



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Sidewalks on Midland Avenue

Date:	September 22, 2015
To:	Public Works and Infrastructure Committee
From:	General Manager, Transportation Services
Wards:	Ward 36
Reference Number:	p:\2015\ClusterB\tra\pr\pw15006pr.docx

SUMMARY

This report responds to a request to halt the planned addition of a sidewalk in conjunction with watermain replacement and resurfacing road work on Midland Avenue between Fishleigh Drive and Romana Drive. City staff recommend that the sidewalk planned for the west side of Midland Avenue proceed as part of Contract 15ECS-LU-03SU for the following reasons:

- The presence of sidewalks is well-supported by City policies in order to promote and enhance pedestrian safety, comfort, accessibility and connectivity.
- Midland Avenue is a collector road, and City policy directs that there be sidewalks on both sides of the street. Reflecting the residential nature of this street, City staff have already recommended installation of a sidewalk on only the west side.
- This section of Midland Avenue is an on-road segment of the Waterfront Trail and a sidewalk will further benefit residents and visitors alike.
- Midland Avenue has a senior's residence, housing co-operatives and residential homes
- Major construction is the most cost effective and efficient manner in which to add sidewalks where missing.
- This sidewalk will be built first and then connected to the existing sidewalk on the west side that currently terminates south of Sandown Avenue through a stand-alone capital project and is currently scheduled for delivery in 2018. Staff are working to accelerate this project to 2017 in order to meet safety and connectivity concerns.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager, Transportation Services recommends that:

1. The Public Works and Infrastructure Committee affirm the Transportation Services policies for installation of sidewalks and direct the Executive Director of Engineering and Construction Services to continue with the planned delivery of a sidewalk on the west side of Midland Avenue between Fishleigh Drive and Romana Drive under Contract 15ECS-LU-03SU.

Financial Impact

Funding for construction of the sidewalk on Midland Avenue between Fishleigh Drive and Romana Drive is included in the 2015 Capital Budget for Transportation Services (Sidewalks CTP415-01).

Accelerating construction of the missing sidewalk on Midland Avenue, south of Kingston Road to Romana Drive will be considered as part of the capital planning process for 2017 with funds to be drawn from the City's Missing Links capital program (a part of Transportation Services' sidewalk capital budget) which currently provides \$2.1 M annually for such activities.

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with this statement.

DECISION HISTORY

On July 16, 2002, City Council adopted the report entitled, "City-Wide Program for Provision of Essential Sidewalk Links," prioritizing the installation of sidewalks on arterial and collector streets.

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2002/agendas/council/cc020730/pof11rpt/cl001.pdf>

On May 25-27, 2009, City Council adopted the Toronto Walking Strategy and its three Guiding Principles: (1) universal accessibility, (2) safety and (3) design excellence. Implementation action item 3.1 is "Construct new sidewalks – during road reconstruction and resurfacing, or when applicable, through the development review process – on both sides of the street in all areas where they are missing."

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2009.PW24.6>

On February 29, March 1-2, 2013, City Council adopted an update to the Road Classification System. The system classifies Toronto's roads to facilitate operational decisions. Road class is based mostly on the volume and speed of vehicular traffic, but also the existence of other modes such as surface transit. It stipulates that arterial and collector roads have sidewalks on both sides and that local roads have sidewalks on one or both sides.

http://www1.toronto.ca/City%20Of%20Toronto/Transportation%20Services/Road%20Classification%20System/Files/pdf/2012/criteria_table.pdf

On May 7-10, 2013, City Council adopted the Toronto Seniors Strategy: Toward an Age-Friendly City, which includes direction to City divisions to create policies to support a comprehensive and universally accessible transportation system; develop walkable and transit-supportive neighbourhoods, and design public streets that are safe, comfortable and accessible. The Seniors Strategy also directs staff to improve the safety of pedestrians by taking steps to reduce the number pedestrian and vehicle collisions.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.CD20.1>

On June 10-13, 2014, City Council adopted the Public Health report entitled, "Advancing Active Transportation in Toronto: Findings from Four Demonstration Projects" which recommended the General Manager, Transportation Services, in collaboration with the Medical Officer of Health, review the actions identified by the Cliffside community to provide local improvements for active transportation, which include sidewalks where missing.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2014.HL31.2>

On September 22, 2015, Public Works and Infrastructure Committee requested that staff report back on removal of the sidewalks from planned work for Contract 15ECS-LU-03SU and relocate the sidewalk to the northern portion of Midland Avenue, south of Kingston Road.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2015.PW7.15>

ISSUE BACKGROUND

In accordance with City policy, a sidewalk is planned for construction on Midland Avenue as part of a phased watermain replacement project. City staff met with area residents to review their concerns but were unable to satisfy their request that a sidewalk not be built on their street. Residents support a sidewalk further north on Midland Avenue where there is a sharp turn and steep hill, but do not wish it to continue south to Fishleigh Drive where they live. Residents would also like to have the sidewalk north of Romana Drive constructed as soon as possible for safety reasons.

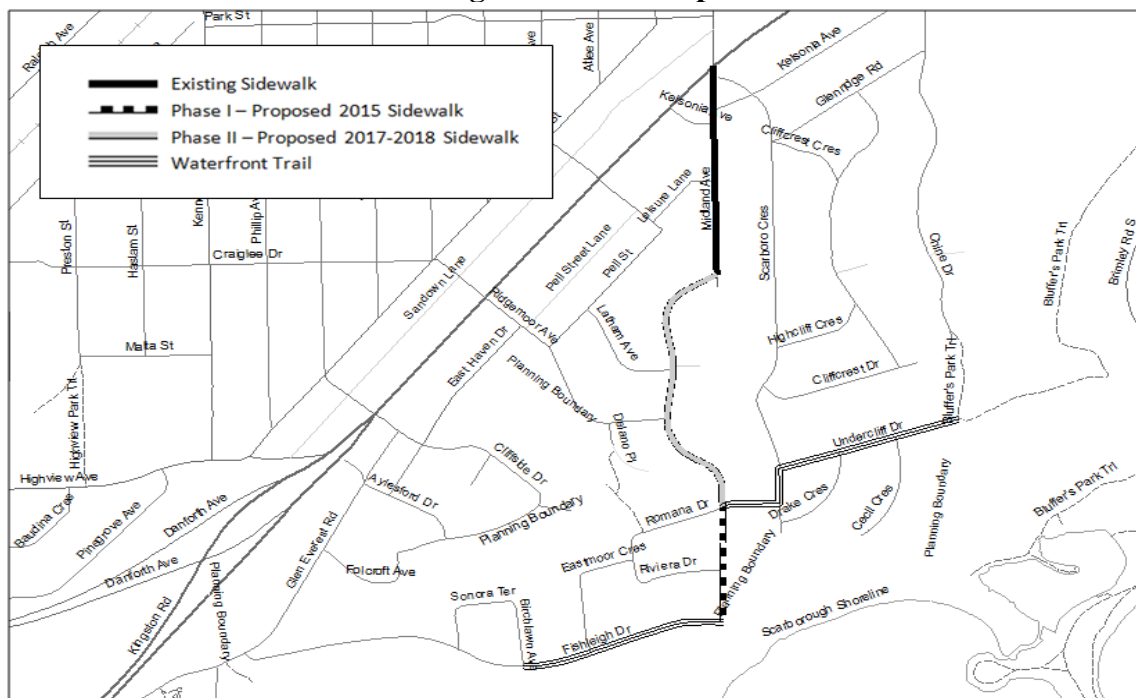
COMMENTS

As a collector road, City policy requires that sidewalks be provided on both sides of the road. Due to the residential character of this street, Transportation Services has already recommended that a sidewalk be installed along only one side of Midland Avenue. The west side was selected in order to provide a connection to the existing sidewalk, which currently terminates near the senior's residence at Sandown Avenue, and due to grading difficulties on the east side.

City staff have received a significant number of requests from area residents, supported by the local Councillor, for a sidewalk on Midland Avenue north of Romana Drive, particularly where the road has a sharp turn and steep grade. Midland Avenue, south of Kingston Road is a two-way street with a partial sidewalk on the west side which starts at Kingston Road and ends just south of Sandown Avenue. The street is residential in character and is home to a large senior's residence and long-term care facility, low-rise housing, co-operative buildings, and single-family dwellings. Midland Avenue is designated as a collector road as it provides connectivity to the area streets seeking to access to and from Kingston Road. The portion of Midland Avenue between Fishleigh Drive and Romana Drive is also the designated route of the Waterfront Trail which encourages separate pedestrian and cycling facilities wherever possible.

Toronto Water is replacing the watermain on Midland Avenue from Kingston Road south to Fishleigh Drive. This project will proceed in two phases: Phase I - Fishleigh Drive to Romana Drive, including road resurfacing and a new sidewalk on the west side only, and Phase II - Romana Drive to Kingston Road.

Figure 1: Area Map



As the Phase II project would not require a road resurfacing, Engineering and Construction Services advised that the best approach was to install the proposed sidewalk in a separate construction project. At this time, the sidewalk for this segment is proposed for construction in 2018, but City staff are working with Engineering and Construction Services to determine if this date can be advanced based on capacity and funding.

City staff strongly support the delivery of the sidewalk as part of the planned work for Contract 15ECS-LU-03SU. The proposed sidewalk runs alongside the curb in front of 13 homes. No trees will be damaged and only one homeowner will be limited in the number of cars (from three to two). They currently park in their driveway. The watermain will travel under the proposed sidewalk, and this area would be subject to construction regardless. The sidewalk will also offer connectivity for the neighbourhood and will be a needed link when the sidewalk is added north of Romana Drive. As this section is part of the Waterfront Trail, this sidewalk will also provide recreational benefits to users.

Neighbourhoods such as Cliffside were planned and built in an era when there was less vehicle traffic and sidewalks were not included on many of the streets. Since then, the City has moved to ensure that sidewalks are added as part of new developments and, since 2002 has provided dedicated capital funding to ensure that missing sidewalks are built. While it is optimal to build a network of sidewalks at the same time, it is not always possible as is the case on Midland Avenue where the full length of sidewalk will be completed by 2018. However, opportunities to add sidewalks and improve safety and connectivity should not be lost as these present once in a lifetime cost-effective and efficient opportunities.

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SIGNATURE

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