



TO: Chair Grimes and the members of the EYCC

FROM: Walk Toronto (Steering Committee)

RE: Construction of Sidewalk on Usher Ave. (PW12.17)

DATE: May 3, 2016

RECOMMENDATION

Walk Toronto recommends that sidewalks be installed on **both** sides of Usher Ave. between Royal York Rd. and The Kingsway. Our second preference would be that the City proceed with its plans to construct a sidewalk **only on the south side** of Usher Ave.

SAFETY

An extensive study by the US Department of Transportation established that cars were more than twice as likely to collide with pedestrians on urban residential streets without sidewalks, in comparison with streets that do have sidewalks. In Toronto, approximately 30 to 40 pedestrians are being killed by motor vehicles every year. One of the most effective measures that the City can take to reduce this carnage is to build sidewalks on streets that lack them.

NETWORK

Councillor di Ciano noted in his letter that the south section of The Kingsway has no sidewalks, reflecting the preferences of the local residents. However, examination of a 2015 satellite view reveals that most of the streets in the immediate vicinity of Usher Ave. (marked on the map with a red pushpin) do in fact have sidewalks. Furthermore, the sidewalks on Royal York Road (on the west side of Usher Ave.) loop, indicating a clear intention by planners that Usher should receive sidewalks. The building of a sidewalk on Usher would supply a missing link in the local sidewalk network.

Usher



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Toronto Maps



RESIDENTS' PREFERENCES

Local residents are opposing the construction of a sidewalk on the street they live on. A second zoomed-in satellite view shows property lines in magenta/ pink.



The land on virtually all of the front yards of the homes in question is part of the City-owned right-of-way. On the north side, residents' cars are parked on City-owned property. On the south side, no cars are visible, but it is clear that those residents likewise park on driveways and parking pads that are on public land. Residents currently are taking advantage of free parking on City property. This perk could be jeopardized by the construction of a sidewalk. It is our conjecture that this fear is the real motive behind residents' opposition to a sidewalk on their street.

CONCLUSION

The building of at least one sidewalk on Usher Ave. will supply a vital link in the local sidewalk network. In the larger picture, **the safety of pedestrians must take priority over the convenience of a parking perk** that local residents have been enjoying gratis.