THE DANFORTH STUDY

An Integrated Process

ActiveTO: DESTINATION DANFORTH

Common Questions & Concerns | November 30th 2020

Common Questions & Concerns

THE DANFORTHSTUDY

1. What changes have been installed on the Danforth Avenue from Broadview Avenue to Dawes Road?
2. What is the purpose of the project?
3. How will this pilot support local businesses?
4. What are the project timelines?
5. How are you engaging businesses on the project?
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11. How have emergency services been considered? What do I do when an emergency vehicle approaches? [UPDATED]
12. I'm concerned that this pilot implementation is bypassing the consultation process.
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15. How is loading for businesses being considered? [NEW]
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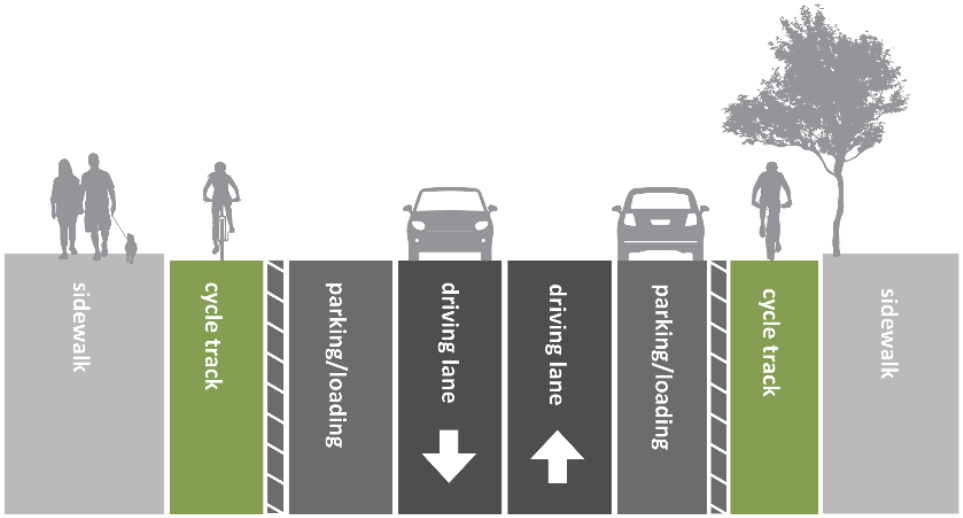
17. How can I request additional bike parking? [NEW]
18. What happens to the CafeTO program on Danforth Avenue in 2021? [NEW]

1. What changes have been installed on Danforth Avenue from Broadview Avenue to Dawes Road?

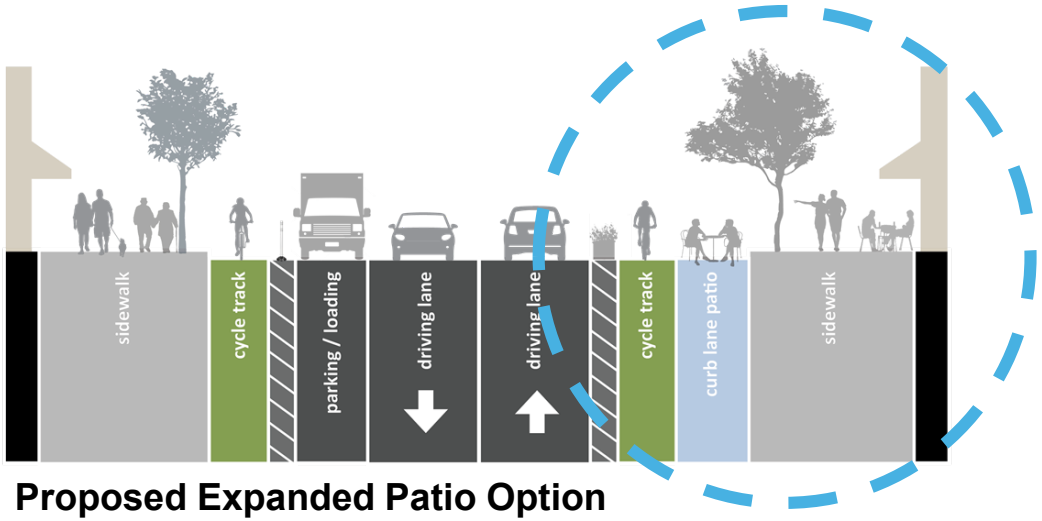
ANSWER

The pilot design includes:

1. Full-time (24/7) parking/loading lane on both sides of Danforth Avenue, providing an additional 10 hours of parking availability per stall per week.
2. Streetscape improvements such as planters, brightly painted curb extensions to reduce pedestrian crossing distances, and opportunities for new and expanded patios to create an attractive streetscape with more outdoor seating and retail space.
3. Opportunities for more and expanded patios (eg. in the curb lane, and on sidewalks) through a streamlined permit process, with waived fees for businesses.
4. A separated bicycle lane in both directions to provide safe mobility options for local shopping, etc. trips, and serve as a transit relief valve.
5. One traffic lane in either direction maintained, and turn lanes added at intersections.
    a. Adequate pedestrian space for circulation, safety and physical distancing will be maintained on sidewalks.



Typical Proposed Cross Section



Proposed Expanded Patio Option

1. What changes have been installed on Danforth Avenue from Broadview Avenue to Dawes Road? (Cont'd)

ANSWER (cont'd)

Perspective and aerial renderings of the design (below) provide additional details on the design concept. A combination of pre-cast concrete curbs and posts, as well as planters have been used along the street, depending on the context.

Perspective Rendering of Typical Mid-Block Configuration

Aerial Rendering Concept of Intersection Design

2. What is the purpose of the project?

In 2019, the City launched the Danforth Study to create a vision and plan for the Danforth into the future. The study is a joint project between Transportation Services, City Planning and Economic Development & Culture. A “Complete Street Pilot” was being considered as part of this project, intended to test out ways to enhance the Danforth in a number of ways:

- **Improved road safety**
- **Vibrant and beautiful streetscape**
- **More mobility options**
- **Social benefits**
- **Local economic benefits**
- **Environmental benefits**

After a project pause because of the Covid-19 pandemic, City Council voted to accelerate key projects around the City to support a Pandemic Recovery Mobility Strategy and address emerging transportation issues. The goals for the project were updated to include the need for:

+ **Better use of right-of-way** in the context of Covid-19
+ Supporting **local businesses** by improving access options
+ Supporting local businesses by providing **expanded patio &** outdoor **seating opportunities**
+ Supporting **physical distancing** for active modes of transportation
+ Supporting **transit system relief**; Provide **sustainable alternatives** for people who will not be comfortable taking transit (walking, cycling)
+ Providing **more space for public realm enhancements, Bike Share, bike parking**

3. How will this pilot support local businesses?

ANSWER

Supporting local businesses is even more important amid the COVID-19 Pandemic. This pilot reallocates underused space on the roadway resulting from lower traffic volumes, creating new:

- Full-time parking on both sides of Danforth Avenue
- Opportunities for “al fresco” patio dining on the street and sidewalk, should businesses be permitted to do so. Staff are currently working towards waiving patio application permit fees and streamlining the permit application process.
- New access opportunities for people to get to the Danforth (eg. by bike, Bike Share)
- More high-capacity bicycle parking
- Streetscape beautification and animations (using curb extensions and public seating) to bring excitement to the street and create more space for social distancing
- Identifiers for Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) across the corridor, using unique curb extension colour combinations and plantings in each BIA area

4. What are the project timelines?

ANSWER

Given extremely tight timelines for a pilot of this scale and the need to support local businesses and provide transit relief, an iterative design approach is required that involves adjustments following ongoing monitoring. The project is being delivered in multiple phases, starting with the initial installation in July 2020. The current timeline includes:

- Preliminary Design **May 2020**

- Engagement with BIA Office, BIAs, businesses, resident associations and public: **Starting June 1**

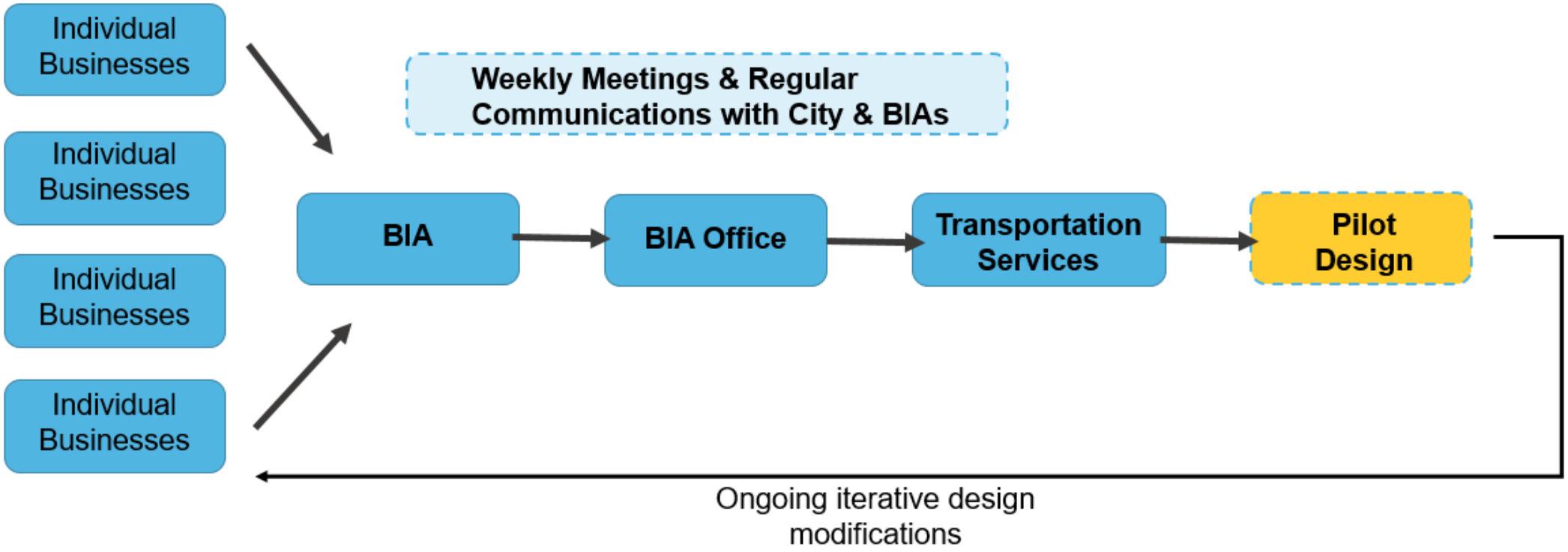
- Phase 1 Implementation: **Start mid-July 2020**
  - Expanded patio space, planters, curb extensions, cycle track, bike parking, Bike Share installation, public parklet seating areas, street art components including large murals, traffic boxes painted by local artists and unique colours applied to parking buffer zone within each BIA.
- Phase 2 Implementation : **2021**
  - Ongoing monitoring, iterative design modifications
  - More extensive community consultation, with specific feedback on what works well and what doesn't from Phase 1
  - Report to Council (including Pilot Evaluation) in late 2021
- Long Term Implementation: **2021 - BEYOND**
  - Ongoing monitoring, iterative design modifications, new pedestrian crossings upon review from Traffic Operations/Council Approval.

*Elements included in each phase to be refined as detailed design and procurement proceeds.

5. How are you engaging businesses on the project?

ANSWER

In order to receive consolidated feedback in an expedited manner, City staff worked with businesses through the BIAs on key issues, including loading, patio expansion opportunities, design features, and installation timelines.



6. How are you engaging residents and other stakeholders?

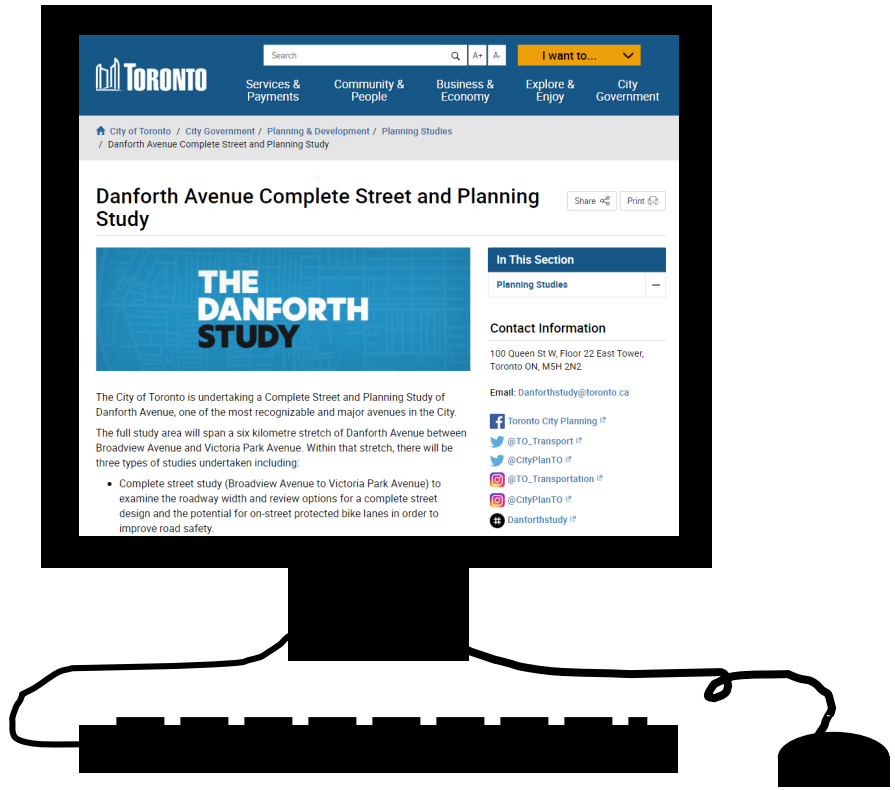
ANSWER

The City will be hosting online engagement opportunities for the project Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC), local resident associations and other stakeholders. City staff will also be updating details on the project website (www.toronto.ca/danforthstudy) and sending mail-outs to all addresses within 300m of the pilot implementation area, with a link to more information on the project website.

Upcoming Community Meetings

The next round of community consultation will include two online Community Meetings and a survey.

- Meeting 3A (December 1, 2020 from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.) will provide a brief update on the three study components with a focus on presenting the Complete Streets Pilot that was implemented over the summer and the City's plan for monitoring and evaluating this initiative.
- A link to the online survey will be posted on the Danforth Study webpage on December 1st, 2020.
- Meeting 3B (Date To Be Determined) will focus on the Planning Study work that is underway from Broadview Avenue to Coxwell Avenue covering topics such as land use, building heights and development density, parks and public realm, and heritage.



7. What are the impacts on parking as a result of the pilot? [UPDATED]

ANSWER

In general, vehicle parking is being maintained on both sides of the Danforth, though some modifications will be required to accommodate bus stops and vehicle turn lane lengths. City staff worked with stakeholders and on traffic analysis optimization to minimize these impacts, as well as to review potential for more side street parking. Two bicycle parking racks were added to the corridor in key locations to ensure people cycling have opportunities to park. Four BikeShare stations were also installed at key locations along the Danforth corridor.

The following table provides anticipated parking modifications as a result of the pilot.

Parking By Type	Total	Anticipated Modifications, if any
On-Street (Danforth)	779	Minor Reduction is quantities of stalls to accommodate bus stops, turn lanes, loading zones. Additional (seasonal) reductions as a result of potential expanded patios. Increase in peak hour parking time (10 hours per stall per week) No peak hour towing.
Green P Lots	604	None
Private Parking Lots	627	None
On-Street (Side Streets North & South of Danforth)	1119	None
TOTALS	**3129**	**<10% Reduction** (Depends on expanded patio interest level)

Notes:

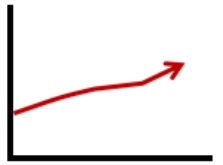
- Counts assume parking availability for each type 100m north and south of the corridor.
- Stalls currently not available due to construction (eg. Green P construction staging areas) have been removed from counts.

8. How is pedestrian safety being addressed?

ANSWER

Pedestrian safety is an overarching consideration for the proposed improvements along Danforth Avenue. An external road safety review was performed to inform this study, which determined that on average, 25 pedestrians are involved in collisions along the corridor annually. While people walking make up approximately 22% of the total traffic on Danforth Avenue, pedestrian collisions make up 33% of Killed or Seriously Injured Collisions.
Some of the key pedestrian safety improvements being proposed in the design include:

- **Shorter crossing distances** (especially at mid-block, but also at intersections) through the reduction of vehicle lanes and the addition of brightly painted curb extensions. Curb extensions will also provide more space for safe physical distancing and improve pedestrian visibility when crossing the street.
- **Narrower vehicle lanes and other streetscape improvements** to reduce vehicle speeds and dangerous vehicle movements (e.g. U-turns, accelerating merging maneuvers at intersections)
- **Signal timing improvements** (e.g. "Leading Pedestrian Intervals") at critical intersections to provide pedestrians a head-start to cross the street, protecting them from turning vehicles.
- A **generous buffer between pedestrians and motor vehicles** through the implementation of the bike lane, 24/7 on-street parking and/or expanded patio areas will significantly improve pedestrian comfort. Expanded seating and patio spaces will also provide more space for physical distancing.



Annual collisions have slightly **increased** from 2014 to 2018

On average

22 cyclists & **25** pedestrians

are involved in collisions annually

9. What is the impact of this project on traffic on Danforth and on local streets? [NEW/UPDATED]

ANSWER

The preferred cross section provides two vehicle through lanes along the length of the corridor, and the addition of turn lanes at all intersections. Providing sufficient turn lane capacity and signal timing at intersections are critical aspects to manage congestion. Staff have been monitoring traffic changes along the corridor since the start of COVID-19 restrictions. Up-to-date traffic counts are being analysed and incorporated into the design through adjusted turn lane lengths and signal timing modifications. Information on updated travel patterns will be compiled and shared on the project website: www.toronto.ca/DanforthStudy

Monitoring Strategy for Danforth Avenue: City staff will continue to monitor traffic counts (for all modes of transportation, including pedestrians, cyclists, vehicles, and transit users) following the pilot implementation using data collected by cameras along the corridor. Information will be used to evaluate whether the pilot is meeting goals and objectives of the project, and to inform any design adjustments. Based on the Post-Pilot traffic count data, traffic analysis are being undertaken for all intersections along Danforth Avenue corridor to understand and develop mitigation strategy to resolve potential traffic impacts and congestion. The above analysis will inform potential signal timing changes for intersections along Danforth Avenue in coordination with intersections at cross streets, including implementation of leading pedestrian intervals (LPI) at critical intersections to provide pedestrians a head-start to cross the street, protecting them from turning vehicles.

Monitoring Strategy for Adjacent Street Network: City staff prepared a traffic volume and speed data collection plan for adjacent local and arterial road network to monitor and understand potential safety issues and traffic impacts to adjacent streets. Traffic volume and speed data will be collected this fall and next spring to develop a mitigation plan, as necessary. These data will be shared on the project website and stakeholders will be consulted on the findings and potential recommendations. The report to Council (including Pilot Evaluation) in late 2021 will include the above.

10. How much does this project cost? I'm concerned the costs are significant during a time when budgets are constrained.

ANSWER

The cost of the proposed corridor-wide implementation is approximately **$4M,** roughly **$1.5M** of which would go specifically to public realm improvements (eg. planters, curb extensions, murals, etc.).

The overall cost estimate includes: the implementation of the new Danforth cross section (full-time parking lanes, cycle track, curb extensions, planters, bicycle parking, and street art.

Staff are also working with Bike Share to provide additional space for station expansion/implementation. Each station would bring an additional investment of $50,000 from the Toronto Parking Authority.

A pilot cost of this scale that uses temporary materials provides a cost-effective, low commitment investment to test new ideas for Danforth Avenue. A comparable permanent reconstruction would cost upwards of $50-100M.

During these unprecedented times, the City is reconsidering capital and operating budgets in light of new considerations. In the case of Danforth Avenue, this investment seeks to prioritize critical needs resulting from the pandemic, such as small business support, main street revitalization, and new mobility options along key transit corridors.

11. How are emergency services being considered? [UPDATED]

ANSWER

Safe access for emergency vehicles is a fundamental part of the project design process.

Geometrically, staff use a number of tools, standards, and guidelines to support vehicle maneuverability, while balancing road safety. These tools include vehicle turning "swept path" simulations, as well as roadway standards and the City of Toronto's Lane Width Guidelines, which were developed in consultation with emergency services.

From a traffic point of view, staff are updating traffic analysis using up to date (pandemic) counts to reflect the most recent travel patterns. This will translate in the design through turn lane length modifications, and signal timing changes, which will help manage congestion at intersections.
The Danforth's peak periods are typically one-sided (eg. predominantly westbound in the AM peak, and predominantly eastbound in the PM peak), meaning emergency vehicles that are permitted to use the opposing lane of traffic should be able to do so in congested scenarios, as they do across the City.

As this is a rapid installation and pilot project, staff will be monitoring traffic operations along the corridor, and work with emergency services to address any issues as they arise through an iterative design process.

What to do when an approaching emergency vehicle has sirens and/or lights on:
People driving and cycling should slow down and pull over as on any other street in the city, in accordance with the Ontario Highway Traffic Act. For more information on reacting to an emergency services vehicle, visit: https://www.ontario.ca/document/official-mto-drivers-handbook/dealing-particular-situations

12. I'm concerned that this pilot is bypassing the consultation process.

ANSWER

The Danforth Study was launched in 2019 and included three study components, one of which was a Complete Street Study that included a potential pilot project in 2020-2021. Following a project pause during the start of the pandemic, Council directed staff to develop a pandemic mobility recovery strategy under the guidance of the Medical Officer of Health to address new and emerging issues resulting from the pandemic.

On May 28, 2020 Council approved a proposal for a number of new bikeway and complete street installations across the City, called ActiveTO (see the full report here). The projects respond to the imminent need for: Better use of the right of way in the context of COVID-19; Support for local businesses by improving access options, and creating an environment to support expanded patios; Support for physical distancing for walking and cycling; Alternatives for people who are not comfortable taking transit.

In order to deliver a pandemic-responsive design, staff had to act quickly and focus detailed design engagement efforts on businesses, predominantly through BIAs. Public and stakeholder input previously received through study engagement activities (including two large Community Meetings, a public online surveys, and two Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meetings held prior to the pandemic) were also incorporated into the design. While most of the proposed ActiveTO cycling network initiatives use quick and basic materials for cycle track installations, Danforth Avenue will involve a more comprehensive Complete Streets approach, and include a higher level of investment in order to support the main street character, and provide beautification, greening, business and patio culture support, cyclist and pedestrian safety, and more convenient vehicle parking times.

13. How is the pilot considering accessibility? [NEW]

ANSWER

Key features of this project that support accessibility include:

- **Temporary curb extensions:** Provide people more room to navigate on the sidewalk, and improve the pedestrian clearway at intersections. Curb extensions also allow able-bodied pedestrians to safely make room for people with mobility challenges in constrained sidewalk conditions.
- **Spacing between cycle track barriers and parking zones:** Providing permeability between parking zones and the sidewalk provide space for people with low mobility to access the sidewalk
- **New ramps:** To be installed in new expanded curb lane patio locations, at loading zones, and key accessible parking zones to provide easier access from the roadway to the sidewalk. WheelTrans data and stakeholder feedback is being used to help identify accessible pick-up and drop-off hot spots.
- **Barrier-free access** is being maintained at all TTC bus stops bus stops for barrier-free bus and WheelTrans access
- Concrete curbs or planters removed at 10 key locations to facilitate accessible curbside access for Wheel-Trans vehicles (in consultation with WheelTrans and other stakeholders)
- As per **City Bylaws,** a vehicle is still permitted to park in the bike lane for the purpose of loading/unloading a person with a disability. The City will be creating education materials on this bylaw.

As with all transportation infrastructure, Destination Danforth has been designed in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 ONTARIO REGULATION 191/11 INTEGRATED ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS, and the City of Toronto's Accessibility Guidelines.

This pilot is iterative in nature, and staff are constantly working through challenges to help improve the design. If you have an accessibility concern or accommodation request, please contact DanforthStudy@toronto.ca

14. With the new cycling facility, who has the right-of-way at intersections? [NEW]

ANSWER

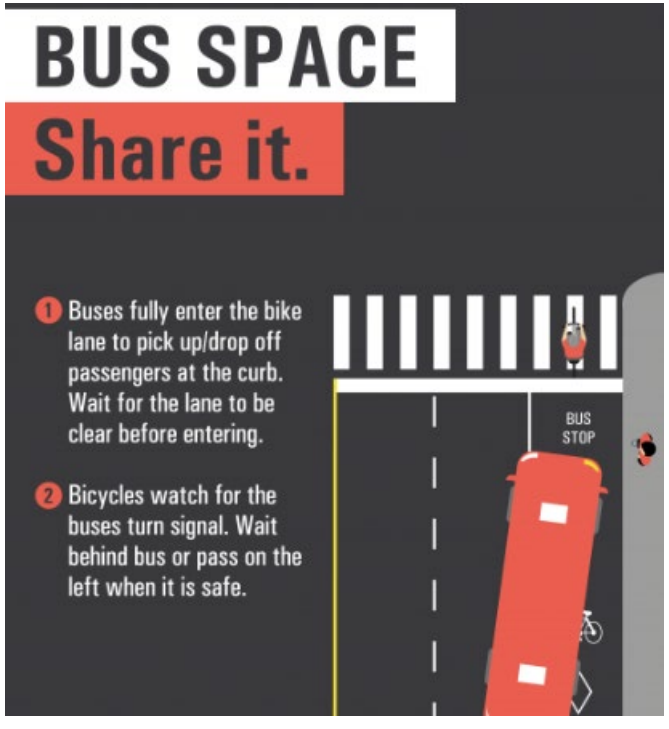
Education is a critical component to ensuring that both drivers and cyclists understand how to use and interact with different types of infrastructure in a safe manner.

In cycle tracks where the line is solid extending to the intersection, cyclists have the right of way. Vehicles must:

- Yield to cyclists and pedestrians
- Look both ways
- Enter the bicycle lane only when they are clear from cyclists and pedestrians and they can safely turn into the opposing lane

For more information on Bicycle Education, visit: https://www.toronto.ca/services-payments/streets-parking-transportation/cycling-in-toronto/safety-and-education/signs-and-pavement-markings/

The City of Toronto's Bicycle Safety Campaign, visit: https://www.toronto.ca/services-payments/streets-parking-transportation/road-safety/vision-zero/educational-campaigns/bicycle-safety-campaign/



15. How is loading for businesses being considered? [NEW]

ANSWER

During the development of the Destination Danforth design, staff performed site observations, consulted with local BIAs and stakeholders, and engaged a third party consultant to inform delivery and pick-up and drop off location needs along the Danforth.

Following the pilot roll-out, staff worked directly with businesses to understand and address outstanding loading issues. Loading & Accessible Pickup/Drop-off Online Survey was launched on August 19, 2020 and was sent to all businesses along Danforth Avenue through local BIAs.

Based on the findings from the above study and consultation, 6 new dedicated loading zones were added for businesses plus many end of block loading areas which were already added at most intersections as part of the Destination Danforth project in July 2020.

16. Are e-scooters permitted on the new cycle track on Danforth? [NEW]

ANSWER

Electric scooters are not permitted on cycle tracks, including the Destination Danforth cycle track pilot.

For more information on the City of Toronto's e-bike definitions and bylaws, visit:
https://www.toronto.ca/311/knowledgebase/kb/docs/articles/transportation-services/transportation-infrastructure-management/cycling-infrastructure-and-programs/electric-bicycles-e-bikes-power-assisted-bicycles-city-streets-parks-bike-lanes.html#:~:text=Motorized%20vehicles%20(including%20e%2Dbikes,fined%20by%20bylaw%20enforcement%20officers.&text=Please%20note%20that%20electric%20scooters,lanes%2C%20but%20not%20cycle%20tracks.

17. How can I request additional bike parking? [NEW]

ANSWER

- For requests on new Bike Rings, please email streetfurniture@toronto.ca or call 311 or email 311@toronto.ca
- For multi-unit bike parking or Bike Corrals, please call 311 or email 311@toronto.ca

18. What happens to the CafeTO program on Danforth Avenue in 2021? [NEW]

ANSWER

- As part of the Citywide CafeTO program approved by City Council in June 2020, 60 on-street and sidewalk expanded patios were installed on Danforth in July and were removed by November 15, 2020.
- Staff will report to Council in January 2021 on the Citywide CafeTO program. If Council approves continuation of the CafeTO program in 2021, extended patios may return on Danforth Avenue in 2021.

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ActiveTO: DESTINATION DANFORTH

Additional Questions? Reach out at danforthstudy@toronto.ca

Or check out the project website: www.toronto.ca/danforthstudy