SUBJECT: Lane Designation Change - James Street at St. Joseph’s Drive (PW06061) - (Ward 2)

RECOMMENDATION:

(a) That the centre southbound lane on James Street at Joseph’s Drive be designated for left turning traffic only.

(b) That the by-law outlined in Report PW06061 as Appendix “A” to amend the City of Hamilton Traffic By-law 01-215 be passed and enacted.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Phase two of the Downtown Transportation Master Plan, approved by Hamilton City Council in 2001, was implemented in November 2005. At that time James Street and John Street, from King Street southerly, were converted to two-way traffic.

The two-way conversion included installation of a traffic signal at the intersection of James & St. Joseph’s Drive. Initial observations by staff and complaints received from the public indicated that southbound left turning drivers were not always yielding to opposing traffic and pedestrians at this new signal. Redundant signs were installed to remind drivers that southbound left turns must yield to opposing traffic and pedestrians. Nevertheless, in the first 3 months of two-way operation there have been ten collisions involving southbound left turns not yielding to opposing traffic and pedestrians.
To improve safety associated with the identified collision pattern, staff will change the operation of the southbound left turn to a fully protected movement. Drivers will only be allowed to turn left on the green arrow. In order to make the change, the centre southbound lane on James Street at St. Joseph’s Drive must be designated for left turning traffic only. Currently, this lane is shared by both left turns and through traffic which cannot be accommodated with a fully protected left turn display. Without the lane designation change through traffic may be blocked behind left turns waiting for the green arrow. These changes will likely result in increased queue lengths and delay for southbound traffic but is necessary to address the collision pattern.

Therefore, staff recommends that the centre southbound lane on James Street at St. Joseph’s Drive be designated for left turning traffic only.

**BACKGROUND:**

The information/recommendations contained within this report primarily affect Ward 2.

Phase two of the Downtown Transportation Master Plan, approved by Hamilton City Council in 2001, was implemented in November 2005. At that time James Street and John Street, from King Street southerly, were converted to two-way traffic. The intent of the Downtown Transportation Master Plan is to revitalize the Downtown core and make neighbourhood streets more accessible and pedestrian friendly.

The two-way conversion included installation of a traffic signal at the intersection of James & St. Joseph’s Drive. Prior to two-way conversion, southbound left turning traffic was required to yield only to pedestrians at a left turn island. This island was removed and the new traffic signal operates with a protected-permissive signal display for southbound left turning traffic. This standard display provides a green arrow to allow southbound traffic to turn left with the right of way. Following the green arrow and yellow arrow clearance period, a standard green ball signal is displayed. This permits southbound traffic to turn left after yielding to opposing traffic and pedestrians. These are standard signal displays found at many traffic signals in Hamilton and throughout Canada.

Initial observations by staff and complaints received from the public indicated that southbound left turning drivers were not adjusting to the two-way conditions. Southbound left turns did not always yield to opposing traffic and pedestrians. Redundant signs were installed to remind drivers that southbound left turns must yield to opposing traffic and pedestrians. Despite the signs and the use of standard signal displays a pattern of left turn collisions developed. In the first 3 months of two-way operation there have been ten collisions involving southbound left turns not yielding to opposing traffic and pedestrians.

To improve safety associated with the identified collision pattern, staff will change the operation of the southbound left turn to a fully protected movement. Drivers will only be allowed to turn left on the green arrow. Left turns through opposing traffic will not be allowed. In order to make the change, the centre southbound lane on James Street at St. Joseph’s Drive must be designated for left turning traffic only. Currently, this lane is shared by both left turns and through traffic. The shared use cannot accommodate a fully protected left turn display because through traffic may be blocked behind left turns waiting for the green arrow. These changes will likely result in increased queue lengths and delay for southbound traffic but is necessary to address the collision pattern.
Therefore, staff recommends that the centre southbound lane on James Street at St. Joseph’s Drive be designated for left turning traffic only.

**ANALYSIS/RATIONALE:**
The recommendation is in keeping with the approved policy.

**ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION:**
An alternative would be to take no action which would not address public safety. The current pattern of collisions is preventable with the implementation of a fully protected left turn signal display. The result may be an increase in rear-end and side-swipe collisions due to increased congestion. However, these types of collisions are generally less severe than left turn collisions.

**FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:**
Sufficient funds are available in regular current accounts to cover the cost of changing the signal operation and manufacturing, erecting and maintaining the required signs and pavement markings.

**POLICIES AFFECTING PROPOSAL:**
The subject recommendation is not affected by any policies.

**RELEVANT CONSULTATION:**
This proposal was discussed with Councillor Bratina and he supports these recommendations.

**CITY STRATEGIC COMMITMENT:**
By evaluating the “Triple Bottom Line”, (community, environment, and economic implications) we can make choices that create value across all three bottom lines, moving us closer to our vision for a sustainable community, and Provincial interests.

Community Well-Being is enhanced. ✔ Yes □ No
Public safety is enhanced..

Environmental Well-Being is enhanced. ✔ Yes □ No
Human health and safety are protected.

Economic Well-Being is enhanced. □ Yes ✔ No
Does the option you are recommending create value across all three bottom lines?

□ Yes ✔ No

Do the options you are recommending make Hamilton a City of choice for high performance public servants?

□ Yes ✔ No
KEY MAP

LOCATION PLAN

PROPOSED
LANE CONFIGURATION REVISION:

LEGEND

SUBJECT LANE

HAMILTON HARBOUR
BURLINGTON ST
WELLINGTON ST
BARTON ST
CANNON ST
MAIN ST
WARD 2
James at St. Joseph's

NOT TO SCALE

REFERENCE FILE NO: PW06061
CITY OF HAMILTON

BY-LAW NO. 06-

To Amend By-law No. 01-215

Being a By-law To Regulate Traffic

WHEREAS Section 11(1)1 of the Municipal Act, S.O. 2001, Chapter 25, as amended, confers upon the councils of all municipalities the power to enact by-laws for regulating traffic on highways subject to the Highway Traffic Act;

AND WHEREAS on the 18th day of September, 2001, the Council of the City of Hamilton enacted By-law No. 01-215 to regulate traffic;

AND WHEREAS it is necessary to amend By-law No. 01-215.

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the City of Hamilton enacts as follows:

1. “Schedule 13 (Designated Traffic Lanes) of By-law No. 01-215, as amended, is hereby further amended by deleting from Section “E” (Hamilton) thereof the following items, namely:

   “James (05-285) St. Joseph’s Drive to 2nd lane from west curb lane Anytime Southerly and Southerly to easterly”

   and by adding to Section “E” (Hamilton) thereof the following items, namely:

   “James (05-285) St. Joseph’s Drive to 2nd lane from west curb lane Anytime Southerly to Easterly”

2. Subject to the amendments made in this By-law, in all other respects, By-law No. 01-215, including all Schedules thereto, as amended, is hereby confirmed unchanged.

3. This By-law shall come into force and take effect on the date of its passing and enactment.

PASSED and ENACTED this day of , 2006.

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MAYOR CLERK