



## **Royal York Road Reconstruction and Rehabilitation From Mimico Creek to Ashley Road**

### ***Public Meeting***

**March 29, 2005  
Etobicoke Collegiate Institute, Cafeteria  
86 Montgomery Road  
7:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

#### ***1.0 Welcoming Remarks and Introductions***

**David Nagler** (Public Consultation Unit) opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. He welcomed those in attendance and introduced **Mr. Peter Milczyn** (Councillor for Ward 5), **Tom Ellerbusch** (Manager of Design and Construction), **Eric Leon** (Senior Project Engineer), **Dan Egan** (Manager of Pedestrian and Cycling Infrastructure), **John Niedra** (Transportation Infrastructure Management), and **Gary Stevenson** (Regional Manager, UMA Engineering Ltd.).

**Councillor Peter Milczyn** noted that at the prior public meeting different cross section options were presented. At the meeting the community expressed a strong desire for the narrowest option that was still safe. Staff are recommending a 9.4 m cross section curb to curb. However, he explained that when he reviewed all of the technical criteria and considered the safety of all users, he determined that a 9.1m wide cross section would still be safe cross-section. He noted that he and staff disagree on this issue and that at the March 30<sup>th</sup> Etobicoke Community Council meeting he will be asking staff to make a report to Works Committee. He explained that Community Council does not have jurisdiction over arterial roads. He noted that he would advise residents as to the date of the Works Committee meeting so that people could make deputations. In addition, he noted that residents have expressed concern regarding traffic lights at Glenroy and Kingsway. He and staff are not supporting lights at this time. Lastly, he noted that he and staff are continuing to discuss the need for a PXO at Usher and Royal York Road.

**Tom Ellerbusch** explained that the highest scoring cross section was 9.6m wide with exclusive bike lanes of 1.5m width. Staff is now recommending a 9.4m cross section. It will not have exclusive bike lanes because Royal York Road is not currently a bike route. This road width will ensure minimal damage to the trees and underground services, and will provide adequate access for emergency vehicles. Lastly, he noted that Enbridge gas will be reconstructing gas mains in the neighbourhood in the near future.

**Eric Leon** noted that Royal York Road is an arterial road that services 20,000 to 25,000 vehicles per day. He explained that the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Royal York Road from Mimico Creek to Ashley Road represents phases 4, 5, and 6 of the project. He reviewed the scope of work and timing for each phase, as well as, the underground construction, storm water management and other design considerations that will be taken into account during the project. In addition, he summarized the potential impacts to services and residents' property during construction. For details please refer to the meeting handouts in Appendix A.

**Gary Stevenson** provided an overview of the presentation boards that were on display at the meeting. He noted that the boards show aerial views of the current conditions, the 9.4m cross section, the left turn lane at Glenroy, and the Usher intersection.

## 2.0 Comments, Concerns and Questions

8.5 metre Wide Option	Response
Why is the 8.5m wide option not acceptable?	<b>Councillor Peter Milczyn</b> replied that based on the volume of traffic using the road and the need to accommodate all users, including emergency vehicles, a width of 8.5 m would not be safe. He explained that he used the same technical criteria as staff did and he came to the conclusion that 9.1 m is the minimum safe width.
Member of KPRI executive noted that 8.5m meets all the technical criteria set out by the City staff. No one has explained why it is not a safe option.	Comment noted.
A 28-foot (8.5m) wide road is wider than the current 24-foot (7.4m) driving surface. Anything wider will increase traffic speed and impact trees. The City's own consultant agrees that a wider road is a faster road. Passing on the right is also a danger if the road is any wider. A 28-foot road is adequate for emergency vehicles and the Toronto Bike Plan says that a 28-foot road is still a bike friendly road. Why is a 9.1m or 9.4 m wide road safer?	<b>Scott Cowden</b> (District Chief - Toronto Fire Services) replied that Mr. Scott was appalled by the way his quote was taken out of context. Mr. Scott was lead to believe that the road in question was a local road not an arterial road, that is why he said that a 28-foot wide road was adequate for emergency vehicles. In fact the Ontario Building Code 3.2.5 "Fire Department and Access to Buildings and Streets for Access" states 9m as a minimum road width. <b>Tom Ellerbusch</b> replied that traffic on Royal York Road is unlikely to speed over 60 km/hr because it is so crowded. He noted that Royal York Road is wider at Dundas Street so traffic may move faster here, but not elsewhere. Traffic calming does not apply to arterial roads, only local roads. There is ample time for pedestrians to cross at PXOs. A 9.4m width is needed to accommodate a fire truck that has a

	width of 4m. There also needs to be room for a car or a bus to pull over to let the emergency vehicle pass. A 8.5m width is not safe for emergency vehicles. The City Fire Department directs staff to design roads so that fire trucks can get to destinations safely and as quick as possible. Curbs will prevent drivers from passing on the right.
--	--

<b>9.1 metre Wide Option</b>	<b>Response</b>
Why do you think 9.1 m is the safest width?	<b>Councillor Peter Milczyn</b> replied that 9.1 metres still provides a reasonable space for bikes and is within the range for cyclist comfort, however, it will not accommodate a dedicated bike lane. With a 9.1 metre width there is more space for planting trees along the boulevards.
Why do you think that a 9.1m width is sufficient?	<b>Councillor Peter Milczyn</b> replied that according to the City bike plan a width of 4.0 to 4.6 m is considered bike friendly. A width of 9.1 metres will accommodate a car and a cyclist, a bus and a cyclist, or an emergency vehicle and a cyclist.
Why will staff not accept a 9.1m width?	<b>Tom Ellerbusch</b> noted that, as a professional engineer he has a code of ethics to adhere to and once he puts his stamp on the design he has to be responsible for the road for 17 years. He noted that it is not just cars that use the road. Garbage trucks, snow removal equipment, and emergency vehicles all use the road which require a 7.5m turning radius onto local streets.
A resident commented that a width of 9.1m is a good compromise.	Comment noted.

<b>9.4 metre Wide Option</b>	<b>Response</b>
Why have staff recommended a width of 9.4 metres when 9.6 metres was the preferred option that was presented at the last meeting? Drivers and cyclists would feel safer if the road was 9.6 metres wide.	<b>Tom Ellerbusch</b> replied that if there were exclusive bike lanes the width would be 9.6 metres. Staff is no longer supporting this option, as Royal York Road is not a designated cycling route. He explained that the 9.4 metre option provides 2.7 m of space for cars to pull over to the side of the road in order to allow 4 m wide emergency vehicles to pass through.
If trees are going to die in .3 m of less space then we have a problem. Royal York Road needs to be wide enough for emergency vehicles or else the death of people not trees will occur and the City may be liable.	Comment noted.

Decision Making Process	Response
<p>Is it a certainty that the road will be 9.4 m in width?</p>	<p><b>Councillor Peter Milczyn</b> replied that what normally happens is that staff design a road, there is a public meeting to review the preferred option, and then construction begins. However, he recognizes the community's desire to have the narrowest safest road possible, so he supports a 9.1 m wide road instead of a 9.4 m wide one that is being recommended by staff. He will be lobbying other City Councillors for their support for the 9.1m wide option. He explained that because Royal York Road is an arterial road and not a local road it is ultimately City Council that will make a decision regarding the width of the road. He reassured those in attendance that a 9.4m width is not a certainty and he encouraged people to depute on this issue before the Works Committee.</p>
<p>Why does the Councillor have a different opinion from staff regarding the width of the road?</p>	<p><b>Councillor Peter Milczyn</b> replied that he and staff have different professional opinions as to what is a comfortable safety margin.</p>
<p>Royal York Road is a strategic road and conduit. It is selfish for residents not to look beyond its neighbourhood borders to see how the road is important for others, especially emergency vehicles. Why should residents here have such an exclusive right over the road and declare Not In My Back Yard?</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
<p>For last 2 meetings staff have been very forth coming with information. Now we are just presented with two options 9.1m and 9.4m, neither of which were options that were presented at the last meeting. Why have the bike lanes been removed when they were the preferred choice at the last meeting? There is no information to support the options you are presenting. Staff seem unprepared at this meeting.</p>	<p><b>Tom Ellerbusch</b> noted that the 9.4m option was presented at the last meeting. He explained that even though there are no exclusive bike lanes, the road would be cyclist friendly and safe for emergency vehicles.</p> <p><b>Councillor Peter Milczyn</b> explained that he arrived at a width of 9.1m by allowing a 1.25m bike zone with 3.3m for cars on each side. This is the narrowest safe road possible. He admitted to using a narrower safety margin than staff but he assured residents that his calculations fall within the range of technical acceptability criteria.</p>

<b>Cyclist Concerns</b>	<b>Response</b>
Will a 9.4m wide road still provide level C comfort for cyclists?	<b>Tom Ellerbusch</b> replied that at 9.4 m the road will be safe enough for cyclists to use but there will not be any exclusive bike lanes.
The bike route was pushed off of Prince Edward now it is not being given space on Royal York Road.	Concern noted.
Royal York Road is a commuter bike route and cyclists use it. The road is for all users and belongs to all citizens.	Comment noted.
Royal York will have 1.5 m bike lanes from the lake to Lawrence, except for the section from Bloor to Usher. Will a width of 9.4 m accommodate cyclists using the road?	<b>Tom Ellerbusch</b> replied that at 9.4 m the road will be safe for cyclists to use.
It was noted that the quotes from Dan Egan listed on the sheet that was distributed at the meeting by the Kingsway Park Ratepayers Inc. were made almost 6 years ago and were taken completely out of context.	<b>Dan Egan</b> clarified that at the time the quotes were made it made more sense for bike lanes to be put on Prince Edward Drive as there was less volume of vehicles than on Royal York Road. However, citizens did not support a bike route on Prince Edward Drive.
A citizen who does not live in area but uses Royal York Road to cycle to the Kingsway commented that he is frustrated by residents' irrational fear of bike lanes. He felt that bike lanes help keep traffic organized and cars drive at an appropriate speed.	<b>Councillor Peter Milczyn</b> noted that he does not have a fear of bike lanes. He explained that Royal York Road is unique in terms of its character and the canopy of trees it has. He wants to ensure that the boulevards remain wide enough to protect the trees.
A resident noted that he was very disappointed that bike lanes are gone, especially in light of the Kyoto Agreement. He noted that while 6 inches does not matter that much to a driver, the space is a big deal to a cyclist with a bus going by. He felt that the City was not taking advantage of the opportunity that exists to create a bike system that works.	Comment noted.
When bike lanes are put in the traffic slows down - they are a form of traffic calming.	Comment noted.
Cycling on Royal York Road is too dangerous.	Comment noted.

<b>Pedestrian Safety</b>	<b>Response</b>
If you had evidence that a 9.4m wide road was unsafe for pedestrians would staff be willing to change the width of the road?	<b>Tom Ellerbusch</b> replied that yes staff would change their position on the road width if there was proof that 9.4 m was unsafe for pedestrians.
A KPRI member commented that residents have repeatedly asked for traffic calming measures and instead they are getting a wider street. Why won't the City accommodate the residents who don't want a fast roadway?	Comment noted.
Please consider small turn radiuses off of Royal York Road onto local streets so that the speed of traffic slows down.	<b>Councillor Peter Milczyn</b> replied that this is being considered.
A resident noted that there are a lot of children in the neighbourhood who go to schools and community centres. She commented that the neighbourhood does not necessarily want sidewalks, but she asked how is safety being considered.	<b>Tom Ellerbusch</b> replied that City staff have to consider the safety of all road users. He noted that Royal York Road carries 20,000 to 25,000 vehicles a day, which means that technically it should be a 4-lane road. Local side streets have a standard width of 8.5m or 28 feet for side streets and where every they intersect Royal York Road there is a stop sign. The local roads in the area will be reconstructed at some point in the next 10 –15 years.
A resident on Montgomery Road noted that drivers do not usually stop at the PXOs. He asked if there would be additional stoplights installed from Humbertown to Bloor.	<b>Councillor Peter Milczyn</b> reported that staff are not recommending the installation of any additional stoplights. In terms of pedestrian safety, he explained that the installation of curbs will better define the crossing distance enabling pedestrians to stand closer to street without fear of being run over. There will be improvements made to the lighting and signals at the PXOs. In addition a third PXO will be installed at Usher, and the PXO at Glenroy will be moved south to improve sight lines and visibility.

<b>Right Hand Passing</b>	<b>Response</b>
Steve Rankine (KPRI) noted that he measured 30 different makes of cars and found that many of them were 6 feet two inches wide. With a 9.4 m wide road, if a car is waiting to make a left hand turn off of Royal York Road and is one foot to the right of the centre line, there is still plenty of room for dangerous right hand passing.	<b>Tom Ellerbusch</b> noted that drivers require a certain amount of distance from the curb so there will not be any passing on the right. The only way people will have room to pass on the right is if they drive over the curb. He explained that the road width needs to be sufficient to accommodate buses and emergency vehicles. Therefore 9.4 metres is the minimum safe width.
Why do you think there would not be right hand passing at 9.4m when people pass on the right now and the road is not as wide?	<b>Tom Ellerbusch</b> replied that at Dundas there will be three lanes so there will be right hand passing at this intersection. However, everywhere else the road will be 2 lanes. At 9.4 metres wide with the curbs along the street there will not be enough room for people to pass. The only way they will be able to pass is if they run the curb. He explained that right hand passing occurs now because people use the wide unpaved shoulders. At the moment the paved surface of Royal York Road can be 30 to 40 feet in spots, it is not uniformly 24 feet wide.

<b>Trees</b>	<b>Response</b>
A KPRI member expressed concern about the width of the boulevard and the number of trees that would be planted by the City.	<b>Tom Ellerbusch</b> replied that there will be 2 m (about 6 feet) wide boulevards on both sides of the road. He noted that, where they can, the City will be planting trees in the boulevards in front of houses.
Do the boulevards get narrower towards Bloor Street?	<b>Tom Ellerbusch</b> replied that yes the boulevards go down to 2 m as you get to Bloor Street.
The community wants to preserve and protect as many trees as possible. The 9.4 metre width is too big.	Comment noted.

<b>Other Comments and Concerns</b>	<b>Response</b>
A High Park area resident expressed concern that the standard width for local streets is 28 feet. His street is only 24 feet wide and he feels it is safe for all users. He asked what the typical curb to curb width is for local streets in the old City of Toronto.	<b>John Niedra</b> replied that there are 5400 km of roads in the former City of Toronto. Arterial roads are 11 to 15 m wide, while 85% of downtown local roads are 8.5m wide or less. There may be some that are 6m wide and many may be 24feet. He explained that the 8.5m width for residential street is a standard that has not been put in place yet. Staff like to design a street for its surroundings and meet the needs of all users.

Will unsafe gutters be replaced?	<b>Tom Ellerbusch</b> replied that all ditches will be removed and curbs will be put in place. There will be a concrete gutter right beside the curb to direct runoff.
Will hedges be removed? Some are not shown on the aerial photos.	<b>Tom Ellerbusch</b> replied that the aerial photos are old. It may be the case that hedges have been removed, or replanted, in some spots.
One particular resident expressed concern about impacts to the end of his driveway.	<b>Tom Ellerbusch</b> replied that he would talk to him at end of meeting to discuss his specific concerns.
What is the recommendation for the Usher Avenue and Kingsway intersection?	<b>Tom Ellerbusch</b> replied that staff will be recommending an all way stop at Usher Avenue and the Kingsway.
A resident asked if the City would consider a counter petition to leave Kingsway as is.	<b>Councillor Peter Milczyn</b> replied that any petition would be reviewed.
There are design faults with Usher Road and residents have not been consulted about the deterioration in traffic control.	<b>Councillor Peter Milczyn</b> noted that there were a number of lengthy petitions from Kingsway residents regarding safety concerns. The upper Kingsway has the highest speed of traffic. The stop signs are an interim measure. In the coming week residents of Kingsway street will be receiving a survey regarding traffic calming measures and the potential use of speed humps. Speed humps need 60% approval from residents to be put in place. He explained that the stop signs would be removed once traffic-calming devices are put in place. Staff will also be meeting directly with affected residents regarding site lines and driveways.
A resident of the Kingsway felt there should be a 4 way stop at Usher Avenue and the Kingsway.	<b>Councillor Peter Milczyn</b> replied that it is an all-way stop because it is an offset intersection.
A Kingsway resident noted that he received a survey but he was not asked about the stop sign placement. He feels that the traffic flow is smooth and the speed is not excessive so traffic calming is unnecessary. He is glad that staff recommended that no changes be made. He wondered whom the people were that were petitioning for change.	<b>Councillor Peter Milczyn</b> replied that the petitions came from residents on the street. He noted that a study found that vehicles do use excessive speed on the northern section of the Kingsway south of Government Road. 60% support from residents is needed for speed humps to be put in place. He commented that it was a Council decision to put the all-way stop signs in place.
What is speed limit on Royal York Road?	<b>Tom Ellerbusch</b> replied that it is 50 km/hr.

### **3.0 Closing Remarks**

**David Nagler** thanked everyone for attending the meeting. He encouraged those in attendance to complete a comment sheet so that it could be forwarded to the project team. The meeting ended at 8:50 p.m.