



## **Palmerston Tecumseth Cycling Connection - Public Information Event**

**July 5, 2022**

**Start Time:** 6:30 PM **End Time:** 8:30 PM

**Location:** WebEx Meeting

### **Introductions, Meeting Objectives & Project Overview**

The City of Toronto is installing contra-flow bike lanes, protected cycle tracks and other safety improvements including wayfinding markings on Palmerston Avenue, Palmerston Square, Palmerston Boulevard and Tecumseth Street from Dupont Street to Niagara Street, and on Lennox Street from Palmerston Avenue to Markham Street. The project was originally approved by the Infrastructure and Environment Committee in December 2021.

The meeting was facilitated by Dominic Cobran, Senior Public Consultation Coordinator, with a presentation by Karina Fortin, Senior Project Manager, Transportation Services and Alyssa Krantzberg, Project Manager, Area Transportation Planning and Kasra Khajavi, Transportation Engineer with Transportation Services.

### **Discussion**

Following the presentation, there was an opportunity for comments and discussion. Below is a record of key points, concerns and follow up. The discussion captured is summarized below:

**Q:** Question

**A:** Answer

**C:** Comment

#### **Palmerston Avenue - North of Barton Avenue**

**Q:** We live by Vermont Street and Palmerston Avenue and are pleased with the project. Are there further ways to make it safer along the route and can they be upgraded with a physical barrier? Are there places to put physical barrier and not just paint?

**A:** Wherever we had curb to curb to accommodate with wide hatched line there will be additional protection. To fit in other areas such as on Vermont Street and Palmerston Avenue, there are existing curb extensions and bump-outs that already exist. We looked at options with dedicated lanes along the entire corridor. Some segments would have required significant parking removals. These options were not the favoured design. We are planning to try this configuration but are always looking to improve facilities.

#### **Mirvish Village Area**

**Q:** Could you explain the motor vehicle movement at Palmerston Boulevard/Lennox Street/Markham Street in relation to the Mirvish Village development parking garage?

**A:** The entrance to the parking garage for the Mirvish Village development is on the north side of Lennox Street east of Markham Street. Motorists are encouraged to use the major arterials, Bloor and Bathurst, when entering and exiting the garage. If a motorist is exiting the parking lot,

they will need to make a left on Lennox and go to Bathurst or right on Lennox Street then another right onto Markham Street and exit north onto Bloor Street. Additionally, someone entering the parking lot will be encouraged to travel from Bathurst and make a turn onto Lennox Street, or travel on Bloor Street and make a left or right turn onto Markham Street depending on where they are coming from.

**Q:** There are 20-30 homes on Markham Street between Lennox Street and Herrick Street - directly beside the garage for the Mirvish Village development and we are concerned the laneway will become the main gateway entrance to the garage for Mirvish Village. We have been asking for all sorts of mitigations around this but in the current plans we don't really see any. What are the different entrances to the Mirvish Village garage? Is one of the key entrances Markham Street between Lennox Street and Herrick Street? What is going to be done about that to ensure the safety of our community? How will you address the safety concerns? The street on Markham between Lennox Street and Herrick Street has changed and is becoming more and more like Seaton Village to the north of Bloor Street, filled with kids, many under the age of 10 or under the age of 5. We are very concerned about the safety and about Markham Street essentially becoming a kind of highway into the garage and it goes against everything you have said about keeping development traffic to the main roads.

**A:** There are several ways to access the garage on Markham Street- the goal of the change on Lennox Street is to encourage users to enter and exit using arterial roads between Bloor Street and Bathurst Street. Looking at the data, we found the two main roads that had the highest volumes were Palmerston Avenue - which is why we are proceeding with the Palmerston-Tecumseth Cycling Connections and Lennox Street. We recognize that there may be changes that come with the development, but right now Markham St is carrying below the targeted carrying capacity of a local road. The goal of this change is to encourage motorists to enter and exit from Bloor Street and from Bathurst Street and prevent people from using the neighbourhood roads, keeping the neighbourhood roads as low volume as possible. If we see that volumes are increasing we can assess to see if changes are appropriate and the same for speeding and other safety concerns. The Councillor's office is pursuing the request for speed humps on Markham St between Harbord St and Lennox St.

**Q:** If you're removing parking (along Lennox Street for example) will you loosen the restrictions on new parking passes on property for residents?

**A:** On Lennox Street there is no change to parking capacity. Right now there is parking permitted on the north side and there is not parking permitted on the south side of Lennox Street - this will be flipped so that there will only be parking on the south side and there will be a contra-flow lane on the north side. The No Parking zone will essentially be turned into a No Stopping zone to permit cycling movements. We tried to minimize impacts to parking for the entire corridor in order to balance safety improvements being implemented. There are some areas with some losses and one area with some gains. We have no change to the existing permit parking on Lennox Street. We obtained permit parking data and conducted ten rounds of parking surveys along the corridor and all of the data shows that the capacity is above what the demand is. For some sections where we are losing parking, the existing capacity is above demand so it's always on the safe side.

**Q:** I live in 783 Bathurst Street and am a cyclist and driver; our parking garage is on Loretto Lane. Making Palmerston Boulevard one way north from Lennox Street to Bloor Street and Lennox Street one way east from Palmerston Boulevard to Markham Street boxes drivers in. Where would we turn left onto Bloor Street? Will every car in the neighbourhood turning left onto Bloor have to use Markham Street or Loretto Lane or Lippincott Street? There are no traffic

lights at those intersections currently and we can't turn left onto Bloor Street from Bathurst Street.

**A:** Lennox Street on east side of Bathurst Street will remain unchanged, it will remain two-way on Loretta Lane and Bathurst Street so people can still travel both ways to access Loretta Lane. Vehicular movement east of Bathurst Street won't be able to make a left onto Palmerston Boulevard which will change travel on those routes.

**Follow up Q:** Our condo building is on the south-east corner of Bathurst Street and Bloor Street so our parking garage on Loretta Lane is east of Bathurst Street but it's nearly impossible to make a left-hand turn out of Loretta Lane. To get onto Bloor Street many people take Lennox Street, cross Bathurst Street and turn right onto Palmerston Boulevard to be access Bloor Street. We won't be able to do that with these changes. Where are people from our building supposed to turn left?

**Follow Up A:** Thank you for the clarification. You are correct, vehicular movement if you're travelling from the east side of Bathurst Street will not be able to go straight through to Palmerston Boulevard to be able to make a left turn out. Traffic diversions impact both people living inside the neighbourhood and people who are visiting the neighbourhood, so there will be changes to how people travel and how people access and exit their properties within the neighbourhood. Alternative routes will have to be selected because that through-route will no longer be available. It's hard to comment, not knowing where people are travelling to but that's part of the trade-off, of implementing a diversion.

**Q:** Can you add speed bumps on Markham Street north of Herrick Street?

**A:** We can't include speed humps as part of our projects. The process is the community signs a petition then that will brought forward to Community Council to proceed or not with speed humps. It is possible that Councillor Layton can speak with staff to see if it can be done immediately or seek approval through City Council. The Councillor's Office will follow-up with the community on how to expedite the implementation.

**Q:** The number of trips generated by the Mirvish Village parking garage could really be the impact on what we would see on Markham Street and the rest of the network. Do you have an idea of what the number would be for total trips? There are three ways in and out that would probably share that load, do you have any idea about the number of inbound trips on an hourly basis?

**A:** We know the development does have low parking capacity in trying to encourage cycling trips. All of the volume and speed data that we have for the City is posted publicly so folks are welcome to check that out. The available data that we looked at saw about 500 daily trips on that segment of road. Of course it could change, people are now encouraged to cycle around this neighbourhood with this new cycling route that is there. It could change to reduce vehicle trips because of that. Vehicles may choose to use Markham Street to get to the parking garage. Data on the number of inbound trips per day is not available at this meeting but that is something we can get back to you on. Councillor Layton has already mentioned about the speed humps on Markham Street so that is something that will be pursued by the Councillor's office offline.

**Q:** Please specify where the 7 lost parking spots between Bloor Street and Dupont Street will be?

**A:** Of the 7 parking spot losses between Dupont Street and Bloor Street, one spot is between Barton Avenue and Palmerston Square and the rest of the 6 spots are between London Street

and Bloor Street, as we are switching parking from the east side to the west side. On the east side between London Street and Bloor Street there are 21 available parking spots. We have 15 available spots on the west side - and that's the six parking spot difference. We have done ten rounds of parking surveys in this area and the average number of cars parked on that section of Palmerston Avenue between London Street and Bloor Street is 16 cars, against 15 available spots.

**Q:** It is currently incredibly difficult to find street parking. We are also getting many more neighbours. Where are we supposed to park?

**A:** One of the goals of this project is that bikeways should be for all ages and abilities, we're hoping that having dedicated space will encourage people to change their modes of transport. Providing different options will be key in the future if we want to hit our climate and health targets, as mentioned in the beginning of the presentation.

**Q:** Can we limit the amount of temporary parking permits?

**A:** We have heard this issue, especially in the downtown core that some people are getting around the issue that permit parking has hit its capacity so they are applying for temporary permits and being allowed to park, creating issues for permanent permit holders. We have flagged this with our permit parking staff colleagues - they are aware. I'm not sure what the status is but I will follow up with them.

**Q:** We (residents) have gone door-to-door on our block between Herrick Street and Lennox Street; there are about 30 homes and we have spoken to almost every single resident. There is a huge consensus that we are very, very nervous about what is happening right now and comments from staff did not assuage our fears whatsoever. It sounds like the City believes there is an under capacity in our block and welcomes additional capacity. That is simply not our experience on the street whatsoever and we do not want our street to become a highway into the garage (for the Mirvish Village development) and we deserve to be listened to and for real mitigation efforts to be put in place. Furthermore, most importantly this note from the City that Lennox Street is somehow close to capacity or overcapacity and Markham Street is under, is an ill-informed piece of data. I've been a resident of the neighbourhood for 20 years living right by Lennox Street and Markham Street. Lennox Street is not a residential street; it's a utilitarian road for the garages of homes on either Markham Street or Palmerston Boulevard. Lennox Street may be able to accommodate more cars. The entire assumption of your plan in that area is, respectfully, not informed by real lived experience on that street. The real experience of living in our neighbourhood is that Lennox Street is rather a kind of utilitarian, car-based street, whereas Markham Street between Lennox Street and Herrick Street is a growing family street. It's not true that there are many ways to get in the (Mirvish Village development) garage. There are essentially two ways when it comes to trips downtown: people coming from the south will either take Bathurst Street from the lights or they will take Markham Street. We anticipate a huge surge in traffic. Just hearing that we can make adjustments in the future does not assuage us because it could become very difficult to make those changes in the future when there are 3000 more residents. Making changes is something we should do now in advance of those concerns. We have a group of about 60 or 70 residents on our block on Markham Street. We have canvassed, had neighbourhood meetings, held barbeques and we are really concerned about this and we're just not hearing an appropriate level of response from staff. Councillor Layton, I welcome a separate zoom call, perhaps with staff as well - just with the residents on our block on Markham Street between Herrick Street and Lennox Street.

**A:** Thanks for your candid remarks, again the message is being reiterated about safety plans for Markham Street. If there is a commitment to that meeting, Councillor and staff may be able to include potential safety plans for Markham Street as part of the discussion.

### **Palmerston Avenue - College Street to Dundas Street**

**Q:** Between College Street and Dundas Street, there is a condo at 308 Palmerston Avenue. With the new lights implemented, there is traffic build-up in alley in front of the building and access to garage is part of alleyway. There are lots of delivery trucks for the building and for the restaurants next door. What will the city do to help address the congestion at this section - particularly at 308 Palmerston Avenue? The congestion has gotten worse since the new lights were implemented. Cars are parked on both sides, there's really not the space for it, and when you're at the light you assume you can actually go through the intersection. It is a growing concern for our point of view and our residents.

**A:** The access is not restricted; the first block south of College Street on Palmerston remains as is, no change – it is a two-way currently and will stay as is. Cars can access the laneways with no change. In terms of egress, drivers need to make a left turn from the west side or right turn from the east side to go up to the signal at College Street. We will monitor flow and avoid traffic infiltration and if there are new issues that result from the cut-throughs at the laneway, we can assess and will flag with the City's traffic signals team.

**Q:** As a local resident, I am concerned with the project. The biggest concern is at College Street and Palmerston Avenue - since signal lights were installed there is huge congestion with loading issues, drop-offs and pick-ups. Will the 'DO Not Enter' sign at the first laneway south of Palmerston Avenue change to allow for traffic going east? Due to traffic congestion cars are entering do not enter sign lanes. The designs are causing more traffic congestion. The café at Dundas Street and Palmerston Avenue hasn't used their outside patio; cement barriers are up and it has affected the flow of traffic and cars turning left and right.

**A:** We are not encouraging or replacing the laneways as roadways. The "Do Not Enter" sign at the first laneway south of College on the east side will remain un-changed. If we need to make additional changes to laneways it will be considered. There is a requirement for CaféTO businesses to use the patios within a certain number of hours/days over the course of a week. The Councillor's team will follow up on that address with CaféTO.

**Q:** I understand the spirit behind the changes; promotion of cycling + influencing flow of traffic from residential streets towards major roads (i.e. Queen Street + Dundas Street), however the current placement of CaféTO patios on those streets is a major roadway impairment.

**A:** There is only one curb lane café on the Palmerston-Tecumseth corridor. Regarding the café north of Dundas Street on Palmerston Avenue, there has been communication with the restaurant owner who knew the project was imminent and knows the CaféTO will be reduced for the bikeway installation.

### **Tecumseth Street**

**Q:** I live on Tecumseth Street about two driveways south of Mitchell Avenue. I'm curious what 'new stop controls' is? Follow up: I understand that a stop sign means stop. It doesn't mean continue to drive forward after you've stopped. How do we achieve that?

**A:** There will be a new stop sign northbound at Tecumseth Street and Mitchell Avenue and also one southbound, so two new signs at those locations. We will have pavement markings with hatched areas that will include barriers (curb stones and bollards), in-road signage and off-road

signage. Those are all for helping to guide traffic flow. They will need to make a southbound right turn or northbound left turn and those stop signs are helping people take the turn at that intersection. Also we have a plan for installing warning signage at Queen Street and King Street so that people will know that starting from a specific date there is no access going northbound/southbound at Mitchell Avenue. The advance warning signage will be in place for at least a month after installation so that people get used to the new configuration.

**Q:** I'm a resident just off Tecumseth Street between Queen Street and King Street and am very supportive of cycling infrastructure. That being said, this feels like a lot of one-way changes being implemented on very short blocks in this stretch. I fear this will cause lots of confusion for everyone and also make it more difficult for local residents to navigate our neighbourhood when we are in a car. How will the implementation of this be monitored? Are these changes necessary south of Queen Street?

**A:** Our experience is that people become accustomed to these changes quite quickly. Clear signage will be installed. From a cyclist's standpoint, it will be smooth transitions north and south but yes, it does complicate movements north and south for vehicular users. One of the goals is to encourage movements to local destinations, not as a short-cut. It will take a little while but people will grow accustomed to the new network. We have experience on some of our other projects where we have contra-flows and one-way direction changes. We are providing additional notices and we are working with parking enforcement to provide a grace period. We have requested paid duty officers to help with that transition. All of these elements should help with the adjustment period.

**C:** We do have experience on this. We've had a couple of different changes to Shaw Street as a result of the feedback we got from the community. The most recent changes have not only resulted in an enormous decrease in vehicles on Shaw Street and an increase in bikes, but also a decrease in vehicles on most other streets surrounding them. What it did was break up the cut-through that was resulting in higher levels of traffic on the streets. Barton Street has seen a reduction in cars of about 1000 cars at peak on a daily basis because we broke up that cut-through, which is something we are trying to do here to make it just a little bit more uncomfortable for people driving to avoid the use the neighbourhood as a highway.

**Q:** I would like more information about the loading/unloading on behalf of my neighbours south of Wellington Street as well.

**A:** The existing parking has not changed, so parking is already on the west side of Tecumseth and will be maintained. Loading on the east side is not allowed as a No Stopping parking regulation will be there. That means no cars; delivery cars are allowed to stop on the bike lane. They can use the existing parking on the west side. We also accounted for existing driveways, so whoever lives in those properties can load and unload from their driveways.

**Q:** For the area containing the segment of Tecumseth between Richmond Street and Adelaide Street, will there be any adjustment (more, less) to the "temporary on street parking" inventory?

**A:** When the parking inventory in the area is calculated it should be updated. If that pushes them over the threshold for allocating temporary parking permits then yes, it will definitely change the availability of permits.

**Q:** First can we get a recording of this session, please? Between Tecumseth Street, just north of Wellington Street, where can an Uber stop, or loading/unloading take place? Currently, we stop outside of our house. What will we do with bike lanes the whole length of the streets?



**A:** We cannot share a recording of the session but we will provide a summary of questions and responses made available on our website. Parking adjacent to the curb is still possible on the east side (shown on-screen: existing and new Tecumseth Street configuration) the new Tecumseth Street configuration indicates you can still stop and load at this section just north of Wellington Street. The signage would remain as No Parking that allows you to actively load/unload.

**Staff in Attendance:**