

Submitted by
Councillor Wong Tam

PW 17.9.1

JARVIS STREET CULTURAL CORRIDOR CONSULTATION FINDINGS

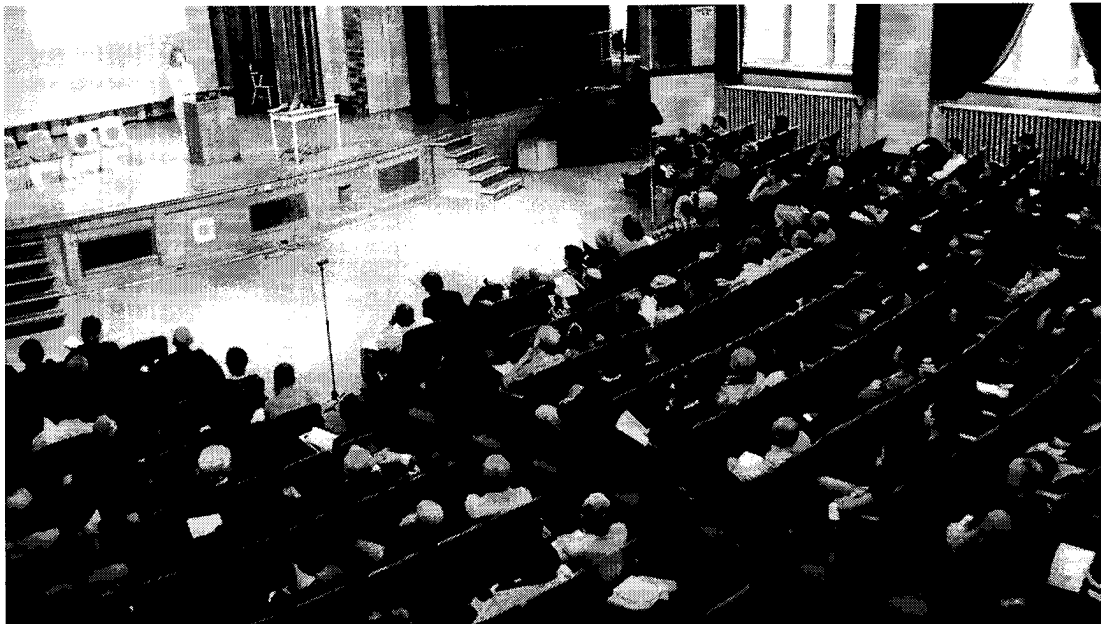


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JARVIS STREET CULTURAL CORRIDOR CONSULTATION RESULTS

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On April 3rd 2012, Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam hosted a public consultation to discuss the future of Jarvis Street. Invitations and email notification were sent out broadly to Ward 27 households and all key stakeholder groups such as resident associations and business improvement areas. At this meeting, the community heard presentations about the cultural and historical significance of Jarvis Street from Heritage Toronto, ERA Architects, Cultural Services and Toronto Preservation Services. Residents shared their ideas and visions for future streetscape improvements to the Jarvis corridor.

Surveys were distributed to the attendees in order to identify important issues and priorities for the local community, and included topics like traffic and road infrastructure, streetscape and pedestrian realm quality, and neighbourhood heritage assets. Approximately, one hundred and twenty people completed the survey, providing valuable feedback on the issues that mattered most to them. The results from these surveys suggest that the local community believes very strongly in the cultural significance of Jarvis Street, and what follows are the main highlights, issues and priorities that resonated through peoples' responses.

2. BACKGROUND

- Jarvis Street was identified as one of seven cultural corridors in the City of Toronto in the 2001 document entitled "Canada's Urban Waterfront - Waterfront Culture and Heritage Infrastructure Plan".
 - A streetscape study was initiated as one component of a broader Heritage Plan for Jarvis Street, but concluded that there was insufficient right-of-way space to achieve the objectives of improving the public realm.
 - A subsequent Traffic Feasibility Study in 2005 indicated that reducing the width of Jarvis Street from five lanes to four would be feasible from a traffic perspective, and justified further evaluation under an Environmental Assessment Study which begins in 2006.
- In May 2009, City Council considered the Streetscape Study and Class Environmental Assessment Study to identify options for future streetscape improvements to Jarvis Street
 - Several design solutions were put forward, each exploring different options like widening Jarvis Street, installing bicycle lanes, and removing the reversible fifth lane.
 - The favoured option was (2b), streetscape modifications within the existing boulevard width, no modification to the curblines, removal of the reversible fifth lane, and the installation of bicycle lanes.
 - While some disadvantages to this plan were noted, such as modest increases in travel time for vehicular traffic during peak travel hours, the disadvantages identified were not contrary to the Official Plan and city policies of creating pedestrian and cyclist-friendly streets, and creating an urban environment that encourages and supports walking and biking.

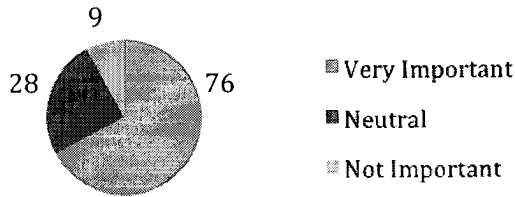
- January 2011, Councillor Wong-Tam identified the design and construction of a new children's playground at Allan Gardens to be an area priority. Equipment is outdated and unsafe. Stakeholder consultations begin immediately.
- February 2011, Councillor Wong-Tam consults with Upper Jarvis Neighbourhood Association and the residents along Charles Street East on strategies to improve pedestrian safety at the intersection streets of Charles, Mount Pleasant and Jarvis.
- March 2011, Councillor Wong-Tam initiates new street design plans with Transportation staff to improve pedestrian safety at Charles, Mount Pleasant and Jarvis streets.
- April 2011, Councillor Wong-Tam proposes the creation of an Aboriginal Village (placeholder name) business improvement area and a new downtown east planning framework to address issues of poverty, housing and social equity. Concept is well-received by the Aboriginal community and consultation is ongoing with staff.
- May 2011, Councillor Wong-Tam prepares to present two preliminary Transportation design options for the Upper Jarvis Residents' Association, Rogers Communications and Charles Street residents for feedback. Funding source from Section 37 was identified.
- June 2011, Councillor Wong-Tam and the Friends of Allan Garden renew dialogue to implement the Masterplan for Allan Gardens including the introduction of a new architectural gateway for Jarvis Street modelled after the Serpentine Gallery Pavilions in London, UK.
- In July 2011, City Council endorsed the *Mayor's Bike Plan*. Part 11 of the decision:
 - City Council rescind its decision related to the bicycle lanes on Jarvis Street, and co-ordinate implementation of the proposed separation of bike lanes on Sherbourne Street from Bloor Street to Lake Shore Boulevard as an alternative, and staff be directed to take all steps required to revert Jarvis Street to its pre-existing operation such that implementation can be achieved as soon as possible, with all work to be completed on Sherbourne Street and Jarvis Street in 2012.
- December 2011, Councillor Wong-Tam initiates plans to create Canada's largest public art mural with Aboriginal stakeholders in the area.
- January – March 2012, Councillor Wong-Tam and her staff meet with the Garden District Residents Association, Upper Jarvis Residents' Association, Heritage Toronto, Toronto Parks and Friends of Allan Gardens to renew discussions for the Jarvis Cultural Corridor.
- April 2012: Public consultation meeting for the Jarvis Cultural Corridor takes place at Jarvis Collegiate.

3. CONSULTATION HIGHLIGHTS

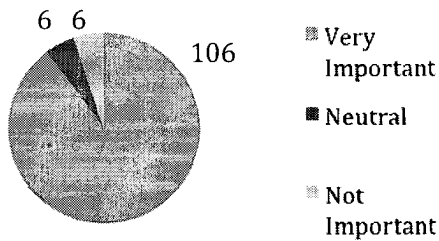
3.1. TRANSPORTATION

- **Bicycle lanes**
 - There is significant support to leave the bicycle lanes intact and even extend them southward to the waterfront.
 - Despite the forthcoming installation of separated bike lanes on Sherbourne Street, many people firmly disapproved of removing the Jarvis bike lanes, citing a significant increase in cyclists using Jarvis Street and enhanced safety for cyclists and pedestrians as reasons for maintaining the current street layout.
- **The Jarvis Street 5th lane**
 - Some respondents used the survey's *additional comments* section to express opposition to the reinstallation of Jarvis Street's reversible fifth lane, a decision which was made by City Council in July 2011 despite the finding of the 2009 Environmental Assessment Study that the removal of the fifth lane would result in only nominal increases to travel times.
- **Parking availability**
 - When asked about whether or not there needs to be an increase in the availability of commercial parking options, most respondents were neutral or opposed to the suggestion.
 - A moderate level of support for the creation of service vehicle lay-bys was expressed. Lay-bys would enable service vehicles to pull over to the side of the road without blocking traffic, thus creating bottlenecks and obstructing cyclists.
- **Speeding and traffic**
 - A large number of those surveyed indicated that the reduction of vehicle speeds is an important concern for Jarvis Street. The 2009 Environmental Assessment Study made note of the high incidence of speeding, and concerns still remain over taking measures to slow down local traffic.
 - Some respondents commented that they would like to see increased policing to monitor speeding cars, as well as an increase in the number of speeding tickets given out.
 - Traffic light synchronization generated a favourable response. Doing so would ease the overall flow of traffic and reduce the idling associated with frequent stops, but could also potentially encourage speeding.
- **Intersections and pedestrian safety**
 - The issue of pedestrian safety was a significant concern in the survey, and respondents felt strongly about initiatives to enhance the safety and well-being of pedestrians using Jarvis Street.
 - Several destinations along Jarvis Street could potentially justify the installation of pedestrian crossings, such as Jarvis Collegiate High School, and respondents agreed that these crossings would be desirable.

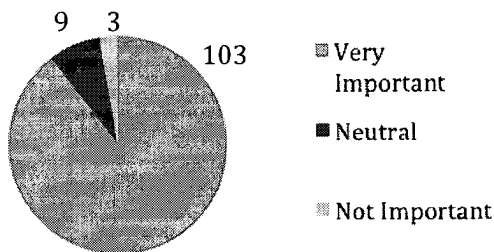
Reduce Vehicular Traffic on Jarvis



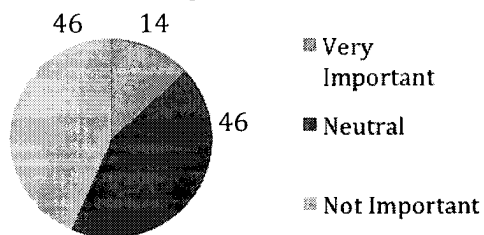
Keep Bike Lanes



Enhance Pedestrian Safety



Expand Commercial Parking Options



3.2. STREETScape AND PUBLIC REALM

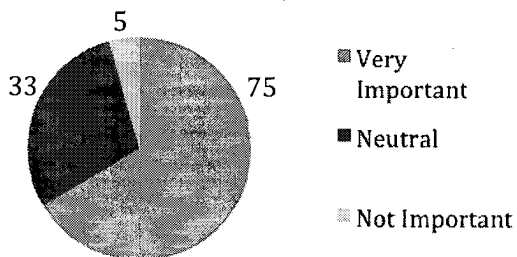
• **Street furniture**

- The provision of specially designed street furniture is an idea which was well received by the survey respondents. The community has expressed a desire to address the deficit of public seating along Jarvis, and installing

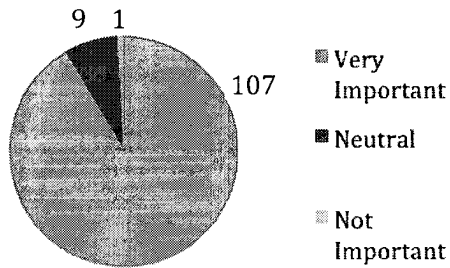
custom street furniture could meet this need while enlivening the overall vibrancy of the broader public realm.

- **Public space**
 - Respondents indicated that they strongly support the creation of new public spaces along the Jarvis Corridor. Such spaces could facilitate community activities and provide cherished space for public congregation.
- **Public art**
 - The idea of exploring new opportunities to install public art generated a positive response. Shayne Dark's *Double Vision* sculpture outside of the X Condominium at Jarvis & Charles Streets is an example of public art that can bring animation and playfulness to the streetscape.
- **Public safety and crime**
 - The survey responses indicate that crime reduction and improved neighbourhood safety is very important to many in the community. A well-planned streetscape could reduce crime and curtail undesirable behaviour through good design, by promoting eyes on the street, eliminating secluded areas, and encouraging a diverse array of uses for the streetscape.
- **Greening and environment**
 - There is very strong support for implementation of a 'green strategy' to enhance neighbourhood sustainability and improve local environmental quality.
 - Respondents expressed support for increasing the tree canopy and the amount of plantings and gardens.
 - A very large number of respondents noted that they would like to see improvements to local park conditions. The upcoming Allen Gardens Revitalization Master Plan will invest \$15 million into the neighbourhood's largest park, making it an oasis for locals and a truly city-wide attraction.

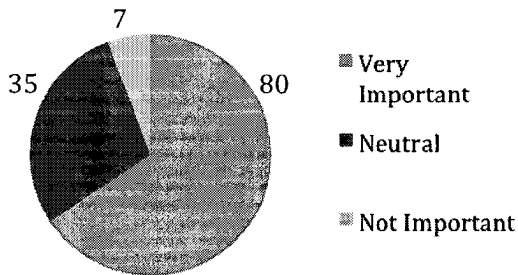
Reduce Crime and Improve Safety



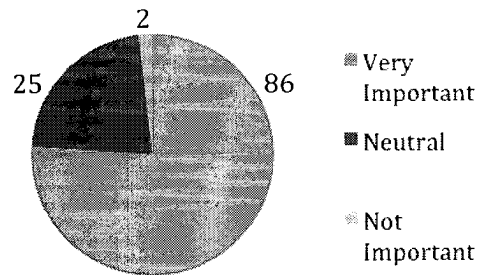
Implement a Greening Strategy



Install Public Art



Create New Public Spaces

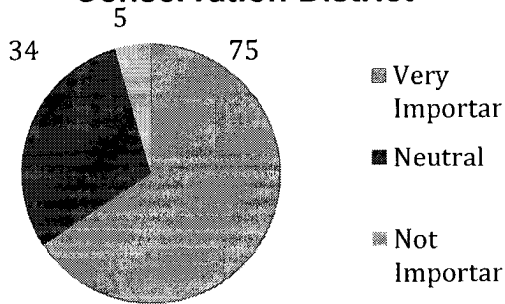


3.3. CULTURAL HERITAGE

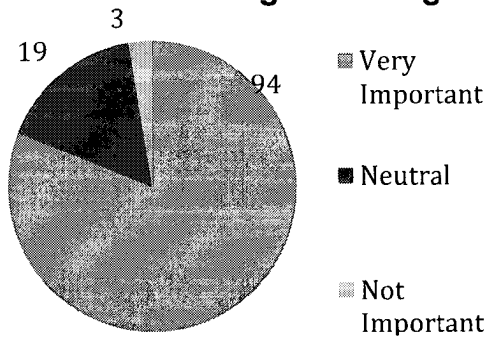
- **Heritage preservation**
 - Survey responses indicated very strong support for the restoration of heritage buildings – a critical priority given sustained development pressure that threatens to compromise heritage preservation.
 - Many respondents supported the creation of a Heritage Conservation District to provide an extra layer of protection for Jarvis' treasured heritage assets
 - Respondents were receptive to the idea that the City should provide way finding for significant heritage sites.
- **Heritage plaques**
 - Many respondents liked the idea of installing heritage plaques, which could provide information about specific sites and increase the overall awareness of Jarvis Street's unique cultural history.
- **Gateway markers and banners**
 - Most respondents were neutral toward the installation of gateway markers and banners, indicating that other improvements might be more beneficial or desirable.

- **Celebration of cultural assets – historical and modern**
 - Respondents asserted that the celebration of Jarvis' cultural assets should be a priority for the City of Toronto.
 - While keen on preserving and celebrating the past, many people recognized the importance of Jarvis' modern cultural elements like the National Ballet School, and favoured a plan to enhance the prominence of the street's contemporary assets.

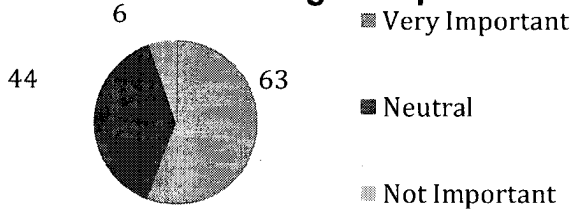
Create Heritage Conservation District



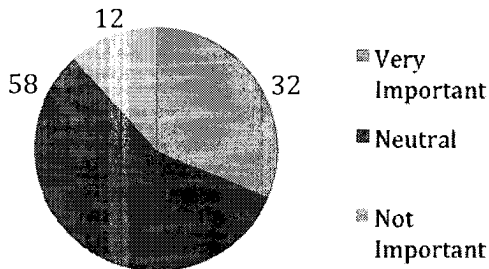
Restore Heritage Buildings



Install Heritage Plaques



Install Gateway Markers

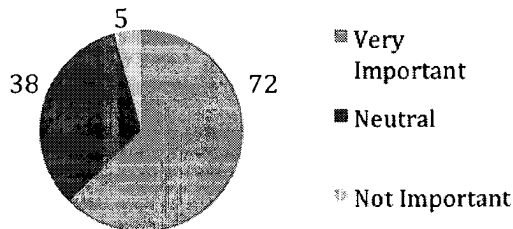


3.4. CONFRONTING CHALLENGES AND FUTURE PRIORITIES

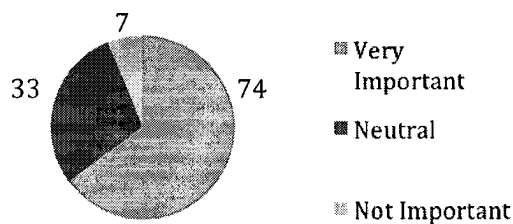
- **Coping with development and heritage loss**
 - The Jarvis Street Cultural Corridor Survey revealed a broad consensus that local heritage must be vigorously protected as Jarvis experiences the ongoing challenges and stresses of new development.
 - Survey results indicated a moderate level of support for the creation of a new intersection at Jarvis and Charles Streets. The existing intersection is chaotic, and complicated unusual turns on to and off of Mount Pleasant Road. Furthermore, a high number of new condominium developments located at this intersection might necessitate design changes to facilitate enhanced flow of traffic and optimize the conditions for pedestrian and cyclist safety.
- **Provision of adequate arts & cultural facilities for new development**
 - Respondents indicated that as the Jarvis neighbourhood continues to undergo development, there needs to be an expansion of public facilities such as libraries and recreation centres in order to meet the needs of the growing local community.
- **Consultation with the Aboriginal community**
 - Downtown East is home to Toronto's largest Aboriginal community, and many people felt that it is important to consult and engage with this community to ensure that they are well-represented in the Jarvis Street conversation.
- **Creation of Jarvis Corridor Advisory Group**
 - Many respondents believed it would be useful to establish a dedicated advisory group, or working group, to oversee broad consultation

regarding improvements to the Jarvis Street Corridor, and ensure that all stakeholders have an opportunity to participate in the process and have their voices heard.

Consultation with Aboriginal Community



Provision of Arts & Cultural Facilities in New Developments



4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- More than a decade has passed since Jarvis Street was first identified as one of Toronto's seven Cultural Corridors in 2001. In 2009, years of studies and an environmental assessment culminated in the installation of bicycle lanes and removal of the reversible fifth lane. Despite significant opposition, Council voted in July 2011 to restore Jarvis Street to its pre-2009 state, a move that will carry a large price tag for the city. The results from this survey suggest that the local community desires neither the reconstruction of the reversible fifth lane nor the removal of the bicycle lanes.
- The community believes strongly in opportunities for streetscape revitalization. There is a general consensus on the main priorities for the Jarvis Streetscape: slower traffic and less parking for cars; a more pleasant, hospitable and animated pedestrian realm; more tree cover, vegetation and green features, and; new and improved parks and public space.
- The Jarvis community is very concerned for the preservation of its heritage assets and believes strongly that new development must not take place at the expense of the neighbourhood's historical fabric. The survey revealed strong support for the creation of a Heritage Conservation District to formally recognize

the importance of local historical landmarks and provide an enhanced level of protection against redevelopment.

- The celebration of Jarvis' unique cultural history should be a priority for the city of Toronto, and the community would like to see the creation of heritage features to identify prominent sites and destinations. Such features could include: wayfinding, heritage plaques, and heritage banners/marquees.
- While recognizing the inevitability of development, the community believes efforts must be made to shape development so that it is well integrated into the street in a way that is sensitive to the existing features. The neighbourhood's growing population must be provided with new and expanded arts, cultural and recreational facilities to avoid overwhelming what limited resources are currently available.
- There must be broad community consultation to guide the process of creating a plan for neighbourhood improvements. Many people responded in their surveys that it is especially important to engage the local aboriginal community to ensure that their interests and ideas are well represented. Many respondents also supported the creation of a special Jarvis Cultural Corridor Advisory Group to manage the various aspects of streetscape improvements and ensure broad participation in the process.