



## **STRATFORD CITY COUNCIL ADDENDUM**

Adoption of Addendum to the Regular Council Agenda:

Motion by

**THAT the Addendum to the Regular Agenda of Council dated June 27, 2022, be added to the agenda as printed to include the following:**

### **9.0 Reports of the Standing Committees:**

#### **9.1 Report of the Infrastructure, Transportation and Safety Committee:**

##### **9.1.1 Continued Promotion of Active Transportation through Lakeside Drive Lane Closures (ITS22-015)**

Following publishing of the agenda, correspondence was received from the City's Active Transportation Advisory Committee.

Attachment – Letter from David Daglish, Chair, on behalf of the Active Transportation Advisory Committee, received June 27, 2022

Motion by

**THAT the correspondence from David Daglish, on behalf of the Active Transportation Advisory Committee, received June 27, 2022 regarding Continued Promotion of Active Transportation through Lakeside Drive Lane Closures, be received.**

City Council,

As the Chair of the Active Transportation Advisory Committee, I am writing on behalf of the citizen members to request that you reconsider the proposal to close the Westbound lanes of Lakeside Drive. In discussion at our meeting on June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022, we were discouraged that a few misconceptions had defeated the proposal at the Infrastructure, Transportation and Safety Committee on June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

It was said that the closures were a “COVID thing”. The impetus was COVID, but a good, safe space to be out in a natural setting in the city is a valuable asset. The staff report addressed the safety issue with a close-spaced row of traffic bollards that will reduce the opportunity to circumvent the separation between active space and traffic. Since the entire road is not being closed, just the westbound lanes, traffic burdens on other streets are less than half than that of a full closure (since some drivers will opt to travel in the opposite direction in leaving the area). And, since only the one direction is closed, those in cars are still able to enjoy the lakeside vistas as well.

While many positive benefits of the closure were discussed, such as safety for the local wildlife, and retention of the parking and road accessibility for the Festival Theatre nearby, several other benefits did not seem to be captured. The lake is an important draw, both for the city residents and for the many visitors to the city. Having a safe zone for many to enjoy it in comfort—without fighting for space with the swans and geese on the narrow path—will generate positive opinion. The city has a few trails and paths, but nothing that would provide the recommended “Prescription for Nature” that we all need.

Other criticisms included the possibility of neighbouring streets becoming congested as a result of the potential change. There is no evidence to back that up and what better way to evaluate this than by running the proposed pilot study. It is true that the Festival is now back to running shows however the closure of one lane should not have an impact on parking and probably will have minimal impact on traffic flow.

It is true that there is a cost associated with a pilot study. Perhaps we can brainstorm on potential ways of recovering the cost of the pilot study and if successful, the eventual permanent lane closure. One idea is to strategically allow vendors along lakeside. Many

Festival patrons park their cars as far as Williams St and enjoy a stroll around the lake after or before a show. Think about the potential benefits for local residents. The lane closure provides a safe space for cyclists, both young and old, skateboarders, runners and other active transportation participants. Toronto closed 6 km of Lakeshore drive during Covid and continues to do this; it has been warmly received by residents. Similarly, this initiative has the potential to be a plus for the health and well-being of residents and an attraction for visitors to the city. This initiative can help Stratford to be compliant of Canada's "National Active Transportation Strategy 2021-2026". Yes, hopefully Covid is over, however what better initiative is there to explore the continual health of our residents to be pro-active with their own health than providing them with better access and use of their own city park space.

Having the opportunity, in a transition year coming out of the COVID closures, to study the public's reactions to the closure and open space will provide for a more definitive data set towards making changes to the city's green space uses.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter,

David Daglish, for the Active Transportation Advisory Committee