



## Southwest Agincourt Transportation Connections Study Virtual Public Meeting Question & Answer Summary

The questions that follow were asked by attendees of the Virtual Public Meeting, held on September 23, 2020. Responses were provided to most questions by members of the project team, which includes City of Toronto staff and project consultants. The responses provided below have been summarized for clarity and brevity. This summary also includes responses to some questions that were not answered during the meeting, due to time constraints.

For information about the Southwest Agincourt Transportation Connections Study Municipal Class Environmental Assessment, visit [toronto.ca/ConnectingSWAgincourt](https://toronto.ca/ConnectingSWAgincourt).

### Study scope

1. Which modes of transportation are within scope for this study? Why are cars included?

This study takes all modes of transportation into consideration, which is why a future connection will be a 'complete street' that provides space for people walking, cycling and driving. While the City is prioritizing walking, cycling and transit access within the study area, providing for and managing vehicle access is also a consideration within this study.

2. Why is active transportation pedestrian and cycling infrastructure not the primary consideration?

Supporting active transportation is a primary consideration of this study. The potential improvements include a new multi-use trail, as well as a potential future 'complete street' connection that would provide space for people walking, cycling and driving. Although the City is prioritizing walking, cycling and taking transit within the study area, providing for and managing vehicle access is also a consideration within this study.

3. When community meetings were held prior to the development of condos at Village Green Square, the community raised concerns about access in and out of the development. The community was informed that an east-west road would be built to Midland Avenue. Why is this no longer being considered?

The Agincourt Secondary Plan is City's guiding policy for growth and infrastructure in the study area. The Secondary Plan identifies a new conceptual street network in the Secondary Plan area. The Secondary Plan was amended in 2007 as part of an Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) decision that approved a residential subdivision on the employment lands formerly occupied by the Toronto Truck Sufferance Terminal.

The OMB decision also removed the conceptual street connection from Village Green Square (formally known as Sufferance Road) to Midland Avenue as a result of the development. The Final Staff Report can be found on the City's website: [www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2007/sc/bgrd/backgroundfile-8604.pdf](http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2007/sc/bgrd/backgroundfile-8604.pdf)

4. Are there any plans for future pedestrian or bike connections across the 401?

The scope of this EA is limited to the boundaries of the study Focus Area and does not include infrastructure improvements south of Village Green Square. Pedestrian or cycling connections across Highway 401 could be identified as a potential future study opportunity. Future road resurfacing or reconstruction may also present an opportunity to make improvements to the design of existing infrastructure.

5. Are there any plans to improve connections east of the Stouffville GO Train rail line?

Exploring new connections east of the GO Train line is currently not within the scope of this study, which is focusing on the major developments happening around Cowdray Court and Village Green Square, and the need to improve north-south connectivity up to Sheppard Avenue East, as identified in the Agincourt Secondary Plan.

6. Will improvements to the plazas situated at Sheppard and Kennedy and Sheppard and Gordon be considered with respect to adding active transportation amenities, to encourage cycling and walking connections?

Improvements to plazas at Kennedy and Sheppard Ave. is not something that is being considered as part of this study. However, improvements to the sidewalk and addition of cycling facilities on Sheppard Ave. in the vicinity of the GO Station driveway are being considered, depending on the preferred alignment of the new north-south street and the new north-south trail. The addition of cycling facilities on Sheppard Avenue is something that is also being considered as part of the 'Optimization of existing streets and intersections'.

## Existing conditions

7. How is a "built heritage resource" defined?

Ontario Regulation 9/06 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* provides criteria for determining and defining cultural heritage value or interest at the municipal level as follows:

1. The property has design value or physical value because it,
  - i. is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method,
  - ii. displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit, or
  - iii. demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.
2. The property has historical value or associative value because it,
  - i. has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community,
  - ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture, or

- iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.
3. The property has contextual value because it,
- i. is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area,
  - ii. is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings,
  - iii. is a landmark. O. Reg. 9/06, s. 1 (2).

8. What is the potential cultural heritage site at the northwest corner of Kennedy and Sheppard?

There was an unintended error in the diagram showing potential cultural heritage sites included presentation slides. There is no potential cultural heritage site located at the northwest corner of Kennedy Road and Sheppard Avenue.

9. Is there any GO Train ridership information from the study area?

The EA team will inquire with Metrolinx on this matter. There are some improvements being made along the rail corridor that are anticipated to result in capacity and ridership changes. Metrolinx is aware of this EA and working closely with the project team.

### **Forecasting future conditions**

10. How will the study take account of future COVID-19 impacts on transit ridership and permanently increased numbers of people working at home?

The pandemic has brought unprecedented changes to the entire City. The timing, long term consequences and impacts of the pandemic are not yet understood. Ultimately, the project continues to support the need for safe walking and cycling infrastructure in the City, including trails that provide access to important park land.

11. What is the modeling on how many new cars will use the new north-south street? If you don't have this data now, when will this be available?

The project team has collected all the traffic impact studies that were submitted for each of the development applications within the study area. These studies identify the levels of traffic that are projected from each of the planned and proposed developments. As part of the detailed evaluation process, these projections will be considered together for each of the potential street alignment options, and the projected volumes at each intersection will be assessed.

12. The Kennedy/Sheppard intersection has been identified as a major safety priority by the Toronto police. What traffic forecasting methods are you using to model this extremely complex intersection?

The project team is looking at all of the intersections in the study area carefully, and this includes a review of the collision records at each intersection to assess whether there are patterns in the collision data. The intersection modeling will also consider pedestrian conflicts, the number of buses passing through, percentage of heavy vehicles, as well

as signal timing. The traffic analysis will look at roads and intersections in the study area as a network, including consideration of the flow of traffic and queuing behaviour on Kennedy Road and other corridors in the study area.

### **New street and new multi-use trail alignment options**

13. With street alignment option C-4, how close will the new street be to the building at 4091 Sheppard Avenue East?

At this stage in the study, the exact location of the new street has not yet been determined for each alignment option. The options that are being presented give an approximate alignment because there are a number of factors that will influence the location and design of the street. These include where it is feasible to cross West Highland Creek, traffic signal locations, intersection design, and impact to existing infrastructure, among other considerations. Information about the design details and impacts to properties will be shared with the public as part of the next phase of the study.

14. Would the multi-use trail include space for vehicles?

A multi-use trail is not a facility for vehicles. A multi-use trail is for people who are walking, cycling, and using mobility devices, as well as for other forms of active transportation such as skateboarding, rollerblading, etc.

### **Impacts to local streets**

15. What is the anticipated impact to local traffic on residential streets?

With the implementation of different complete street connections, it is anticipated that traffic patterns will change through the study focus area. It is too early in the study to determine what these changes will be. The transportation patterns associated with each of the street alignment options will be better understood through detailed traffic assessments carried out for each option. The traffic assessment will account for the traffic generated by each of the planned developments and consider how traffic flow patterns would be impacted by each of the new street options.

The study team recognizes that changes in traffic patterns along streets can impact neighbourhoods, and this will be evaluated carefully. The detailed design stage of the study will include an opportunity to address specific concerns related to traffic.

16. Collingwood Street and Gordon Avenue are quiet residential streets. They will be significantly impacted. Have you considered how the streets are currently being used? People use Collingwood like a large sidewalk because of the dead end.

The project team has been closely observing the existing conditions of the study area through analysis of data as well as multiple in-person site visits. The character of these streets has been noted, and the project team recognizes that some of the new

connections raise concerns for some residents. The evaluation criteria for potential options include changes in neighborhood characteristics, which means these affects will be considered as part of the detailed evaluation.

There are opportunities to design solutions in a way that minimizes impacts, while still ensuring that safe infrastructure is constructed. Although traffic volumes on some streets, such as Collingwood Street, may be low enough that people feel comfortable walking on the street, this does not reflect Provincial and Municipal standards for accessibility and safety. The City's standard is to have at least one sidewalk on local streets.

17. If only the multi-use trail is recommended, how would Collingwood Street be affected?

A key objective of the Environmental Assessment is to improve connectivity, accessibility and safety for people walking and cycling. Currently there is no sidewalk on either side of Collingwood Street. One improvement that is being considered separately from the new street and new multi-use trail is the addition of a sidewalk on Collingwood Street. This would require space in the City's existing right-of-way on Collingwood Street.

18. Can Collingwood Street remain a dead end?

If alignment option C-1 for the new street is the preferred alignment, then Collingwood Street, east of Gordon Avenue, would remain a dead end.

### **Cycling infrastructure**

19. How does multi-use trail option D-2 differ from the elements of the 'complete street'? Is the trail an addition to the street right-of-way where they would be aligned?

In order to achieve the objectives of the study, a multi-use trail and a complete street are being considered separately. This ensures that active transportation objectives within the study area adequately addressed in the final recommendation. If the final study recommendation includes both a complete street and multi-use trail, they would likely be designed as one unified piece of infrastructure in the sections that overlap.

20. Will any cycling infrastructure built as part of these plans be separated lanes (cycle tracks or dedicated cycling facilities)?

The intention is to create a cycling connection that is safe and accessible for all abilities and ages. Facility types may include bike lanes, cycle tracks or a multi-use trail.

### **Road safety at Village Green Square**

21. Are there plans for new stop signs, speed limits or crosswalks at Village Green Square when the new street connection is implemented?

As part of the upcoming design phase, the project team will be looking at all the existing and future intersections in the study area and assessing how traffic patterns will change with the implementation of different complete street options. At that time, the project team will consider the guidelines set out by the City for traffic control as well as future conditions, in order to determine where crossings, stop signs, signals, and other types of control should be installed.

22. Are there any plans to implement new crosswalks, stop signs or traffic calming at Village Green Square prior to the new street connection?

A review of existing transportation conditions has been carried out as part of the EA process. The project team will review the safety concerns that have been raised and consider these in the future recommendations. All infrastructure that will be recommended has safety as a top priority, and any design will follow the City's Vision Zero policies.

Improvements unrelated to the study, and/or requests for interim traffic calming measures should go through the City's Traffic Calming Request process: [toronto.ca/services-payments/streets-parking-transportation/traffic-management/traffic-calming/](https://toronto.ca/services-payments/streets-parking-transportation/traffic-management/traffic-calming/)

23. At the cul-de-sac on Village Green Square where the new street would connect there will be the main entrance to a new daycare. How will you deal with the traffic to keep parents and children safe?

The intention of all of the ultimate recommendations of this study is to provide high quality and safe transportation improvements and the design will closely follow the City's Vision Zero policies and guidelines. There are different tools that can be used to improve the safety of intersections and roads and make sure that pedestrians have safe access options.

24. The north-south street is very important for the safety of residents at Village Green Square, particularly in the case of an emergency. There have been situations where residents are unable to get in or out when the intersection at Kennedy is blocked.

Provision of infrastructure for emergency services and emergency service access to Village Green Square will be considered in the final evaluation of options.

### **Other potential improvements**

25. Could the intersection of Kennedy and Sheppard be converted to a roundabout?

Roundabouts are unique tools for unique contexts. Some of the considerations that inform the appropriateness of a roundabout would include availability of space, transit network, number of travel lanes, network context (eg. whether intersections up and downstream of the roundabout are signalized), pedestrian volumes, and other factors. The focus of the transportation assessment and intersection improvements will be to address the Problem & Opportunity Statement of the study. Based on this context, the

project team does not consider this intersection to be an appropriate candidate for a roundabout.

## **Evaluation process**

26. Of all the factors that will be considered as part of the evaluation process, which one is the most important?

All of the factors that have been identified in the Draft Evaluation Criteria will be closely considered. However, it is critical that the preferred options are aligned with the City's policy framework, which includes plans, policies and guidelines that have been developed through decades of consultation. These policies reflect the direction that the city wants to move in, as a growing major urban centre. All of the other Draft Evaluation Criteria relate back to this policy framework in some way. Other major factors are cost and adhering to guidelines for new infrastructure within the flood plain.

27. The floodplain of West Highland Creek seems to be a major problem for this study. How will this be approached? Is the primary concern the impact that new infrastructure would have on the floodplain or the impact of the flood plain on new infrastructure?

Both safety and environmental impact are key considerations in regards to the flood plain. Infrastructure within the flood plain is at risk of flooding if there is a very significant storm event (e.g. Hurricane Hazel) and must be designed with a number of safety policies and guidelines (e.g. streets must be designed to withstand potential flooding events). Infrastructure constructed in the flood plain also has the potential to impact the flow of the creek and the natural environment (e.g. introducing a new road in a flood plain may increase the amount of surface water flowing into the creek).

28. How does public consultation fit into the overall evaluation process? How will feedback from the community be weighed against some of the other factors that will be considered?

The project team aims to recommend improvements that balance a range of diverse needs and priorities with the City's policies and potential impacts to the environment and to people. The consultation process is not a vote. The results of the consultation will help the project team apply the evaluation criteria in a way that reflects the concerns, priorities and preferences identified by the public. For example, if accessibility is identified as a top priority by the public, then this will be taken into consideration in the evaluation process.

29. If public feedback reflects a desire to make things easier for drivers but the City's policy is to encourage more walking and cycling, where does the City stand?

The project team aims to recommend improvements that balance a range of diverse needs and priorities with the City's policies. This is a multi-modal study and the priority is to encourage walking, cycling, active transportation and transit use in the area, while also balancing and managing vehicle access.

30. Why are sport and recreation facilities and community centres not considered as a part of the 'Healthy Communities' criteria?

This is a great suggestion and the project team will consider adding connections to sport and recreation facilities to the evaluation criteria.

### **Implementation of recommended improvements**

31. The potential for a new street to Sheppard has been discussed for years. What is the likelihood that the road will actually be built?

We recognize that this has been a long process. At this point it has not yet been determined whether the final recommendation will include a new north-south street connection. This final recommendation of this study will be informed by the potential impacts of each alignment option and how well each option addresses the objectives and Problem & Opportunity Statement of the study.

32. What is the timeline for constructing the new street from Village Green Square to Sheppard Ave?

The anticipated timeline for the completion of this EA study is mid- to late-2021. At that point, the final recommendations will be identified and there will be a timeline for implementation of those recommendations. Implementation will require coordination with planned and ongoing developments in the study area. Provincial EAs have a ten year lifespan. Infrastructure improvements typically get built within ten years of the completion of a 'Schedule C' Environmental Assessment.

33. Will the street and trail construction move together or will one precede the other?

At this stage in the study, no infrastructure recommendations or timelines for construction have been made. Any construction related to the recommendations will need to be coordinated with development and other construction activities in the focus area.

34. Will there be a naming competition for the new street?

The City of Toronto has a policy for naming new streets. Members of the public can visit the City's website for more information:

[toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/street-naming](https://toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/street-naming)

35. Litter is a problem on our roads. Will there be garbage and recycling bins on the new street and trail?

An Environmental Assessment does not typically design to this level of detail. It is generally good practice to have waste and recycling facilities along certain street types and multi-use trails. The project team will include a recommendation to consider appropriate types and locations for street furniture as part of the detailed design process following the EA.

## **Development applications and population growth**

36. Has there been any consideration of how the population growth in the study area will impact traffic on the ramps on Kennedy Road to and from Highway 401?

Yes, the project team will complete a detailed traffic assessment of future conditions, taking into account all of the development that is proposed in this area as well as other growth and traffic that is occurring beyond the area. The project team is working closely with the Ministry of Transportation to ensure that the analysis that is carried out takes into consideration the highway ramps.

37. How will the results of this study impact existing planning applications?

This EA will proceed in parallel with City Planning's review of development applications in the study focus area. The intent is to ensure that the development applications do not preclude the ability to deliver the recommended street and/or trail alignments.

## **Property impacts**

38. For private properties affected by the improvement options, what will the impacts be?

The owners of properties that are potentially impacted by the transportation improvement options have been notified directly by the City of Toronto. In some cases the potential impact is to private property, while in other cases the impact would be to the City-owned right-of-way. The specific impacts will not be defined until further design work is carried out in the next phase of the study. The City will continue to work with potentially impacted property owners as the study progresses.