TORONTO

REPORT FOR ACTION

Proposed Sidewalk on Usher Avenue

Date: March 15, 2017
To: Etobicoke York Community Council
From: Directors, Public Realm Section and Etobicoke York District, Transportation Services Division
Wards: Ward 5 – Etobicoke-Lakeshore

SUMMARY

A new sidewalk is proposed for Usher Avenue from Royal York Road to The Kingsway on the south side only, a collector road that does not have a sidewalk on either side. The sidewalk would provide a safe walking environment for pedestrians on a two-way road which is only 6.5m in width, and also connect with existing sidewalks. The City standard is for collector roads to have sidewalks on both sides of the road.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Directors of the Public Realm Section and Etobicoke York District, Transportation Services recommends that:

1. Etobicoke York Community Council receive this report entitled, "Proposed Sidewalk on Usher Avenue" dated March 14, 2017 for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The estimated cost for the proposed sidewalk is $32,000. These funds are included in the 2017 Transportation Services Capital Works Program.

DECISION HISTORY

At its June 14, 2016 meeting, Etobicoke York Community Council referred the May 5, 2016 report back to the Director, Transportation Services, Etobicoke York District in order for staff to attend a community meeting hosted by Councillor DiCiano and report back for its meeting on September 7, 2016.

http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.EY15.49

A report from the Director, Public Realm Section dated May 5, 2016 was submitted to Etobicoke York Community Council on the Proposed Sidewalk on Usher Avenue.

http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2016/ey/bgrd/backgroundfile-93124.pdf

At its April 25, 2016 meeting, Public Works and Infrastructure Committee (PWIC 12.17) received a letter from Councillor Di Ciano regarding the construction of sidewalk on Usher Avenue from Royal York Road to The Kingsway. It was ruled that the item (PWIC 12.17) is within the jurisdiction and mandate of the Etobicoke York Community Council.

http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.PW12.17

On July 12, 13, 14 and 15, 2016 City Council approved the Road Safety Plan which targets vulnerable road users including pedestrians, seniors and school children and includes a recommendation to further enhance the Missing Links sidewalk capital program.
http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.PW14.1

On February 29, March1-2, 2013, City Council adopted an update to the Road Classification System. It stipulates that arterial and collector roads have sidewalks on both sides, and that local roads have sidewalks on one or both sides.

http://www1.toronto.ca/City%20Of%20Toronto/Transportation%20Services/Road%20Classification%20System/Files/pdf/2012/criteria_table.pdf

On May 25-27, 2009, City Council adopted the Toronto Walking Strategy that has three Guiding Principles: universal accessibility, safety and design excellence, and an action item to install sidewalks where they are missing.

http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2009.PW24.6

On July 16, 2002, City Council adopted the report, "City-Wide Program for Provision of Essential Sidewalk Links," prioritizing the installation of sidewalks on arterial and collector streets.

http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2002/agendas/council/cc020730/pof11rpt/cl001.pdf

COMMENTS

A new sidewalk was originally planned for construction in 2016 on the south side of Usher Avenue from Royal York Road to The Kingsway, as shown in "Appendix 1: Usher Avenue from Royal York Road to the Kingsway – Sidewalk Construction Plan and Profile".

Usher Avenue is classified as a collector road and does not have sidewalks on either side. Usher Avenue has a road surface that is approximately 6.5 metres wide, which is insufficient to safely support two-way vehicular traffic and pedestrians on the road surface. This is of most concern during winter months when snow storage further reduces the available space for pedestrians. The proposed sidewalk is approximately 88 metres in length and is located immediately adjacent to the curb, without a boulevard between the curb and sidewalk to minimize impacts on the two abutting frontages. The proposed sidewalk connects to existing sidewalks on Royal York Road and The Kingsway.

An excerpt from the 2002 City-Wide Program for Provision of Essential Sidewalk Links," report prioritizing the installation of sidewalks on arterial and collector streets advises:

It must be emphasized that sidewalks are required on both sides of arterial and collector roads for safety reasons. The posted speed on collector roads is typically 40 or 50 km/h with a daily motor vehicle traffic volume ranging from 2,500 to 8,000. The posted speed on arterial roads ranges from 40 to 80 km/h, with most at 50 or 60 km/h, and with daily motor vehicle traffic volumes ranging from 8,000 to 40,000 or more. Under these conditions, walking on the road or on an unimproved boulevard is not an acceptable option for pedestrians and the provision of sidewalks on arterial and collector roads is a matter of necessity rather than choice.

The sidewalk was requested by residents concerned about the safety of students walking on the road through 311 requests dating back to 2012. Vehicles travelling northbound on Royal York must turn right on Usher Avenue to go eastbound on Dundas Street West as this movement is not possible at the intersection of Royal York Road and Dundas Street West. Staff have observed several pedestrians including students walking along this stretch of road during their investigation. TTC data indicates 47 transit users alighting at the bus stop at Royal York Road and Usher Avenue.

Usher Avenue has four houses, two on each side. One 30cm diameter tree would need to be removed for construction and would be replaced by the planting of one or more new trees, with location(s) to be determined by the City's Forestry Division and local residents.

A community meeting was held on October 27, 2016 at which Usher Avenue residents objected to the sidewalk installation and also disputed the traffic count volumes which were reported as approximately 3,800 daily vehicles with approximately 400 vehicles in the peak hour (8-9AM), as collected on Thursday, September 24, 2009. At the request of the local Councillor, Transportation Services staff updated the vehicular counts and found that on November 8 and 9, 2016 there were 3,221 and 3,201 daily vehicles respectively. These updated traffic counts continue to place the road's vehicle traffic in the collector road class (over 2,500 vehicles) in addition to its function as the linkage between two main thoroughfares.

If approved, Engineering and Construction Services would deliver the sidewalk in 2017 or 2018, depending on Community Council approval and subsequent tender dates. The City's policy is to build a physical environment that supports and encourages walking

and accessibility, as adopted by Council in the 2009 Toronto Walking Strategy and further supported under the 2016 VisionZero Road Safety Plan. Sidewalks provide safe, accessible pedestrian routes and connectivity in the community.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Appendix 1: Usher Avenue from Royal York Road to the Kingsway – Sidewalk Construction Plan and Profile

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