

Drivers intending to park identified that parking is limited on Dundas Place. Comments also indicated that parking locations are not always apparent. However, additional parking did not rank highly in measures to attract more visitors.

When asked which option was preferred for traffic management, the most common response was 'consistent days or times of the week when traffic is restricted', followed by the 'traffic diversion at Ridout and Wellington' and 'more street closures' as illustrated in Figure 4.

**Figure 4: General Survey: Which of the following options would you prefer going forward for traffic management on Dundas Place?**



### 2.2.2 Business feedback

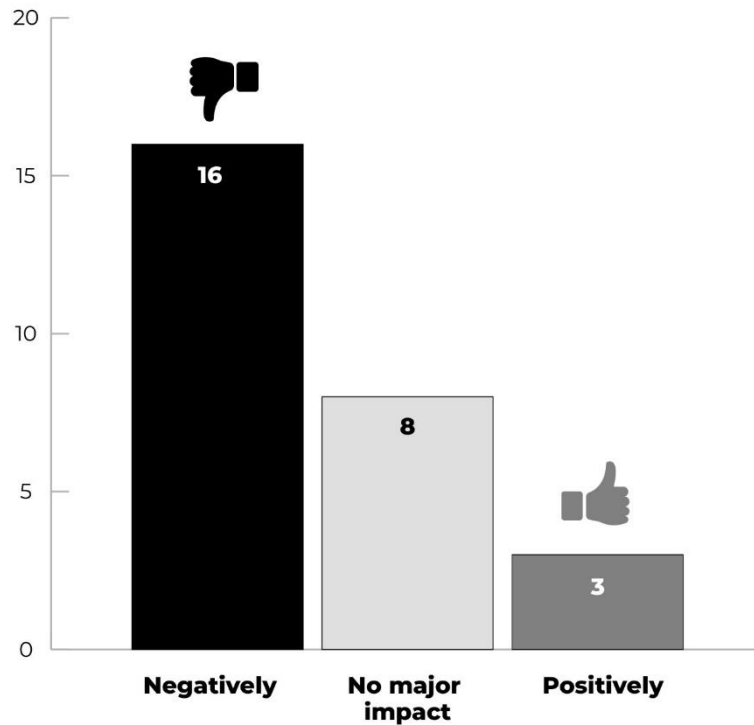
There are approximately 74 businesses on Dundas Place. Civic Administration reached out directly to Dundas Place businesses to collect feedback using a business-focused feedback survey. All businesses and institutions were emailed the survey link, a letter was hand delivered with a verbal request to fill out the survey, and follow-up emails were sent to individual businesses to remind them to fill out the survey. Completed business-focused feedback surveys received from 27 businesses and institutions.

Questions focused on how different options would impact their business. The most informative responses to the options are as follows in Figures 5 to 7.

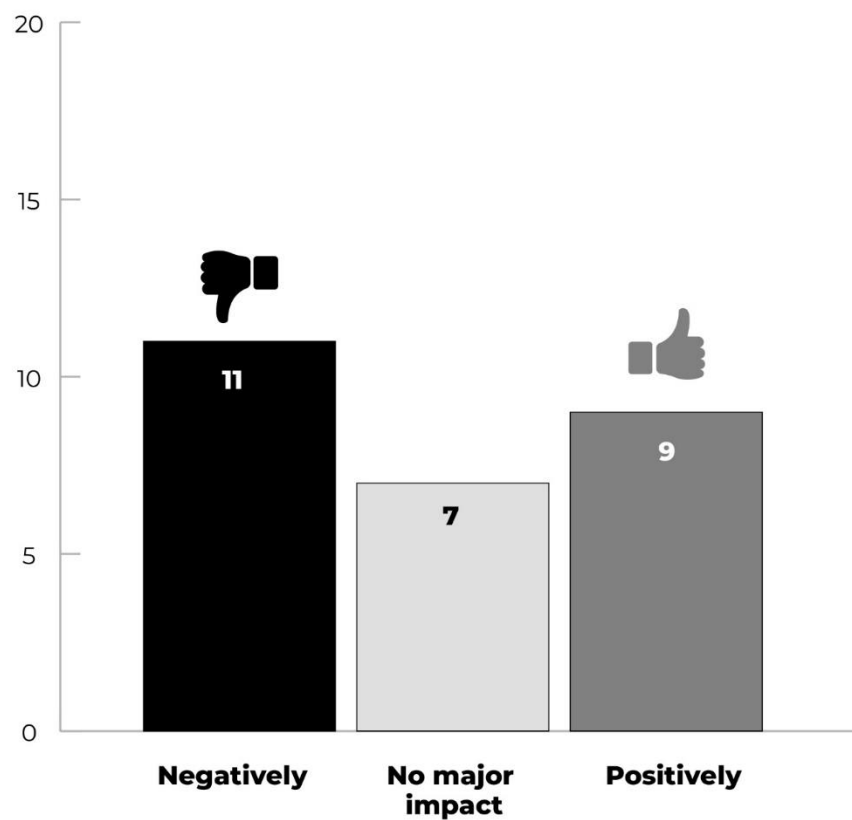
59% of respondents indicated the seasonal traffic diversion would have a negative impact on their business. Businesses had a more mixed response to the idea of regular weekend road closures with 40% predicting a negative impact, 30% a positive impact and 26% no impact. 52% of businesses are in favour of more road closures for events, 25% were opposed and 15% felt they would not have an impact.

Business consultation also asked about parking and loading zones. The majority of businesses expressed the need to make it easier for drivers to know where they can park and load legally. Other suggestions included increasing the amount of space for parking and loading and increasing the length of time drivers can park.

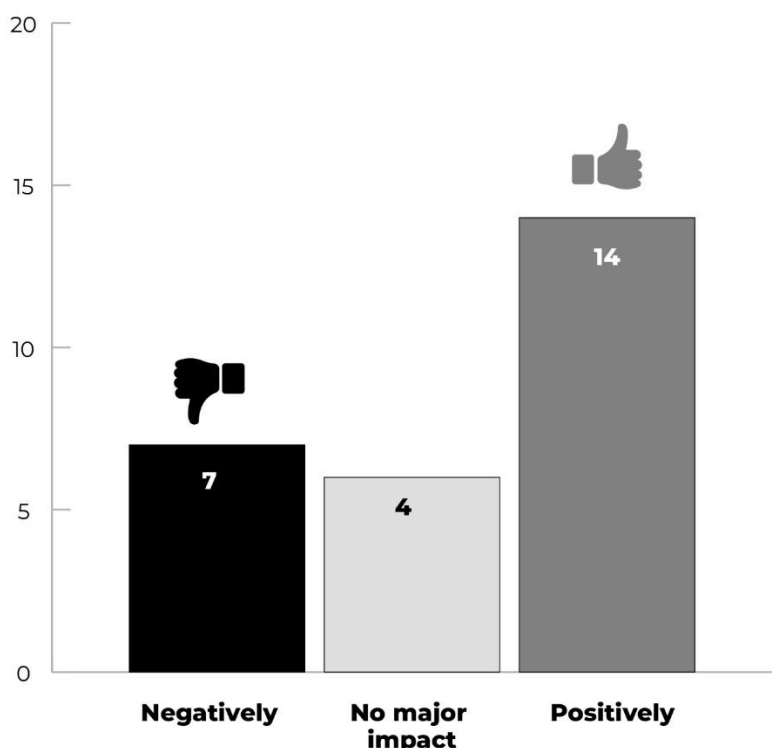
**Figure 5: Business Survey: Anticipated impact of Traffic Diversion restricting inbound motor vehicle access at Ridout and Wellington from May to October**



**Figure 6: Business Survey: Anticipated impact of consistent days or times of the week when traffic is restricted (i.e. Car-Free weekends from May to October when done with necessary programming)**



**Figure 7: Business Survey: Anticipated impact of more Dundas Place street closures for events**



### **2.2.3 Cycling feedback**

Fifteen per cent of respondents identified “cycling” as how they most often travel to Dundas Place. The experience was rated as “fair” by 45% of those cyclists followed by 34% stating “good”. Positive experiences cited the new 20 km per hour speed limit and the addition of more bike racks and parking spaces. The feedback also expressed concerns related to driver behaviours, traffic issues, vehicle parking and loading, and cyclists’ safety. Concerns also exist related to bike parking security.

### **2.2.4 Accessibility feedback**

Comments about accessibility on Dundas Place were mixed with slightly more persons with disabilities identifying travel as poor compared to good. Respondents identified challenges posed by uneven pavement. The wide sidewalks are positive but patios, parking and other features were identified as obstacles.

### **2.2.5 Integrated Transportation Community Advisory Committee feedback**

This item was presented to the Integrated Transportation Community Advisory Committee (ITCAC) in October. The discussion focussed on similar streets in other cities that are dedicated to pedestrian use. The committee discussed the potential to make Dundas Place pedestrian only and the various challenges this would cause including business loading and customer access, especially those with restricted mobility.

## **2.3 Traffic Conditions**

Measurements taken during in early September 2024 identified average daily motor vehicle traffic volumes of between 2,300 and 2,800 depending on location. More vehicles are observed going eastbound, particularly toward the west end of Dundas Place which is consistent historically. The motor vehicle volumes measured in 2024 are significantly higher than that measured in 2021. This is attributable mostly to the pandemic influences in 2021 and also the application of the traffic diversions in 2021 and not in 2024. The measured average vehicle speeds are between 26 and 33 km/hr



depending on location and direction. The measured speeds are similar to that measured previously in 2021.

Pedestrian volumes are 2,744 per day on average for the year 2024. Daily cyclist volumes are 224 per day on average during the warmer months.

### **3.0 Traffic Management Plan**

The management strategies to make the Dundas Place successful consider business success, events and activations, mobility, and operations. The recent consultation of visitors and businesses has further informed the observations and feedback received by Civic Administration.

The value of street closures to support activations is prevalent across all perspectives received during the consultation. Feedback from the public was highly in favour of consistent weekend road closures. Business input is mixed on the potential impact of consistent full weekend closures but are very supportive of more road closures for events. Based on this input and experience from the last five years, Civic Administration will be working with the BIA, businesses, and community partners to deliver an expanded activation program in 2025. This program will include consistently closing some or all of Dundas Place for activations on a weekly basis from May to October. These activations may include music concerts, dance parties, film screenings and more. They will take place primarily in the evenings from Thursday to Saturday and in the day on Sundays when business and traffic operations are less impacted by road closures.

Flexible streets are designed to easily change based on need and season. Sidewalk space can be used for walking, patios, activations, public art, and sales. This same space can also be allocated to parking and loading. Changes in the business mix and operations along Dundas Place create the need for changes to the use of the parking and loading areas. Administration are reviewing the parking and loading zones and will create more loading zones as support for transitional uses. These adjustments can be made administratively in consultation with the BIA.

Parking compliance and enforcement is also a concern. The unique nature of the street design and narrowness of the corridor make the parking areas less obvious to drivers. The visibility and clarity of signage will be reviewed. The delineation of parking areas will be made more apparent with the addition of more bollards.

Left and right turn restrictions exist on Dundas Place at the Talbot Street, Richmond Street and Clarence Street intersections. These have been reviewed under the current operational conditions. All will be removed with the exception of the left-turn restrictions at Richmond Street. This will improve access to Dundas Place destinations and also egress from the street. These changes can also happen administratively.

#### **3.1 Traffic Diversion**

As noted in the November 2021 report, the traffic diversion arrangement creates a street environment that is more conducive to all ages and abilities cycling and walking by reducing the volumes of 'through' motor vehicle traffic without a destination on the street. A seasonal implementation can also improve the environment for patios and other activations of the pedestrian zone during the time of year of peak demand.

The feedback on the seasonal traffic diversion was similar to the previous consultation with many Dundas Place visitors and active transportation users expressing support. However, the business survey clearly disfavoured the seasonal traffic diversion with 16 of the 27 respondents anticipating a negative impact on their business. Given the success of the flex street and the Dundas Place businesses is interconnected, the seasonal traffic diversion is not recommended at this time.

## Conclusion

The Dundas Place flex street is a unique facility in London. It is a street shared by pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists and is also a destination for shopping, dining, art, and events. Success relies on being a welcoming public space with thriving businesses.

Council directed the Civic Administration to review options for ongoing traffic diversion. Consultation in the Summer and Fall of 2024 has helped inform planned management strategies.

The traffic management plan to begin in 2025 and described herein identifies:

- More consistent road closures for planned activations in the evenings from Thursday to Saturday and in the day on Sundays;
- Addition of more loading zones for improved ease of access and additional drop-off and pick-up opportunities;
- Minor infrastructure changes such as additional bollards to improve parking and loading compliance and enforceability; and,
- Removal of most Dundas Place turn restrictions to improve driver access and egress.

Implementation of the seasonal traffic diversion is not recommended at this time based on feedback from Dundas Place businesses.

**Submitted by:** **Doug MacRae, P. Eng, MPA, Director, Transportation and Mobility**

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**Recommended by:** **Kelly Scherr, P.Eng., MBA, FEC Deputy City Manager, Environment and Infrastructure**

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Integrated Transportation Community Advisory Committee