



# Scarlett Road Bridge & Road Improvements Public Consultation Summary

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## **Introduction**

In 2008, the City of Toronto completed a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (Class EA) of the CP Rail underpass/Scarlett Road Bridge located on Scarlett Road between St. Clair Avenue West and Dundas Street West. The study, which looked at the safety and traffic operations in the area around the bridge, recommended changes to the bridge and surrounding roads.

The City is now moving forward to implement the study recommendations, which include widening the underpass and reconfiguring the intersection of Scarlett Road and Dundas Street West in order to accommodate traffic volumes and improve vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle movement through the intersection. In 2017, the detail design phase was initiated, including consultation with the public about the project, the proposed design, and the impacts of construction. Opportunities for the public to learn about the project and provide feedback have included:

- a public meeting
- maintenance of a project website
- maintenance of a 'single window' for questions and comments via phone, mail and e-mail.

This document summarizes the feedback received at the Public Meeting, through phone calls and e-mails, as well as through the feedback form.

## **Notification**

A Notice of Public Meeting was sent to all properties in local community by Canada Post on November 14, 2017. E-mails were also sent to individuals on the study mailing list and specific stakeholders within the local area (businesses, schools, ratepayer associations, City-wide and government agencies and owners of impacted properties).

## **Public Meeting Event**

A public meeting was held on November 28, 2017, at Lambton Park Community School, 50 Bernice Crescent. The format of the meeting was a drop-in centre with display panels from 6:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. and a presentation at 7:00 p.m., followed by a Question & Answer period. Attendees were able to review panel displays until 8:30 p.m. and further discuss the project with members of the Project Team who were present.

The purpose of the event was:

- To present residents with an overview of the project and the initial designs for the reconstruction of the bridge and the surrounding roadways
- To hear and respond to questions and concerns regarding the project
- To receive input on the project and the proposed design

Ninety-seven people signed in at the event including:

- Area residents
- Local political representatives
- Local business owners and affected property owners
- Representatives of active transportation groups

The City received eighteen completed feedback forms.

## **What We Heard**

### **Residents are concerned about pedestrian safety.**

- Ensure pedestrian safety options are included at intersections including timed traffic signals for pedestrian crossings and vehicles.
- Request for traffic signals on Scarlett Road north of St. Clair Avenue, at Eileen Ave.

### **Strong support for improvements to cycling infrastructure on all major streets in the project area.**

- Protected, elevated and/or dedicated bike lanes should be considered for St. Clair Avenue West, Scarlett Road and Dundas Street West.
- Solutions to facilitate cyclists' safe movement through the intersection of Dundas St. West and Scarlett Road should also be considered.

### **Significant concerns about traffic volumes and speeds from the intersection of Dundas St. West and Scarlett Road into the Humber Valley, via Gooch Avenue, during and after construction.**

- Turn restrictions and restrictions on through traffic to Gooch Avenue should be considered, as well as other traffic calming methods.

A full summary of input from the public meeting, feedback forms, e-mails and phone calls is provided below.

The comments have been grouped based on theme and focus. The questions raised during the Question & Answer session at the public meeting and the responses that were given are listed at the end.

## **Roadways & Traffic**

### Dundas Street West & Scarlett Road

- The bus stop on the north side of Dundas Street, west of Scarlett Road, should be moved further west to allow for cars to make a right-hand turn into the lane.
- Westbound traffic has to wait for several lights before merging northbound onto Scarlett Road.
- Concern about the close proximity of traffic lights on either side of the bridge will still be a bottleneck issue (like Jane Street & Dundas Street during rush hour). While the extra lane doubles car capacity under the bridge, waiting for the light will cause queuing on Dundas Street, and vehicles may block the intersection at Dundas St/at

Scarlett Rd trying to squeeze into the underpass (keeping in mind there will be a density growth-high density building has been planned right at Dundas St. and Humbercrest). A roundabout would resolve the issue:

- Continuous flow of traffic reducing the average time to cross intersection - especially with the addition of Gooch traffic flow
- Slower flow of traffic (addressing speeding issues)
- Safe from "t-bone" accidents due to left turn light coordination
- No traffic lights required (low maintenance, and street lights in the area are known to go out during bad weather)
- In the aerial rendering you have three lanes merging into two on Dundas St. going westbound past Scarlett Rd., and the lane closest to the sidewalk quickly merges. A bus stop location away from traffic could be created in lieu of the lane, or extend the separated bike lane.

#### Scarlett Road, north of St. Clair Avenue

- Request for a traffic light at Eileen Ave. and Scarlett Road for safety and ability to make a left hand turn, and to reduce traffic speeds.

#### Gooch Avenue

- Need the option of a left-turn onto Dundas Street or north onto Scarlett Road from Gooch Avenue.
- Do not want cars to be able to turn right [from Dundas] onto Gooch Avenue as it will create a cut-through.
- If there will be any changes to Gooch Avenue, there needs to be another community meeting.
- Consider the addition of a speed bump at the school crossing on Gooch Avenue at Skylark Road.
- Take a look at the 'desire line' of people accessing Loblaws from the apartments. Recommendation to install pavement markings to indicate a location of conflict, and prompt vehicles to slow down.

#### Roadways - General

- Consider incorporating some elements from the Dutch style intersection, or roundabouts. A "Dutch" intersection:
  - off set/pushed back pedestrian crossings
  - separated bike barrier at turns
  - bikes able to make left turns in two stages, and avoid conflict with cars
  - bikes making right turns do not need to stop, yielding only to pedestrians
  - cars able to queue away from moving traffic by barrier zone, allowing traffic to continue flowing
  - easily incorporated in traditional intersection
- What delays will vehicles face with more streets incorporated in the intersection?

## **Cycling Infrastructure**

- Cycle tracks should be implemented immediately.
- Bike lane design appears to be an afterthought. Very disappointing.
- Recommend an above-grade bike lane with raised separators between it and the other lanes.
- Wide shared lanes don't really work for cyclists if the edges are low – they collect too much debris.
- Concern that bike lanes won't be protected.
- Take a look at design guidelines for separated bike lanes from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation: <https://www.mass.gov/lists/separated-bike-lane-planning-design-guide>
- Need to ensure that bike lanes under the bridge don't flood. Bike lanes should be raised to the sidewalk level.
- Sidewalk under the bridge should be cut back and separated bike lane can be added.
- A protected bicycle lane under a bridge must have a vertical protection like bollards and the lane must be cleared of snow in the winter.
- Eastbound bike infrastructure on St. Clair Avenue needs to be protected.
- The bike lanes on Scarlett Road should be protected.
- Bikes coming south from Scarlett Road wishing to go eastbound on Dundas Street will need to make a left turn along with vehicle traffic. A Dutch style intersection resolves the issue of bikes exposure with traffic.
- Need protected bicycle lanes, not sharrows or painted lanes.
- Future bicycle lanes on Dundas St West must be protected.
- For neighbourhood cycling wayfinding, suggest City put sharrows on Baby Point to Humbercrest, and then Varsity to the trail via Pasadena Gardens. Instead of Old Mill Drive, people take the path through Etienne Brule Park and parking lot (because Old Mill is too steep). Suggest we formalize that as it leads to the trail.

## **Public Transportation**

- Will there be a lane under the bridge for buses? If not, does this mean no bus service along St. Clair? This area is underserved by transit.
- Connecting the area from Keele Avenue to Scarlett Road should be a top priority, even it's just adjusting bus routes. Having to transfer 3-4 times to make it across is ridiculous and unacceptable.
- Why isn't there protected space for a potential streetcar right-of-way in the event that the 512 St. Clair streetcar is extended west?
- Add a GO station between Union and Kipling on the Milton line.

## **Accessibility + Pedestrian safety**

- Wider sidewalks appreciated.
- Recommend raised crossings in both intersections.
- Consider a crosswalk on St. Clair Avenue, near Danier.
- Provide a ramp to 3735 Dundas St. West, to make it accessible.

- Need a safe way for children to cross Scarlett Road to get to Bernice Crescent.
- Concern about pedestrian safety at Scarlett Road and Dundas Street with cars turning right.
- Request better pedestrian crossing options. Suggestion to limit right-hand turns on red coming from St. Clair Ave., turning north onto Scarlett Road.
- Recommend removing one of the left turn lanes on Scarlett Road, north of St. Clair in favour of wider sidewalks and crosswalks all around the intersection.
- Scarlett Road slopes and the crossing is dangerous for pedestrians because vehicles come down the hill at a high speed.
- Concern that increased traffic will result in reduced pedestrian safety.
- Concern that long crossing time across Dundas Street will lead to longer signal cycles and increase driver aggression.
- Request for a sidewalk connection on St. Clair Ave. from Scarlett Road, east over to Jane Street, on the south side of St. Clair Avenue, as well as the north side of Dundas St. West, east of Scarlett Road, over to Jane St.
- The tires of large trucks often have to go up on the curb when turning at Scarlett Road and St Clair Ave.
- Pedestrian crossing between pillars under the bridge is a safety hazard due to poor sight line with vehicle traffic. Pedestrians starting the crossing behind a pillar are not visible to left turning traffic.
- Recommendation for reduction in traffic speed limits.
- Recommend timed crossing lights to allow the most vulnerable road users and cyclists to start to cross before any other forms of transportation. The order of crossing priority with timed lights should be: pedestrians first, bicycles second, vehicles third.

### **Landscape + Streetscape**

- Add murals/public art to the retaining wall on Dundas Street. Suggestion to honour the Humber River and rail history.
- Something should be done to discourage graffiti on the retaining walls.
- Greenscaping and inclusion of public art are underwhelming.
- Ensure adequate lighting under the bridge.

### **Natural Environment + Drainage**

- Not enough permeable surface left. Need more trees, better drainage. Water doesn't reach catch basins until close to Humber River Trail, and often misses and washes out the ravine. Toronto & Region Conservation Authority should be contacted and consulted.
- Concern about flooding under the bridge. It floods now after torrential rain and flooding will be worse if the grade of the street is lowered.
- Sidewalks & bicycle lanes can be made to mitigate anticipated flooding in the future.

## Construction Phase

- Consider the timing of construction/development at Danier, on north side of St. Clair.
- Recommendation that pedestrian safety be considered during construction. Request for safe and navigable walkways for disabled and elderly.
- Concerns about Gooch Avenue being used as a shortcut to Jane Street.
- Ensure a safe route for children crossing Scarlett Road to get to Lambton Community School during construction.
- Suggestion of a stop light or worker to stop drivers at Scarlett Road and Bernice Crescent during early mornings and evenings.
- Create a traffic plan to reduce impacts to Bernice/Eileen/Foxwell.
- Concern that temporary lane closures will mean that drivers will use side streets south of Dundas Street, and it will become a safety issue, especially for children.
- Stop sign needed for southbound traffic to Dundas Street W. Drivers cannot see pedestrians.
- Put temporary traffic lights at Eileen and Scarlett, and at Dundas westbound turning right on Scarlett.
- Will the westbound right turn lane from Dundas St. to Scarlett Road be closed during construction? This would increase the number of vehicles turning left from Jane onto St. Clair (westbound) but this intersection is already congested.

## Question & Answer Session

The discussion captured is summarized below. Questions are noted with a “Q”, answers with “A” and comments with “C”.

Q: Cycling is a preferred form of transportation for many people and should be considered a form of traffic. Are you constructing bike lanes at the same time as the project?

A: *We will be constructing separated bike lanes under the bridge at the implementation stage of the project. The City's 10 Year Cycling Network Plan includes cycling facilities on Dundas Street West and St. Clair Avenue West in the future.*

Q: How are the protected bike lanes under the bridge supposed to turn onto Dundas St. safely and connect to the rest of the city safely?

A: *The separated bike lanes will be protected with a barrier through the under pass.*

Q: Will bike lanes be in place at the end of the project or in the future?

A: *We are planning for separated bike lanes under the bridge at the implementation stage of the project. Cycling connections will also be reviewed along Dundas St. West in the future. We will be holding public consultation meetings in the future with more detail on any future route connections.*

Q: Will the bike lanes be protected?

A: *Yes, at the underpass they will be protected.*

Q: I was hoping for protected bike lanes. Is the intersection reflecting the policies in Vision Zero? Is there a safety zone being implemented around the school?

*A: The City is working to build a city-wide cycling network that reflects best practices and Vision Zero. There are challenges because of the right-of-way widths on connecting streets. We will consult with the community in the future on any options.*

Q: What is the plan for traffic going southbound on Gooch Avenue? Will access to Gooch Avenue be signalized as part of the intersection? Will there be 4-way access to and from Gooch Avenue? Can we ensure there won't be a cut through southbound to Gooch from Dundas St. West?

*A: We are at 30% design. The City will look into measures for the Gooch intersection through the next stage of the design process. The current plan is for 4-way access to/from Gooch Avenue.*

C: If there will be any changes to the intersection of Gooch Avenue and Dundas St. West, there needs to be another meeting specifically about those plans.

Q: Getting out of Eileen Avenue is currently difficult. What will access into and out of Eileen Avenue be like?

*A: The intent of the project will be to improve access to the transportation network. The next phase of design will look at plans for this section.*

C: Gooch Avenue was built on a sandhill and ends at a ravine. We are concerned about the future of the road with an increase in traffic moving up and down Gooch Avenue.

Q: Scarlett Road slopes, the crossing for the children is dangerous because of the traffic continuing downhill, it is difficult for cars to stop fully and proceed. I don't want this slope to have the qualities that make stopping difficult.

*A: In terms of the bridge and road network design we are taking everything into consideration.*

C: With the increase of traffic flow and increased speeds, this project is seen as dangerous for children in the community. Increased density will increase the traffic. Consider residents in the valley and around it.

Q: The City should monitor the construction and its effects on traffic. When traveling eastbound on Dundas Street, there's a line up to turn left as you go under the bridge. When traveling westbound there is no light. When making left turns onto Scarlett Road from Eileen Avenue during construction, I think there should be a temporary light. The traffic is getting worse in the neighbourhood. I think we are getting isolated from transportation infrastructure.

*A: We will look at the possibility of adding a signal at the intersection to deal with congestion. We will need to do improvements on Scarlett Road. We will get Transportation Planning staff to look into this.*

Q: I live in the TCHC building. How will you make room for the additional lane?

*A: The new infrastructure will work within the existing building parameters of the TCHC building.*



Q: Stairs from the TCHC property down to Dundas St. West are shown in the plans. Please consider accessibility and the addition of a ramp.

A: *We will take that into consideration as we move through the design stage of the project.*

Q: With temporary lane closures planned for under the bridge, people are not going to wait to turn- they are going to go down the other side streets. What will happen with the children? It will become a safety issue.

A: *We will look at how to manage traffic during construction. There will be disruption, just like any other construction project. Before construction starts we will meet with residents again to inform them of the traffic management plan. We will modify and adjust traffic management accordingly as construction progresses.*

C: At East Drive cars have lost control. That section of Scarlett Road needs increased traffic control.

Q: Why can't streetcar tracks be added under the Scarlett Road Bridge?

A: *TTC has no existing plans to extend St Clair streetcar service to Scarlett Road.*

Q: Where is the bus stop at this intersection?

A: *The bus stop will be relocated to the west of the intersection, on Dundas St. West.*

Q: You are taking away trees. Are we getting them back?

A: *Yes, there will be a tree replacement plan.*

Q: What is the total cost of the project?

A: *The final cost is still to be confirmed.*

## **Next Steps**

As the design phase progresses, the Project Team will consider the input and feedback gathered through the consultation process and determine how best to incorporate and respond to the public's requests and concerns.

A future public event will be held to further inform residents about the traffic management plan for the construction phase and mitigation of construction impacts.