

# yonge**T**omorrow

**Municipal Class EA –  
Yonge Street from Queen Street to College Street**

**Stakeholder Advisory Group Meeting #2 Summary**

Prepared by LURA Consulting for the City of Toronto  
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## Overview

The City of Toronto hosted the second Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) meeting for the yongeTOmorrow: Municipal Class Assessment (EA) – Yonge Street from Queen Street to College Street on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 from 2 p.m. – 4 p.m. at City Hall, located at 100 Queen Street West. The purpose of the SAG meeting was to:

- Review and confirm Terms of Reference and role of SAG
- Report on study progress and present draft long list of alternatives
- Provide update on upcoming public consultation activities
- Provide opportunity for questions and feedback

There were 21 SAG member organizations invited representing various sectors within the Study Area. A total of 21 participants, representing 19 SAG member organizations, attended the SAG meeting. The stakeholders included, Business Improvement Areas, Resident Associations, research and advocacy groups, educational institutions, and other stakeholders. A full list of SAG members and participants can be found in **Appendix A**.

This meeting feedback document is organized according to the SAG Meeting #2 Agenda. A detailed agenda can be found in **Appendix B**.

## Review SAG Terms of Reference

The SAG meeting began with opening remarks provided by Johanna Kyte, City of Toronto and Ward 13 Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam. Liz McHardy, LURA Consulting, reviewed the key aspects of the SAG Terms of Reference (TOR).

The following represents a summary of the questions of clarification that followed review of SAG TOR. The summary is not verbatim and includes feedback during, and following, the meeting. Questions posed by participants are noted with a 'Q,' and answers/responses provided by the project team are represented by an 'A'.

- Q.** As members of the SAG, we are adhering to the TOR. What happens if there are disagreements between SAG members? How would disagreements be resolved?
- A.** The TOR indicates that the SAG is an advisory body. The SAG is encouraged to discuss and debate ideas towards the generation of consensus. However, it is anticipated that consensus will not be reached on all issues. If after a period of time no consensus can be reached, differences will be noted and provided to the Project Team with rationales for consideration.
- Q.** How are SAG members expected to carry out communication about the project after and between meetings?
- A.** The SAG will support communication by sharing information and opportunities to participate in the consultation process with their organizational networks.
- Q.** Are the presentation materials confidential?

- A.** The information presented today is in draft form. SAG member feedback will help inform final versions to then be presented to general public. SAG members are asked not to circulate draft information from this meeting publicly.

In the future, SAG meeting materials (i.e. presentation and meeting summary) will be posted on the project website (under Consultation tab). SAG members will receive an update once the meeting materials are uploaded onto the website.

## Meeting Presentation

Peter Piet, Steer, delivered a presentation on the yongeTOmorrow study. The presentation provided participants with information on the existing conditions of Yonge Street and the long list of alternatives that have been developed. The presentation was followed by a discussion facilitated by Liz McHardy, LURA Consulting. SAG members were invited to ask questions and provide feedback.

## Questions of Clarification

*The following represents a summary of the questions of clarification that followed the presentation. The summary is not verbatim. Questions posed by participants are noted with a 'Q,' and answers/responses provided by City of Toronto staff are represented by an 'A.'*

- Q.** The presentation slide indicated that the driving modal share is 17%. What is that a percentage of?
- A.** Within Toronto, the driving modal share is 17% of all transportation modes (e.g., walking, cycling, public transit).
- Q.** I was happy to see that your alternatives considered pedestrians. I want to emphasize that pedestrians come not only as adults. There are people with disabilities, children, etc. that all need to be taken into consideration. Are you taking into account the wide-range of pedestrians?
- A.** There is a movement called 8 80. It states that when you design cities and spaces that are great for an 8-year-old and an 80-year-old, then you are designing places that are great for everyone. There are opportunities to make Yonge Street more activated and animated, but we need to have space for that to happen. This project will look into how we can make that happen.
- Q.** How will you assess the viability of having cycling facilities on parallel streets (e.g., Church Street, Bay Street)?
- A.** We will be conducting a technical analysis of Yonge Street and the adjacent parallel corridors to understand the feasibility of having cycling routes, in terms of the physical space, the number of drivers, constructability, ridership, and more. Cycling experts within the Transportation Services at the City will also provide input on the where would be most appropriate to locate the cycling facilities. The policies framing the project will also be a critical part of the analysis. Post note clarification: First, Yonge Street will be assessed in isolation to determine its purpose within the transportation network. If it is determined that the priority/purpose if Yonge St does not include cycling infrastructure, then the feasibility of alternate streets will be undertaken as per above.

- Q.** With respect to improvements to the area, such as a second subway exit at College Street, will you be looking at the aspect for the study?
- A.** The TTC has their own program for improving interior station access, which includes renovating stations to add and improve access from the concourse level to platform level. The scope of the YongeTOmorrow project focuses on works in the right-of-way. That said, we are coordinating with the TTC on all of their projects within the study area to provide guidance when their works may impact or influence the right-of-way.
- Q.** How many alternatives will you be presenting to the public?
- A.** At this stage in the EA process, the long-list of alternatives from today will be presented.
- Q.** Has consideration been given to two lanes of traffic going one-way? This would allow for better traffic to flow. This would also give drivers room to pull off to the side to allow emergency vehicles to perform their duties.
- A.** One of the alternatives presented looks at providing a slightly wider lane, which would allow traffic to flow in addition to providing the necessary requirements for emergency vehicles. Post note clarification: The alternatives shown represent spatial allocation, but do not define operation, materials or other detailed design considerations. Lanes shown in any of the alternatives could be northbound, southbound, or dedicated turn lanes.

## Detailed Summary of Feedback

Participants provided comments on the existing conditions and the long list of alternatives. Feedback was provided during and after the SAG meeting in the form of verbal and written comments.

A summary of the feedback received from participants are organized below by themes.

### Vehicular Traffic and Circulation

- Members discussed the potential impacts on circulation in and around Yonge Street arising from changes to the road network. Some members expressed changes that would result in negative impacts, while others felt it would not result in significant impact.
  - Some members expressed concerns that a reduction in the number of traffic lanes may create potential traffic flow issues. This was particularly noted for access to office towers, parkades, and Ryerson University.
  - One member noted that there are currently restrictions on left and right turns for vehicles travelling on Yonge Street within the study area. Road operation and circulation would therefore not be significantly impacted by any additional turn restrictions or limits to connections with east-west streets.
- A few members liked that there are alternatives that consider reducing vehicular traffic on Yonge Street in order to prioritize other transportation modes, especially for pedestrians. Yonge Street was noted as an ideal corridor for prioritizing active transportation.
  - Some members noted that Yonge Street has low vehicle volumes in comparison to adjacent north-south streets. Additionally, there is currently no on-street parking on Yonge Street within the study area and therefore none would have to be removed.

- Flexible, unstructured, and unmarked two-way vehicle space in the central area (i.e., woonerf) was a suggested opportunity to explore through this study. Drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians could share the space, with some delineation between pedestrian and vehicle spaces. Examples were noted in the West Don Lands and Yorkville.
- An assessment of the potential impacts of changes to the road network will have on traffic and circulation in and around the study area as well as, the impacts of each alternative were requested by several members.
  - One member expressed that if Yonge Street were to be fully pedestrianized, methods to address concerns for how traffic would be controlled and not pushed into areas such as Ryerson University would be needed.
  - Additionally, it was noted that alternatives to force traffic to other main streets (such as, Jarvis Street) and smaller streets (such as Bond Street and Victoria Street) should be considered.
- Some participants expressed preferences of one-lane of traffic in each direction, as moderate traffic is needed for deliveries and pick-ups.

### Active Transportation - Walking

- Some members noted that pedestrianizing Yonge Street is an ideal outcome for this study. It was noted that full pedestrianization should be a long-term goal and it is important to think about creating an enhanced Yonge Street that can easily be changed to accommodate full pedestrianization.
- It was noted that Dundas and College subway stations are well-located to service increased pedestrian activity and an increase in pedestrian traffic on Yonge Street would alleviate overflow and jaywalking issues on Victoria Street and Gould Street.
- Several concerns about the current width of sidewalks were noted and particular consideration to increase space was discussed. This aspect needs to be prioritized at Yonge Street and Dundas Street.
  - One member expressed that the sidewalks are not wide enough at Yonge Street and Dundas Street, especially during busy times of the day. There are issues with crowding due to the high cluster of offices, retail, Ryerson University, and transit stops.
  - One member expressed that statistics on pedestrian traffic and accidents should be acquired as part of this study to help demonstrate the potential need for wider sidewalks.
- Apart from pedestrian traffic, the space on the sidewalks are also impacted by other factors.
  - Several members expressed that ice and snow are not cleared promptly on the sidewalks. During winter months, there are large amounts of ice that constrain space on the sidewalks and space on the roads.
  - Some members noted that there are people panhandling and sleeping on Yonge Street that constrains space on the sidewalks with panhandling activities and camping.
- Well-defined side and central pedestrian areas were favourably noted by some participants. If the central space is sometimes used by vehicles, it is important to have pedestrian-only space along the sides for people with accessibility needs.

- It was additionally suggested that an increase of pedestrian traffic on Yonge Street requires an assessment of enhance protection for pedestrians from east-west traffic.

### Active Transportation - Cycling

- Cycling was noted as a convenient way to get around when other transportation modes are congested; however, there are currently factors deterring people from cycling on and around Yonge Street.
  - One member noted that the lack of dedicated cycling facilities makes people feel unsafe and hesitant to ride a bike.
  - One member noted there is no continuous north-south cycling route between Sherbourne Street and Beverly Street.
  - One member noted that there are currently very few safe places to lock bikes on Yonge Street and additional bike parking would need to be provided if Yonge Street were to have dedicated bike facilities.
- Some members expressed the desire for cycling facilities to be located on Yonge Street while others expressed alternative streets (such as Bay Street and Church Street) be considered.
  - It was noted that it is ideal to locate cycling facilities on Yonge Street because it has the lowest vehicle volume, no streetcar tracks, and no on-street parking. Whereas, Church Street and Bay Street have high vehicle volumes and streetcar tracks, which are not ideal conditions for cycling facilities.
  - It was also noted that incorporating cycling infrastructure into a pedestrian-priority or a fully pedestrianized space could result in potential conflicts and collisions between cyclists and pedestrians. This would also limit the amount of space and flexibility available for pedestrian space, public realm improvements, and events.
- It was noted that in the absence of clarity on how cycling facilities will work on the adjacent parallel streets (e.g., Bay Street, Church Street), an incentive has been set for cycling advocates to push for cycling facilities on Yonge Street.

### Operations and Servicing

- Operational and servicing concerns were discussed, particularly for business and organizations that rely on front door deliveries and pick-ups from Yonge Street.
  - It was noted that businesses without their own loading dock or laneway for servicing may face specific challenges if more space is allocated to pedestrians and cyclists on Yonge Street. This could also create challenges for institutions such as Ryerson University was one noted example who have a centralized loading system which uses Yonge Street for deliveries to various buildings.
- It was suggested that analyzing waste removal and loading on smaller streets and lanes (such as O'Keefe Lane South) are critical to incorporate in the study.
- Members noted the desire for further discussion on methods to address specific challenges with regards to operations and servicing for any alternative provided.

### Public Realm

- Several members expressed that greening and street trees are desirable to enhance the public space on Yonge Street.

- The project team noted challenges of providing sufficient soil volumes for tree growth due to subway and utility conflicts below grade. Members suggested the need to explore other options such as raised planters and permanent artificial trees.
- Hanging gardens was a noted suggestion for consideration as there is low maintenance in the winter.
- Several participants expressed that Yonge Street should provide places for people to spend time on Yonge Street and the area should have a diverse mix of uses and be a major destination for festivals, entertainment, and tourism with four season programming.
- One member expressed concern for increased maintenance pressures as a result of increased pedestrian traffic should be considered.
- It was noted that street furniture should be designed and selected to ensure that it fits in with other aspects of the street while providing flexible social spaces.

### Safety

- Members suggested that the City should work with stakeholders and the community in reviewing how changes to Yonge Street will impact safety and security.
- Many members discussed that it is important to accommodate disenfranchised populations in a meaningful way. It was noted that some people living on the street are spending less time in laneways and more time on Yonge Street due to concerns for their safety in the laneways.

### Growth and Neighbourhood Change

- Some members expressed that the rapid population and employment growth in the area is an important consideration.
  - There is a lot of condo development along Yonge Street – more than 8,500 proposed condo units are in development. It is important to keep in mind the population that will be arriving and using Yonge Street.
- The built form of Yonge Street was a noted importance. One member noted that controls on towers casting shadows will be critical for the analysis of the study.
- One member expressed that gentrification and neighbourhood change should be addressed appropriately to ensure all members of the public feel welcome in the area.

## Feedback for Public Events

Participants provided feedback on how information should be presented at the upcoming public event in May 2019. Below is a summary of the comments received:

### Long-List of Alternatives and Recommendations

- The flexible, unstructured space (i.e., woonerf) should be presented as an alternative.
- The flexibility of the street should be emphasized, in terms of its ability to adapt to change. This may include acknowledging time of day, seasonal changes, events, and operational challenges.
  - The opportunity for flexibility should be clearly communicated to allow the public and stakeholders to understand the potential operational and design options to address challenges associated with pedestrian-priority and pedestrian-only alternatives.



- The graphical presentation of streets should not be black as this could be confused to represent asphalt.
- A high-level recommendation statement on how the vision can be achieved should be provided. A suggested example included approaching City Planning to provide input on where developers can assist with realizing the vision.

### Additional Data and Information

- Additional context information should be provided including data on:
  - Number of pedestrians, vehicles/cars, projected growth etc
  - Pedestrian accidents
  - Traffic volume broken down according to vehicle type (e.g., bus, passenger vehicle, trucks)
  - East-west vehicle and streetcar movement to provide insight into the important east-west gateways and entry/exit points
  - Anticipating additional subway station entrances/exits
  - Best practice examples or case studies of other jurisdictions that have undertaken similar work.

### Concurrent City Initiatives

- Information should be provided about strategies underway, beyond the scope of the study, which address issues such as winter maintenance and homelessness, shelter support, and housing.

### Next Steps

Liz McHardy, LURA Consulting and City staff thanked SAG members for their participation. They noted that any additional feedback be shared with the project team by April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019. City staff expressed that the meeting presentation will be shared after the meeting.

## Appendix A – List of Participants

The following is a list of organizations that are members of the SAG. Those organizations that participated at the April 1, 2019 meeting are signified in **bold text**.

### Stakeholders

- **Bay Cloverhill Community Association**
- **Cadillac Fairview**
- Church of Holy Trinity
- **Church-Wellesley Village BIA**
- **Cycle Toronto**
- **Downtown-Yonge BIA**
- **Greater Yorkville Residents Association**
- **McGill Granby Village Residents Association**
- **Mirvish Productions**
- **Ryerson City Building Institute**
- **Ryerson University**
- **St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood BIA**
- St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association
- **St. Michael's Choir School**
- **Toronto Financial District BIA**
- **Toronto Youth Cabinet, City of Toronto**
- **Walk Toronto**
- **YMCA**
- **Yonge Suites / Firkin on Yonge**
- **Yonge-Dundas Square**

### Toronto City Councillor/Representatives

- Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, Ward 13 – Toronto Centre
- Lorraine Hewitt, Chief of Staff, Councillor Wong-Tam's Office
- Tristan Down-Dewdney, Advisor, Policy & Stakeholder Relations, Councillor Wong-Tam's Office

### Project Team

- Johanna Kyte, City of Toronto, Senior Project Manager Public Realm
- Jeff Dea, City of Toronto, Manager Infrastructure Planning
- Maogosha Pyjor, City of Toronto, Senior Coordinator Public Consultation Unit
- Alexa Aiken, City of Toronto, Coordinator Public Consultation Unit
- Peter Piet, Steer, Project Manager
- Angie Ning, Steer, Project Coordinator
- Liz McHardy, LURA Consulting, Community Engagement Lead
- Zoie Browne, LURA Consulting, Community Engagement Project Manager
- Jennifer Le, LURA Consulting, Community Engagement Support

## Appendix B – SAG Meeting #2 Agenda

### Meeting Purpose:

- Review and confirm Terms of Reference and role of Stakeholder Advisory Group
- Report on study progress and present draft long list of alternatives
- Provide update on upcoming public consultation activities
- Provide opportunity for questions and feedback

<b>2:00 pm</b>	<p><b>Opening Remarks and Introductions</b></p> <p>Johanna Kyte, City of Toronto Kristyn Wong-Tam, Ward 27 Councillor</p>
<b>2:10 pm</b>	<p><b>Review of the Stakeholder Advisory Group Terms of Reference</b></p> <p>Liz McHardy, LURA Consulting Zoie Browne, LURA Consulting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highlight key aspects of the Terms of Reference (TOR)</li> <li>• Facilitate SAG questions about the TOR or their role</li> <li>• Confirm the TOR</li> </ul>
<b>2:20 pm</b>	<p>Study overview including purpose process and timelines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YongeTOmorrow intro (meet us there)</li> </ul> <p><b>Presentation</b> Peter Piet, Steer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Overview</li> <li>• Problem / Opportunity statement</li> <li>• Existing condition constraints and challenges</li> <li>• Evaluation criteria and methodology</li> <li>• Long list of Alternatives</li> <li>• Next steps</li> </ul>
<b>3:00 pm</b>	<p><b>Facilitated Discussion – SAG Questions, Feedback and Advice</b></p> <p>Liz McHardy, LURA Consulting (Facilitator)</p>
<b>3:45 pm</b>	<p><b>Public Information Centre (PIC) Materials</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present yongeTOmorrow DRAFT social media video</li> <li>• Review approach to PIC #1 including online questionnaire</li> </ul>
<b>4:00 pm</b>	<p><b>Next Steps</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PIC #1 May 9<sup>th</sup> Drop-in Event 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. (Marriott Courtyard, 475 Yonge Street)</li> <li>• Next Meeting</li> </ul>