Proposed Sidewalk on Taber Road

Date: August 28, 2017  
To: Etobicoke York Community Council  
From: Directors, Public Realm Section and Etobicoke York District, Transportation Services  
Wards: Ward 2 - Etobicoke North

SUMMARY

A request to build a partial 140m sidewalk on a collector road which stops midblock is not recommended due to safety and connectivity concerns in an industrial area with a secondary school and community health centre. However, the sidewalk could be extended a further 50m and provide a continuous, safe walking environment between the existing sidewalks on Kipling Avenue and Brydon Drive. Detailed design would seek to reduce any impacts on parking, trees and the existing ditch system on both segments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. Etobicoke York Community Council approve the proposed construction of a sidewalk on the north side of Taber Road between Kipling Avenue and Brydon Drive.

2. City staff be directed to work closely with affected property owners to reduce impacts on parking, trees and facilitate any necessary boulevard enhancements as part of the detailed design process.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The estimated cost for the proposed sidewalk is $70,000. If approved, this sidewalk will be added to the City's Missing Links Sidewalk Capital Program.
At its April 4, 2017 meeting, Etobicoke York Community Council requested the Director, Transportation Services, Etobicoke York District, to report to the June 13, 2017 meeting of the Community Council on the feasibility of installing a sidewalk on the north side of Taber Road, from Kipling Avenue to a point approximately 100m west, terminating in front of the Rexdale Community Health Centre.


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.


On February 29, March 1 and 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.


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.


COMMENTS

In 2016, a sidewalk was added to Brydon Drive to provide safety and accessibility to Monsignor Percy Johnson Secondary School's rear playing fields. This sidewalk was planned to connect with a new sidewalk on the north side of Taber Road based upon the 2016 request from the Councillor's office on behalf of the Rexdale Community Health Centre. The project was cancelled due to the concerns of the corner property owner about the potential loss of boulevard parking.

Taber Road is a collector road situated in an industrial area which connects to Kipling Avenue, and currently has a sidewalk on its south side. The road is approximately 7.3m in width and has a ditch drainage system. The City's standard for collector roads is to
have a sidewalk on both sides due to the speed and volume of vehicular traffic. At its April 4, 2017 meeting, Etobicoke York Community Council requested the Director, Transportation Services, Etobicoke York District, to report on the feasibility of installing a partial sidewalk on the north side of Taber Road, from Kipling Avenue to a point approximately 140m west, terminating in front of the Rexdale Community Health Centre. City staff also met with the local Councillor to discuss the project.

Construction of a partial sidewalk is not recommended for safety, accessibility and connectivity reasons. While pedestrians who access the health centre will have a direct link from Kipling, those who will be connecting to or from Brydon Drive will be forced to walk on the roadbed for the remaining 50m or to cross midblock to access a safe place to walk. Signage will also need to be posted advising pedestrians that the sidewalk ends midblock. Many employees of nearby businesses rely upon public transit and shiftwork can often mean trips in darkness in competition with heavy vehicles. In addition, when sidewalks are not connected, sidewalk snow plows are forced to backtrack and/or swing into the roadbed, reducing their efficiency. Lastly, capital construction costs would be most effectively spent if the fully connected sidewalk was delivered as one capital construction project, rather than as separate projects requiring separate consultations, design work, tenders and construction if the City’s policy of providing a connected pedestrian network was upheld.

Taber Road, between Kipling Avenue and Brydon Drive has four properties on the north side. These properties will have a minor reduction in the number of boulevard parking spaces as a result of the sidewalk. 8 Taber Road has three newly planted trees that would have to be removed for construction and would be replaced by the planting of new and/or additional trees, with location(s) to be determined by the City’s Forestry Division and local property owners. During the detailed design process, City staff would work with affected property owners to reduce impacts to trees, loss of parking and seek potential ways to also beautify the existing streetscape.

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SIGNATURE

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