

Woodfield Road-Monarch Park Avenue Quiet Streets Program Next Steps

Public Consultation Report May 2021

Prepared by:

Carol Tsang Senior Public Consultation Coordinator Public Consultation Unit, City of Toronto



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1 Executive Summary

Between March 30 and April 29, 2021, local residents were invited to provide feedback on the proposed changes to install cycling facilities on Woodfield Road-Monarch Park Avenue, including three cross-section configuration options on Woodfield Road, between Queen Street East and Eastern Avenue.

Project notification was communicated through 9,934 unaddressed flyer notices; 53 addressed letters to residents between Queen Street East and Eastern Avenue and 26 emails sent to known stakeholder groups. Questions and comments were received from 60 participants over two (2) virtual public meetings on April 14 and 15, 2021; 267 respondents to an online feedback form; 37 individuals by email and five (5) people by phone.

From the feedback form, 79 per cent of respondents support or accept the overall project, including a majority of residents who live on Monarch Park Avenue to Woodfield Road, between Danforth Avenue and Lake Shore Boulevard. For the options on Woodfield Road, between Queen Street East and Eastern Avenue, while all three were found to be acceptable, Alternative 2 (switch parking to west side) received the most support.

The community is generally supportive of the proposed cycling infrastructure and crossing upgrades. Concerns raised include the possibility of an increase in non-local traffic, perceived dangers to pedestrians from people cycling, and possible exacerbation of existing on-street parking and loading challenges.

An online petition in opposition to the project was also received, which raised concerns about Woodfield Road between Queen Street East and Eastern Avenue and the loss of four parking spaces and unregulated loading along the street.



Figure 1: Map of proposed changes on Monarch Park Avenue and Woodfield Road, from Sammon Avenue to Lake Shore Boulevard East

2 Introduction

2.1 Project Background

Woodfield Road and Monarch Park Avenue were identified in the City Council-adopted <u>Cycling</u> <u>Network Plan Update in the Near Term Implementation Program (2019–21)</u>. The proposed bikeways would provide a new north/south connection to existing east-west cycling routes such as Danforth Avenue, Dundas Street East and Lake Shore Boulevard East.

Woodfield Road and Monarch Park Avenue are local streets, with the exception of Woodfield Road between Walpole Avenue and Fairford Avenue which is designated as a collector. Woodfiled is one-way for motor vehicle travel between Fairford Avenue and Eastern Avenue and two way between rail corridor and Fairford Avenue and Eastern Avenue and Lake Shore Boulevard. Monarch Park Avenue is two-way within the limits of this project. There is no transit service on the corridors and there are no dedicated bikeways. In the last decade, there has been one collision that led to a person walking being seriously injured.

From May to October 2020, Woodfield Road-Monarch Park Avenue were designated as Quiet Streets as part of the ActiveTO program which created shared space to enable people to maintain physical distancing while walking, running, using mobility devices and cycling.

A <u>survey</u> was conducted in the summer of 2020 to receive feedback from users of the Quiet Street. There were over 700 unique responses about the Woodfield Road-Monarch Park Avenue route. Based on the survey results, the route was one of the highest ranked routes for reducing vehicular speeds, improving physical distancing, and marking people feel safer sharing the street. Concerns were expressed about the temporary materials and non-local traffic.

In April 2021, City Council requested Transportation Services implement the Woodfield Road and Monarch Park Avenue quiet streets route prior to installation of this proposed project. Transportation Services is moving forward with the installation in consultation with the City Councillor.

2.2 Consultation Overview

This report summarizes feedback received between March 30 and April 29, 2021 from local residents, stakeholder and community groups and City Councillor in response to the proposed changes and options to cycling facilities, described below:

- Install contra-flow bike on one-way segments to allow people cycling to travel two-way along the Woodfield Road-Monarch Park Avenue corridor so they can easily connect between popular cycling routes on Danforth Avenue, Dundas Street East and Lake Shore Boulevard East
- Make parking permanent on the west side between Fairford Avenue and Queen Street East
- Switch parking from the east side of the street to the west side of the street and the removal of four parking spaces between Queen Street East and Eastern Avenue
- Improve wayfinding and signage along the entire route and curb extensions in key locations
- Install bike lanes between Eastern Avenue and the terminus of Woodfield Road and a new trail connection to Lake Shore Boulevard East

• Install new signals at Gerrard Street East, Queen Street East and Eastern Avenue to improve walking and cycling safety and connections

Between Queen Street East and Eastern Avenue, Transportation Services reviewed three alternative designs with stakeholders and residents:

- Alternative 1 included a contra-flow bike lane with no changes to motor vehicle parking or travel. The parking would remain on the east side and people parking would need to cross the contra-flow bike lane.
- Alternative 2 included a contra-flow bike lane and changing the motor vehicle parking to the west side resulting in a loss of four parking spaces. This alternative would separate the contra-flow bike lane and parking.
- **Alternative 3** included a proposal to switch the motor vehicle direction from southbound to northbound.

3 Activities

Between March 30 and April 29, 2021, the public was informed and invited to participate in providing feedback on the proposed changes through a variety of notification methods and activities described below:

3.1 Notification

- 53 addressed letters¹ to residents on Woodfield Road between Queen Street East and Eastern Avenue, with a special invitation to a focused discussion at Virtual Public Meeting #1 on April 14, 2021
- 9,934 unaddressed flyer notices² delivered by Canada Post to the area bordered by Glebehome Boulevard to the north, Lake Shore Boulevard to the south and streets between Greenwood Avenue and Coxwell Avenue, with an invitation to the Virtual Public Meeting #2, which spoke to the full length of the route on April 15, 2021
- 26 emails sent to known local stakeholder and community groups
- Social media posts via Twitter (@TO_Cycling and @GetInvolvedTO)

3.2 Participation

- 60 participants attended two virtual public meetings on April 14 and 15, 2021, with over 75 questions and comment received
- 267 respondents of an online feedback form
- 37 individuals by email
- 5 individuals by phone
- 2 individual stakeholder meetings with representatives of Duke of Connaught Public School (70 Woodfield Rd.) and Canada Post (969 Eastern Ave.)
- 1 letter received from the Friends of Monarch Park (115 Felstead Ave.)
- 1 online petition signed by 115 people, but without associated names or addresses provided at this time
- 1,501 views of the project web page (<u>toronto.ca/WoodfieldMonarch</u>) between March 29 to April 28, 2021

¹ See Appendix B.

² See Appendix A.

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4 Feedback Summary

Below is a summary of the key points heard through all communication channels for the overall project and the different sections and the proposed changes. Participants were self-selecting and not a representative sample of the affected community. Statements in comments are not necessarily accurate or agreed by the City.

4.1 Overall Project

While a wide range of feedback for the project was received, the majority of participants support or accept the proposed project, including the majority of participants who live/own properties directly adjacent to the project or live/work in the local community³.

Regardless of the level of support for the project, the community value overall lower traffic speeds and safety for all road users.



Figure 2: Levels of support for the overall project (Data: feedback form)

4.1.1 Comments of Support

• Support for safer cycling infrastructure

Many participants feel that the proposal will creating a safer north-south cycling route connecting the Danforth to the Lake Shore, especially for families cycling with young children or those who cycle infrequently.

Some participants feel that the Woodfield-Monarch route is a safer alternative to the designated facilities on Jones Avenue, Greenwood Avenue or Woodbine Avenue, or on the undesignated route on Coxwell Avenue. Reasons include the gentler incline heading north, as well as slower traffic speeds and fewer vehicles that frequently stop, such as buses or delivery trucks.

• Support for improved crossing upgrades

Many participants support added safety infrastructure in the community, particularly for the proposed crossings at Gerrard Street and at Eastern Avenue and curb extensions. A

³ Participants who self-identified as living or owning property on Monarch Park Avenue or Woodfield Road; living or owning property very near these streets; or representing a business on or very near these streets

few participants who cycle feel the proposal will provide safer travel over the dangerous left turn conditions at Queen Street East/Knox Avenue and Eastern Avenue/ Woodfield Road.

• Support for improved reduction in traffic and speeds

Many participants have cited traffic speeds over the posted limit as an existing community concern. Some participants feel that installing cycling infrastructure would help reduce traffic especially motor vehicle speeds overall. A few participants also feel that additional signage would help slow speeds and create a safer environment for all road users. A couple of participants would like to see "no left turn" options to dissuade non-local vehicles cutting through neighbourhood.

Support for overall improvements to the community

Some participants feel that the proposal will increase the value and family-friendly reputation of the community, as well as increase the sense of community by connecting neighbourhoods.

• Support for green infrastructure and active transportation

Some participants feel the City needs to implement even more active transportation infrastructure to reduce congestion, combat climate change and create a more liveable city for future generations.

• Support for prioritized snow clearing

Some participants support the project because bike lanes and roads with bike lanes are prioritized for snow clearing.

4.1.2 Comments of Concern

Concern about increased traffic volumes and speeds

Some participants feel the proposal will compromise safety of people who walk and cycle southbound. A few participants feel that the addition of traffic signals will increase both vehicular and cycling traffic. Several participants are concerned about the increase in non-local traffic on nearby streets.

• Concern about traffic analysis

Some participants believed that the traffic counts used as part of City staff's analysis of the project was from summer 2020 and not representative of the regular traffic volumes and operations, especially for Woodfield Road.⁴

• Concern about cost

A couple of participants would rather spend tax dollars on cycling infrastructure in other locations or for other types of infrastructure altogether. Some participants were concerned about the allocation of funds to cycling and pedestrian projects during the COVID-19 pandemic.

⁴ Traffic counts were conducted in February 2018 and August 2020.

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4.1.3 Other Comments

Continuation of the Quiet Streets Program

Many local participants feel satisfied with the results of the 2020 Quiet Streets Program and would like to see elements of the program return to the area. Other participants feel that the road should remain for vehicular traffic, and that it was too difficult to navigate around the concrete barriers.

• Cycling infrastructure not necessary on Woodfield Road-Monarch Park Avenue

Some participants felt that additional cycling infrastructure on Woodfield Road-Monarch Park Avenue is not necessary because of existing routes on parallel streets like Knox Avenue, Greenwood Avenue and Woodbine Avenue.

• Request for road maintenance

A couple of participants reported that the street has potholes and uneven surfaces, and would like to see the road resurfaced along with project implementation.⁵

4.2 Monarch Park Avenue, between Sammon Avenue and Felstead Avenue (On-Street Shared Lane)

The majority of respondents support or accept the proposal between Sammon Avenue and Felstead Avenue.



Figure 3: Level of support for proposed on-street shared lane on Monarch Park Avenue, between Sammon Avenue to Felstead Avenue (Data: feedback form)

⁵ Woodfield Road-Monarch Park Avenue is not scheduled in the next five to seven years. The Project Team will ask Road Operations for a review of the road conditions for potential future maintenance.

4.2.1 Comments of Support

• Support for traffic calming

Many participants who live between Danforth Avenue and Felstead Avenue support measures to slow down traffic, as there is a lot of speeding.

• Support for Quiet Streets Program

Many participants who live in this section have had a positive experience with the 2020 Quiet Streets Program and would like to see it continue.

4.2.2 Comments of Concern

Concern about non-designated cycling facility

Some participants show a preference for designated cycling facility over pavement marking. Other participants feel that the road is wide enough to facilitate a bike lane.

Concern that the road is too narrow

A couple of participants are concerned that the current road width would not be able to accommodate a bike lane⁶.

Concern for increased traffic volumes and speeds on Parkmount Road

A couple of participants are concerned that the proposal will mean that more people will choose to use parallel streets, like Parkmount Road, which was experienced during the Quiet Streets Program last year. A few participants saw speeding traffic last year because there are no speed bumps on the north end of Parkmount Road.

4.3 Monarch Park (Existing Connection)

City staff did not suggest any changes in this area, however, the community shared feedback on the accessibility and inclusivity of the current park path design and the inability for all park users to use the path safely.

4.3.1 Comments of Support

• Support for continued focus on accessible needs in the community

Some participants express disappointment that the intentions of the 2015 City-funded improvements to make Monarch Park more accessible and inclusive have not been achieved. Along with many families with children from nearby schools and dog owners who frequent the park, participants share that park users also includes people living in the five nearby seniors buildings and Tobias House (695 Coxwell Ave.), which provides attendant care services for people with disabilities.

• Support for widening of park path

The City Councillor and several participants support widening the path to create a more comfortable experience for all park users.

⁶ The proposal in this section is for a shared lane, designated by pavement markings. A designated cycling facility is not proposed.

• Support for improved wayfinding

Some participants would like to see improved wayfinding, including directional signage, speed signs and pavement markings.

4.3.2 Comments of Concern

• Concern with speed of cycle traffic on park path

A few participants believe a designated route along Woodfield Road-Monarch Park Avenue would result in more high-speed commuters or exercisers cycling using the route, versus slower, recreational users.

As well, some feel the redesign of the path in a snake-like fashion has not achieved the desired objective of discouraging high speeds of people who cycle. These participants mention experiences or near-miss experiences between park users with mobility challenges and people who cycle. The Friends of Monarch Park would like the City to discourage people who cycle from using the path.

Concern about existing P gates

Some participants note that the P gates at the end of the underpass at the south end of Monarch Park are a safety issue, and have seen some people cycling fall at that location. Other participants feel that the P gates help create a safer, slower environment, as many children and older adults also use the underpass.

4.4 Woodfield Road, between Fairford Avenue and Queen Street East (Proposed Contra-Flow Bike Lane)

While the majority of participants support or accept the proposal between Fairford Avenue and Queen Street East, feedback from participants living adjacent to this section is divided.



Figure 4: Level of support for proposed contra-flow bike lane on Woodfield Road, between Fairford Avenue to Queen Street East (Data: feedback form)

4.4.1 Comments of Support

• Support for formalized contra-flow lane

Generally, participants felt that designating space for an official contra-flow lane would increase safety for all road users, as people currently cycle northbound on this section of Woodfield Road to travel from the Lake Shore Trail to Danforth Avenue. Comments included support for adding flexi-posts, concrete barriers or periodic bump-outs to provide further visual and physical separation of the northbound contra-flow lane, ensure the contra-flow lane will not be used for parking or delivery and to lower traffic speeds. Some participants supportive of the northbound contra-flow lane would like an alternate, separated solution to the shared southbound lane.

• Support for upgrading to traffic signals at Queen Street East

Many local community participants support the proposal to convert the existing pedestrian crossover to a traffic signal.

Positive experience with Quiet Streets Program

Many participants who live on this part of Woodfield have had a positive experience with the 2020 Quiet Streets Program and a positive effect in slowing traffic speeds.

4.4.2 Comments of Concern

Concern for local children's safety

The main concern for participants living in this area is that the proposal will bring a perceived an increase in traffic, resulting in potential conflicts between the children who live and play in front of their homes and people who cycle. Several residents explain that there are many elementary school-aged children live in this area and often play together in their front yards, and an increase in traffic would create an unsafe environment.

Some residents note that this part of Woodfield Road is already a high-traffic area, servicing a school, a couple daycares, community centre and a laneway. Participants see existing concerns about the high speeds of road users in this section, yet lack of speed enforcement, and are concerned that additional traffic would magnify this issue.

Concern about loss of on-street parking and space for loading/unloading

Some local participants feel that the addition of a contra-flow lane will provide no spots for pick-up/drop off, deliveries and challenges for emergency vehicles and garbage trucks. There is concern that the narrowness of the existing street will exacerbate these challenges. Some participants also mentioned challenges for many residents who own accessibility permits in the area.

4.5 Woodfield Road, between Queen Street East and Eastern Avenue (Proposed Contra-Flow Bike Lane)

Overall, the majority of participants support or accept Alternative 2 (Switch to West Side Parking). The other options are not preferred because participants felt Alternative 1 (Contra-Flow Bike Lane) would create potential conflicts between people who cycle and vehicle doors and Alternative 3 (Switch to One-Way Northbound) would create confusion and disrupt the alternating north/south pattern of streets. Alternative 2 is the City's preferred option because it eliminated parking and contra-flow conflicts.



Figure 5: Level of support for proposed contra-flow bike lane options on Woodfield Road, between Queen Street East to Eastern Avenue (Data: feedback form)

From the feedback form responses, the overall levels of support for the options include:

- 54 per cent support or accept Alternative 1
- 68 per cent support or accept Alternative 2
- 54 per cent support or accept Alternative 3

Participants living/owning property adjacent to this section of the street support Alternative 1 (from feedback form) or no contra-flow bike lane installation (from emails).

From the feedback form responses, the overall levels of support for the options from participants who live/own property adjacent to the project in this section include:

- 59 per cent support or accept Alternative 1
- 36 per cent support or accept Alternative 2
- 42 per cent support or accept Alternative 3



Figure 6: Level of support for the proposed contra-flow bike lane options from participants living or owning property adjacent to Woodfield Road, between Queen Street East to Eastern Avenue (Data: feedback form)



Figure 7: Level of support for the proposed contra-flow bike lane options from participants living in the local community on or near Woodfield Road, between Queen Street East to Eastern Avenue (Data: feedback form)

4.5.1 Comments of Support

• Support for upgrade to traffic signals at Eastern Avenue

In general, there is support for upgraded traffic signals, however, there is also some concern that changing the direction of traffic would increase traffic in this area.

• Support for safer cycling infrastructure

Some participants who live on Woodfield, between Queen Street East and Eastern Avenue, feel the proposal will provide safer cycling route.

4.5.2 Comments of Concern

• Concern about loss of on-street parking and space for loading/unloading

Several participants mention that existing daytime on-street parking is also used by employees and customers of local businesses, and any loss of parking would further impact the community.⁷ A couple of participants feel that the loss of four parking spaces is not accurate, and the number of parking spaces lost is more than what is proposed.

Concern about existing truck volumes

Participants who live adjacent to this stretch show concern about the existing traffic and potential conflicts with trucks. There is concern that the contra-flow lane will create a more challenging environment.

• Concern with loading in the proposed contra-flow lane

Some participants are supportive of the contra-flow lane, but show concern that without designated loading zones, vehicles will stop frequently in the contra-flow lane creating safety concerns.

⁷ The Project Team will look into potentially extending permit parking hours to prevent day users from crowding out residents.

4.6 Woodfield Road, between Eastern Avenue and the Lake Shore Trail (Proposed Bike Lane)

Participants strongly support the proposed bike lane between Eastern Avenue and the Lake Shore Trail.



Figure 8: Level of support for the proposed bike lane between Eastern Avenue to the Lake Shore Trail

4.6.1 Comments of Support

• Support for bike lanes with physical barriers

Many participants support the proposed bike lanes in this area, however, there are concerns of potential conflicts between people who cycle and large trucks from the adjacent Canada Post, UPS and Access Storage facilities. Participants would like to see physical separation and protection for the proposed bike lanes.

• Support for new multi-use path

Many participants support the construction of the new multi-use path and the planned installation of the proper depressed curbs and tactile walking surface indicators.

5 Next Steps

5.1 City Council Decision

City staff reviewed all comments received for consideration in the final project design. A Staff Report, recommending Alternative 2 (Switch Parking to West Side) will be presented to the City's Infrastructure and Environment Committee (IEC) on May 25, 2021, and, pending IEC decision, consideration by City Council afterwards.

If the project is approved by City Council, installation is expected to be complete in Summer 2021. Public notices will be issued prior to construction.

5.2 Improvements to Monarch Park

With concerns heard from the City Councillor, the letter from the Friends of Monarch Park and during the Virtual Public Meetings, Transportation Services staff will collaborate with Parks, Recreation & Forestry staff to bundle improvements along with any future planned work in Monarch Park.

Appendix A: Unaddressed Flyer Notice



Example of a contra-flow bike lane

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What Would This Change Mean for You?

If you drive or park on the street:

- No changes to parking or travel lanes on Monarch Park Avenue or two-way sections of Woodfield Road.
- For one-way sections of Woodfield Road, parking currently alternates between sides of the street in some sections. If approved, parking would be permanently on one side, without reducing total parking spaces.
 No stopping is permitted in bike lanes.
- No other traffic impacts to the way the streets operate when you drive.
- All turning movements, laneway and driveway access would remain.

If you cycle:

- You would be able to travel both north and south on Woodfield Road, making it easier and more
 comfortable to connect to existing east-west bikeways.
- Pedestrian crossovers at Gerrard Street and Queen Street East converted to traffic signals, with a new traffic signal at Eastern Avenue. These would provide protected crossings at these intersections for people cycling and walking.
- Bicycle lanes proposed in both directions south of Eastern Avenue, with a new short trail section connecting to the existing multi-use path on the north side of Lake Shore Boulevard.

If you live or work in the neighbourhood:

City services such as fire, emergency medical services, solid waste pick-up and snow clearing will
continue as usual. There will be no impact to existing sidewalks, traffic flow or speed limits.

Learn More and Provide Your Feedback

Based on the advice of our Medical Officer of Health to practice physical distancing, help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and protect the health and safety of Toronto residents and our staff, this public consultation will be conducted online, by phone and by mail only.



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Appendix B: Addressed Letter to Residents of Woodfield Road, between Queen Street East and Eastern Avenue

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Focus on Woodfield Road from Queen Street East to Eastern Avenue

Part of a Larger Quiet Streets Project

As part of the Woodfield Road – Monarch Park Avenue Quiet Streets Program Next Steps project, the City of Toronto is inviting residents of Woodfield Road from Queen Street East to Eastern Avenue for a special focused consultation on proposed changes to that section of street.

Wider area residents (including your section) should receive a flyer for the wider general public consultation on the complete route from Sammon Avenue to Lake Shore Boulevard (see image at right). The flyer includes a general summary of the project goals and proposal to install contra-flow bike lanes on one-way sections of Woodfield Road along with other traffic calming elements like painted bulb-outs, wayfinding and traffic signal upgrades at key locations.

The full project map and information is available now at toronto.ca/WoodfieldMonarch

See three alternatives for Woodfield Rd between Queen St and Eastern Ave on page 2...



Learn More and Provide Your Feedback

Based on the advice of our Medical Officer of Health to practice physical distancing, help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and protect the health and safety of Toronto residents and our staff, this consultation event will be conducted online, by phone and by mail only.

Online	Review information panels and provide comments using the feedback form, phone, email or mail. All materials are posted on the project web page now.		
	Special Focus Meeting on Woodfield Rd Between Queen St and Eastern Ave Wednesday, April 14, 2021, 7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.		
Virtual Public Meeting	Join by computer, smartphone or tablet Register to attend at: toronto.ca/WoodfieldMonarch You will receive an email with instructions on how to join the event. If you do not register in advance, you can still join via the web page on the day of the event.	Join by phone (audio only) View information material ahead of time on the project web page OR request material by email or mail. Five minutes before the meeting starts, call 416-915-6530 and enter code 133 314 5383.	
Contact	Carol Tsang Sr. Consultation Coordinator, City of Toronto 55 John Street, 19th floor Toronto, ON M5V 3C6 Telephone: 416-392-8361 Email: Carol.Tsang@toronto.ca		

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Contra-Flow Bicycle Lanes Explained

When a contra-flow bicycle lane is installed on a one-way street, the street becomes two-way for people cycling, but remains one-way for drivers.

When a person cycling is travelling in the direction that motor vehicles travel, they share the lane with the motor vehicles. To travel in the opposite direction, people cycling use a dedicated contraflow bicycle lane.

Contra-flow bicycle lanes are marked with a yellow

line separation, compared to white lines for normal bicycle lanes.

Toronto has many well-used contra-flow bicycle lanes, including Knox Avenue, Strathcona Avenue, Chester Hill Road, Montrose Avenue and Shaw Street.

Three alternatives for Woodfield Rd between Queen St and Eastern Ave

ALTERNATIVE 1 – Contra-Flow Bike Lane					
Sidewaik Sharrow Bike Iane Parking Iane Sidewaik	 Add 2.0 metre northbound contra-flow bike lane on the east side between parking and vehicle lane Mixed use lane (sharrows) in the southbound direction Parking remains on the east side 				
ALTERNATIVE 2 – Switch parking to west side					
Sidewalk Parking Jane Sharrow Bike Jane Sidewalk	 Add 2.0 metre northbound contra-flow bike lane on the east side Mixed use lane (sharrows) in the southbound direction Parking switched to west side – loss of 2-4 spaces Permit parking hours remain unchanged No stopping permitted in contra-flow bike lane 				
ALTERNATIVE 3 – Switch to one-way NB					
Sidewaik Bike lane Sharrow Parking lane Sidewaik	 Switch one-way direction to northbound Add 2.0 metre southbound contra-flow bike lane on the west side Mixed use lane (sharrows) in the northbound direction Parking remains on the east side No stopping permitted in contra-flow bike lane 				

Next Steps

Join us for a focused meeting on these three alternatives on Wednesday, April 14, 2021, at 7 p.m. - see details on how to join the virtual meeting on page 1.

Following public and stakeholder consultation and subject to approval from City Council, the City of Toronto plans to install the proposed changes in Summer 2021.

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