



**STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED**

Bloor-Dupont Bikeway Environmental Assessment Study

Date:	October 1, 2013
To:	Public Works and Infrastructure Committee
From:	General Manager, Transportation Services
Wards:	Parkdale-High Park, Ward 14 Davenport, Ward 18 Trinity-Spadina, Wards 19 and 20 Toronto Centre-Rosedale, Wards 27 and 28
Reference Number:	P:\2013\Cluster B\TRA\TIM\pw13011tim

SUMMARY

A consultant team was retained to commence work on the Bloor-Danforth Bikeway Environmental Assessment Study in summer 2010. However, in July 2012 City Council, directed staff to not proceed any further on the E.A. Study and to refocus the available resources towards Council's new cycling priorities.

There has been a longstanding interest by many in the cycling community to evaluate the feasibility of a bicycle facility on Bloor Street. A bicycle facility along Bloor Street could be one of the most significant bikeways in the City bikeway network due to the length and location of the corridor. The changes required to implement a bikeway could also have substantial impacts on auto mobility, commercial loading and on-street parking.

An environmental assessment (E.A.) is already planned for a parallel corridor along Dupont Street. From network planning and cost-benefit perspectives, there is an advantage to combining the Bloor Street and Dupont Street corridors together because changes to one of the two parallel streets will affect the other. The Dupont Street E.A. is scheduled to begin in 2014. Staff are therefore recommending that a combined Bloor Street - Dupont Street Bikeway Environmental Assessment Study be undertaken by Transportation Services, commencing in 2014.

RECOMMENDATION

The General Manager, Transportation Services recommends that:

1. City Council direct the General Manager, Transportation Services to undertake a combined Bloor Street – Dupont Street Bikeway Environmental Assessment Study in 2014, and that the funds for this study be included for consideration in the 2014 Capital Budget and 2015-2023 Capital Plan for Transportation Services (within approved capital targets).

Financial Impact

There is no immediate financial impact associated with this report. The estimated cost to undertake a combined Bloor Street-Dupont Street Bikeway Environmental Assessment Study, as described in this report, is approximately \$450,000. If approved by Council, the funds for this study will be included for consideration in the 2014 Capital Budget and 2015-2023 Capital Plan for Transportation Services (within approved capital targets) under Cycling Infrastructure.

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and concurs with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

Funds for the Bloor-Danforth Bikeway Environmental Assessment Study were previously approved as part of the Transportation Services 2010 Capital Budget. The goal of the environmental assessment study was to evaluate an innovative design and implementation plan for developing a bikeway along the Bloor-Danforth corridor, and identify short and long-term design options, including evaluating the feasibility of separated bicycle lanes. A consultant team, led by IBI Group Ltd., was retained to commence work in summer 2010. City Council, at its meeting on July 12, 13 and 14, 2011, adopted the staff report, entitled "Bikeway Network – 2011 Update" (PW5.1) and, in so doing, directed staff to not proceed any further on the Bloor-Danforth Bikeway Environmental Assessment Study and to refocus the available resources towards Council's new cycling priorities, including upgrading existing downtown bicycle lanes to cycle tracks and expanding the bikeway trail system.

At its meeting on June 19, 2013 the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee considered a communication (PW24.10) from the Councillors for Wards 14, 18, 19, 20, 27 and 28 requesting that staff "include plans to resume work on Bloor Street bike lanes, including the restarting the Environmental Assessment in the Transportation Services 2014 budget and workplan." The communication was deferred to the September 11, 2013 Public Works and Infrastructure Committee meeting for a report from the General Manager, Transportation Services, on the feasibility of reviving the Bloor-Danforth Bikeway Environmental Assessment Study.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

A bicycle facility in the Bloor-Danforth corridor could be one of the most significant bicycle routes in the city, due to the location and length of the corridor. Conversely, providing bicycle lanes or cycle tracks could also have a substantial impact on auto mobility, on-street parking and commercial loading/deliveries. The provision of bicycle lanes on Bloor Street and Danforth Avenue has been studied and implemented in a fragmented manner in the past. Some segments of the corridor have either bicycle lanes (Sherbourne Street to Broadview Avenue) or shared-lane markings (Avenue Road to Church Street). The Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) study commenced in 2010, and halted in 2011, would have been the first comprehensive review of the whole corridor to determine the feasibility of developing a continuous bikeway facility.

COMMENTS

Restarting the Bloor-Danforth E.A. Study

In accordance with Council's July 2011 decision to stop work on the Bloor-Danforth Bikeway Environmental Assessment Study, the contract with the consultant team was terminated. It has therefore been determined, in consultation with Purchasing & Materials Management Division (PMMD) staff, that the study cannot simply be restarted from where it left off. A new Request For Proposals would need to be issued and a consultant would be retained through the City's competitive procurement process.

The Bloor-Danforth Bikeway E.A. Study was terminated early in the study process. The consultant team conducted several meetings with City agencies and other internal stakeholders to finalize the study design, develop the consultation strategy, and to collect the necessary background data. There will be some cost savings as a result of the work completed as part of the previous study, however; the data will be four years old and may need to be reassessed.

Determining the New Scope of Work

The scope of work for the terminated Bloor-Danforth Bikeway E.A. Study covered a very large study area, extending approximately 24 km from just east of Kipling Avenue in the west to Kingston Road in the east. The study area included three Community Council districts, 14 Municipal Wards (3, 13, 14, 18, 19, 20, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 35 and 36) and 16 Business Improvement Areas. The E.A. study would have involved a major effort to engage the business and residential communities along the corridor, as well as all other stakeholders, to help define a viable, effective, and implementable scheme.

This report is responding to a request to resume work on Bloor Street bicycle lanes for a much smaller area, extending from Keele Street in the west to the Prince Edward Viaduct in the east. This central portion of the corridor has some of the most challenging sections to accommodate bicycle lanes due to the existing pavement width (varies from 12.2 to 16.5 metres), traffic volumes (ranging from 19,000 to 45,000 vehicles per day) and high

demand for on-street commercial loading/delivery and/or parking. There are existing bicycle lanes on Bloor Street East from Sherbourne Street to Broadview Avenue. There is also potential to accommodate bicycle lanes west of Keele Street alongside High Park. Conducting a bikeway E.A. study for this section is estimated to cost in the order of \$300,000.

There are two new developments since the termination of the Bloor-Danforth Bikeway E.A. Study that should be considered in determining a new scope of work for a Bloor Street Bikeway E.A. study. Firstly, Council has directed Transportation Services to design and implement separated bicycle lanes (cycle tracks) along a parallel corridor, Harbord Street, Hoskin Avenue and Wellesley Street, between Ossington Avenue and Parliament Street (scheduled to be completed by fall 2014). A Bloor Street bikeway study should take into consideration any changes in traffic (including cycling) patterns resulting from the new Harbord-Hoskin-Wellesley cycling corridor. The study area would include connections to the Harbord-Hoskin-Wellesley bikeway.

Secondly, City Council, on October 2, 3 and 4, 2012, authorized the Acting General Manager, Transportation Services "...to undertake a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Study of measures to mitigate traffic congestion and improve cycling safety in the area along Dupont Street between Lansdowne Avenue and Dundas Street West, which would include the development and evaluation of any options that would retain the Annette Street – Dupont Street bicycle lanes and improve connections to existing and proposed bikeways to the east of Lansdowne Avenue" (PW17.10). This E.A. study is scheduled to commence in 2014.

Appendix 1: Proposed Combined Bloor-Dupont E.A. Study Area illustrates the study areas for the Bloor Street E.A. Study and the Dupont Street E.A. Study and the proposed combined study area.

Impact of Adding Bloor Street E.A. Study to 2014 Cycling Program

The estimated cost to undertake the Dupont Street Bikeway E.A. is \$200,000 and the Bloor Street Bikeway E.A. is \$300,000, for a sum total of \$500,000 if conducted independently. Should the studies be combined into a singular project, it is anticipated that approximately \$50,000 in project management cost savings could be achieved. The total estimated cost of a combined Bloor-Dupont E.A. Study would therefore be \$450,000 – or \$250,000 more than currently budgeted.

To accommodate for this unplanned additional expense, Transportation Services would defer the planned feasibility study, Mid-Humber Gap – Phase 2 (approximately \$250,000), to the 2015 Cycling Infrastructure Program. Deferring the Mid-Humber Gap – Phase 2 feasibility study should have no impact on the implementation of this important trail connection because the construction is scheduled for 2016, pending resolution of the property and technical design issues.

In terms of staff time, the studies for several of Council's current cycling network priorities (Richmond-Adelaide Bikeway E.A., Harbord-Hoskin-Wellesley Cycle Tracks, and the West Toronto Railpath Extension E.A.) will be substantially completed by the second quarter of 2014. Staff resources could be available for the proposed Bloor-Dupont Bikeway E.A. Study commencing in the third quarter of 2014, with little impact on existing planned projects. The E.A. study would be completed in approximately 12 months. Due to the 2014 Municipal Election the public consultation component of the E.A. study would commence in early 2015.

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENT

Appendix 1: Proposed Combined Bloor-Dupont E.A. Study Area