



**SUBJECT:** Options to increase physical distancing on Brant Street in response to Covid-19

**TO:** Community Planning, Regulation & Mobility Cttee.

**FROM:** Transportation Services Department

Report Number: TS-08-21

Wards Affected: Ward 2

File Numbers: 750-01

Date to Committee: June 8, 2021

Date to Council: June 22, 2021

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### **Recommendation:**

Direct the Director of Transportation to proceed with option \_\_\_ as indicated in transportation services report TS-08-21 and to work with the Burlington Downtown Business Improvement (BDBA) and the Ward 2 Councillor on soliciting input from downtown businesses on the approved option.

### **PURPOSE:**

#### **Vision to Focus Alignment:**

- Increase economic prosperity and community responsive city growth
  - Improve integrated city mobility
  - Building more citizen engagement, community health and culture
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### **Background and Discussion:**

The following staff direction from the Community Planning, Regulation and Mobility Committee meeting on May 4, 2021 was approved by City Council on May 18, 2021:

Direct the Executive Director of Community Planning, Regulation and Mobility and the Director of Transportation Services to explore options to increase the ability for physical distancing and safe passage in response to COVID-19 for the area of Brant Street (Caroline Street to Lakeshore Road) for Saturdays and Sundays, from July 3 - September 5, 2021 with

a recommendation and report back to the June 8, 2021 Community Planning, Regulation and Mobility Committee meeting. (SD-10-21)

### **Strategy/process**

The current conditions on Brant Street from Lakeshore Road to Caroline Street includes a lane configuration consisting of one travel lane in each direction with curbside parking predominantly on both sides of the road. Truck loading and 20-minute curbside drop-off zones also exist within the curbside parking lane. During normal conditions, there is no charge for parking after 6 pm and on weekends.

A review of recent traffic studies available on Brant Street north of Caroline Street has revealed traffic volumes on Saturday and Sunday are approximately 1,000 vehicles per hour (both directions).

As part of the 2021 Temporary Patio Program, there are 4 establishments with applications pending approval to use portions of the public right-of-way along Brant Street.

### **Options Considered**

The identification of options to provide physical distancing along Brant Street took into consideration the current lane configuration, the extent and type of traffic control devices required to maintain safety and potential impacts to residents, business and others utilizing the roadway. The focus in determining options was to seek additional space for people to comply with physical distancing guidelines while walking or waiting.

The options identified include the following:

Option 1 - Close the parking lanes to extend the sidewalk

Option 2 - Full closure of Brant Street from Lakeshore Road to Caroline Street

Option 3 – Status quo - continue with enhanced pedestrian delineation

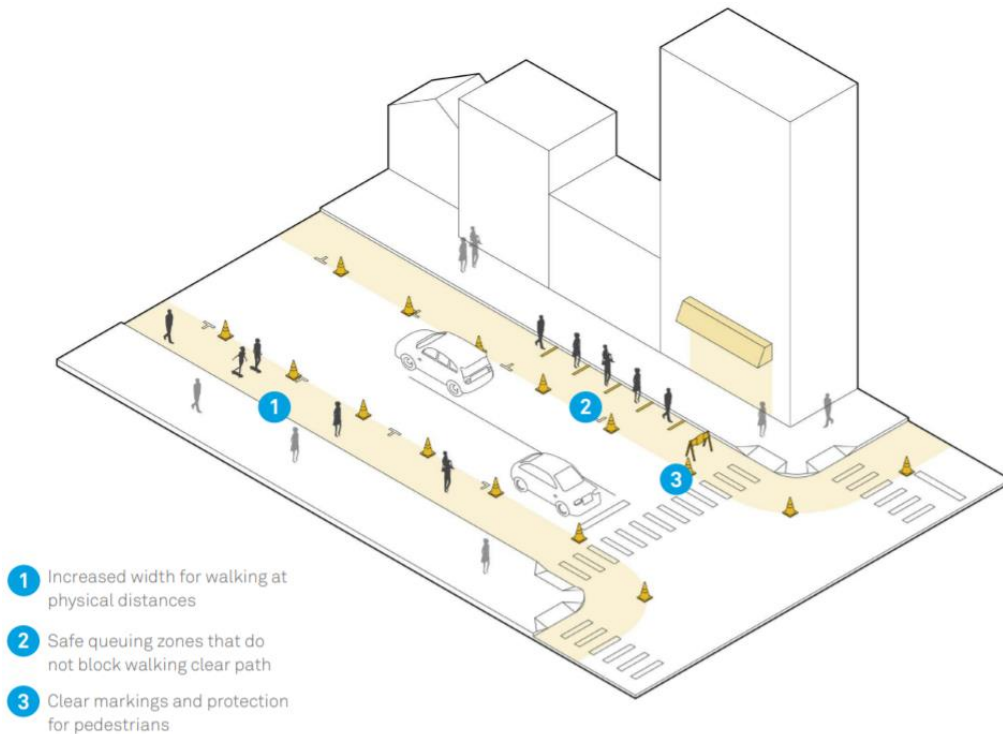
#### Option 1 - Close the parking lanes to extend the sidewalk

This option involves closing the curbside parking where it exists on both sides of Brant Street. This space will become a pedestrian area and an extension to the sidewalk, as illustrated in Figure 1.

With this configuration, the pedestrian area is proposed to be separated from the traffic lanes by using freestanding movable delineators. These devices are weighted but portable and provide separation for the pedestrian area while capable of being placed and removed each Saturday and Sunday until September.

The existing curbside pick-up will require relocation and/or removal should this option be endorsed by Council.

Figure 1 – Sidewalk Extension Using Curbside Parking



\*Image courtesy of NACTO Streets for Pandemic Response & Recovery

### Option 2 - Full closure of Brant Street from Lakeshore Road to Caroline Street

This option involves a full road closure on Saturdays and Sundays and provides the maximum available space for physical distancing.

The traffic control required for this option involves the placement of barricades and road closed signs on Brant Street located at both Lakeshore Road and Caroline Street and at all intersecting roadways within this closed section. As a result, traffic on Lakeshore Road cannot turn onto Brant Street and traffic heading southbound on Brant Street towards Caroline Street will need to be directed east or west. In addition, the 6 streets intersecting with Brant Street would need to be signed, barricaded and closed to local access only.

While the full closure option provides the maximum space available for physical distancing on Brant Street, it has the following impacts:

- Displacement of non-local or through traffic onto adjacent streets.
- The current 20-minute curbside drop off areas would be inaccessible resulting in impacts to area businesses.
- The current loading zones will be inaccessible for trucks to load and unload if/when providing deliveries to local businesses on weekends.
- Restricts access to driveways, laneways and parking lots along Brant St.

- Impacts transit routes and requires buses to be re-routed around closed sections of road, in turn affecting bus schedules and potential customer confusion as transit re-routing would be limited to weekends only.

A variation of this option could include modifying the limits of the closure. For example, a possible change could include a full closure of Brant Street from Lakeshore Road to Elgin Street. While many of the issues related to a full closure still exist, they are lessened as a result of a shorter section of Brant Street being closed.

### Option 3 – Status Quo/enhanced pedestrian delineation

Under existing conditions, pedestrian circulation can be at times, challenging at key intersections and/or higher volume business entrances along Brant Street. In 2020, staff worked with the BDDBA in developing and installing enhanced pedestrian queuing delineation and signage which helped to guide the public around locations that were identified as pinch points. This delineation will be re-installed and refreshed again for 2021.

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### **Financial Matters:**

The key costs to provided either option includes the traffic control materials to support the closures and the staff resources to set up and remove every Saturday and Sunday. Costs for each option have been estimated and summarized below.

	Option 1 Close parking lanes	Option 2 Full closure	Option 2 Status Quo
Materials	\$10,600	\$4,000	\$1,200
Labour	\$29,160	\$29,160	\$400
Total	\$39,160	\$33,160	\$1,400

The associated costs will be identified as Covid19 related with the potential for these costs to be offset by Covid relief grant funds.

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### **Engagement Matters:**

This report attempts to provide Council with options however due to the short turnaround to provide Council with a follow up report, staff have not engaged the community to date. Support from the Burlington Downtown Business Association (DBDA) and Downtown businesses in key for any of the described options to be

successful. Following endorsement of a preferred option by Council, it is anticipated the Ward Councillor will lead the engagement of businesses and the BDBA with staff assistance as required.

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Respectfully submitted,

Vito Tolone

Director of Transportation Services

Ext. 7976

**Report Approval:**

All reports are reviewed and/or approved by Department Director, the Chief Financial Officer and the Executive Director of Legal Services & Corporation Counsel.