

# Toronto Bike Plan Public Consultation Session Summary

## Fall 2007

**Re: Toronto Cycling Public Consultation Session**  
**St. Lawrence Hall, King Street East**  
**Thursday, July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2007**  
**7:00 to 9:00 p.m.**

### SUMMARY NOTES

## 1.0 Introduction

A central premise of the Implementation and Evaluation of the Toronto Bike Plan is to actively involve members of the public (Chapter 10, Toronto Bike Plan). To this end, the City of Toronto hosted a Public Consultation Session to receive feedback and collect new ideas on setting priorities for cycling in Toronto for the next five years. Considering that the ten year Toronto Bike Plan (adopted in 2001) is now at the halfway point, this first session functioned as an open house format for:

- the public to learn about the status of current City projects,
- the public to give feedback and comments directly to staff, and,
- for the public to participate in activities to help prioritize bike projects and timelines

The Public was encouraged to share their thoughts and visions in moving the cycling agenda forward with projects that support both current and new cyclists. Over 150 people attend the Public Consultation Session on July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

## 2.0 Session Format - *Dotmocracy*

*Dotmocracy* is an established facilitation process for prioritizing ideas among a large number of people. It is a participatory and equal opportunity large group decision-making process.

A total of 42 existing Bike Plan Recommendations were posted at the Session. Participants were given dots in order to demonstrate their support for a Recommendation on an opinion scale. Participants were asked to help 'prioritize' the existing recommendations by placing their dot in one of the following categories:

- High Priority
- Priority
- Low Priority
- Forget About It

Participants were given instruction sheets with clear and concise guidelines taken directly from the *Dotmocracy Handbook* available at [www.dotmocracy.org](http://www.dotmocracy.org). These guidelines included but were not limited to:

### Core Rules

1. Each participant can only fill one dot per a dotmocracy sheet.

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2. There are no changes to an ideas text inside the idea box once dotting has started. Amendments should be presented as a new complete idea on a new sheet. Comments may be added at any time outside of the idea box.

### Participant Responsibilities

1. One must fully read and consider a posted idea before dotting.
2. One's dot represents one's judgment of the idea written on the sheet, not the comments, although comments may inform one's judgment.
3. One must sign each sheet she or he dots. Exception: On request, a facilitator may fill a dot and sign a sheet for someone with disabilities or who is not comfortable putting their own signature.

More about the process of Dotmocracy can be found at [www.dotmocracy.org](http://www.dotmocracy.org).

### 3.0 New Ideas

In addition to the existing Bike Plan Recommendations, participants also had the option of posting 'New Ideas' in two designated areas of the room. 'New Ideas' were written in the appropriate section of a blank *Dotmocracy* form, posted and subsequently voted on by other participants. Staff from Public Consultation and Community Outreach (City of Toronto Department), facilitated the 'New Idea' area by providing appropriate resources (markers, pens, blank sheets) and posting the sheets in a visible and accessible manner. In total there were 62 'New Ideas' formulated.

### 4.0 Results

#### Most Popular Existing Toronto Bike Plan Recommendations

##### Methodology

As mentioned in the Session Format section (above), a total of 42 existing recommendations from the Toronto Bike Plan were posted at the Consultation Session. In order to determine which existing Toronto Bike Plan Recommendations were the most popular, city staff combined the total number of votes for both the 'High Priority' and 'Priority' sections on the opinion scale. The results were then compared and ranked in their appropriate numerical order. This formula provided staff with insight into which existing recommendations were to be prioritized according to the participants present at the session.

For example,

*Recommendation # 1– Implement a Bikeway Network. 5-1*

<i>High Priority</i>	<i>Priority</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>Forget About It</i>
75	5	4	1

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*Total: 80*

The following represent **the top ten most popular recommendations** from the Toronto Bike Plan:

**Recommendation #1: Implement a Bikeway Network. 5-1\***

High	Priority	Low	Forget About It
75	5	4	1
<p>Comments**:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prioritize routes to schools and major centres of employment + make sure to find ways to cross highways + railroad (i.e., Consumers Rd in North York isolated by 401 &amp; 404</li> <li>- Host follow-up consultations on Bikeway Net.: have people identify priorities over the next 5 years.</li> <li>- Make sure it connects paths and amenities w. the places cyclists need to go! (i.e. avoid traffic and hills) make it useful, ie, Bloor/Danforth</li> <li>- Bike friendly streets make the whole road system a bikeway network</li> <li>- Have cyclists ride w. bike lane planners around the city to see where to put lanes</li> <li>- Too truncated - lanes disappear: we should not have to problem-solve while cycling</li> <li>- Think commuting - think getting people out of cars - think major arteries</li> <li>- Direct E - W &amp; N - S commuting routes w. dedicated bike lanes (Danforth Bloor, Yonge St.)</li> <li>- Less blue signs and more bike lanes!</li> </ul>			

**Recommendation #2: Improve Bikeway Maintenance to Ensure Safe Operation. 5- 4**

High	Priority	Low	Forget About It
59	14	6	1
<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Can you start w. Sherbourne St please</li> <li>- Involve community folk in maintenance (of Sherbourne)</li> <li>- Snow &amp; ice clearing on existing roads needs improvement. think year-round: maintain bike lanes/ sidewalks prior to vehicles</li> <li>- Major bike paths should be cleared of snow &amp; ice!</li> <li>- Potholes &amp; sewer grates can kill!</li> <li>- Require developers to return the road to perfect, not just usable condition after making utility cuts, esp. in the curb lane/bike lane.</li> </ul>			

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### Recommendation #3: Provide Bicycle Friendly Features for Bridges/ Underpasses. 4- 6

High	Priority	Low	Forget About It
49	17	3	0
<hr/> <p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Should expand to include on/off ramps ((ie, at 401 underpasses)</li> <li>- Finland has underpasses and bridges especially for cyclists &amp; pedestrians</li> <li>- Why is this not yet a part of the process?</li> <li>- This is so important. Number one concern when riding at night</li> <li>- Some underpasses are soo dark even during the day that cyclists should be using lights, not a good user design</li> <li>- If I blow a tire under an underpass (as has happened), I must walk on the road, as the curb is fenced.</li> <li>- There have been fatalities at underpasses; we need safety first in design.</li> </ul>			

### Recommendation #4: Produce Bicycle Parking Guidelines for Developers. 9-5

High	Priority	Low	Forget About It
61	4	3	1
<hr/> <p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Downtown condos have more people on bikes than in cars. Why do residents w/o cars get a free spot they'll never use?</li> <li>- (Not free - show me where! \$29k)</li> <li>- Must include some sort of monitoring program, otherwise bike storage areas can</li> </ul>			

### Recommendation #5: Develop a Bike-to-School Program. 7-2

High	Priority	Low	Forget About It
55	10	2	0
<hr/> <p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Check out Cycling Proficiency Program in UK schools</li> <li>- Get kids riding young and include safety in program.</li> <li>- Great way to get the whole family involved!</li> <li>- Set up a 'bike bus' program - this can be community-run, they just need to know how</li> <li>- Great idea!</li> <li>- Link bike-to-school with the bike network (eg. Bike lanes/paths to schools of all levels)</li> <li>- Why don't kids just bike to school like they used to?</li> </ul>			

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- Biking is not considered cool by youth - making it so in highschools would be an awesome feat
- Secure bike parking at schools is needed

**Recommendation #6: Develop a Strategy for Reducing Bicycle Theft. 9-6**

High	Priority	Low	Forget About It
58	6	3	0

**Comments:**

- Fix & the post'n'ring security issue!
- Please ban Igor - give cops power.
- Supervised bike parking - you could make all the parking lots provide a certain amount of supervised bicycle parking – you can also make buildings put their bike parking racks within so many metres of the main entrance so that it is visible and theft is less likely.
- I asked if there was information-gathering done by police about stolen bikes - apparently not, no tracking, no high theft area (we all know)
- no monitoring of Igor & Uncle Jacob (Spadina)
- Please, please, please, I also suggest cracking down on "used bicycle sales" - so many 'legal' stores in the city sell stolen, refurbished bikes.
- Bike thieves should be charged same as car thieves: both are stolen vehicles!
- Education: if 95% of thefts are really from broken locks, there's not much we can do.
- Re: insurance companies - most of us have \$1000 deductible & most bikes are not that much more.

**Recommendation #7: Encourage Employers to Promote Bicycle Commuting. 7-6**

High	Priority	Low	Forget About It
48	15	6	0

**Comments:**

- Tax parking lots at a higher rate than buildings (2 dots in support of this)
- Devise tax relief for businesses with cyclist employees (1 dot in support of this)
- Tax parking so its more representative of the true cost of not riding one's bike to work
- There are plenty of employers in Toronto who are near-hostile to bike commuters. We need to change this...somehow.
- Must make this part of comprehensive TDM program
- The City must show leadership internally before biz will follow suit.

**Recommendation #8: Manage City-wide Bicycle Parking Strategy. 9-1**

High	Priority	Low	Forget About It
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47	16	6	0
<hr/> <p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Change by-laws so that any property owner (strip-mall, condo developer, etc...) required to supply parking also has to provide bicycle parking (similar to handicap spots idea)</li> <li>- Develop incentives to encourage property owners, especially retailers, to allow cyclists to bring their vehicles indoors/shopping with them!</li> <li>- Make good locations and establish minimum quota per block based on useage.</li> <li>- Advertise programs on a monthly basis.</li> <li>- Post-ring racks at Don Mills Stn (and others?) are not sunk in concrete – only are bolted to sidewalk. Many are loose – not secure parking.</li> </ul>			

### **Recommendation #9: Request MTO to Develop/Implement Bicycle Safety Strategies. 6- 8**

High	Priority	Low	Forget About It
59	3	0	0
<hr/> <p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Educate drivers on cyclists rights!</li> <li>- Yes! Bikes are people too!!</li> <li>- Check collision data re: mandatory helmets</li> <li>- Has # of injuries decreased because of helmets or because fewer people cycle due to the requirement...</li> <li>- But be careful not to restrict/reduce the implications accidents have</li> </ul>			

### **Recommendation #10: Review Access to Transit Stations and Implement Improvements. 8- 3**

High	Priority	Low	Forget About It
50	12	2	1
<hr/> <p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Heath St. exit at St. Clair W. station – no way to exit with a bike</li> <li>- The word implement is the key in this section</li> <li>- Include GO stations &amp; Union station – include by the hour/day lockers – will serve many more people</li> <li>- Include GO &amp; VIA</li> </ul>			

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Stairways retro-fitted with bike ramp</li><li>- Stairs are a huge impediment to wheeled traffic!!</li></ul> |
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### \* A Note Regarding the title line

The recommendation is ranked from 1 to 10, followed by the title of the recommendation (e.g. Implement a Bikeway Network) and lastly the Toronto Bike Plan recommendation number (e.g. 5-1).

\*\* Comments were retyped herein as they appeared on the original sheets collected at the Consultation Session (ie. verbatim)

## Most Popular 'New Ideas'

### Methodology

#### **First step:**

In order to accurately and fairly represent the large number of New Ideas, many of which were very similar in nature, staff grouped the 'New Ideas' together. The groupings of the 'New Ideas' are loosely based on the Toronto Bike Plan recommendations to allow for comparison and appropriate future staff delegation. For example "New Bike Lanes/Paths Requested" is similar to Toronto Bike plan recommendation "5-1 implements a Bikeway Network". The results reflected strong correlations between highly prioritized existing recommendations and popular new ideas.

The following are the categories created to represent recurring and popular themes:

- Bike Lane Design
- Bike Lane Enforcement
- Bike Lane on Bloor
- Bike Lane/Path Requests
- Bike Stations and Public Bikes
- Clean Air Zones
- Go Train and TTC Rush Hour Access
- Highway and Bridge Crossings
- Policy, Practices and Regulations
- Target Promotions

#### **Second Step:**

Similar to the methodology used to prioritize existing Toronto Bike Plan ideas, staff combined the total number of votes for both the 'High Priority' and 'Priority' sections on the opinion scale. The 'New Ideas' were ranked based on highest number of votes one idea received (e.g. "Effective east-west bike network" has 47 votes the most in the "**Bike Lane on Bloor**" group).

For example:

<i>Title of New Idea</i>	<i>Number of votes</i>	<i>Most votes in group</i>
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<i>Effective east-west bike network</i>	47	<b>47</b>
<i>Bloor St. bike lanes</i>	43	

The results were then compared and ranked in their appropriate numerical order.

The following represent **the top ten New Ideas** as gathered from the Toronto Public Cycling Consultation Session on Thursday, July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2006:

### New Idea 1: Bike Lane on Bloor

Effective east-west bike network*	47	<b>47</b>
Bloor St. bike lanes	43	
Bike Lane: Bloor	42	
Dedicated bike lane on Danforth Ave.	28	

### New Idea 2: Clean Air Zones

Rush-hour Bicycle lanes on arterial roads that have Rush-hour Parking restrictions	42	<b>42</b>
Sustainable "Green Zone" for foot and cycle deliveries in downtown ore during peak congestion periods	30	
Clean air Corridors: walk/cycle during smog days over '5'	4	

### New Idea 3: New Bike Lanes/Paths Requested

Bike lanes on all arterial roads	41	<b>41</b>
Continuous Bike lanes IE Gerrard, College, Royal York, etc	30	
Paint bike lanes on Wellesley street now. The section between Yonge street and Jarvis street has no parking and a painted median that could easily be removed to paint lanes	21	
I speak on behalf of the ICES BUG at Sunnybrook Hosp. on advocating for a Bayview Avenue mulitpurpose path(like that Martin Goodman path... to be distinguished from a bike path) Currently there is no safe north/south connector. Bayview is:a major artery to Cresent school and York Uni., Glendon Campus - A major artery to Sunnybrook Hosp., Lyndhurst Rehab Hospital, CNIB, Bloorview Kids Rehab Centre, all major emplyers and destinations points - a major artery to park/rec. areas - sunnybrook and other connecting parks. - A major artery to designated city bike routes/lanes (south east through park; south to downtown west through cemeteries and beltline) - A bike lane already exists on Bayview that connects the Granite Club to Lawrence - Cars travel dangerously fast between Sheppard and Broadway because there are no	13	

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buisnesses/parking. The unfortunate tragedy a few weeks ago on Bayview speaks volumes on this issue.		
Bike/Park path through gateway greenbelt. (At present Flemington and thorncliff park community members do not have easy/comfortable/safe access to Bike Plan routes. Children have zero opportunity to learn to ride.	13	
Link to Leslie St. Spit on Leslie St	9	
Rails to Trails? (can not read rest)	7	
Path: E. Winchester Ave down past Riv. Farm to Bayview & up the Riv. Park embankment to the footbridge over the Don	5	
Bike lane on Mount Pleasant between Bloor St and Merton St	4	

### New Idea 4: Bike Stations & Public Bikes

Secure parking at all subway stations	37	<b>37</b>
Renewed ideas of sharing and reusing old bikes at Bike Pirates, CBN, Bike Chain, getting all the old bikes out of garages and on the road - better access to bikes for low-income groups	10	
Create bike rental stations in the city, along the lines of the recent "velo" program in Paris. That is, short term rental for commuting not leisure riding.	10	
Bike Lease/short term rental	2	

### New Idea 5: GO Train and TTC Rush Hour Access

Allow bikes on the subway at all times. For example, use the last subway car only for bicycles ( all seats could be taken out for additional space)	36	<b>36</b>
Bikes allowed on Go trains and buses all hours (could be in handicapped car during rush hours OR Bike lockers at union station (all stations)	35	

### New Idea 6: Bike Lane Design

Paint all Bike lanes a bright colour that stands out to all	31	<b>31</b>
Centre-positioned bike lane on selected routes, such as Davenport. CPBL's eliminate the likelihood of being doored and keep cyclists in line-of-sight w. drivers. Also lanes get cleared of snow in winter.	17	
Have raised concrete ridge or bumps to create a barrier btw. Bike lanes & car lanes, i.e., Amsterdam/Mtl	17	
Have traffic lights at EYE LEVEL in busy bike lane intersections	14	
Move Car parking to the left of the bike lanes	12	

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Bike lanes should make sense vis traffic lights and other signals..e.g. Strachan Northbound bike lane (east side) at lakeshore - there is no crossing provided well utilized portion	11	
Put posts outside bike lanes so that cars cannot park or stop there- its done in Montreal!	11	
Change bike lanes so cars must go around bikes; not have the bike lane end	8	

### **New Idea 7:** Policy, Practices & Regulations

Recognize that cyclists are to treat stop signs as yield, especially in residential areas where stop signs are used primarily for traffic calming	31	<b>31</b>
Design a way for safe left hand turns on busy streets (maybe some way to make bikes more visible)	13	

### **New Idea 8:** Bike Lane Enforcement

Make bike lanes tow away zones. Let tow truck drivers loose on them. Yes!	37	<b>37</b>
Stronger enforcement of bike lane parking violations	30	
Police should have a 'bike lane blocking' hotline where cyclists can call/send pic. For police to assess & take action	11	
Pass by-law to make parking in Bike lanes (by Cars) a ticket able offence- and enforce it	10	

### **New Idea 9:** Highway & Bridge Crossings

Safe routes over 400 series Highways (e.g. Yonge/401). Bike Lanes, Better Lighting	30	<b>30</b>
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### **New Idea 10:** Target Promotions

Develop incentive program with corporate/ DT office buildings that A- encourage employees to bike to work B- Provide an area for employees to safely store their bikes	25	<b>25</b>
Bike lanes are being voted down ORGANIZE neighbourhoods to identify priority projects GET THEM OUT TO CITY HALL.	22	
Promote cycling in "priority areas" (i.e. hi-need areas) as economical and empowering transportation	6	

\* 'New Ideas' were retyped herein as they appeared on the original sheets collected at the Consultation Session (ie. verbatim)

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### **6.0 Next Steps**

The Toronto Bike Plan is the product of a consultation process which was started in 2000 with the formation of the plan itself. As we move forward, regular public consultation will continue to take place and a number of events to facilitate the extension of these important conversations will be planned each year. Planning is currently under way for another special consultation event in June 2008.

The input received from the participants at the Toronto Bike Plan Public Consultation Session on July 26, 2007 will be taken into consideration in setting the work plan for the next five years. Staff will thoroughly review all of the feedback received from the public before goals for the second half of the bike plan are set.