

Glen Road Pedestrian Bridge & Tunnel Replacement

Public Information Event Summary

A virtual Public Information Session was hosted by the City of Toronto on November 18, 2021 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. through the WebEx Events platform for the Glen Road Pedestrian Bridge and Tunnel Replacement Project. The purpose of the event was to inform the community of the pedestrian bridge and tunnel (and adjacent areas) final design, provide information about the upcoming construction work, and provide an opportunity for the public to ask questions.

Once complete, the Glen Road Pedestrian Bridge and Tunnel Replacement project will provide a reconstructed pedestrian bridge / tunnel, a new barrier free accessible path from the north side off Bloor Street East to connect with the bridge, and redesign of the public spaces at the north and south ends of the bridge and tunnel.

A total of 42 individuals attended the event online and by phone

City Staff presented background information about the Glen Road Pedestrian Bridge and Tunnel Replacement project, final design overview, construction plan and impacts, followed by a Question & Answer period. A copy of the presentation is available online at: toronto.ca/glen-rd-ped-bridge

Question & Answer Period

Attendees were able to ask questions to Panelists and members of the project team verbally and submit them through the Q&A box. Questions were answered verbally.

Below is a summary of questions that were answered during the event:

Question

The current bridge railing shown on the deck in the rendering looks like it has mesh on it and pedestrians could climb on it, it doesn't meet OBC requirement.

Answer

The bridge railings and the suicide prevention barriers were designed in accordance with the Canadian Highway Bridge Design Code (CHBDC) and the Ontario Building Code (OBC). The inner railing has a height of 1400mm (including height of curb), which is more than the Code required 1370mm for cyclists and 1075mm for pedestrian. There is no mesh on the inner railing but only vertical pickets, which prevents pedestrians to climb on it. The appearance of the mesh look could be a product of the rendering showing an overlap of the bridge railing and the suicide prevention barrier.

Question

Is there deck drainage provided on the bridge given its length? Snow removal resulting in excessive salt use has historically been an issue on this bridge. Have the City planned for winter maintenance in the proposed design?

Answer

Due to the fact that the pedestrian bridge deck is narrow, with a total length of less than 120 m, it is designed with a normal cross fall (2%). Deck drains are normally not required on bridge deck like this as per the Ontario Structural Manual. The surface water on the deck will flow towards the edge with the 2% cross fall, and/or flow towards each end with the 1% longitudinal grade. Catch basins are provided on both ends of the bridge to collect the surface runoff.

The bridge will be maintained during the winter. De-icing salts will be used. The pedestrian bridge deck will be completely waterproofed with a high performance waterproofing product, called Matacryl. This type of material provides a durable wearing layer for skid resistance. Premium reinforcement, Glass Fiber Reinforced Polymer (GFRP), will also be used in the bridge deck to prevent salt-induced corrosion if the de-icing salts are used during winter maintenance.

Question

What does the speaker mean by the term "User Conflict"?

Answer

As the area will be utilized by various users (pedestrians, those using mobility devices, parents with strollers, and individuals with bikes to name a few) we need to ensure we design the areas so that there is enough space to move between the areas safely (limit "conflict" or congestion) by everyone – the "users"

Question

Can you discuss plans for security cameras?

Answer

The City is including provisions for blue light distress poles which includes a security camera. Locations will be Glen Road South, South Landing of bridge, and North Landing of bridge and entrance of the barrier free path. This construction will ensure the electrical provisions are provided for these, while a separate city division (corporate security) would be responsible for installation of them.

Question

What is the expected final date for use of the existing bridge?

Answer

Construction is currently scheduled to begin in spring 2022. The last day in which the bridge can be used will be communicated via signage, email updates and webpage. Any updates on the construction progress and bridge reopening will be communicated through the project webpage and Construction Update notice.

Question

Can you advise if the security cameras are manned in any way, i.e. do they run 24 hours, or only if a distress button is activated?

Answer

No one from corporate security is present at the meeting. We have the outfitting ready with distress buttons. They are like designated waiting areas in subway station. Cameras would be operating. We do not know if they are continuously monitored.

- After the meeting, City staff confirmed that the cameras will be monitored 24/7.

Question

Follow-up: that is a long span for that drainage plan...will that not result in an icy (skating path) in freezing months?

Answer

The pedestrian bridge deck will be completely waterproofed with a high performance waterproofing product, called Matacryn. This type of material provides a durable wearing layer for skid resistance.

Question

All previous attempts at murals in this location have been tagged and 'modified' by graffiti. Rather than the investment in another mural would it not make more sense to provide a canvas that encourages the behaviour that will exist anyway? Much like graffiti alley?

Answer

Anti-Graffiti spray will be placed on mural and concrete. However, most of the artwork work being installed is not a mural. It's a varied surface. In terms of providing a canvas, the city has considered this option in the past (not at this location), however we do not have preferred path nor a suitable location yet.

Question

The current bridge is poorly maintained in terms of garbage and broken glass near the tunnel. Can anything be done about this prior to spring and what will be done after the bridge is completed?

Answer

The inspection crew is scheduled to visit the site and ensure the bridge is structurally safe to remain open until construction starts next spring. Once the bridge is completed, regular maintenance will occur. Specific concerns shall be raised to 311.

Question

How about the current graffiti? Can something please be done?

Answer

We can look into if this is feasible prior to construction. We can take that to transportation maintenance.

Question

Will the Castle Frank subway station construction be completed before this bridge project work begins?

Answer

Going from October 2021 till 2024. We do not have details on staging plans of construction on hand. We also require more detail regarding Bloor reduction of lanes. We can get that information.

VERBAL

Comment

I support flat surfaces because there really isn't anywhere to sit. When people hang out in the area they usually sit on the grassy slope, rather than on the edge. I'm usually very interactive when I'm in the area with the people that are hanging out. It is usually safe, people say hello. I can see the merit of NOT having a fence if something bad were to happen (safe exit egress risk).

Answer

In addition to replacing the deteriorating bridge and widening the tunnel, public safety will be enhanced by way of design improvements. For instance, design improvement principle includes natural observation and territorial reinforcement. The example of sitting and talking with someone in these areas is enforcing and increasing favorable activity in the area, which will discourage unfavorable behavior.

Question

Are the white mulberry trees on the side going to be preserved? Or is there a plan to cut them down as well?

Answer

The white mulberry tree in front of 9 Glen Road is going to be removed as it has been identified as a potential hazard, with included bark and a fence through the trunk. The City looked at various options to include the sidewalk (and save the tree); however, none of the explored options allowed the tree to be saved. Thanks to a design adjustment, many of the trees along Bloor Street East, adjacent to the parking lot at Glen Road South, will be preserved.

Question

What is the incidence of the frequency of suicides from this bridge? The suicide prevention barrier is going to obstruct the view of the ravine on this bridge. Will the inclusion of a suicide prevention barrier be reassessed at this location?

Answer

The City does not release data to the public regarding suicides specific to this, or any other bridge. There was a report on *Suicide Prevention through Bridge Modification* by Toronto Public Health which was adopted by Executive Committee in 2018. As a next step, Transportation Services was mandated to perform feasibility studies of implementing suicide prevention barriers as part of the City's state-of-good repair capital bridge program. The results of the assessments are used to determine whether it is possible and appropriate to install a barrier and/or other interventions, such as nets, telephones/signage or surveillance, to proactively prevent and decrease the likelihood of suicide deaths on bridges in Toronto. As a result, a suicide prevention barrier review at this bridge location was performed by the design consultant in 2019 and the current barrier design was selected. Therefore, the inclusion of a suicide prevention barrier will not be reassessed at this location.

Question

When will the concrete on the North Landing be demolished?

Answer

The concrete removal at the North landing will be part of Phase 1, and it will be in 2022 between spring, 2022 and fall, 2022. The construction schedule and the exact time is still under review.

Question

How many trees are being removed for construction? Will remediation of the bank and erosion management need to occur south of 40 Glen Road? Or on City land only?

Answer

The City will be removing 127 trees, and replanting approximately 400 new trees and 1000 new shrubs within the valley and on public right-of-way. The extents of the project are not going outside of the boundaries of the City's right-of-way. There will be some disruption of 40 Glen Road to the front hedges, which will be restored. Erosion control south of 40 Glen Road, within the ravine, will be part of the project as well. The consultant added that the trees adjacent or street near the staircase are to remain. The design was altered in the final months of the design process. After hearing from the community, but wanting to retain as many trees as possible. So with having to accommodate for the grade changes that are required in this area we saved as many trees as we could. Just in this graphic that is being shared on the screen, the trees along the east side of Glen Road will be removed and replaced.

Comment

This muralist was awarded \$275,000 for the work. The design was not chosen by public.

Answer

The City has already gone through the public art competition and it has been awarded. It was a rigorous process and there was ample public consultation. There already is a preferred art concept selected for this area in terms of graffiti. The area will be 'anti-graffiti' coated (including concrete). Most of the work is not actually a mural. Some 'more varied' surface will make a little bit of a difference.

Question

Residents of south Glen Road are not happy with design at Glen Road south. What are the amendments involved?

Answer

The amendments to the Glen Road South design (from the first Glen Road south community meeting to the most recent one) included shortening the bike share station, preserving the trees along Bloor Street East, finalizing the species of planting area, honor the heritage through finishes such as black railings (that complement the bridge and tunnel) and historic plaque, replacement of retaining wall on the west side and a new retaining wall on the east side.

Event Panelists

- Michael Vieira, Public Consultation Unit
- Candice Chan, Engineering and Construction Services
- Violetta Savage, Transportation Services
- Cassidy Ritz, Transportation Services
- Jodi Atkins, Engineering and Construction Services
- Maaja Eichfuss-Clarke, City Planning (Urban Design)
- Ragini Dayal, City Planning (Heritage Planning)
- Catherine Dean, Economic Development & Culture (Public Art)
- Justin Chen, Morrison Hershfield
- Dan Rozanski, Morrison Hershfield
- Maria Goretti Lippa, Morrison Hershfield
- Councillor Mike Layton, University-Rosedale
- Councillor Kristin Wong-Tam, Toronto Centre