

ActiveTO Midtown Yonge Street Pilot Project

Stakeholder Meeting # 2 Summary

Date: Friday, April 9, 2021 from 9 – 11 a.m.

Host: City of Toronto, WebEx

Present

Councillors:

Councillor Matlow and Councillor Layton

Business Improvement Areas:

Bloor Yorkville BIA

Rosedale Main Street BIA

Yonge & St. Clair BIA

Residents' Associations:

Avenue-Bay Cottingham (ABC) Ratepayers' Association

Brentwood Towers Tenants Association

Deer Park Residents Group

Greater Yorkville Residents' Association

North Rosedale Ratepayers' Association

Midtown Ravines Group

Moore Park Residents' Association

Oriole Park Residents' Association

Quantum Owners & Residents Association

South Eglinton Ratepayers and Residents Association

Summerhill Residents' Association

Site Specific:

Toronto Lawn Tennis Club

Tridel: 5 Scrivener Sq Residential Development

Tricon Residential Inc.

York International School

York School (Jr. Campus)

Yorkminster Park Baptist Church

Organizations:

Canada Post

City of Toronto Senior's Forum

Cycle Toronto

Toronto Youth Cabinet

Walk Toronto

Staff and Project Team, City of Toronto:

Jacquelyn Howard, Director, Project Design & Delivery

Becky Katz, Manager, Cycling & Pedestrian Projects

David Dunn, Senior Project Manager, Cycling & Pedestrian Projects

Karina Fortin, Senior Project Manager, Cycling & Pedestrian Projects

Daniel Samson, Project Engineer, Cycling & Pedestrian Projects

Maogosha Pyjor, Stakeholder and Public Consultation

Jonathan Lam, Public Consultation Coordinator

Danielle Davis, BIA Office

Tobiah Abramson, CaféTO Project Manager

Aviva Coopersmith, Advisor Constituency and Planning to Councillor Mike Layton

Angela Surdi, Senior Advisor Constituency and Planning to Councillor Layton

Slavisa Mijatovic, Transportation and

Neighbourhood Issues Advisor to Councillor Matlow

IBI Group:

Zibby Petch

Dillon Consulting Limited:

Daniel Hoang and Simmy Saini

Meeting Purpose

This was the second key stakeholder meeting for the ActiveTO Midtown Complete Street Pilot project. The purpose of this meeting was to provide stakeholders with an update on the work that has been completed since the first meeting, including updates on the Council decision, streetscape design elements, CaféTO registrations, and preliminary designs and cross sections.

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Welcome

The meeting was facilitated by Dillon Consulting and began with a First Nations Land Acknowledgement. There were 28 stakeholders in attendance.

What We Heard

The following is a summary of what we heard from stakeholders:

- General **support and excitement for the Council approval of the pilot project**
- Ensure that **appropriate stakeholders and agencies are engaged with** to inform the development of the design, such as Police, EMS, Fire and Toronto Parking Authority
- Desire to **extend the pilot north of Davisville Avenue** for greater connectivity
- **Enhanced traffic calming measures north and south of the pilot installation**, to provide additional safety once the pilot boundaries end
- **Concern for the use of white bollards (flex posts)**, which are viewed as unsafe and easily broken, **and white hatched cycling lines** as delineations, which can cause confusion for cyclists and drivers
- **Support local businesses and minimize lane closures during install period** as much as possible
- **Address loading and parking needs**, while minimizing the impact on local businesses

Project Updates: Council Decision

The City provided stakeholders with an update on the Council decisions:

- On April 7, 2021, City Council approved the consultation, design, installation and monitoring of the ActiveTO Midtown Complete Street Pilot in collaboration with local Councillors and stakeholders.
- Transportation Services continues to work with TTC staff to ensure the proposed design adequately accommodates TTC bus stops, minimizes the impact to transit, and improves the street environment for transit users.
- Additional Council direction requested that the ActiveTO Midtown Yonge Complete Street Pilot report alongside the Midtown Infrastructure Implementation Strategy to inform other local transportation aspects with the report, and to reinforce one another.
- Council also requested that business-specific issues get reviewed and addressed throughout pilot delivery and monitoring and that block-by-block walkthroughs be conducted with the BIAs.
- Council requested that restaurants and bars fronting Yonge Street along the pilot who receive a curb lane café if requested, provided they meet all requirements of the program
- Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC) has endorsed the pilot project. City Council directed a report to the Committee following the consultation and installation of the pilot.

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Project Updates: Design + Installation

The City provided an update on design, streetscape elements and installation including preparation of base maps and survey, constraints maps for BIA Site Walks, curb lane CaféTO parking accommodations maps, traffic modelling, and cross sections.

Preliminary Design

The City presented drawings of the preliminary streetscape both with and without a curb lane CaféTO. Precedent images of some streetscape design elements were shown, such as the curb extensions, flex-post bollards, cycle track and planters from the Danforth Complete Street pilot.

The City presented preliminary typical mid-block cross sections from Bloor Street to Heath Street, and from Heath Street to Davisville Avenue, illustrating how the existing street configuration will change during the pilot both in summer and winter conditions. An alternative second southbound lane option between Davisville Avenue and Heath Street was presented, which is dependent upon discussions with the TTC.

Various criteria was reviewed to determine the preliminary design recommendations such as CaféTO applications, construction, accessibility provisions, and parking and loading demand factors.

Preliminary maps were shown to illustrate the area constraints and the location of curb lane CaféTO applicants and the parking accommodations and lane configurations along the various stretches of the study area.

CaféTO Updates

The CaféTO Registration Window 1 closed on March 26, 2021.

- 16 applicants were within the pilot area
- Those approved will have their curb lane cafés set up in May

The CaféTO Registration Window 2 is open and closes on May 3, 2021.

- Approved restaurants will have their curb lane cafés set up with the ActiveTO Midtown installation in June

Next Steps

Design Work:

- Site walks and accessibility review
- Work with BIAs to develop streetscape design palette and plant selection
- Prepare draft pavement markings plan
- Prepare draft public realm plan and signage plan
- Finalize traffic model

The next Stakeholder Meeting is scheduled for May 11, 2021 from 2 – 4 p.m.

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Questions & Discussion

The following is a record of the comments, questions and answer that were collected throughout the meeting. **Q = Question A = Answer C = Comment**

Cycling Infrastructure

Q: What is the rationale for using the bollards and buffer for bike lanes?

A: The City standard for a buffer is two white lines with diagonal hatching and flex posts. Last year, due to the speed at which we were asked to install new cycling infrastructure, we used two white lines without hatching because to reduce the time for manual labour for the contractors. There is a general preference for the bollards and white hatching for bike lanes to be the standard.

Q: White bollards are a safety issue with cars. Will concrete barriers be used to increase safety and how can the community have an input on what these will look like?

A: We are proposing to use low concrete curbs with bollards on top. We have found that bollards mounted on straight asphalt tend to have more challenges. At Council, it was adopted that Transportation Services has recently introduced new standards for bollard maintenance where there will be weekly patrols of all bikeways in the city to identify and replace broken bollards and curbs. Maintenance will start in the spring. Improving bollards maintenance has been a hot topic. We are happy to discuss further about youth engagement and how to potentially incorporate art and aesthetic elements in the pilot.

C: The York International School is happy to explore engaging their students.

Q: Can you elaborate on the tapering measures north (of the project boundaries)? Are those protected?

A: At intersections we normally drop protection, and we taper in where the parking starts and try not to impact parking at the north. We typically leave the parking where it is, and then taper it back with an appropriate clearance before the parking. Every design is site specific so for Yonge Street, we are investigating our options for improvements.

Traffic

Q: How will the second southbound lane between Davisville Avenue and Heath Street be used during weekdays? Will it be a dedicated transit-only lane or a general traffic lane?

A: The TTC has asked the City to evaluate a southbound second lane for general purpose. A motor vehicle second lane would be proposed rather than parking on both sides. The TTC has raised concerns regarding some of the queuing on St. Clair Avenue and some side street left hand turning, and what kind of queuing would be caused when they attempt to run shuttle services. The City is still in the initial phase of evaluating this request from the TTC, including trade-offs and benefits.

Q: The bridge south of Merton Street is narrow - how do we have space for two bike lanes on each side and two car lanes?

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A: The proposal is to reduce to either one travel lane in each direction or with the alternative configuration of a second southbound travel lane. Vehicular traffic would be down to one lane in each direction. We would have two or three travel lanes at most and then the bike lane.

Stakeholder Engagement

Q: What input has Toronto Emergency Services (EMS) had in this process?

A: We have general guidelines and standards that we utilize on all corridors, for which Emergency Services has provided input on. We typically circulate plans upon design.

C: It is important that EMS is involved at an early stage, to ensure that they can adequately respond to emergencies in a timely manner.

Q: How have Toronto Parking Authority (TPA) and Police been engaged and what data do they have on parking demands, both personal and services in the area?

A: The City is currently coordinating with TPA. They have some existing spaces just north of the site. In situations where there is a loss of parking spaces, alternate areas are investigated to make up loss. Currently we are still reviewing where parking is going. Like, Fire, EMS, and Solid Waste, Transportation Services engages these internal partners for feedback.

Q: Are we going to have individual visits from City staff for individual properties?

A: We are focusing on site walks with BIAs (pending Public Health guidelines). We have not planned to do individual site walks with non-BIA stakeholders, but please contact the team with site specifics so that that team can address any concerns.

Q: How many people will be invited to the community consultation that is planned for April 27?

A: Over 33,000 postcards were mailed to the project area with coverage including: Bloor Street to Davisville Avenue between Mount Pleasant Avenue and Avenue Road. The webpage will launch on April 13 with registration details.

Safety

Q: What happens to the cycling infrastructure north of Davisville when cyclists enter and exit?

A: When we end the transition at the northern end, it does not end abruptly at the intersection. We will taper it so that bike lanes go a bit further north of Davisville Avenue and then taper back into regular lanes of traffic. We will route cyclists to alternate routes off of Yonge Street to guide them further north beyond the limits of this project.

C: We have concerns about tapering and ending the cycling lanes at Davisville Avenue - we would like to see increased connectivity, and have the tapering go past north of Davisville Avenue. When traffic calming measures end, you get a lot of dangerous driving as people spread out into multiple lanes. Having consistent traffic flow is also a concern and how this will be impacted for southbound lanes to open and then close.

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A: Councillor Layton shared that there has been requests to look at left-hand turn lanes and advanced left turns at green lights at Yonge Street and Davenport Road and Church Street, which is something the team will take into consideration when we do more detailed design work on the corridor.

Parking and Loading

Q: Deer Park Association has submitted their priorities to the team – how will these be addressed? Our community prioritizes patios and loading zones higher, and on-street parking as a lower priority. We are cautious of encouraging too much on street parking. There is already a lot of off street parking, which can create negative dynamics and tension.

A: For on-street loading, we always look 50 metres on side streets and 100 metres on larger arterial roads as part of the design process, and we do not typically look further. Early next week we are launching a loading study for businesses and organizations along the corridor to better understand loading needs (how and when require loading and size of vehicles). We are also working closely with Wheel-Trans to understand key locations along corridor that require special attention for accessibility.

Project Expansion

Q: How are you exploring extending this project north of Davisville Avenue?

A: There was interest and a motion to expand the pilot area towards the north, but unfortunately it was not carried at the Infrastructure and Environment Committee. We are hopeful that there will be a connection north in the future, but this is pending City Council direction. Future implementation projects could be recommended in our upcoming Cycling Network Plan updates and that is how we could further indicate recommendations to Council on whether or not to explore a north expansion of the pilot project.

Streetscape

Q: How does street furniture contribute to CaféTO applications?

A: Street furniture on the road right now is an important part of the city streetscape. Under CaféTO guidelines, there is a requirement to maintain 2.1 metre of pedestrian clearway for accessibility purposes. This is measured between the edge of the proposed café area and the closest obstruction, which in many cases would be street furniture. If that is under 2.1 metres, the café would not be possible in that specific space.

Q: Will potholes be repaired before installation?

A: Yes, this will happen in the next few weeks, before CaféTO installation Window 1 happens in May 2021.

Q: Will planters be in place at CaféTO and will they be maintained?

A: We are actively working on getting planters in place in early May 2021, when CaféTO is

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installed.

Business Impacts

Q: Will all curb lane CaféTO be impacted for two weeks during the Complete Street installation?

A: It will not be a two week lane closure for BIAs or curb lane cafés. Once we have a contractor, we will work with them to minimize how long cafés need to be closed.

Q: Is there any capacity to shift patios as construction goes on, rather than removing them completely for two weeks (as a way to help keep businesses and patios open during this time)?

A: It is an innovative thought and we need to consider it. We do not have the contractor to discuss the detailed design, but when we do, we will take it into consideration. We are prioritizing keeping patios open.