

Transportation Evaluation

A draft Transportation Impact Assessment (TIA) was submitted to the City on 2021 March 16, that reviewed two access scenarios: the first was permitting right-in right-out access to 17 Avenue SW and all-turns access at 16 Avenue SW; and the second was permitting an all-turns access to 16 Avenue SW only.

Several challenges were identified with the access to the site at 17 Avenue SW. Among the challenges, the driveway access from 17 Avenue SW:

- impacts the public realm;
- impedes pedestrian and active modes mobility; and
- lessens the opportunity to complete the vision of 17 Avenue SW as an accessible, people-focused space.

As an example, analysis provided in the TIA confirms that vehicles accessing the site from 17 Avenue SW physically disrupts (blocks) the pedestrian sidewalk (public realm) during the AM periods. The configuration of the site accommodates space for three vehicles to queue, whereas observations note seven vehicle queue length at the driveway access for longer periods of time. It is noted that during the AM peak, a queue greater than 3 vehicles was observed over 75 percent of the time based on the February 2021 traffic data. To address queuing concerns, a conceptual site plan provided with the application proposes to relocate the drive through entrance to the north of the site. This appears to lessen potential queuing impacts to the public realm along 17 Avenue SW by no longer blocking the sidewalk on 17 Avenue SW, however access and egress at 17 Avenue SW increases the amount of vehicles crossing the public realm, increasing potential conflict between pedestrian, active modes, and vehicles.

The second scenario, permitting access and egress from 16 Avenue SW only, appears to provide a balanced solution to the challenges of access at 17 Avenue SW. Impacts to the 17 Avenue SW public realm impacts are eliminated, allowing for continuous, uninterrupted public space for the length of the block. This also leverages the full benefit of the public and private investments made along 17 Avenue SW to improve public realm and experience along 17 Avenue SW. From a technical perspective, the TIA suggests that pedestrian and active mode volumes are also substantially less along 16 Avenue SW, reducing potential vehicle/active mode conflicts. In addition, together with the proposed site layout allows for increased vehicle queueing or stacking within the site itself. If the queue extends onto 16 Avenue SW, it is a better place for queueing to occur when compared to 17 Avenue SW.

Based on the technical review, combined with a review of preferred outcomes for 17 Avenue SW, Administration recommends access and egress to the site be provided at 16 Avenue SW only. The one technical option for egress onto 17 Avenue SW could be a directional right-out only at 17 Avenue SW. This is not an ideal outcome, but from a technical perspective it is a possible option with reduced conflict risk to pedestrians and active mode users along 17 Avenue SW. With a right-out only drivers leaving the site must stop before entering the public right-of-way, and will have improved sightlines to observe pedestrians along 17 Avenue SW compared with the inbound movement. All turns access to 17 Avenue SW is not supported.