

Community: Six Points Interchange Reconfiguration Study

Community Consultation
May 15, 2007

Valhalla Inn - Scandia Room
Valhalla Inn Road (Hwy 427 and Burnhamthorpe Road)
7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

SUMMARY NOTES

The following summarizes Comments and Questions from the May 15th public meeting regarding the Six Points Interchange Reconfiguration Environmental Assessment Study. The meeting was hosted by Councillor Peter Milczyn.

Comments Received

- Comment 1:** Residents of the Tridel condominiums would rather have City streets with traffic signals and lively street life, than a highway interchange
- Comment 2:** Strongly prefer to allow resident access to Viking Lane.
- Comment 3:** Do Nothing is for people driving through the area; at-grade is for people who live here.
- Comment 4:** Would prefer to have pedestrian overpass to get through the area.
- Comment 5:** I would like you to simplify ramps as it is difficult to navigate hem now.

Questions Received

Question 1: Will there be grade separation?

Answer: *The current 6 Points Interchange has grade separations. The preferred option, as its name implies, the At-grade Dundas Street Loop option will not have any grade separations.*

Question 2: Have you assessed the impacts of increased vehicle emissions?

Answer: *An air quality analysis was undertaken for the study that assessed the potential local air quality impacts from vehicle emissions for the preferred option. The result of the analysis was that future vehicular emissions will be below provincial standards for the residences adjacent to the Six Points Interchange.*

Question 3: How can you say that traffic will be improved? What about travel time for buses?

Answer: *The existing configuration of the Six Points Interchange provides a relatively high level of service for vehicular traffic passing through the study area. The design of the interchange is more in character with what is commonly found at interchanges along major highways than at the intersection of urban arterial roads.*

Today, vehicular access to adjacent properties, including the under utilized Westwood Theatre lands, is poor. These lands fall within the Etobicoke Centre Secondary Plan area, one of four designated Centres within the City of Toronto. These Centres are targeted for future growth due, in large part, to their proximity to major rapid transit infrastructure. Pedestrian and cycling connectivity through the existing interchange is also poor and is not compatible with character of an urban centre.

The preferred alternative for reconfiguring the Six Points interchange balances the need to maintain acceptable traffic operations through the interchange with other objectives including improving the urban environment, improving vehicular access to adjacent lands, maximizing future development opportunities, and improving pedestrian and cycling conditions.

We have consistently stated that the preferred alternative for the reconfiguration of the interchange will operate at an acceptable level of service within the context of a highly urbanized centre, while acknowledging that future traffic operations through the interchange will not be as free flowing as they are today.

The TTC has been involved in the study and are supportive of the recommended plan. The reconfiguration of the interchange will not unduly impact TTC service levels.

The proposed relocation of Mississauga Transit bus terminal facilities from Islington to Kipling, an initiative that is independent of the proposed reconfiguration of the Six Points interchange, will result in a decrease in the number of Mississauga Transit bus trips through the Six Points interchange, a decrease in Mississauga Transit travel times and a decrease in vehicle kilometres travelled by affected Mississauga Transit buses.

Question 4: How is the pedestrian environment improved?

Answer: *Pedestrian connectivity through the existing interchange is poor. There are no direct and convenient pedestrian connections between Bloor Street (west of Kipling Avenue) and either Bloor Street or Dundas Street (east of Kipling Avenue). Pedestrian connections between Dundas Street (west of Kipling Avenue) and either Bloor Street or Dundas Street (east of Kipling Avenue) are interrupted by interchange ramps. Sidewalks on the Dundas Street bridges crossing Kipling Avenue are continuous on only one side of the street, are relatively narrow, and lack boulevard treatments.*

The recommend alternative (i.e. Dundas Loop) will provide a new pattern of public roads. Bloor Street will be continuous across Kipling Avenue. Grade separations will be replaced by signalized intersections where pedestrians will be allowed to cross. All of the reconfigured roads will have sidewalks on both sides of the street. Sidewalks will be wider than they are today and will included boulevards with street trees and street furniture where appropriate.

Question 5: Where are the cyclists coming from/going to?

Answer: *Bloor Street is a designated link in the Toronto Bike Plan; however, it is not continuous through Kipling Avenue today. Cyclist must follow circuitous routes to travel from Bloor Street, west of Kipling Avenue to Bloor Street, east of Kipling Avenue. The reconfigured interchange will provide arterial road connectivity through the interchange, allowing cyclist to travel continuously along Bloor Street, and will maintain the current continuity of Kipling Avenue and Dundas Street through the Six Points Interchange study area. The proposed design of Bloor Street includes dedicated bike lanes which, over time, will form part of a larger network of bike lanes linking central Etobicoke to the rest of the City.*

Question 6: Why would people travel along Dundas to go to the 427, instead of Bloor to Valhalla?

Answer: *There is no formal interchange where Bloor Street crosses Highway 427. There is limited access to and from Highway 427 in the vicinity of Bloor Street and the East Mall via Gibbs Road and Valhalla Drive respectively, and in the vicinity of Bloor Street and the West Mall via Eva Road.*

Ramp connections with Highway 427 at Dundas Street are more direct and can accommodate greater vehicular volumes than the connections to Highway 427 in the vicinity of Bloor Street. Dundas Street is a major arterial road, with a seven lane cross section and a posted speed of 60 kilometres per hour west of Kipling Avenue, whereas Bloor Street is designated as a minor arterial road with a four lane cross-section and a posted speed of 50 kilometre per hour west of Kipling Avenue. Dundas Street will continue to provide the most direct and obvious connections to and from Highway 427 in the future for a greater number of drivers compared to Bloor Street.

Question 7: Could you Do Nothing and put in pedestrian bridges?

Answer: *Pedestrian bridges must meet the Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines. These guidelines require ramps for wheel chair accessibility for pedestrian bridges and for a number of ramp crossings it is not feasible to put in pedestrian bridges.*

Question 8: Can you still go to Kipling from westbound Dundas without going down Dunbloor?

Answer: The connection between westbound Dundas Street to northbound Kipling Avenue will be maintained.

Question 9: How will the lands be redeveloped - what uses will be permitted?

Answer: Future development of the Westwood Theatre lands will be regulated by the Etobicoke Centre Secondary Plan and its accompanying implementing zoning by-law 1088-2002, both of which were adopted by Toronto City Council in November, 2002 and subsequently approved by the Ontario Municipal Board. The zoning by-law permits a mix of a wide range of uses to a maximum density of 3.5 f.s.i (floor space index) including high rise commercial and residential uses. Maximum building heights range from 60 to 72 metres dependent upon proximity to the adjacent rail corridor (the tallest buildings are permitted adjacent to the rail corridor).

The Westwood Theatre lands are currently owned by the City of Toronto. City staff are currently studying new uses for these lands. For example, the site is one of several alternative locations being considered for a new Etobicoke York Civic Centre. The need for other public infrastructure, including new parks, recreation facilities, and affordable housing is also being considered. Lands that are deemed surplus to municipal requirements could potentially be sold for redevelopment that could include a mix of residential, commercial and community based uses, within the context of a Council approved guiding vision.

Question 10: How can access to Kipling Station be improved from the new development lands?

Answer: The proposed new road network will provide a number of new and improved pedestrian linkages between existing and emerging neighbourhoods in the vicinity of the Six Points interchange and Kipling Station. Existing sidewalks on Kipling will be improved. Dundas Street will be extended through the Westwood Theatre lands including generous sidewalk and boulevard treatments. St. Albans Road will be extended to the east into the Westwood Theatre lands and will include sidewalks.

The TTC is proposing to construct a new pedestrian entrance to Kipling Station at the east end of the existing TTC bus terminal. The new entrance will be located underneath the Kipling Avenue overpass and will be accessible to pedestrians via St. Albans Road. A new passenger pick-up and drop-off facility is proposed in conjunction with the new station entrance. The new pedestrian entrance will be accessible to future development on the Westwood Theatre lands by sidewalks constructed along the proposed easterly extension of St. Albans Road under Kipling Avenue to the Westwood lands.

Question 11: How will road elevations be changed?

Answer: The current 6 Points Interchange has grade separations. The preferred option, as its name implies, the At-grade Dundas Street Loop option will not have any grade separations.

Dundas Street will rise west of Beamish Drive to meet the current elevation of Bloor Street West.

Bloor Street West, west of Kipling Avenue will slope downward to connect with the existing elevation at Dunbloor Road. The intersection of Bloor Street and Kipling Avenue is to be raised approximately 1.5 m.

Kipling Avenue will be elevated from 0.5 m to 3.5 m from the existing southerly loop ramps to north of Bloor Street.

During the detailed design stage of the project, the elevation changes identified through the Environmental Assessment study may change; however, it is not anticipated that the changes would be significantly different from those identified in the Environmental Assessment study.

Question 12: What is happening to the development site on Dunbloor?

Answer: *The lands located at 2 Dunbloor were the subject of an Official Plan and Zoning Amendment Application to permit the development of a 26 storey residential condominium building containing 356 units. This application was approved by the Ontario Municipal Board. The owner has not yet submitted a site plan application. The site currently sits vacant.*

Question 13: There will be much more congestion in the area due to new development moving in, more cars?

Answer: *Etobicoke Centre is one of four designated Centres in the City of Toronto Official Plan. Centres are targeted for future growth due, in part, to their excellent transit accessibility. A large proportion of Etobicoke Centre's existing residents and workers use transit as their preferred mode of transportation to and from the Centre. The proportion of residents and workers using transit and other non-auto modes of transportation is expected to grow as development within Etobicoke Centre intensifies. The proposed road network resulting from the reconfigured Six Points Interchange will operate at acceptable levels of service in light of the highly urbanized form and function of the Centre.*

Question 14: Feel that the environmental impacts are perhaps not being addressed as fully as possible. Concerned about idling cars, Heat sinks from increased areas of asphalt.

Answer: *As stated in the response to Question 2, the study did look at air quality resulting from vehicle emissions for the preferred option. Regarding any heat sinks effects resulting from a potential increase in road surface area the study did not address this issue.*

Question 15: Could walking/bike paths be created that are not beside heavily travelled arterial roads?

Answer: *All new roads proposed in conjunction with the reconfiguration of the Six Points Interchange will have sidewalks and boulevard treatments, whether they are arterial roads or local roads. The bike lanes proposed on Bloor Street are consistent with the approved City of Toronto Bike Plan. There may be opportunities to create other pedestrian and bike path linkages through future development sites. Opportunities to achieve such linkages, where appropriate, could be explored through the review of individual development proposals.*

Question 16: How will the access roads into Kipling Station be improved for pick up/drop off?

Answer: *Planning for the new inter-regional bus terminal at Kipling Station, serving GO Transit and Mississauga Transit, is an initiative that is now being lead by GO Transit and is not affected by the proposed reconfiguration of the Six Points Interchange.*

The new terminal will be located, in part, on lands currently occupied by the exiting passenger pick-up and drop-off carousel, a portion of the Subway Crescent road allowance and a portion of the North Kipling commuter parking lot. A new pick-up and drop-off area will be constructed west of the existing passenger pick-up/drop-off facility. Subway Crescent will be closed south of the King's Gate Condominium driveway. Access to the new passenger pick-up and drop-off area and the remaining North Kipling commuter parking lot will be via the portion of Subway Crescent that will remain open. There will be no access to the new passenger pick-up and drop-off area via Auckland Road.

A second passenger pick-up and drop-off facility will be constructed at the southwest corner of the Westwood Theatre lands, in conjunction with the construction of a new pedestrian entrance at the east end of the existing Kipling bus terminal. The new pedestrian entrance will be located beneath the Kipling Avenue overpass, adjacent to St. Albans Road, and will be connected to the east end of the existing Kipling bus terminal via a new enclosed walkway.

Question 17: What are the traffic volumes on Dundas and Bloor?

Answer: *Traffic volumes, both east and west bound, are included as PDF files on the City's website for this study. The following volumes are included:*

- *Existing traffic volumes;*
- *Future Modified Do-nothing Traffic volumes; and,*
- *Future Total Traffic Volumes for the Dundas Street Loop Option.*

Please note, future traffic volumes for the Do-nothing option are not available and those for the Modified Do-nothing option have been added instead. The difference between these two options is that the latter has an access road through the Westwood Theatre lands. This would not affect the traffic volume on Bloor Street west of Kipling Avenue and thus the traffic volume for Bloor Street west of Kipling Avenue for this option should be the same as the future traffic volumes for the Do-nothing option.

Question 18: Will there be an increase in the commuter parking spaces at the Kipling Station also some issue about parking fee?

Answer: *Construction of the proposed new inter-regional bus terminal will eliminate a portion of the North Kipling commuter parking lot. The TTC is proposing the reconfiguration of the residual North Kipling parking lot to maximize the number of remaining commuter parking spaces. The TTC is also pursuing the development of new commuter parking spaces in the Hydro corridor adjacent to Auckland Road, between Dundas Street and Bloor Street, and the purchase of 915 Kipling Avenue to facilitate an expansion of the existing South Kipling commuter parking lot.*

A public meeting concerning the proposed new inter-regional terminal will be scheduled in the near future, and we anticipate further details will be made available at that time.

Question 19: Do you expect there will be pressure to redevelop lands on Bloor, West of Kipling Avenue, from low rise residential to commercial or high-rise residential?

Answer: *The area on Bloor Street from one property west of Poplar Avenue, east to Kipling is located within the Etobicoke Centre Secondary Plan. It is Zoned for development of up to 15 m. in height (approximately 6 storeys). The area west of this area on Bloor (generally west of Poplar) is designated as Neighbourhood in the City of Toronto Official Plan. The Plan does not permit high-rise residential development in areas designated Neighbourhood. New small-scale retail developments are permitted on major roads in Neighbourhoods subject to rezoning applications*

Question 20: Is it desirable for the development of the centre for the subway to extend farther west? Are there architectural design standards that will be implemented?

Answer: *Map 4 of the City of Toronto Official Plan shows the potential future westerly extension of the Bloor-Danforth subway to Sherway Gardens. Although construction of the extension is not anticipated in the foreseeable future, City staff ensure that right-of-way for the extension is secured and protected through the approval of development proposals adjacent to the planned alignment of the extension. Etobicoke Centre would benefit from the westerly extension of the subway; however, the extension is not a requirement of the Etobicoke Centre Secondary Plan.*

All major development in the Etobicoke Centre area is subject to the City's new Design Review Panel, as well as to the Urban Design Guidelines in the Etobicoke Centre Secondary Plan.

Question 21: Isn't premature to place Dundas through Westwood Theatre lands before we know what the development will be?

Answer: *The reconfiguration of the Six Points interchange has been a municipal objective for the past 25 years. It is widely recognized that existing vehicular and pedestrian access to the lands is poor and adversely impacts the site's development potential. The City Centre Secondary Plan and implementing zoning by-law does not permit the development of the Westwood Theatre lands until planning for an improved road pattern has been completed. Planning for the reconfigured interchange has taken into consideration the range of land uses permitted by the City Centre Secondary Plan and associated zoning by-law. The development blocks created by the proposed reconfiguration will generally accommodate the range of permitted uses.*

Furthermore, development in the vicinity of the interchange is proceeding relatively quickly. It is important to finalize plans for the proposed reconfiguration so that decisions made in conjunction with individual development proposals, or as a result of the construction of other public capital projects in the vicinity of the interchange, do not preclude the future reconfiguration.

Question 22: How many buses will be using Aukland when the Mississauga buses move to Kipling Station?

Answer: *Planning for the new inter-regional bus terminal at Kipling Station is an initiative that is being lead by the TTC and is not affected by the proposed reconfiguration of the Six Points Interchange. The new bus terminal will generally be located in the vicinity of the existing Kipling Station passenger pick-up and drop-off carousel and commuter parking lot north of the carousel.*

Access to the new inter-regional terminal serving GO Transit and Mississauga Transit will be via a new driveway to Dundas Street, between Subway Crescent and Aukland Road. A secondary access to the new terminal is proposed from Aukland Road, but this access will only be used in the event of an emergency resulting in a blockage at the main driveway at Dundas Street. TTC buses will continue to use Aukland Road and St. Albans Road to access the existing the existing TTC bus terminal. Some TTC buses may be able to use the proposed new inter-regional bus terminal driveway at Dundas Street to access the existing TTC bus terminal. These details are currently being finalized.

A public meeting concerning the proposed new inter-regional terminal will be scheduled in the near future, and we anticipate that details concerning bus routings will be available at that time

Question 23: Will the development type on Bloor east of here, shops up to the street, be promoted on these new roads?

Answer: *Development adjacent to the proposed new roads will have a maximum front yard setback of 3.0 metres. Retail uses are permitted.*

