

CHANGES TO FRONT STREET AT UNION STATION

Preliminary Preferred Alternative - Alternative 2B

Provides Improved Pedestrian Facilities

Option 2B provides the most consistent and balanced improvement to pedestrian facilities with respect to widening of sidewalks and crosswalk waiting areas; pick-up and drop-off waiting areas; and, areas for pedestrians to simply linger. It provides an effective pedestrian priority zone that is unobstructed and with minimal crossing distances. The presence of a centre median provides for a pedestrian refuge that enhances the sense of pedestrian safety while enabling diagonal crossing patterns.

Supports/Encourages a Pedestrian Culture

Option 2B provides a significant expansion to the pedestrian realm on the south and north sides of Front Street, which can accommodate adequate buffering and potential amenities. The reduction to two travel lanes, combined with a centre median calms traffic speeds and provides for a pedestrian refuge, which is optimal for reducing potential conflicts with other modes of movement and enhancing pedestrian comfort, convenience and safety.

Provides a High Level of Design Quality

Option 2B enables a high quality, coordinated, environmentally sustainable streetscape that is appealing in all seasons and can seamlessly integrate security measures. Furthermore, this configuration respects the beaux-arts principles while integrating the TTC vents, coordinating with the revitalized Station, and providing an optimal amount of potential landscaped areas. Furthermore, this configuration can inform the extension of enhancements into adjacent civic areas.

Contributes to City Building & Urban Design Initiatives

Option 2B most contributes to city-building and urban design initiatives with respect to consistency with city policies, charters and guidelines that encourage pedestrianism and a high quality urban design environment; reinforcing the existing street and block pattern; strengthening connectivity and the open space system through the expansion of the pedestrian realm; and, the retention of the street as a heritage resource while enhancing the heritage/cultural setting. Furthermore, the configuration enables the potential for landscaping on the north side to enhance visual continuity; the opening up of the panoramic view of the south facades; and, reinforces the distinction of the Union Station District and this area's civic and gateway importance to the City.

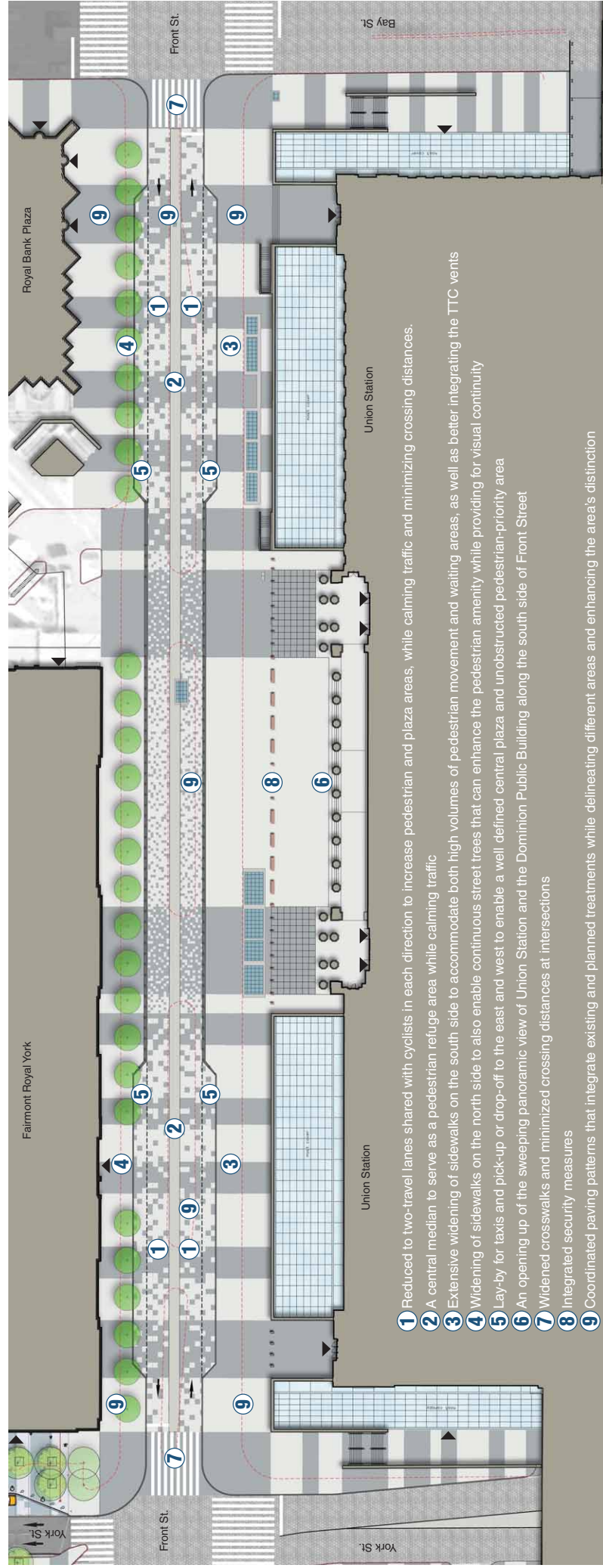
Provide Improved Loading Areas

Option 2B provides dedicated lay-by space for vehicle pick-up and drop-off operations on both the north and south sides of Front Street book-ended around the pedestrian plaza space. The reduction to two travel lanes provides the opportunity for legal pick-up and drop-off activity on the north side of Front Street in front of the Royal Bank Plaza. The design for a single lane of traffic in each direction is expected to discourage the double parking of taxis impeding through traffic that exists currently. As with existing operations some of the space will be dedicated for taxi storage. The remainder of the lay-by space provided may be used for passenger vehicle and bus pick-up and drop-off activity. The provision of a central median creates opportunities for the facilitation of u-turns.

Minimizes Traffic Impacts

Alternative 2B provides for two traffic lanes and a median that provides a balance between serving both vehicle and pedestrian demand. Pedestrian operations are improved with increased waiting areas at intersections and minimized crossing distances. Two stage crossing is maintained for midblock crossing. Parked vehicles have been removed from the midblock crossing area increasing pedestrian comfort. Vehicle operations may experience some deterioration over existing conditions, however all network connections will be maintained.

Air and noise quality impacts are generally less in comparison to other options. With only two lanes of traffic and fewer instances where vehicles are to queue this results in fewer negative effects such as idling and increased noise levels. In relation to the natural environment, a medium impact is identified on the number of tree specific based on removing trees from the median however increasing the landscaping on the north side. The archaeological environment in terms of interest, potential and known features is consistent with other alternatives, there is no concern for impacts to any archaeological resources. Few cultural heritage resources are affected which is consistent with other alternatives. From a socio-economic perspective, the two lane bi-directional character of the street increases the flow of movements and goods, attractiveness of the public realm, improvement of a pedestrian destination, area accessibility, connectivity and employment activities.



- 1 Reduced to two-travel lanes shared with cyclists in each direction to increase pedestrian and plaza areas, while calming traffic and minimizing crossing distances.
- 2 A central median to serve as a pedestrian refuge area while calming traffic
- 3 Extensive widening of sidewalks on the south side to accommodate both high volumes of pedestrian movement and waiting areas, as well as better integrating the TTC vents
- 4 Widening of sidewalks on the north side to also enable continuous street trees that can enhance the pedestrian amenity while providing for visual continuity
- 5 Lay-by for taxis and pick-up or drop-off to the east and west to enable a well defined central plaza and unobstructed pedestrian-priority area
- 6 An opening up of the sweeping panoramic view of Union Station and the Dominion Public Building along the south side of Front Street
- 7 Widened crosswalks and minimized crossing distances at intersections
- 8 Integrated paving patterns
- 9 Coordinated paving patterns that integrate existing and planned treatments while delineating different areas and enhancing the area's distinction