

Lake Shore Boulevard West Cycle Track Consultation Report

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Introduction

The City is planning a 1.4km cycle track along Lake Shore Boulevard West from Norris Crescent to First Street, west of Mimico Waterfront Park in Etobicoke, Ward 6. The new cycle track will provide a safe connection for cyclists, and will close a gap in the Waterfront Trail.

The Lake Shore Boulevard West Cycle Track was initiated by a letter from Councillor Grimes to Council on February 3, 2014 titled "Request for Report on Feasibility of Closing Gap on Waterfront Trail – Etobicoke Section." On March 4, 2014 City Council subsequently approved a motion to request Transportation Services to report on the "feasibility of implementing a bikeway facility along Lake Shore Boulevard West between Norris Crescent and First Street, to connect the Etobicoke sections of the Waterfront Trail."

Consultation with City divisions, utility partners, key stakeholders, and the public was an important part of this project. The objectives of the consultation process were to:

- Identify key stakeholders who would have an interest in or influence on project design outcomes
- Ensure that key internal and external stakeholders are aware of the Lake Shore Boulevard West Cycle Track and its implications and opportunities for the neighbourhood, and provide them with opportunities to comment
- Engage identified stakeholders in a dialogue on design and implementation
- Gather and document stakeholder and public feedback to be considered by the project team

To meet these objectives the City held two Public Open Houses and had individual discussions with various stakeholders:

- The first Open House was held in April 2014 in coordination with other Ward 6 cycling projects. This first meeting provided direction for City staff to design a bi-directional cycle track. A separate consultation report was prepared for the first Open House, and is included in Appendix B.
- A second Open House was held in December 2015 to share the proposed design with the public. Stakeholders and the public were invited to submit comments via email or phone throughout a commenting period, ending December 30, 2015, and information about the project was shared online (www.toronto.ca/lakeshorecycle).

The project team includes:

Kanchan Maharaj, Acting Sr. Engineer, Cycling Infrastructure & Programs
Jennifer Hyland, Project Manager, Cycling Infrastructure & Programs
Kate Nelischer, Sr. Public Consultation Coordinator, Public Consultation Unit
Robyn Shyllit, Sr. Public Consultation Coordinator, Public Consultation Unit
Dave McLaughlin, Sr. Project Manager, MMM Group Ltd. (Consultant)
Scott Roberts, Sr. Project Manager, MMM Group Ltd. (Consultant)
Jason Neudorf, Transportation Planner, MMM Group Ltd. (Consultant)

The following pages summarize the consultation process, and the comments and questions received.

Public Open House

April 16, 2014

Polish Cultural Centre

A Public Open House was held on April 16, 2014 at the Polish Cultural Centre to discuss cycling projects in Ward 6, including improving the Waterfront Trail gap along Lake Shore Boulevard West.

The event was advertised through the City of Toronto website, a print advertisement in the Etobicoke Guardian South, and through the delivery of 12,000 notices to addresses in the study area. Over 50 people attended the event.

City staff presented the existing conditions on Lake Shore Boulevard West from Norris Crescent to First Street, along with potential cycling improvements to close the gap in the Waterfront Trail. The objective of the meeting was to gather public feedback on a number of design options.

A report of this event was completed in 2014 (Appendix B). The main comments received are highlighted below:

- Strong support for connecting the waterfront trail on Lake Shore Boulevard West using a (uni- or bi-directional) cycling facility
- New crossing solution needed to navigate the streetcar tracks at Lake Shore Boulevard West and First Street
- Safe separation between motorists and cyclists was a priority
- Need for more bicycle parking in the area

Stakeholder Meetings and Communications

August 2015 – November 2015

The project team connected with various internal and external stakeholders from July 2015 through November 2015 to introduce the design, discuss needs and opportunities, and gather feedback on the proposed design.

Stakeholders included:

- City departments (Traffic Operations, Solid Waste, Pedestrian Projects, Road Operations, EMS, and Toronto Water)
- Toronto Transit Commission (TTC)
- TTC Advisory Committee on Accessible Transit (ACAT)
- Lakeshore Village BIA
- Mimico-by-the-Lake BIA
- The Consulate General of Poland

City Departments and Agencies

Project Manager Kanchan Maharaj and Jennifer Hyland from Cycling Infrastructure maintained communication with internal stakeholders throughout the project to ensure City requirements were met and that the Cycle Track would be coordinated with other works in the area. Representatives from Traffic Operations, Road Operations, Pedestrian Projects, Cycling, Solid Waste, Toronto Transit Commission, and Public Consultation reviewed the draft Cycle Track design.

TTC Advisory Committee on Accessible Transit

Project Manager Kanchan Maharaj and Kate Nelischer attended an ACAT meeting on September 9th, 2015 at the TTC North York Civic Centre offices to present the proposed design and gather feedback.

Committee members provided the following comments:

- There was some concern about the possibility of cyclists not stopping in advance of bus platforms. Encouraged additional signage, special paint colours within the cycle track, tactile paving, and additional signage imprinted into the cycle track. There was also a suggestion to include a lighted warning signal for cyclists approaching TTC platforms.
- There was some concern about confusion caused by two TTC stop signs (one for buses and one for streetcars) for people with visual impairments.
- There was a suggestion to include tactile paving to mark cuts in driveway entrances.
- There was a suggestion to omit street furniture from the vicinity of the tactile paving adjacent to TTC platforms.
- There was a suggestion to include differently abled people in the renderings.

Lakeshore Village BIA and Mimico-by-the-Lake BIA

The Public Consultation Unit contacted the Lakeshore Village BIA and the Mimico-by-the-Lake BIA on October 1, 2015 through their shared coordinator (Alison Juda) to advise them of the project. Ms. Juda responded on October 6, 2015 requesting a meeting with Lakeshore Village BIA Board Member Peter Kearns.

Project team members Kanchan Maharaj, Jennifer Hyland, and Kate Nelischer held a meeting with Mr. Kearns on October 15, 2015 at Mr. Kearns' office. The meeting minutes can be found in Appendix A.

The project team presented the proposed design to Mr. Kearns and provided a two-page project summary to bring to other BIA members (Appendix B). Mr. Kearns expressed support for the cycle track and offered to share information on the project with other BIA members.

Kate Nelischer also spoke with Chris Korwin-Kuczynski, the Vice Chair of the Lakeshore Village BIA, over the phone on October 2, 2015 and November 19, 2015. Mr. Korwin-Kuczynski expressed support for the cycle track and provided the following comments:

- A separated bike lane is important for this area.
- The reconstruction and widening of sidewalks is also needed.
- Planters are the preferred type barrier between the cycle track and vehicular lanes; help to beautify the street.
- A gateway feature at the start of the cycle track at First Street should be considered.

The Consulate General of Poland

The Public Consultation Unit contacted the Consulate General of Poland (2603 Lake Shore Boulevard West) on several occasions by email and phone, but no responses have been received.

On October 2, 2015 Kate Nelischer emailed the Consulate to introduce the project and request a meeting to discuss. A two-page project summary was attached to this email. This email was followed-up with a phone call. Kate Nelischer spoke with the receptionist at the Consulate and confirmed that the original email had been received and reviewed, but that a meeting could not be scheduled at that time. The receptionist confirmed that the Consulate would contact the City with questions or to request a meeting.

Two subsequent emails were sent on November 18, 2015 and December 15, 2015 to advise the Consulate of the Public Open House, note that display panels were available online, and to request a meeting.

Public Open House
December 8, 2015, 6pm – 8pm
New Toronto Library, 110 Eleventh Street

A Public Open House was held on December 8, 2015 at the New Toronto Library from 6pm – 8pm. This event was held to share the proposed cycle track design with the public, answer questions, and obtain feedback.



Notification

- 14,587 notices were mailed to addresses in the study area through Canada Post on November 19, 2015 (Appendix B).
- An advertisement for the Open House was placed in the Etobicoke Guardian South on November 27, 2015 (Appendix B).
- Information about the Open House was posted on the project website, along with all panels and reports: www.toronto.ca/lakeshorecycle
- Notices were sent via email to the project mailing list, the Lakeshore Village BIA, Mimico-by-the-Lake BIA, the Consulate General of Poland, and CycleTO.
- The notice was also provided to Councillor Grimes' office to be shared with constituents.

Attendees

Over 50 people attended the Public Open House throughout the evening.



Nine project team members participated in the event, including:

- Kanchan Maharaj, Transportation Services (Project Manager)
- Jennifer Hyland, Transportation Services
- Ashley Curtis, Transportation Services
- Jacquelyn Hayward Gulati, Transportation Services
- Kate Nelischer, Public Consultation
- Robyn Shyllit, Public Consultation
- David McLaughlin, MMM Group Ltd.
- Scott Roberts, MMM Group Ltd.
- Jason Neudorf, MMM Group Ltd.

Councillor Grimes and Constituency Assistant Michelle Telfeyan also attended.

Summary of Event

Attendees were invited to view display panels and materials and speak with project team members. Attendees could provide feedback by submitting comment cards at the meeting or via email or mail by December 30, 2015 (Appendix B). Project team members circulated the room with clipboards to record notes during conversations with attendees.



Twenty panels were displayed around the room and provided the following information:

- Project background
- Context
- Existing conditions
- Parking demand
- Timeline
- Summary of 2014 Public Open House
- Proposed design
- Next steps

The panels can be found online. A large print out of the proposed design was also available at the Public Open House along with post-it notes for attendees to post their comments directly on the drawing.

Public Comments

The project team was pleased to receive many comments and questions both from people who live and work in the study area as well as many who travel through it. This feedback came in the following forms:

- 20 comment cards were submitted at the Public Open House, and two were submitted afterwards.
- Staff spoke with Open House attendees and recorded notes.
- 33 comments were submitted separately via email or phone.

The proposed cycle track design received a mainly positive reception from the public. People were excited to have a dedicated cycling facility along Lake Shore Boulevard West and feel that it will provide a safer connection for cyclists and encourage more people to cycle in this area.

There was general support for the bi-directional design and the proposed separation. There was also support for a mix of barriers (including planters, low jersey barriers, and low curbs with bollards). Many people felt that the planters would be the most aesthetically appealing, but some also commented that the low Jersey barrier and the low curb with bollards would provide a strong barrier while allowing for necessary access points.

There were some concerns about the loss of on-street parking along the south side of Lake Shore Boulevard West, and the implication for deliveries and driveway access to single family homes along the cycle track.

Below is a summary of comments received.

General

Comments:

- Support for cycle track (x43)
- Opposition to cycle track (x12)
- The cycle track will bring more people to the neighbourhood, which would result in economic benefits for local businesses (x2)

Suggestions:

- Extend the cycle track

Concerns:

- Connection with possible future bike lanes west of First Street could be problematic

Questions/Requests:

- Statistics on how many cyclists currently use Lake Shore Boulevard West
- Advance notification prior to construction be provided to those who live and work in the area to explain how to use the cycle track

Safety

Comments:

- The cycle track will improve safety (x14)
- Preference for uni-directional design due to concern around crossing bi-directional cycle track and two vehicular lanes to make left turns out of driveways on the south side of Lake Shore Boulevard West (x7)

Concerns:

- The cycle track will be unsafe and lead to accidents (x2)
- Possible conflicts between cyclists and in-line skaters
- Safety of the cycle track in the winter when snow can cause barriers (windrows) (x2)
- Speed of cyclists using the Martin Goodman Trail and the new cycle track, posted speed limits could help
- Breaks in barriers will not provide ample protection for cyclists, and could present tripping hazards for pedestrians and navigational hazards for drivers

Questions/Requests:

- Will enforcement officers be available to monitor whether cyclists are obeying the rules of the road?

Traffic

Comments:

- Using residential streets north of Lake Shore Boulevard West for cycling route would have less impact on traffic flow than using Lake Shore Boulevard West

Concerns:

- Loss of the curb lane and impact on traffic congestion (x6)
- Cyclists will continue using the north side of Lake Shore Boulevard West instead of the cycle track
- Cycle track will make it difficult for drivers to exit driveways on the south side of Lake Shore Boulevard West (x5)

Parking

Comments:

- Do not think that removal of on-street parking is a concern (x2)

Suggestions:

- Additional bike parking needed in the area to support increased cycling volume from cycle track

Concerns:

- drivers will park vehicles in the cycle track
- loss of street parking, including visitor and overnight parking (x6)
- Delivery access to single family residential houses on the south side of Lake Shore Boulevard West

Barriers

Comments:

- Ensure planters are maintained year-round (x2)
- Ensure planters are well spaced out
- Planters will beautify the street (x2)
- Support for solid barriers that can stop a car, like high Jersey barriers and planters (x5)
- Bollards can be easily knocked over (x3)
- Bollards are beneficial because they allow for cyclists to pass

- Oppose the low Jersey barriers (x3)
- Five inch precast barriers should end a foot before the stop line and intersection with a flashing light on top, which would prevent buses and trucks from damaging the barriers

Suggestions:

- To avoid freezing in the winter, use planters with aerogel and reflective coating
- Use low and hardy plants in planters to minimize replacement and increase driver's visibility (x3)
- Low Jersey barriers should be brightly coloured to avoid pedestrians tripping over them (x2)
- Planters could be maintained through local stewardship (x3)
- Narrow the barrier buffer space to provide a wider cycle track (x2)
- Install reflectors on the street side of the barriers

Concerns:

- Loss of existing residential character, and that concrete barriers will contribute to this

Maintenance

Comments:

- Support for year-round maintenance

Concerns:

- The cycle track will not be maintained in the winter (x5)

Transit

Comments:

- Impressed by the accessibility of transit plans

Concerns:

- Buses are not frequent enough to justify a platform, and platforms can be dangerous for cyclists
- Transit users will wait in the cycle track on the platform for TTC vehicles
- Bus stops will be compromised by the cycle track

Signage

Comments:

- Support for adding thermoplast "stop here" and "do not pass open doors" signs into the cycle track at TTC platforms (x3)
- Better wayfinding is needed (x3)
- Support for adding "slow" and "watch for turning vehicles" signs within the cycle track

Suggestions:

- Add sharrows and chevrons to First Street and Norris Crescent (x2)
- The cycle track should be painted green, similar to Sherbourne bike lanes, so that green bike lanes become a standard that are recognized (x3)
- Standardized cycling signage is needed across the city
- Clear signage needed to encourage cyclists to use cycle track instead of riding on the street
- Add wayfinding signs that indicate distance to key destinations
- Use green markings to denote directions into and out of cycle track from cross streets
- Implement signs with symbols rather than using English sentences and words

Intersections

Suggestions:

- Add traffic lights to Norris Crescent
- Accommodate cyclists to make left and right turns to go north, especially at Royal York Road (x4)

Concerns:

- Cyclists will not stop at intersections, especially at Island View
- Cyclists making left turns onto Royal York Road
- How cyclists travelling west who would like to stay on Lake Shore Boulevard West will cross over to the north side of the street
- The sidewalk at the intersection of First Street is too wide and will have to be narrowed to accommodate the cycle track

Feedback on Consultation

The following comments pertain to the Public Open House format:

- This open meeting was a great idea, made you feel more part of the community
- I really like the way the civic meeting was constructive, very interactive
- It was a good format for the meeting and allowed questions to be answered
- Your December 8 open house was much appreciated by local residents for the clarity of presentation and for the presence of several informed representatives who seemed more than willing to discuss attendees' concerns.

Next Steps

The comments and questions gathered through the consultation process have informed the refinement of the cycle track design. The project will move into detailed design in Spring 2016 following Council approval, with construction scheduled for Summer 2016.

Construction notification will be provided to all addresses in the study area, and information about the construction process will be emailed to the project mailing list and posted online.