

Consultation Summary

Don Mills Crossing Study Launch & Public Meeting

This report is not intended to provide a verbatim transcript of the meeting, but instead provides a high level summary of participant feedback.

If you have any questions after reviewing this summary and the appendix, please contact Christian Ventresca, Senior Planner, Strategic Initiatives, City of Toronto, City Planning Division at cventre@toronto.ca or 416-392-3439.

Event Overview

Don Mills Crossing's first public consultation meeting took place on Thursday October 13, 2016, at the Ontario Science Centre at 770 Don Mills Road. The format was an open house with a 15 minute presentation offered every hour on the hour. All consultation materials are available online at www.toronto.ca/donmillscrossing.

The purpose of the event was to:

- raise awareness and generate interest in the Study;
- inform attendees about how they can get involved in the Study;
- inform and educate attendees about upcoming transportation infrastructure and the future development opportunities in the area;
- provide the City with an opportunity to learn from attendees about what works and what needs improvement in the area; and
- provide the City with an opportunity to understand the perspective of locals and interested parties about how the area could evolve with rapid transit.

This was the first formal consultation event held for the Don Mills Crossing Study and City staff from the City Planning Division were present at the event to answer questions and engage with attendees about the study materials. Representatives from TTC and Metrolinx were also on hand to speak to their respective infrastructure projects in the area.

The event consisted of an open house format with information boards on display. Most boards were manned by City Planning staff available to provide information and clarification to attendees and gather feedback. In addition to the open house format, a 15 minute presentation was given introducing the study and its purpose. The presentation was given at 6pm, 7pm and at 8pm.

Approximately 85 people attended the event. The majority of attendees were between the ages of 35 and 65 and of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

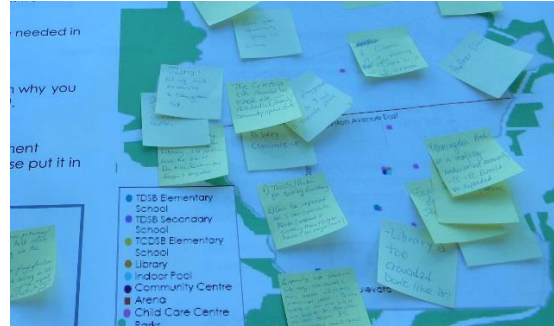
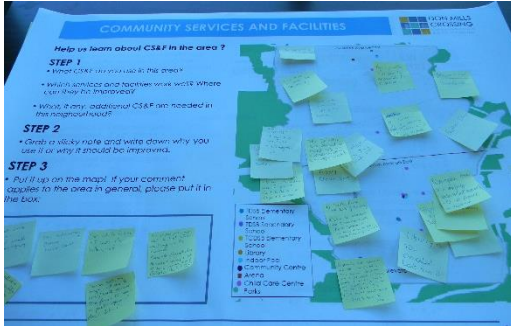


Event Engagement Activities

In addition to the open house and presentation components of the event, activities were available to attendees in order to gather input and to spark conversation. The activities were:

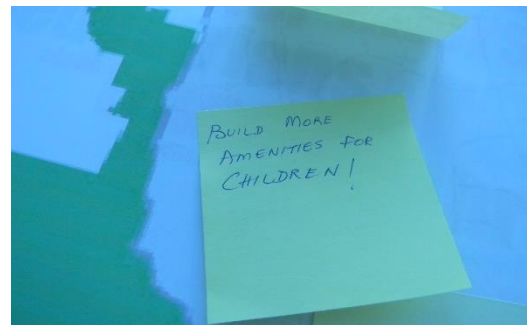
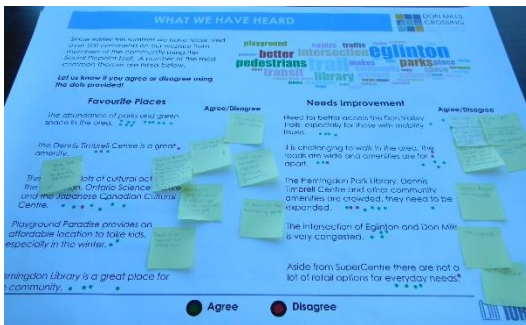
1. Community Services and Facilities – Help Us Learn about CS&F in the Areas

In this exercise, participants offered input about which community services they use in the area. They also indicated which services and facilities in the area work well and which need improvement. The activity also asked participants to identify gaps in services and facilities in the area. Participants were encouraged to write their comments down on post-it notes to display on the board.



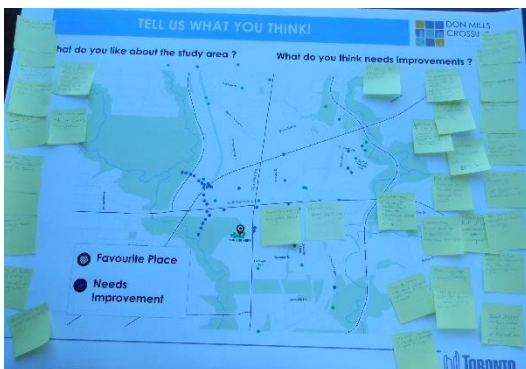
2. What We Have Heard

In this exercise, participants were provided with the opportunity to provide feedback on the input collected through the favourite places online tool on the Don Mills Crossing website and at the 'pop-up' events conducted over the summer. Participants used green dots to indicate they agreed with the summary statements and red dots to indicate they disagreed. Also, post-it notes were available for additional comments to display on the board.



3. Tell Us What You Think! What's Your Favourite Place?

This exercise was a continuation of the exercise present at the Don Mills Crossing 'pop-up' events over the course of the summer and online. This activity asks participants to point out on a map their favourite places with a green dot and to indicate places that need improvement with a blue dot.



Event Promotion

This event was promoted through a number avenues. A mailing was sent out to the 17, 200 addresses in the area and an open house ad was placed in the East York Mirror and North York Mirror (October 6, 2016). The event was also promoted on the Don Mills Crossing website, the Don Mills Crossing E-Newsletter and promoted on twitter. Invitations were also sent to local resident associations and community groups and promoted at our pop-up events.

Summary of Feedback

Community Facilities

Participants indicated that overall, they often used and enjoyed the facilities in the area. The libraries, community centres and Playground Paradise were often cited as some of the most widely used facilities in the area. These same facilities however, were also cited most often as those in need of renewal and investment. These facilities are often very busy making it difficult for users to enjoy the facilities. Participants highlighted a need for investment and renewal of Flemingdon Park Library and Thorncliffe Library in particular as well as Playground Paradise and area community centers. There was also an overall theme of a need for flexible, publicly accessible community space and programs to serve a diverse range of users such as recent immigrants, seniors and youth.

Public Places

Overall, participants spoke about their appreciation for the large amount of green space in the area. They expressed concerns about losing this space in the face of development as well as a desire for additional green space, especially programmed spaces like playgrounds in the Wynford Concorde area. Other concerns were in regards to the current maintenance of these spaces, indicating that garbage collects in these open spaces, ravines and roadways.

Connections to the Ravine System

The ravine system that runs through the Don Mills and Eglinton area was very often cited as a favourite place in the community. Participants indicated that it is difficult to access the ravine with few points of entry in the area. The entrance to Moccasin Trail was frequently cited as a safety concern with the grade being described as very steep causing accessibility issues, particularly for those with mobility devices and strollers. Further, a lack of properly groomed paths and hand rails makes for safety concerns.

History and Heritage

The development history and architecture of the study area was a point of interest for those in attendance as Don Mills and Eglinton contains an interesting collection of corporate and institutional buildings. Some participants expressed a desire for this employment and industrial character to continue through the retention of some of these uses, interesting buildings reflective of the architectural period in which the area was developed, or both.

Development Intensity: opportunities and concerns

On this topic, participants were quite divided. Some showed a desire for increased densities and development with an overall eagerness for reduced block sizes, increased walkability and improved amenities. However, a significant proportion of participants expressed concerns about additional height being brought into the area. They voiced concerns about the density and traffic congestion that additional development might bring.

Transportation

Cycling Infrastructure and Connections

Overall, there was a clear desire for more and better cycling infrastructure in the area. Safety of cyclists was often cited as a concern in the area. Connecting the bike path throughout the ravine system was mentioned repeatedly throughout the evening as was the need for better cycling connections to Flemingdon Park and a need for protected bike lanes. Especially, on Eglinton Avenue East and Don Mills Road. Concerns were also raised about how cycling infrastructure would be incorporated with Science Centre

Station and the Crosstown. Participants were excited about the cycle network connections proposed by the City’s [Ten Year Cycling Network Plan](#) but had concerns about implementation and coordination.

Private Vehicles

Traffic congestion was a consistent topic of discussion. There was a clear desire for improved traffic management in this area. Particularly, at the intersection of Eglinton and Don Mills where there is a large volume of transport trucks moving through the area. The level of freight traffic combined with local and through traffic contribute to congestion. There were related concerns about the construction of the Eglinton Crosstown further exacerbating this issue. Concerns were also raised about the impact that additional development may have on street congestion.

Pedestrians

Overall, participants described the area as an unfriendly pedestrian space. The large scale of the area combined with large building setbacks, wide roads and the high speed traffic create an unpleasant and sometimes unnerving pedestrian environment. Participants indicated that this is further exacerbated by the infrequent opportunities to cross both Don Mills Road and Eglinton Avenue East. Also, there were consistent remarks about pedestrian signal lights being too short to allow for crossing of the intersection safely. Especially, if the pedestrian has a mobility issue. The subject of pedestrian connections was raised frequently, especially the provision of pedestrian connections to future community facilities and residential developments. The stairs located on Wynford Drive were frequently cited as an accessibility issue. Participants indicated that the stairs are too steep for many pedestrians to climb and that they are concerned about accessing the future LRT station on Wynford Drive because of this staircase.



What Happens to the Feedback?

This feedback will be incorporated as a component of input gathered for Don Mills Crossing. Other inputs include planning policy and directions (including provincial policy), inputs from the community, stakeholders, and City Divisions and agencies as well as research and technical evaluations. City Planning staff will consider all feedback in the development of directions for future phases of the Study. Additional opportunities to participate and provide feedback will be provided through each phase of Don Mills Crossing.

Next Steps



Event Materials (to be linked)

- [Event boards](#)
- [Activity boards](#)
- [Handout 1: Why Study Don Mills?](#)
- [Hand Out 2: What Guides the Study?](#)
- [Event Flyer](#)
- [Study Overview](#)