

Scarborough Centre Transportation Master Plan
Local Advisory Committee (LAC) Meeting #2 – April 20, 2017
Meeting Notes

LAC Members in Attendance:

Iain McLeod – Glen Andrew Community Association
Eburn Lewis – Scarborough Centre Resident
Ted Chesney – Toyota Canada
Mike Zenker – Kevric Real Estate Corporation
Julian Illes – Scarborough Centre Resident/Worker
Pranav Patel – Scarborough Centre Resident/Worker
Vincent Puhakka – Scarborough Transit Action
Ed Watkins – Scarborough Resident
Kyna Lock – Scarborough Centre Resident
Mimi Lau – Scarborough Community Renewal Organization
Mark Jacobs – Walk Toronto
Cindy Vienneau – North Bendale Community Association
Karthika Aathavan – Scarborough Resident
Raakeeb Khan – Director and treasurer of TSCC 2347, 50 Town Centre Court

City Staff from Project Team in attendance:

Alan Filipuzzi, Senior Transportation Planner, Scarborough District
Russell Crooks, Senior Planner, Community Planning, Scarborough District
Ben Morell, Assistant Transportation Planner, Scarborough District
Nasim Norouzi, Transportation Planner, Scarborough District

Also in attendance: Maggie (Yue) Chi – Councillor Lee's Office (Ward 41)

Welcome and Introductions

The City opened the meeting by providing a brief introduction, which included a summary of the previous LAC meeting, how the project has progressed since and how the project team has responded to feedback received. For example, for this meeting, the presentation included simplified maps to make it easier for members of the LAC to provide feedback. The Consultant Team then briefly welcomed everyone and the LAC members introduced themselves to the group.

Presentation on Project Schedule, Constraints, Opportunities, Guiding Values and What We've Heard so Far

The Consultant Team began the evening's presentation, reminding the LAC that the presentation would be broken up into sections to allow for discussion of various project elements. The City provided an overview of the efforts to spread the word about the second public meeting for the Scarborough Centre Transportation Master Plan, taking place on May 10th, 2017 at the Civic Centre, and encouraged the group to do the same

through their own networks. The City offered to provide copies of the public meeting notice if requested.

Presentation and Discussion on the Alternatives

The Consultant Team presented the alternatives, which consisted of Alternative 1 – Existing Conditions, Alternative 2 – Current Policy Framework and Alternative 3 – Emerging Vision. The Consultant Team asked the LAC if there were any questions. The Team clarified that the black dotted lines could represent either shared vehicle/active transportation linkages or pedestrian/cyclist connections. It was also explained the diagrams would be further clarified in subsequent maps. The City explained that the subway extension would be discussed during the public meeting on May 10th but indicated the general alignment and directed the LAC to the staff report for more information (<https://goo.gl/XGeiBj>). The bus terminal is anticipated to expand through this work. The following questions and issues were discussed:

- How is the McCowan trench being addressed? – The City answered that the Emerging Vision includes bringing McCowan to grade, and the Consultant Team further expanded that through the normalization of the intersections McCowan Road would be brought up a bit and Progress Avenue lowered a bit. This will improve the connectivity of the area.
- There are very few opportunities to safely cross Borough Drive (i.e. no crosswalks at the southwest T-intersection of Borough Drive and Town Centre Court) and therefore a lot of people try to jaywalk. The City explained that this level of detail isn't shown but that all public streets are intended to have sidewalks on both sides, and that it will be important to look at connectivity opportunities.
- Proposed Bushby connection? The City answered that this was identified in the OP and the McCowan Precinct Plan and that the team is evaluating where/how far this connection should go.
- Need better and more pleasant connections between Borough Drive and Ellesmere Road.
- Looks like the McCowan Precinct area is being cut up into very small parcels. What type of streets would these be and what uses are envisioned? Could be hazardous for truck traffic. The Consultant Team answered that it will be a range of street types. Part of the question was deferred to a bit later in the presentation which would go into more detail. The block sizes will be similar to downtown and other Centres in Toronto since that is the type of density expected for future development.
- Has there been any consideration of lighting types (for example reducing light pollution)? - This level of detail will not be addressed in this project but the City has established standards which will guide future investments.
- Discussion of cycling connection on Bellamy Road north of Milner Avenue – concern about potential new street cutting through neighbourhood south of Sheppard Avenue.
- Concern about volume of left turning traffic onto McCowan Road to get north. The City asserted that more detailed analysis will be completed as part of the next phase of work on this study.
- Some concern about the street network off of McCowan Road and how changes may impact traffic. The Consultant Team agreed that the current street layout currently addresses the needs of vehicle traffic, however it does not serve the needs of any other transportation mode. The potential traffic impacts of the changes will be part of the future detailed analysis.
- The City reaffirmed that thorough analysis will be done and that this is a plan for all modes of transportation, rather than only vehicles – which includes active transportation and goods movement

- What about exploring laneways in McCowan area? Might work for smaller commercial deliveries, although not major transport trucks. The Consultant Team explained that the street network will have a range of sizes, although not really to the detail of laneways – but if downtown Toronto-type of development is realized, laneways may be possible.

Presentation and Discussion on the Evaluation Principles and Evaluation Results

The Consultant Team went through the evaluation principles and results. The LAC was reminded that the Team recently presented to the Planning Review Panel on March 4th 2017 and that through this process, the evaluation principles were simplified. The principles are related to the City’s Transportation Policy Official Plan Review/“Feeling Congested” initiative as well as other City priorities.

The Consultant Team asked the LAC if there were any questions or need for clarification. The City also introduced the more detailed evaluation handout which provides more information. The LAC was invited to email in questions following the meeting and a closer look at the evaluation material. The following discussion took place:

- Where are the truck movement routes in Alternative 3? The Consultant Team explained that the truck movement network is under development and a future, more detailed Alternative 3 map will include the results from a survey sent to area employers. Where mixing would occur on the same street, there would be no bike lane on the street but a dedicated (separated) cycling facility.
- Are there any upcoming developments that the City is aware of? Anything happening to City parking lot? The City answered that the parking lot is a declared surplus City-owned property and may eventually be sold for development. Development is approved in Scarborough Centre though no cranes yet – discussions have taken place with developers on various sites throughout the Centre.
- Are the new streets, dedicated cycling and pedestrian paths separate projects or linked to development? How will they be implemented? The City explained that it would be a combination. For example, the finer McCowan Precinct grid network would likely be realized through development while the normalization of McCowan would be a stand-alone City-initiated project. An implementation plan will represent a key part of this Transportation Master Plan.
- Will the subway station change the GO station? The City explained that the GO station would be integrated into the new larger bus terminal.

Presentation and Discussion on the Preliminary Preferred Alternative

The Consultant Team went through the preliminary preferred alternative and deconstructed the map by showing various layers/components which are included. The Team explained that this helps to simplify the plan to better communicate the various components.

1. Street Network

- Concern with reducing ability to turn north on McCowan Road from Bushby Drive (getting rid of free-flow ramp) since the intersection is already very busy. The Team responded that the finer grain network provides more options to access McCowan Road to disperse traffic volume, even if there is no free-flow ramp. It is important to consider other modes of transportation and the difficulty of crossing ramps for these other modes.

2. Transit Network (in development with TTC and other transit providers)

3. Walking and Cycling Network

- Importance of east-west connections and opportunities for bike share locations

4. Block Structure

The LAC was asked if they had any questions with respect to the four layers.

- Street network – need for additional east-west connections (consider Golden Gate Court). The Consultant Team explained that there were more challenges with this potential connection than the others.
- Highway 401 interchange at Markham Road is a mess. Movements from Highway 401 eastbound off ramp across to Centennial College are dangerous. Recommended solutions could include: closing this eastbound to southbound free flow ramp and bringing it through signals as double right turn lanes; extending southbound Markham Road curb lane down to Progress Avenue as a right turn only lane. There should be further talks with the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) to attempt to improve the area's interchanges.
- Need additional transit infrastructure to support the subway as it will only be going one stop, what about Bus Rapid Transit - BRT (i.e. with dedicated lanes)? Is Scarborough prepared to lead the establishment of a full BRT on Ellesmere Road? The City explained that some preliminary work/studies are starting with Metrolinx, TTC, the City and Durham Region. A BRT is on the radar of the City but a decision has yet to be made about who would operate the service – currently a Durham Region service.
- New Park adjacent to Albert Campbell Square – located above a parking garage and has good security (cameras) on Civic Centre side and Government of Canada side but nothing in the actual park, need cameras since in a major residential area. The City explained to the group that the development of the park is currently up for tender and construction will likely start in July. No cameras have been included in plans but the design is very safety and visibility oriented.
- The mall seems to change in preferred option (i.e. parking structures), why? – The Team responded that Oxford Developments is currently going through a master plan process and so there are opportunities to potentially redevelop the lands surrounding the mall, including the parking structures. The City is working with Oxford Developments and will fill in their part on the map when it is available.
- There were discussions a few years ago about wide sidewalks with trees around the mall. The City explained that the design of the streets will be based on a number of principles (in accordance with the City's Complete Streets Guidelines) so the street cross-sections will depend on land uses, but some will include wider sidewalks - still evaluating which elements will be needed where. The City mentioned that the cited discussions were part of the Scarborough Centre Streetscape Master Plan project and that this study builds on the past plans looking at the Centre more comprehensively. They are still considering extending Bushby Drive to Markham Road.
- This transportation master plan is a long term plan, and an environmental assessment will presumably be needed for specific projects, so will this project really be providing more of a menu of options, to be refined at the more detailed stage? The Consultant Team explained that the transportation master plan addresses phases 1 and 2 of the environmental assessment process, subsequent studies and work will be required to complete phases 3 & 4
- There seems to be a lot going on along McCowan Road, will there be any cross-sections provided at the public meeting to show how all the components will fit together? The team responded that typical or illustrative cross-sections will likely be provided for the final stage (the Fall 2017 public meeting). At the May 10th public meeting, the Team will be asking what design elements people would like to see i.e. street trees, benches, bike infrastructure etc. The Team briefly described how the May 10th public meeting will be set up.

The LAC was asked if there were any last comments.

- Concern about increased traffic and noise as a result of closing some ramps and how increased traffic could be a danger for walking to the transit station and the mall. The Consultant Team stated that this will be looked at through the detailed analysis, and they reminded the LAC that there will also be more route options to disperse traffic.
- Concern about more traffic on Ellesmere Road if a dedicated BRT lane is added, as well as turning impacts. The City responded that a dedicated BRT lane would be in addition to existing lanes (i.e. road would be widened).
- Interested in economic development, what would be the impacts on commercial development? The City explained that there are no guarantees but that they are trying to create an incentive for new development. The proposed plan will make the area far more attractive and hopefully create market demand.
- It would be beneficial to have the Toronto Walking and Cycling Map at the May 10th public meeting to compare with the Walking and Cycling Network layer.
- McCowan Road already very congested between Ellesmere Road and Bushby Drive which could be further impacted by all the future turning buses.
- Albert Campbell Square provides a great opportunity to create a cool place to hang out and the City should build on that (i.e. make the skating rink into a splash pad in the summer). There are also other empty spaces in the Square that could be enhanced. The City explained that there had previously been issues with insurance coverage for a wading pool, but which are now resolved. Most of the property is owned by the school board, not the City, though the City maintains it.
- In general, more pedestrian infrastructure is needed and the plan has to ensure that the new subway station/bus terminal is easy and safe to get to for all modes.
- A lot of the concern with new improvements for other modes is based on the assumption that the volume of car traffic will be the same. Need to consider that it will likely be reduced with the improved availability of other modes.
- Is there approved high rise development? The City stated that development is approved in Scarborough Centre though no cranes yet – discussions have taken place with developers on various sites throughout the Centre.
- Most existing zoning in Scarborough Centre is for relatively low density, although will likely see a higher density/Floor Space Index (FSI) when development comes. Most of the area is designated for mixed use in the Official Plan.

Wrap Up and Next Steps

The Consultant Team is working on recommendations for goods movement and the next Progress Memo.

The next public meeting is on May 10th 2017 at Scarborough Civic Centre, and the LAC is encouraged to spread the word.

The third LAC meeting will be in the fall, and the date will be circulated once it is confirmed.