

Business Travel Survey

A total of 1,092 businesses along the St Clair Avenue West corridor received questionnaires in the fall of 2003. Responses were received from 224 businesses. City staff are working with the BIAs to increase the number of responses in areas where the response was less than average.

The survey results indicate that the two predominant forms of business in the sample are office and shopping/services representing 43% and 42% respectively. Health service offices had the highest representation and retail shopping had the second highest representation.

The 224 businesses who responded to the survey employ 2,393 staff of which 1,627 were full-time, 545 were part-time, and 221 were volunteers or occasional employees.

In terms of on-site parking, 28% of all businesses along St. Clair Avenue West who responded to the survey have on-site parking available for its customers and clients, while 70% of businesses said they felt they did not have enough on-site parking.

For the businesses surveyed, 52% of employees travel to work by automobile, while 39% use public transit. The remaining 9% walk or cycle.

The results of these surveys are compared with a larger travel database that was collected for all of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) in 2001. Together, these two surveys allow study and analysis of travel behaviour and trends in the St. Clair Avenue West study area and across the GTA.

Opportunities for Community Input

Public meetings will be held in mid-February 2004 (SEE NOTICE ON FRONT PAGE). The meetings will focus on how alternatives will be compared and evaluated, and provide information about the types of alternatives that will be considered. The study team will ask for comments and suggestions from the community about the information presented at these meetings.



How to Contact Us

You can provide comments at any time by:

1. Email - stclairwestea@toronto.ca
2. Study website - A project website has been established that provides information on the study and public meeting notices. The website will also include materials presented at the public meetings, and summaries of public meeting and workshop discussions. Visit www.toronto.ca/planningstudies
3. Contacting the Public Consultation Coordinator for the study by mail, fax or by telephone: James Yacoumidis, Public Consultation and Community Outreach, City of Toronto, Works and Emergency Services, 55 John Street, 19th Floor, Toronto, ON M5V 3C6
Tel: 416-392-4331, TTY: 416-397-0831, Fax: 416-392-2974

Para fazer uma pergunta ou deixar um comentário em português, queira ligar para o 416-338-2850.

Qualora desiderate porre delle domande o lasciare dei commenti in italiano, contattate il 416-392-3760.



Next Public Meetings: February 17 and 19, 2004



Neighbourhood Update

St. Clair Avenue West Transit Improvements Class Environmental Assessment

Melhoramentos aos transportes colectivos na St. Clair Ave. West
Miglioramento del sistema dei trasporti pubblici a St. Clair Ave. West




February 2004

This newsletter includes some important information about the study, answers some frequently-asked questions, and explains what has happened to this point in the project. There is also information about upcoming meetings, some of the surveys that have been done in the community as part of the project, and how you can stay involved in the project.

Please Join Us For Our Next Public Meetings

The next public meetings on the St. Clair Avenue West Transit Improvements Class Environmental Assessment (EA) will provide an update on the progress of the study, details on the evaluation factors and method, and information on the alternatives to be studied and evaluated.

Tuesday, February 17, 2004
Holy Rosary Parish Centre
356 St. Clair Ave. W. (east of Bathurst St.)
Open House Displays: 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Presentation: 7:00 p.m.
(followed by a facilitated discussion period)

Thursday, February 19, 2004
Joseph Piccininni Community Recreation Centre 
1369 St. Clair Ave. W. (west of Lansdowne Ave.)
Open House Displays: 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Presentation: 7:00 p.m.
(followed by a facilitated discussion period)

If you are unable to attend either of these meetings, but would like to provide us with your comments, or if you would like to be put on our study mailing list, please refer to the contact information provided on the back page.

The Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) and City of Toronto are presently doing a study to identify and evaluate options for improved transit service on St. Clair Avenue West between Gunns Road (just west of Keele Street) to just east of Yonge Street. The St. Clair Avenue West streetcar tracks are in poor condition and urgently require replacement. The planned reconstruction provides the opportunity to review possible enhancements to the streetcar and road infrastructure as part of broader community revitalization improvements planned for St. Clair Avenue West.

The Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Process

This study of St. Clair Avenue West is following the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) process, a process that is approved under the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act. The study officially started in August 2003. The Municipal Class EA process follows five steps (Phases) to study changes to city roads and the effects changes may have on the neighbourhoods along the road.

Phase 1: In this phase, we ask: What are the problems now and what will happen in the future? What ideas are there for solving the problem(s)? What are the most important reasons for making changes (or not)?

Phase 2: In this phase, we ask: What are all the possible ways to solve the problems, identified in Phase 1? (For example, widen the road for more cars, remove streetcars and put buses, or do nothing) What is the best way to solve the problem, considering the effects on the community, the environment, and the cost?

Phase 3: In this phase we ask: After selecting the best way to solve the problem in Phase 2, what designs would allow us to implement the preferred solution? Which design will be best considering its effects on the community, the environment, and costs?

Phase 4: In this phase we prepare reports summarizing the study process and findings and assist City Council to make decisions. A report is prepared with details about the three phases and the recommended plan. The report is presented to City Council Committees and City Council for approval.

Phase 5: If City Council approves the recommended plan, then in this phase, we prepare detailed designs and construction schedules. The City and TTC would work with the community to do this.

An important part of the Municipal Class EA process is public consultation. The first in a series of four public meetings for the St. Clair Avenue West Transit Improvements Class Environmental Assessment (EA) were held in October 2003 (a summary of the discussions at these meetings is available on the project website). In addition to these public meetings, Community Stakeholder Workshops are being held to discuss work in Phase 2 in more depth with representatives from groups from the community. The first Workshop was held on January 26th, 2004. A summary of the discussions at this workshop will be posted on the project website.

Questions and Answers

1. Why are you doing a St. Clair West Transit Improvements Environmental Assessment Study?

The streetcar tracks along St. Clair Avenue West are in a very poor state of repair and must be rebuilt in 2005. The study is looking at ways to improve transit operations along St. Clair Avenue beyond replacing the streetcar tracks. The EA Study will look at how we can provide better transit operations while, at the same time, considering the needs of others who use the road including pedestrians, automobiles, delivery vehicles, and cyclists. The Environmental Assessment Study will look at concerns about providing better transit operations, including access to parking, neighbourhoods and businesses, and overall traffic safety and community revitalization and business impacts.

2. What's the problem on St. Clair Avenue West today?

Streetcars and their passengers are regularly being delayed by traffic along St. Clair Avenue. This means that the streetcar service has become unreliable for people who depend on it. St. Clair Avenue West is also a corridor identified by business and residents groups for renewal (or revitalization). The new Toronto Official Plan shows St. Clair Avenue as an area for growth in the City and also says that Toronto needs to rely less on cars to keep the City growing and healthy.

3. Why should the community be interested in this project?

This project invites everyone in the community to give their opinion about what happens on St. Clair Avenue. The new tracks will last about 25-30 years, so the design of the street will be part of

the community for years to come. Community groups have established revitalization plans for some of the corridor that need to be included in the plans for changes to the road.

4. Has it already been decided that reserved streetcar lanes is the (best) preferred option?

No decision has been made. The EA Study will consider a wide range of options that might include minor traffic improvements (traffic signal changes) to major ones (replacing streetcars with buses). These will all be evaluated during the next step in the study (Phase 2). The only decision that has been made at this time is: The streetcar tracks at some intersections on St. Clair have become so bad that they have to be rebuilt this year. However, this will not prejudice the nature of the solution which will be recommended in the study.

5. What are the transportation options for St. Clair Avenue?

Alternatives that will be reviewed include:

- Do nothing - keep St. Clair the way it is and simply rebuild the streetcar tracks
- Operational changes - signal timing changes, transit signal priority (special signal operations that give streetcars extra time or special signals)
- Demand Management measures such as: increased parking fees, longer periods of parking prohibition, lanes for vehicles with more than 2 occupants
- Reserved streetcar lanes
- Change of technology (replace streetcars with buses)
- Road widening
- A combination of some of these options

6. Could the streetcar tracks and stops just be rebuilt the way they are?

Yes, one possible outcome of the study is to simply rebuild the streetcar tracks and continue operating streetcars as they do today.



7. What is the expected cost of reconstructing the streetcar tracks?

The cost of reconstructing the tracks for the 6.5 kilometre section, including special trackwork at intersections, which must be rebuilt in 2004, is \$25 million. This excludes the costs of road resurfacing and possible platform, pedestrian, traffic signal, and other related improvements.

8. When would construction start?

If the study ultimately recommends, and City Council approves, reconstruction of the tracks, then construction would start in Spring 2005. As mentioned earlier, some intersection tracks will have to be rebuilt in 2004.

9. What community issues are being considered in the study?

A wide variety of issues and concerns have been identified by the residents, business owners, and visitors along the entire St. Clair Avenue West study corridor. The study will review each of these, and the different solutions and combinations of solutions to address them. Some of the most important issues are neighbourhood traffic, business and property access, effects on pedestrians, parking, safety, support of revitalization plans, business economic impacts and street appearance/urban design.

10. When will a decision on the preferred plan be made? Who has the final say about the decision?

City Council will make a decision about what happens on St. Clair Avenue West. A decision will be made in the summer of 2004, when the study report (ESR) is submitted to a Committee of City Council, and then to City Council for approval. After Council approval, there is a mandatory public review period when any individual who believes that there are still outstanding issues, can ask the Minister of Environment for more study of the situation. Later in the study, we will provide details about opportunities for public review and how to submit comments to City Committees and City Council.

Surveying the Community

Three separate surveys have been done in the community to gather information and opinions about travel habits and needs along the St. Clair corridor. Surveys were sent by mail to residents and business owners along St. Clair Avenue. A separate on-the-street survey was done to gather information from shoppers along St. Clair Avenue during November and December 2003. The shoppers/customers survey is being supplemented with additional surveys that are being co-ordinated with the BIAs along St. Clair Avenue. The results of these surveys will be posted on the study website or can be made available by contacting the study team (listed on the last page).



Residents Travel Survey

In June and July 2003, all households within 250 metres on either side of St. Clair Avenue West were mailed a travel survey to gather insights into household and resident travel characteristics. 3,069 (27%) households responded to the survey which is a very good response.

Here are some highlights of the survey results:

- About 29% of households do not own or lease a motor vehicle (higher than the City average of 25%) while 48% have access to one vehicle.
- Of trips made during the morning study period (6-10 a.m.), 54% were trips to work.
- The mode of travel for work trips reported included 42% driving a car, 44% by TTC, and 10% other modes (bicycling and walking). For shopping trips, 39% drive a car, 21% take TTC, and 32% walk.

A separate newsletter providing more detailed results has been prepared on the Residents Travel Survey and is available on the project website.