

REGION OF OTTAWA CARLETON  
 RÉGION D'OTTAWA CARLETON

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REPORT  
RAPPORT

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Our File/N/Réf.           **03 07-98-0099**  
 Your File/V/Réf.

DATE                       3 December 1998

TO/DEST.                 Transportation Committee

FROM/EXP.               Co-ordinator, Transportation Committee

SUBJECT/OBJET         **BASELINE ROAD - SOUTH SIDE BUS BAY CLOSURES -  
 PUBLIC HEARING**

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### **REPORT RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Transportation Committee recommend Council approve the preliminary design for the permanent closure of the bus bays at the intersections of Baseline Road and Farlane Boulevard, Zena Street and Marson Street as illustrated on Drawing No. RT-2353.**

### **BACKGROUND**

At its meeting on 4 November 1998, the Transportation Committee approved the attached report dated 23 September 1998 from the Environment and Transportation Department. The following Motions were also approved:

1.     *That the Transit Services Committee consider moving the bus stop at Farlane and Baseline to the west corner from the east corner.*
2.     *That staff examine the feasibility of creating a bonafide acceleration lane at the intersection of Baseline and Farlane and consider moving the bus stop to another location.*

An extract of the Minute immediately follows the staff report.

On 12 November 1998 Council approved the original staff recommendation, as outlined above, but did not approve the two additional recommendations by committee. Such approval was subject to reconsideration on 26 November 1998 and on that date, Council confirmed its original position, initiating the public hearing process.

The project was advertised in the three daily papers on the following dates: November 14, 15, 28 and 29 and December 5, 6, 12 and 13, 1998. Councillor Lee Farnworth from the City of Nepean

submitted a letter dated 3 November 1998 requesting the committee's consideration of reopening the bus bay at Baseline and Farlane. A copy of that letter is appended to the extract of Minute.

*Approved by  
Rosemary Nelson*

REGION OF OTTAWA CARLETON  
 RÉGION D'OTTAWA CARLETON

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REPORT  
 RAPPORT

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Our File/N/Réf.           **50 12-98-R016**  
 Your File/V/Réf.

DATE                        23 September 1998

TO/DEST.                 Co-ordinator Transportation Committee

FROM/EXP.                Director Engineering Division  
 Environment and Transportation Department

SUBJECT/OBJET           **BASELINE ROAD - SOUTH SIDE BUS BAY CLOSURES**

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### **DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

**That the Transportation Committee recommend Council:**

- 1.     approve the preliminary design for the permanent closure of the bus bays at the intersections of Baseline Road and Farlane Boulevard, Zena Street and Marson Street as illustrated on Drawing No. RT-2353;**
- 2.     authorize the initiation of the Public Hearing process as required by Sections 297 and 300 of the *Ontario Municipal Act*.**

### **BACKGROUND**

In late 1994, six existing bus bays on both sides of Baseline Road between Merivale Road and Fisher Avenue were closed on a temporary basis, while still maintaining the accesses to the private properties abutting the temporary bus bay closures. This was done as a pilot project to evaluate the operational improvements that OC Transpo would achieve by eliminating the delays that buses were experiencing when leaving the bus bays to re-enter the traffic stream, and to determine any associated impacts on other traffic operations. The results of the evaluation show that the removal of the bus bays contributed to a higher quality transit service and improved bus system reliability without measurable safety or delay consequences to other traffic. In addition, an analysis of traffic accidents in the vicinity of the temporary bus bay closures has not revealed any potential safety issues or any significant deterioration in the level of service for other traffic.

On 23 September 1998, Council approved guidelines for the installation and removal of bus bays on Regional Roads, which support the Transit Priority objectives of the Region's Transportation

Master Plan. These guidelines were developed on the basis of the experience gained from the Baseline Road pilot project. In accordance with the criteria set out in these guidelines, conditions at these locations on Baseline Road, between Fisher Avenue and Baseline Road, indicate that bus bays are not required.

## DISCUSSION

The pilot project has proven to be successful and in accordance with the guidelines for the removal of bus bays, it is recommended that the three temporary bus bay installations at the intersections of Baseline Road and Farlane Boulevard, Zena Street and Marson Street, be removed and permanent closures of the bus bays be constructed as generally detailed on Sketch RT-2353 attached.

The construction of the proposed permanent bus closures will also provide the opportunity to undertake minor roadway geometric modifications at these intersections to facilitate the side street right-turn movement into the nearside Baseline Road lane, improve sidewalk alignments and install permanent bus stop and shelter platforms at these locations. The driveways to the private properties located within the bus bay closure limits will be reconstructed to standards similar to those that exist at all the other entrances along Baseline Road.

## COST ESTIMATE

The following cost estimates are at a preliminary design level stage and are provided for the information of the Transportation Committee and Regional Council:

| <u>Item</u>  | <u>Cost<br/>Estimate</u><br>\$ |
|--------------|--------------------------------|
| Construction | 57,000                         |
| Engineering  | 7,500                          |
| Utilities    | <u>5,000</u>                   |
| Total        | <u>70,000</u>                  |

## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Regional Road modifications required to provide localized operational improvements are identified as Schedule 'A' projects under the Environmental Assessment process for municipal road projects. This proposed undertaking is limited in scale, will not result in greater traffic or any adverse environmental impacts.

Schedule 'A' projects are deemed to be approved projects and, as such, subject to all other approvals, the proponent may proceed to the design and construction stages for the proposed works without further reference to the Class Environmental Assessment Planning and Design process.

### CONSULTATION

Residents of the Fisher Heights community have been made aware of the proposal to permanently close the three bus bays, and the public hearing process will provide them and the general public with the opportunity to raise concerns or provide input.

### COMMENTS FROM THE REGIONAL CYCLING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

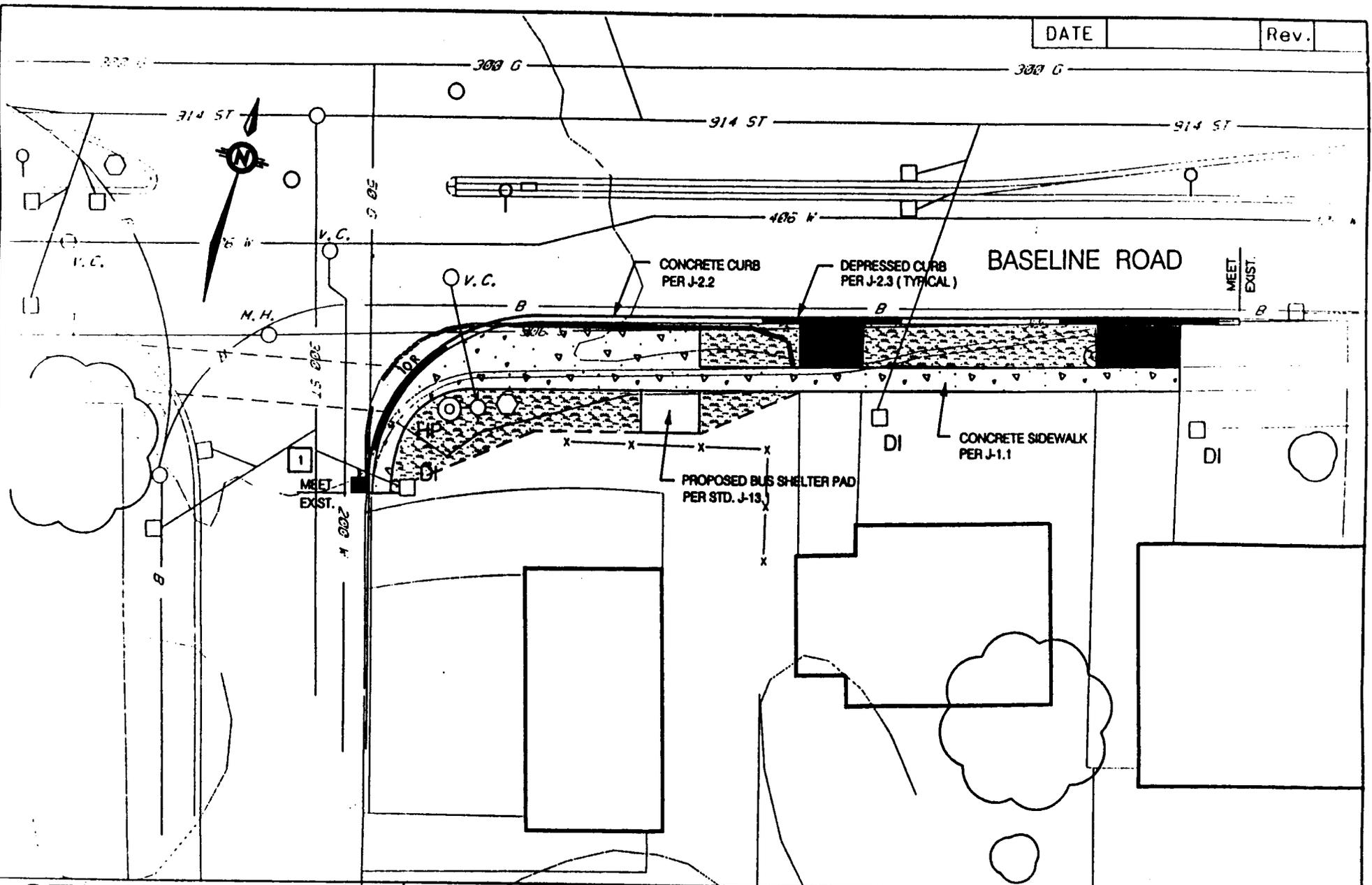
The preliminary design drawings for the proposed permanent closure of the bus bays have been reviewed by the Regional Cycling Advisory Group (RCAG). According to RCAG, roadways without bus bays create less chances for conflicts between cyclists and buses, and therefore they support this initiative.

*Approved by  
Jim Miller, P.Eng.*

MJR/rk

DATE

Rev.



**OTTAWA-CARLETON**  
 Environment &  
 Transportation Department

**BUS BAY CLOSURE LOCATIONS**  
 FARLANE BLVD., ZENA STREET, MARSON STREET.  
 PROPOSED BUS BAY CLOSURES. TYPICAL LAYOUT.

|                 |                   |                  |                 |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Drawn<br>R.B.H. | Checked<br>M.J.R. | Date<br>SEPT. 98 | Scale<br>N.T.S. |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|

ENGINEERING DIVISION

*W. Bennett, P.Eng.*  
 Manager Transportation Projects

RT - 2353

Extract of Minute  
Transportation Committee  
4 November 1998

BASELINE ROAD - SOUTH SIDE BUS BAY CLOSURES

- Director, Engineering Division report dated 23 Sep 98

The committee received a letter dated 3 November 1998 from Councillor Lee Farnworth of Nepean requesting the committee's consideration of reopening the bus bay at Baseline and Farlane.

Doug Brousseau, Acting Environment and Transportation Commissioner reminded members it has been Council's policy for the last four years not to install bus bays and staff are creating a priority list of locations where these facilities will be removed.

Councillor Kreling stated that although there have been no difficulties with the temporary filling of the bus bays over the past four years, he indicated his willingness to support the Nepean councillor's request.

Councillor Hunter advised that residents of Fisher Heights want the bus bay reopened at Farlane because not only would it offer shelter for buses from the flow of traffic, it would provide motorists an opportunity to merge safely and easily into that traffic on Baseline. He stressed the fact that this is an extremely busy road, with traffic usually travelling in excess of the 60 km/h posted speed, thereby creating difficulty for motorists wanting to turn. Consequently, he did not believe the request was a departure from the policy which stipulates that bus bays on roads where the posted speed limit is 60km/h and under will not be reinstated. He indicated the policy also states that bus bays will remain where clear visibility is in question and pointed out in the overhead, the growth of small trees along Baseline which effectively block the motorists' view from oncoming traffic as they exit from Farlane, thus forcing them quite far out onto Baseline. He referred to the comments by the Regional Cycling Advisory Group and did not understand how they contend that the removal of bus bays would be safer for cyclists, because if a bus is stopped, the cyclist would either have to stop behind the bus or pull out into the next lane with other traffic which is speeding along. He urged committee to support the Motion.

Councillor Bellemare inquired whether the intersection of Baseline and Farlane was warranted for traffic signal installation and staff advised that the most recent review revealed that it did not meet the warrants. The councillor agreed with the ward councillor that it is safer to merge with traffic when the bus bay is there, but questioned whether the Region should be encouraging this use of a bus bay because he believed it to be contrary to the Highway Traffic Act. He suggested this point be clarified.

Extract of Minute  
Transportation Committee  
4 November 1998

Councillor Doucet questioned the rationale for Council's policy on the removal of bus bays and the Acting Commissioner advised that when staff originally brought forward the policy, it was presented as a transit priority measure. Councillor Hunter interjected that there are not a lot of buses that use this route so although closing the bus bay permanently will assist a small portion of the transit service, it presents a major amount of inconvenience to motorists.

The Acting Chair, Councillor Legendre made reference to the use of the bus bay as an acceleration lane and questioned whether these were designed for such a use. The Acting Commissioner confirmed these facilities were not designed to be acceleration lanes because they are not constructed long enough to enable a motorist to get up enough speed to merge with the high speed travelled. The Solicitor confirmed this would be an illegal use of the bus bay.

Councillor McGoldrick-Larsen supported the Motion proposed by Councillor Kreling because as a frequent driver of that area, she believed there was a need to accommodate the community in their request. She indicated that she has used bus bays to drop off her kids so they can connect to their bus and went so far as to suggest that such use should be encouraged because it might increase transit ridership. She recognized that even though roads are designed for certain purposes sometimes they can fulfil other purposes they were not intended for and in this instance, the safety and security of both drivers and pedestrians should be considered.

Councillor Doucet stated that while this appears to be an issue of creating safer access onto Baseline Road, if the bus stop was moved to the western corner, he questioned whether there would still be a requirement for such access. He indicated his willingness to bring forward a Motion to that affect. The Acting Chair suggested that Motion should be referred to the Transit Services Committee.

With respect to this Motion, Councillor Cantin was concerned a bus stop before the intersection may impede the travel of motorists that are attempting to turn right at Farlane and envisioned a greater potential for rear-end collisions. He did not support the elimination of bus bays and suggested the Region lobby the province for priority for transit as the province of Quebec has done. He preferred that if the Motion is to be forwarded to the Transit Services Committee, it should include options that if the bus bay is not closed, this is what is proposed, et cetera.

Councillor Byrne noted there were three other locations referred to in the report which have already been closed and inquired when this took place. Staff advised it was done last summer in consultation with the ward councillor. Councillor Hunter advised he had consulted with the community with respect to those locations and they had no concerns

about those; however, this particular location can serve more use to motorists, as previously stated. Councillor Byrne believed the public hearing process would provide an opportunity for the public to examine some of the options being suggested today. She stated that based on the facts in the report that removal of bus bays improve transit service without measurable safety or delay consequences to other traffic, and the fact that the temporary fillings have been in place for four years, she did not see a justifiable reason at this point in time to make an exception to Council's policy.

In speaking to his Motion, Councillor Kreling suggested this is a situation where the community felt there was a reasonable opportunity within the existing policy to ask for this exemption. They have identified this location as a difficulty for them and he felt the arguments put forward were reasonable and in his view, would not constitute that much of a variation in the existing policy and would not jeopardize the integrity of the road system.

Councillor Bellemare suggested that staff examine the feasibility of creating a bonefide acceleration lane at that intersection and, in conjunction with OC Transpo, consider moving the bus stop to another location. In this regard, staff should also determine what costs would be involved and how much longer the lane would need to be, et cetera. While Councillor Hunter was sure the community would be receptive to a full acceleration lane, he thought they might be concerned about the extra monies required for such an extensive modification, when all they are really seeking is a little bit of comfort.

The Acting Chair questioned what the cost would be of making this bus bay into a full acceleration lane vs a signalized intersection. The Director of Engineering, Jim Miller indicated an acceleration lane would be about as expensive as signals (\$100,000) and staff would have to examine what the length of such a lane should be, which would involve some detailed work. The Acting Chair indicated that bus bays are not intended to be acceleration lanes and that the whole purpose of closing the bus bays was to determine if it gave more comfort to bus drivers.

Moved by H. Kreling

**That the bus bay at Farlane Boulevard and Baseline Road be reopened.**

LOST

YEAS: H. Kreling, M. McGoldrick-Larsen....2  
NAYS: M. Bellemare, W. Byrne, J. Legendre....3

Moved by C. Doucet

Extract of Minute  
Transportation Committee  
4 November 1998

**That the Transit Services Committee consider moving the bus stop at Farlane and Baseline to the west corner from the east corner.**

CARRIED  
(H. Kreling and M. McGoldrick-  
Larsen dissented)

Moved by M. Bellemare

**That staff examine the feasibility of creating a bonafide acceleration lane at the intersection of Baseline and Farlane and consider moving the bus stop to another location.**

CARRIED  
(W. Byrne and J. Legendre  
dissented)

**That the Transportation Committee recommend Council:**

- 1. approve the preliminary design for the permanent closure of the bus bays at the intersections of Baseline Road and Farlane Boulevard, Zena Street and Marson Street as illustrated on Drawing No. RT-2353;**
- 2. authorize the initiation of the Public Hearing process as required by Sections 297 and 300 of the Ontario Municipal Act.**

CARRIED as amended



CITY COUNCIL  
Lee Farnworth  
Councillor, Merivale Ward

November 3, 1998

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101 Centrepointe Drive  
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K2G 6K7

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Chair, Transportation Committee  
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Re: Permanent Closure of Bus Bays on Baseline Road

Dear Chair Holmes:

I will be unable to attend tomorrow's meeting of the Transportation Committee; however, I would like to comment on the motion to recommend that Regional Council approve the motion to permanently close the bus bays on Baseline Road at Farlane Blvd., Zena Street and Marson Street.

I do not support the elimination of these bus bays. I believe that by eliminating them we will create an even worse traffic hazard with a steady stream of cars brought to an abrupt halt by buses stopped in the middle of a lane that has a 60 kmh speed limit. The residents of the community have raised these concerns with me and with Gord Hunter, the Regional Councillor for the Ward.

As a minimum, I would ask that the Farlane Blvd. bay be made an exception. The closure of the bay at this location is a particular problem with traffic exiting from the Fisher Heights community both east and west onto Baseline Road. The sight lines for cars exiting at Farlane will be greatly reduced and will create real difficulties.

I would appreciate it if you could share my concerns and comments with the other members of the Transportation Committee. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Lee Farnworth  
Councillor, Merivale Ward

LF/prp