

...Title

Resolution to Approve Restoration of Two-way Traffic on First and Ashley Streets

...Memorandum

Attached for your review and approval please find a resolution to support restoration of First and Ashley Streets to two-way traffic.

Per Chapter 126, Article 1, Section 10:2, the approval of the Council shall be obtained prior to the adoption of a rule or regulation concerning 1-way streets.

In alignment with City Council's commitment to Vision Zero and advancing initiatives that enhance safety and accessibility of the right of way for vulnerable and at-risk users, the DDA seeks support to restore First and Ashley Streets to two-way traffic.

Background

The Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Board prioritized the First & Ashley project in late 2016, with the goal of improving safety, wayfinding, business access, comfort and vitality. First and Ashley Streets were made into a one-way pair in the late 1960's as a first step to a proposed downtown bypass that was never completed.

In November 2017, the Ann Arbor Downtown Development Authority (DDA) worked collaboratively with City staff to select a qualified consultant team led by Smithgroup JJR and Toole Design Group, with engineering support from Wade Trim. The public engagement component consisted of over 40 one on one meetings and eight interactive public presentations and design workshops.

In close coordination with City staff, Toole Design led a detailed transportation analysis of existing issues and best-practice solutions. The analysis captured:

A total of 351 crashes on study corridors from 2013 – 2017:

- 11% resulted in injury
- 25 involved vulnerable users (7% of crashes)
- 84% of vulnerable user crashes resulted in reported injury – 53% of overall injuries
- Vulnerable users were disproportionately injured

Angle/Sideswipe accidents account for over 56% of vehicle crashes on First & Ashley (common with multi-lane roadways)

Nearly 40% of vehicles, more than 3,400 per day, are traveling over the speed limit on these streets. Over 100 vehicles were recorded exceeding 40 mph in a posted 25 mph zone. Speed is directly correlated to likelihood and severity of injury.

Two-way street restorations have been shown to:

- Eliminate the “double threat” to pedestrians, by reducing the number of travel lanes traveling in the same direction
- Lower vehicle speeds by reducing the number of vehicle lanes traveling in the same direction
- Reduce crash severity through lower speeds and less concentrated turning movements,
- Improve access, wayfinding, and the street experience by providing more options to reach a destination

Impact to vehicle travel time is minimal – most local trips will have a shorter travel time, while those traveling the full length of the corridors may see an increase.

The transportation analysis and public engagement process shaped a recommended design concept. Detailed design and engineering will begin as a next step, if two-way restoration is supported.

...Staff

Prepared by: Amber Miller, AICP, DDA Capital Projects Manager

Reviewed by: Susan Pollay, DDA Executive Director; Nick Hutchinson, P.E. City Engineer; Craig Hupy, Public Services Area Administrator

Approved by: Howard S. Lazarus, City Administrator

...Body

Whereas, First and Ashley Streets were converted to one-way streets in the late 1960's as part of a partially completed bypass through downtown;

Whereas, A detailed analysis conducted by Toole Design Group indicates problems with speeding and crashes with disproportionate injuries to vulnerable users – which are symptoms of multi-lane, one-way streets;

Whereas, Restoration of two-way traffic and travel lane reductions are shown to reduce speeding and crash severity for all roadway users, with increased benefit to vulnerable users;

Whereas, Over the past 3 years City Council has reinforced a commitment to Vision Zero and prioritizing human lives and safety, as indicated below:

- Resolution to Accept the Recommendations of the Pedestrian Safety & Access Task Force, affirming the Vision Zero goal of zero traffic fatalities by 2025
- Resolution Supporting Vision Zero Implementation, Including Near-and Long-Term Roadway Safety Measures at Huron High School and Citywide
- Resolution Directing the City Administrator to Review Traffic Calming, Speed Limits, and Design Speed for Road Reconstructions
- Adoption of legislative priorities for 2019, including a commitment to advancing initiatives that enhance safety and accessibility of the right of way for vulnerable and at-risk users

Whereas, In alignment with City Council's commitment to improving safety for all roadway users, the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) seeks approval to restore First and Ashley Streets to two-way traffic;

Whereas, The restoration of First and Ashley Streets to two-way traffic will provide the opportunity to make other complete streets improvements to the corridors;

Whereas, Chapter 126, Article 1 Section 10:2, the approval of the Council shall be obtained prior to the adoption of a rule or regulation concerning 1-way streets;

RESOLVED, That City Council approves the restoration of First and Ashley Streets to two-way traffic.