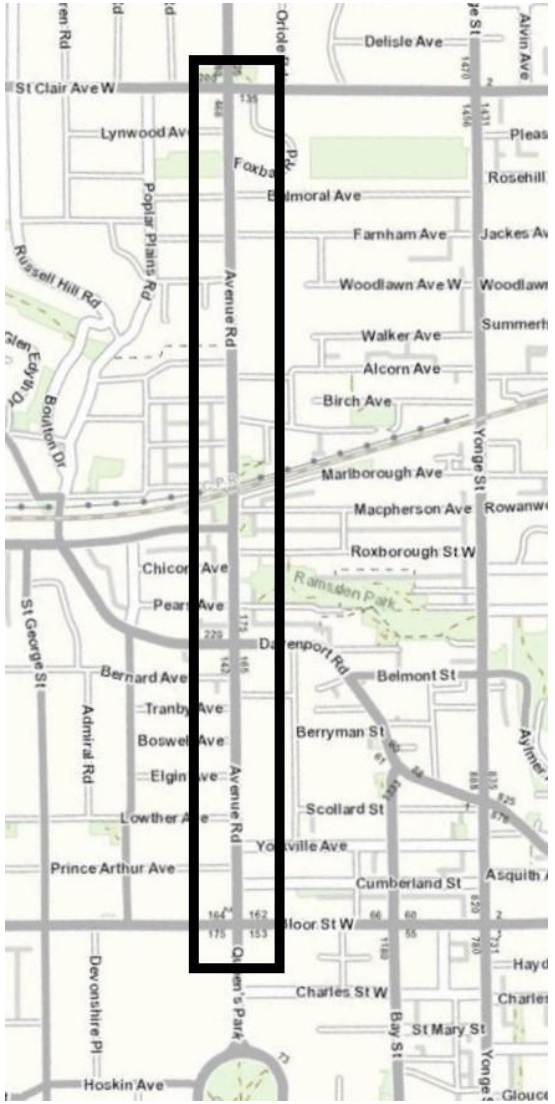
Avenue Road Study

Drop-in Event
October 19, 2023

TORONTO

Study Purpose

The City of Toronto is studying Avenue Road, between Bloor St W and St. Clair Ave W, to find opportunities to improve the street with emphasis on safety, mobility choices, and enhancing streetscape, and to best serve all road users. **The study is premised on the understanding that full reconstruction of Avenue Road is not scheduled in the City's Ten-Year Capital Plan for major roadwork.**



Objectives:

- Develop a **vision** for the future of the corridor to make the road **safer** for all road users
- Identify **interim actions** that can be taken to move toward the vision, in advance of full road reconstruction

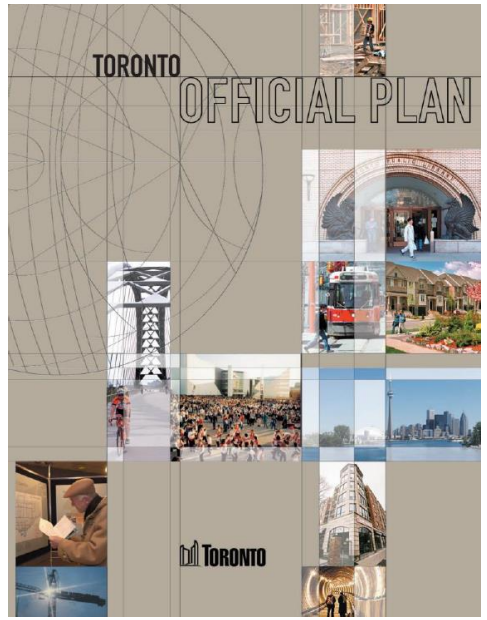
The study considers the impact of potential changes on the city-wide road network and adjacent local streets.

Building on Past Efforts

- **2018-19:** Installation of physical barriers (planters) in front of Brown School that block the curb lane to keep speeding vehicles away from children at the entrance to the school
- **2021:** Installation of a mobile Automated Speed Enforcement camera near Macpherson Avenue (July to November)
- **2021:** Pavement marking improvements at Roxborough Street and Avenue Road
- **2021:** Concepts for Expanding the Public Realm on Avenue Road, developed by the Brown and Storey Architects, in partnership with the Avenue Road Safety Coalition
- **2023:** Speed limit reduction from 50 km/hr to 40 km/hr as per City Council decision (2023.TE4.66). The new signage has been installed.

Policy Direction

- Toronto's ***Official Plan*** provides the vision and framework for improving mobility for road users of all ages and abilities, and guides Toronto's growth and development to make walking, cycling, and transit increasingly attractive to shift mode share and reduce car use.
- The Avenue Road Study is informed by and seeks to advance the goals of Toronto's ***Vision Zero Road Safety Plan***, ***TransformTO: Climate Action Strategy***, ***Complete Streets Guidelines***, and ***Road to Health: Healthy Toronto by Design***.
- The City's ***Cycling Network Plan (2022-2024 Near-Term Program)*** identifies Avenue Road between Bloor Street West and St. Clair Avenue West as a corridor for a study.
- The ***Yonge-St. Clair Secondary Plan*** calls for streets to be designed to move people more efficiently, with more space allocated to pedestrian, cycling and transit infrastructure.



TORONTO'S ROAD SAFETY PLAN
VISION ZERO

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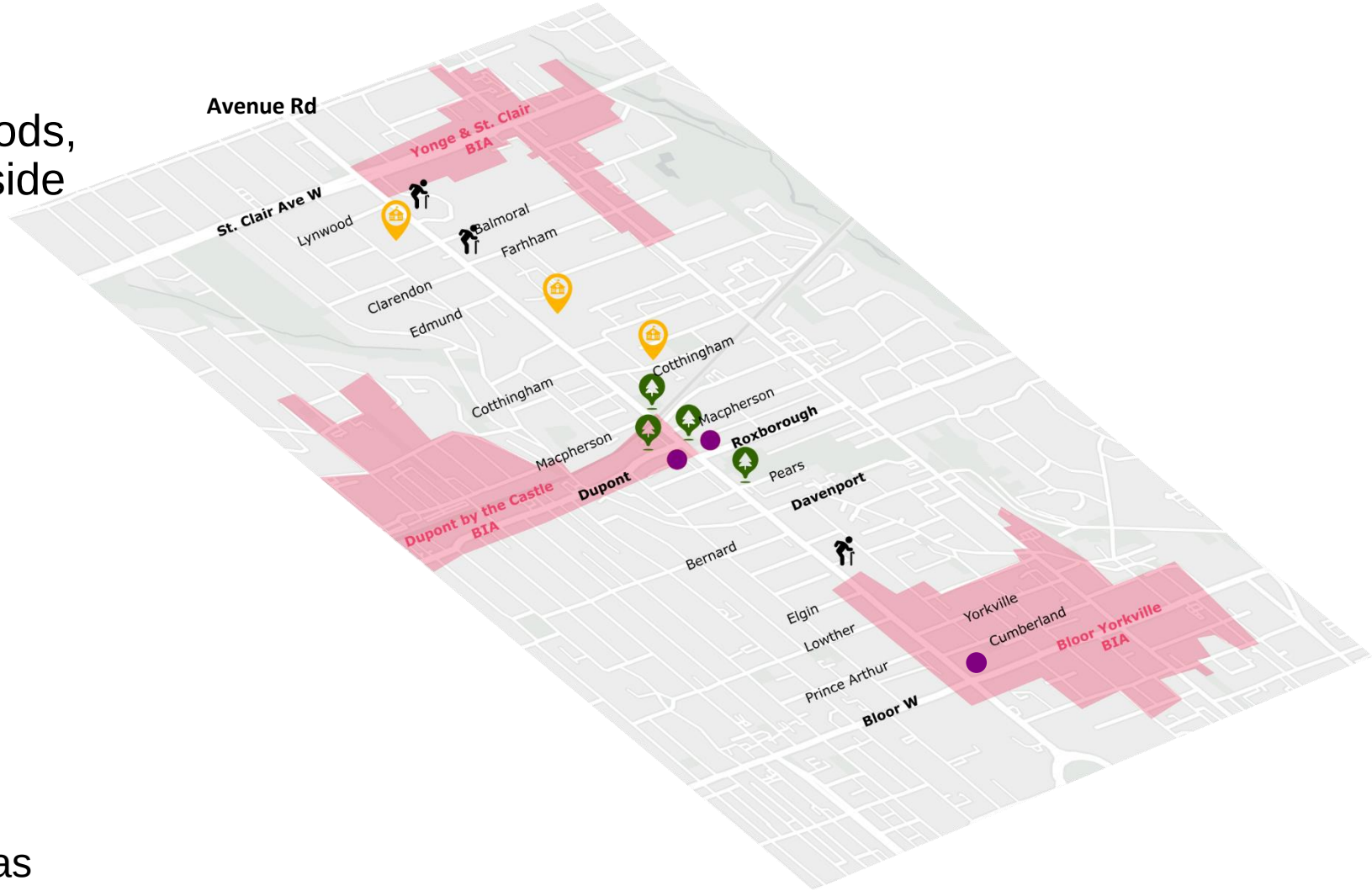
Study Area

- A 6-lane major arterial road, providing connections to local destinations and neighbourhoods, as well as to travel routes outside the midtown area
- Key destinations along or adjacent to the study area:
  - 3 schools
  - 3 senior residences
  - 4 parks
  - Church of Messiah / Avenue Road Food Bank
  - Hare Krishna Temple
  - Church of the Redeemer
  - 3 Business Improvement Areas (BIAs)



Study Area

- Serviced by TTC bus Route 13
- No existing cycling facilities along the study corridor
- Bloor W to Davenport Rd: High to medium density mixed use area with active stretch of retail
- Davenport Road to Cottingham Street: Medium density mixed use area with some retail and open spaces. Includes the CP Rail Overpass
- Cottingham Street to St. Clair Avenue West: Medium density apartment neighbourhoods

Avenue Road Evolution

- In early 1900s, Avenue Road was a tree-lined residential street with few commercial buildings
- The character of the street changed when the trees along were cut down and the road was widened in the 1950s
- Today, the study corridor generally maintains a 6 travel lanes but is situated between a four-lane cross-section to the north, and a four-lane plus 2-bike-lane cross-section to the south along University Avenue

Avenue Road with trees and four lanes in early 20th century

Avenue Road widening project, 1959-60

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Pedestrian Clearway

Unobstructed Sidewalk Width

- **Bloor St W to Elgin St:** Generally wider sidewalks and greater building setback compared to the rest of the of the corridor
- **Elgin St to Cottingham St:** Typically narrow pedestrian clearway at below 1.8 m
- **Cottingham St to St. Clair Ave W:** Sidewalk widths below 1.8m closer to Cottingham St. that slightly widen approaching to St. Clair Ave W
- Grade-separated sidewalk on the west side:
  - Edmund Ave to Poplar Plains Cres
  - McMaster Ave to Macpherson Ave

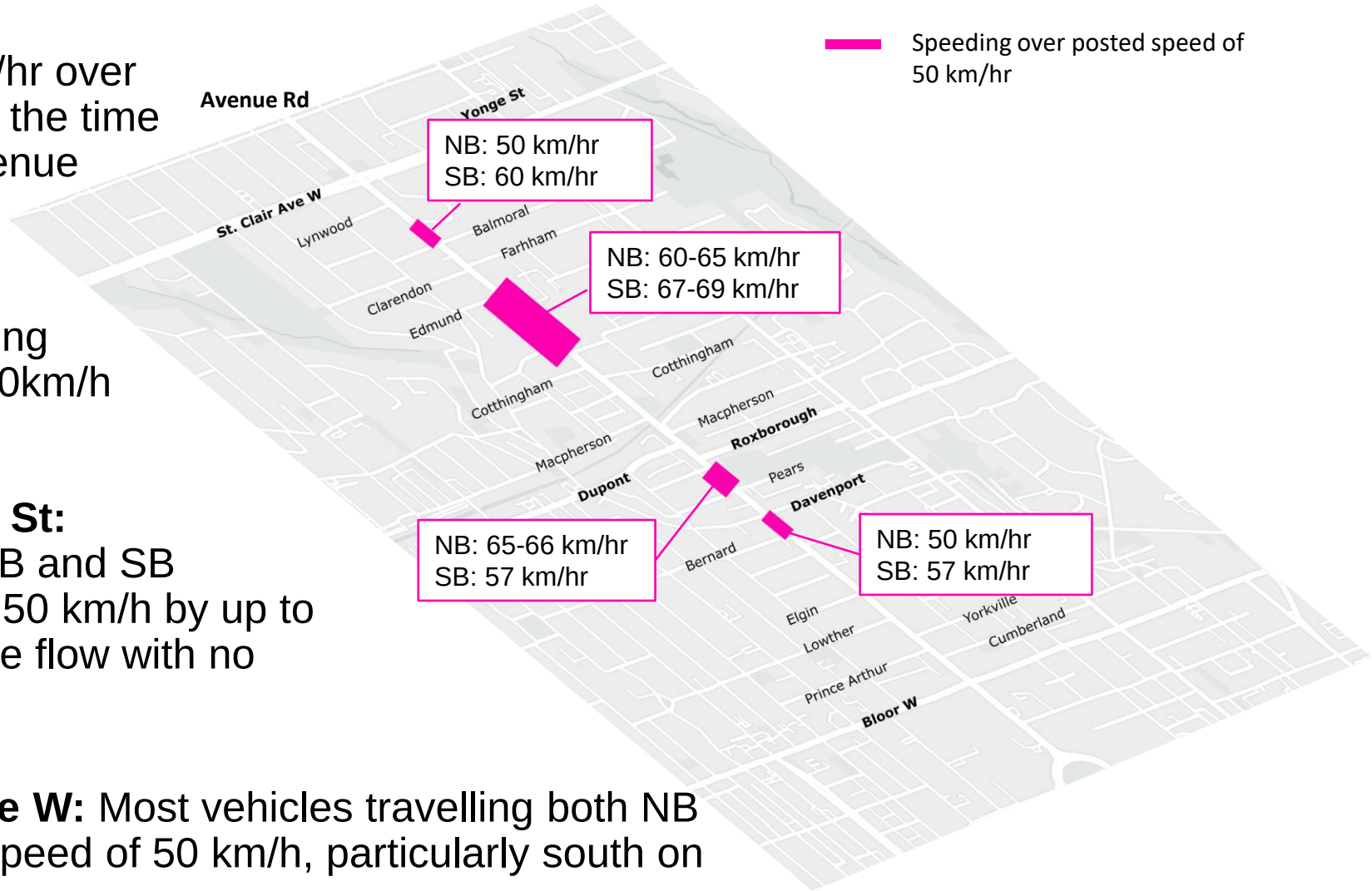
Speed Review

Speed studies indicate that motor vehicles travel about 10 to 20 km/hr over the posted speed limit (50 km/h at the time of study) in some segments of Avenue Road.

- **Bloor St W to Davenport Rd:** The majority of vehicles travelling both NB and SB travel within 10km/h of the posted speed limit

- **Davenport Rd to Cottingham St:** Most vehicles travelling both NB and SB exceeded the posted speed of 50 km/h by up to 15km/h, possibly due to the free flow with no signalized intersections

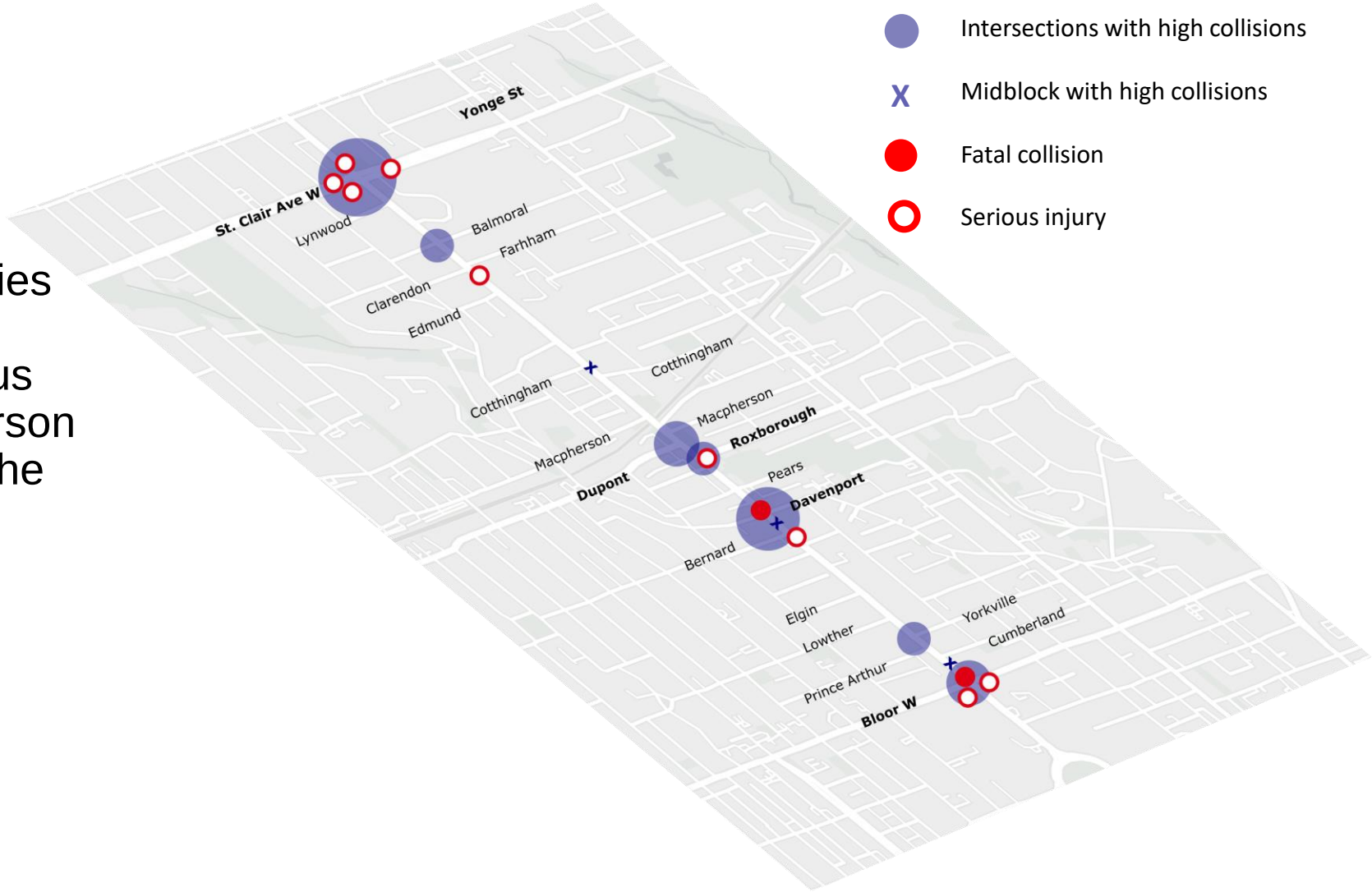
- **Cottingham St to St. Clair Ave W:** Most vehicles travelling both NB and SB exceeded the posted speed of 50 km/h, particularly south on the steep downhill segment



Collision Review

- Total of 1,545 collisions between 2016-2022

- Fatalities and serious injuries within past 10 years: 11 collisions resulted in serious injury (3 pedestrians, 1 person cycling) and 2 resulted in the fatality of persons cycling



What We Heard

May 2022 Consultation Process

- Issued notice to 38,500 residents and businesses in the study area
- Conducted online survey to understand concerns and priorities (1,307 respondents)
- Meetings with Avenue Road Safety Coalition and other community stakeholders

Survey Results

- 65% of respondents lived in the study area and 75% travel on Avenue Road
- Top three concerns were high speed of traffic, narrow sidewalks, and lack of bikeways
- Top three desired improvements were increasing sidewalk widths, reducing traffic speed, and new cycling facilities
- Safety, usability and accessibility were top values
- Full summary at **toronto.ca/AvenueRoadStudy**

Core Themes from Feedback

Core themes emerged through the survey feedback:

1. Avenue Road should be a travel route for all road users (vehicles, public transit, pedestrian, bikes)
2. Avenue Road should be maintained as a car thoroughfare
3. Improvements are needed for pedestrians and traffic flow

There were also comments on the context of changes to Avenue Road:

- Support for active transportation
- Emphasis that Avenue Road and Yonge Street be assessed for impacts and changes together

Long-Term Vision

Study Objective #1: Develop a vision for the future of the corridor to make the road safer for all road users

Principles for Long-Term Vision

Council motions

community requests

existing conditions review

policy direction

lane reduction feasibility assessment

Reduce number of motor vehicle lanes from 6 to 4

+

Repurpose curb lane

Lane Reduction Rationale & Feasibility

Why is change needed?

Because the current conditions:

- Do not provide adequate infrastructure for the vulnerable road users
- Does not meet minimum provincial requirements specified in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and City's guidelines
- Encourage speeding

What would be the impact?

- There is ongoing technical work and traffic analysis, including intersection testing and network analysis, to assess the impacts and changes to transportation patterns and broader network

Network modelling

Intersection testing

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Network Modelling

Preliminary analysis was done to assess the potential impact of the proposed changes on motor vehicle travel times and volumes.

The model's starting point was maintaining existing conditions on Avenue Road (6 lanes) and Yonge Street (2 lanes)

Scenario assumptions for changes on Avenue Road:

- Reduced to 4 lanes
- Speed limit reduced from 50 km/hr to 40 km/hr

Corridor Users

- 13% of auto traffic along the corridor comes from residents along the corridor
- 70% of corridor users live within 5 km of the corridor
- 13% do not live in Toronto

Potential impact:

On Avenue Road, between St. Clair Avenue and Bloor Street:

- A 30-40% reduction in the volume of motor vehicles
- An increased motor vehicle travel time of approximately one minute during peak hours
- The greatest impact occurs during the peak hour peak direction (southbound in the morning and northbound in the evening)

On Yonge Street, between St. Clair Avenue and Bloor Street:

- A 10% increase in motor vehicle volume*
- A reduction in speed by 2-3 km/hr
- An increased motor vehicle travel time less than 1 min

*The rest of the volume would be distributed throughout various alternate routes.

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Intersection Testing

Traffic modelling software is used to analyze intersection operations at signalized intersections in the Study Area.

To date, the project team has developed:

- An “existing conditions” model that represents traffic as it currently exists today, including rush hours.
- A “future conditions” model that represents complete street conditions, including changes to the lane configuration and signal timing changes.

While vehicular traffic is expected to be impacted to accommodate the removal of a traffic lane in each direction, the modelling result **indicates an acceptable level of service for vehicular traffic.**

The future conditions model **shows overall improvements to the conditions for pedestrians and people cycling.**

Lane Reduction & Moving Curblines

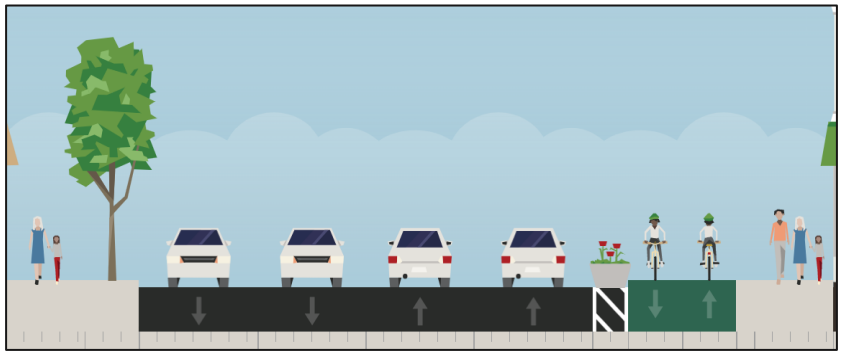
Several scenarios have been developed to improve safety and reduce the number of lanes:

- **Road reconfiguration with moving curblines**
  These scenarios require moving existing curblines which is only possible during full reconstruction of the road. These are considered **long-term scenarios**, given that Avenue Road is not scheduled in the City's Ten-Year Capital Program and Budget for major roadwork.
- **Road reconfiguration without moving curblines:** These scenarios do not require relocation of the existing curblines and can be implemented with the space between the existing curbs.

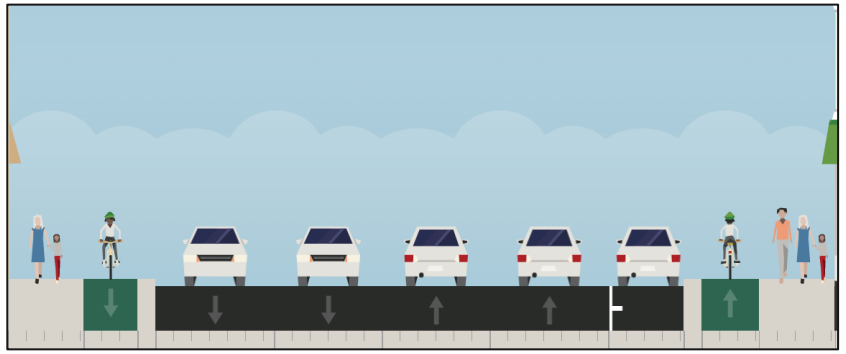
Example Road Reconfiguration Scenarios

Several scenarios to redesign the road to reduce the lanes have been developed. These are potential long-term options that could happen during a full road reconstruction.

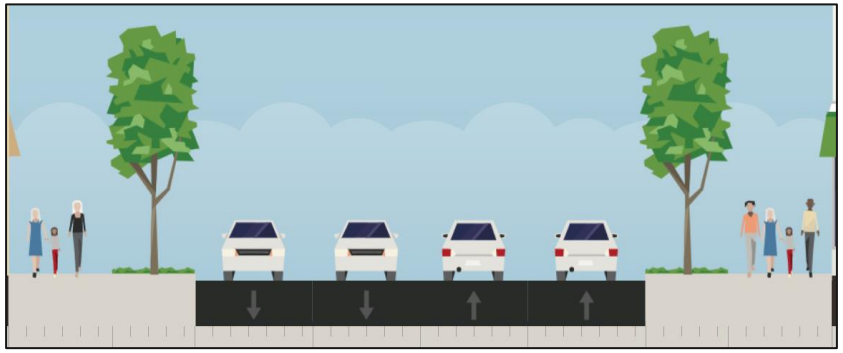
Four Drive Lanes, Sidewalk, Bi-Directional Cycling Facilities, and Trees



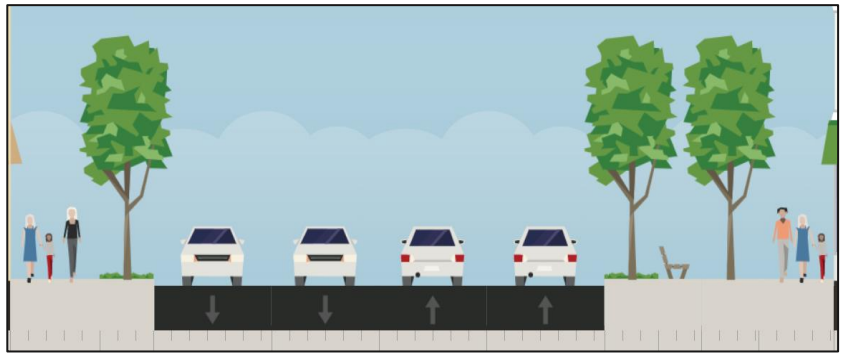
Four Drive Lanes, On-Street Parking, Sidewalk, Uni-Directional Cycling Facility



Four Drive Lanes, Sidewalk, Trees and Public Realm Improvements



Four Drive Lanes, Sidewalk, Double Row of Trees and Public Realm Improvements



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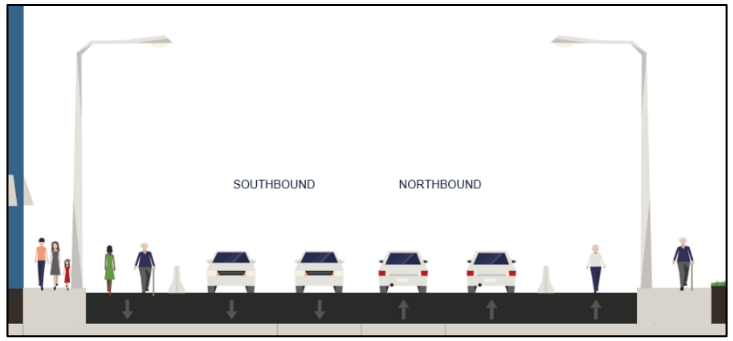
Note: Lane widths will adhere to the City's Lane Width Design Guidelines (Road Engineering Design Guidelines).
Transformation Scenarios prepared using *Streetmix.*

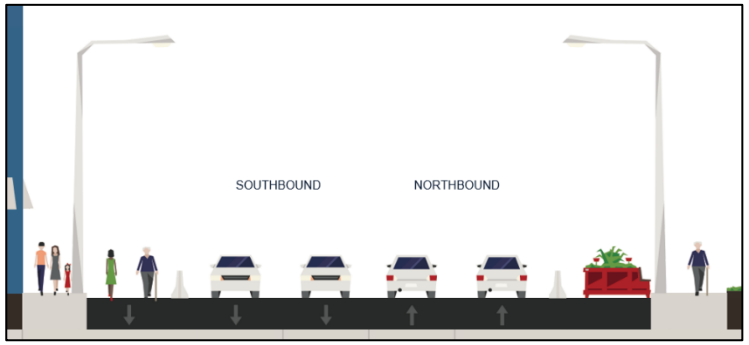
Example Road Reconfiguration Scenarios

Several scenarios have been developed to reduce the number of lanes and improve safety without moving the curblines.

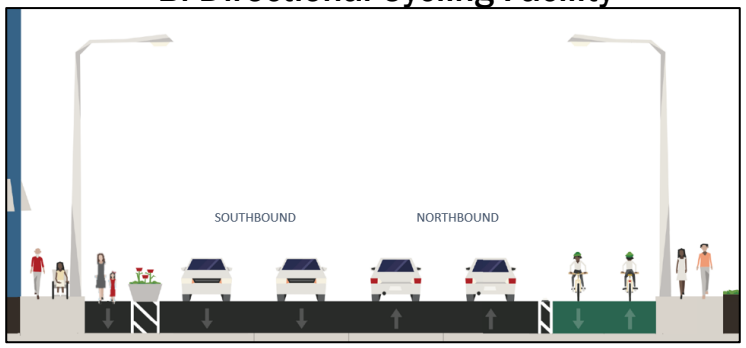
Four Drive Lanes, Wide Pedestrian Space on Both Sides



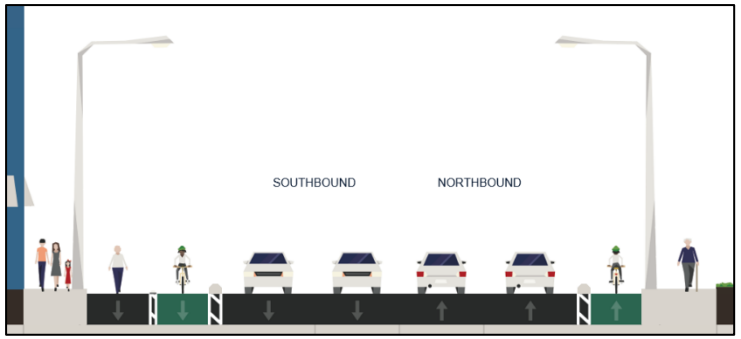
Four Drive Lanes, Pedestrian Space and On-Street Parklet



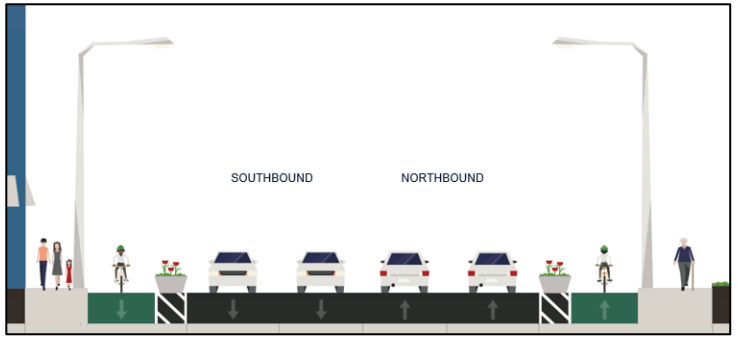
Four Drive Lanes, Buffered Pedestrian Space, Bi-Directional Cycling Facility



Four Drive Lanes, Pedestrian Space, Protected Bike Lanes



Four Drive Lanes, Wide Protected Bike Lanes



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Potential Near-Term Improvements

Study Objective #2: Identify interim actions that can be taken to move toward the vision, in advance of full road reconstruction

Types of Potential Interventions

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Potential Near-Term Improvements

Preliminary design for discussion purposes

- Pedestrian space; physically separated at road level with asphalt ramp
- Buffer space; driveway access/loading
- Curb extension at side streets with paint and bollard
- Cycle track; physically separated at road level
- On-street parking
- Median with physical barriers

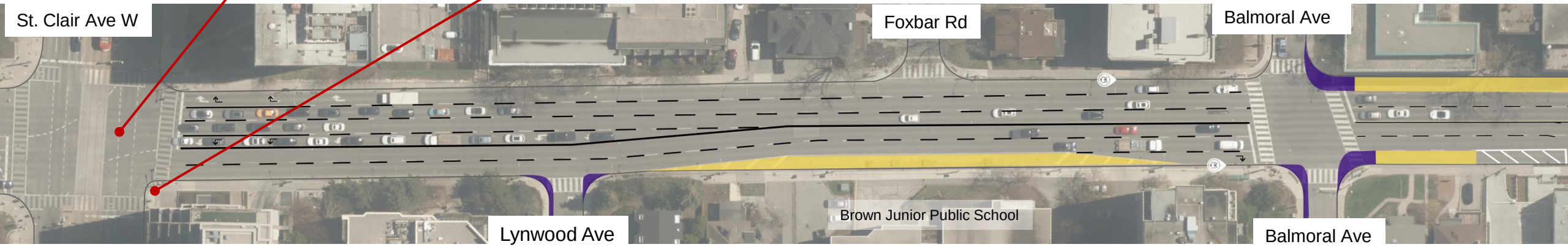
St. Clair Ave W to Balmoral Ave

Preliminary design for discussion purposes

- No new lane reduction proposed for this segment
- Improve the existing pilot in front of Brown Junior School (potential pedestrian drop-off/pick-up)
- Curb extensions on Lynwood Avenue and Balmoral Avenue

Intersection safety review completed – no changes proposed

Curb radii widening
Implemented in June 2023.
This is to address concerns regarding eastbound right-turning (SW corner) motorists encroaching over the southwest corner while making their turn



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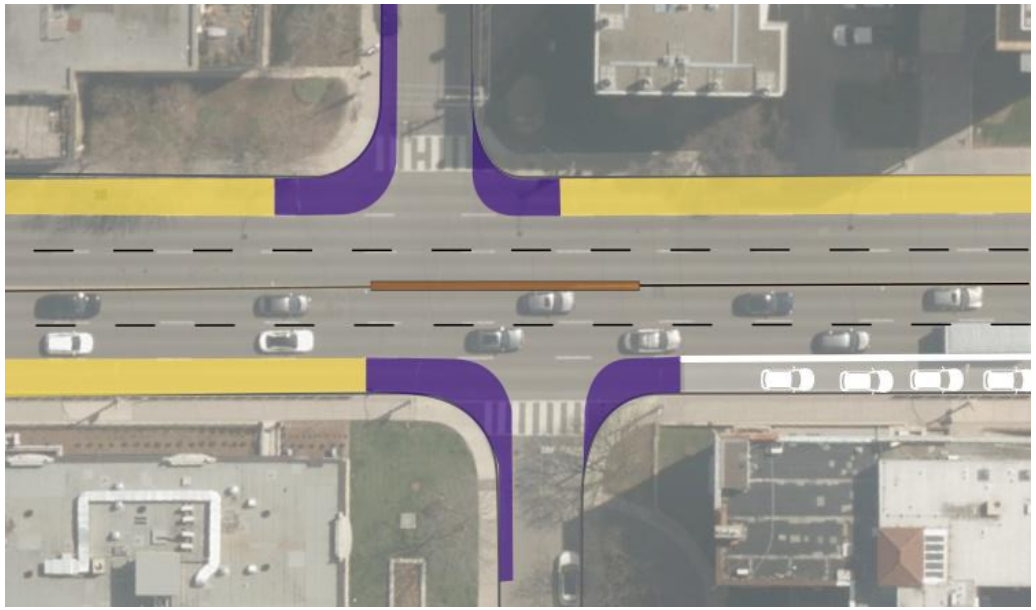
Pedestrian Space | Cycle Track | Curb Extension | On-Street Parking | Loading/ Buffer zone | Median | Grade-separated Sidewalk

Balmoral Ave to Edmund St

Preliminary design for discussion purposes

Farnham Ave



Clarendon Ave

Option 1:

- Addition of a quick build median at the intersection of Farnham Ave/Avenue Rd/Clarendon Ave to block the following movements:
  - Southbound left turn from Avenue Rd to Farnham Ave
  - Westbound left turn from Farnham Ave to Avenue Rd
  - through traffic between Farnham Ave and Clarendon Ave
- Pedestrian space added on both sides
- Curb extensions on Farnham Avenue and Clarendon Ave
- New on-street parking south of Clarendon, on the west side
- This option would result in safer conditions. However, it would restrict access to De La Salle College and other destinations between Avenue Rd and Yonge St. Motorists travelling southbound on Avenue Rd, may take Balmoral Ave and Yonge St as an alternative route.

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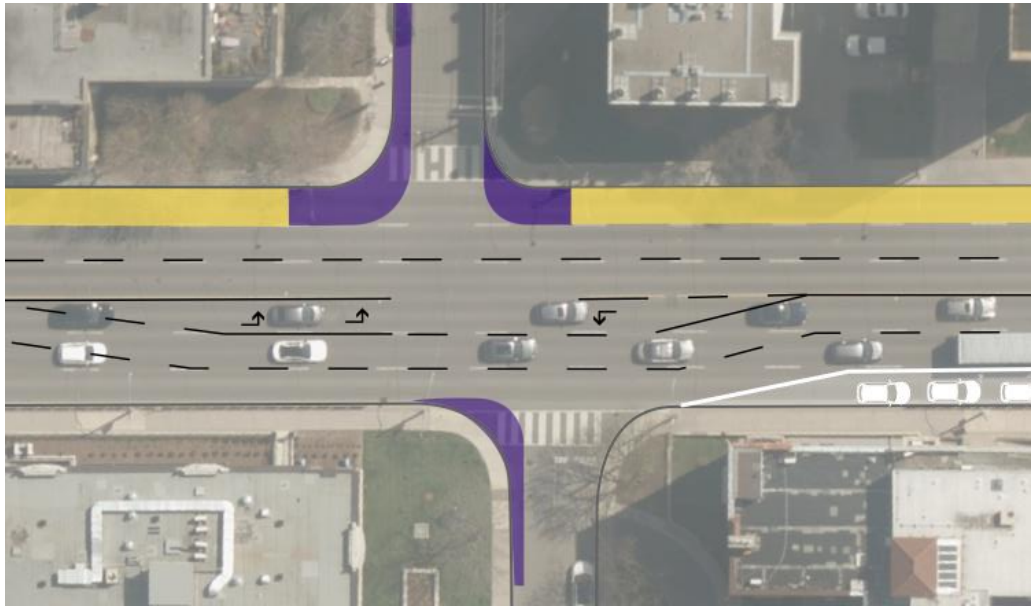
Pedestrian Space | Cycle Track | Curb Extension | On-Street Parking | Loading/ Buffer zone | Median | Grade-separated Sidewalk

Balmoral Ave to Edmund St

Preliminary design for discussion purposes

Farnham Ave



Clarendon Ave

Option 2:

- Addition of left turn prohibition at the intersection of Farnham Ave/Avenue Rd/Clarendon Ave during PM peak for the following movements:
  - Southbound from Avenue Rd to Farnham Ave
  - Westbound from Farnham Ave to Avenue Rd
- A centre turning lane added
- Pedestrian space added on east side only
- Curb extensions on Farnham Avenue and Clarendon Ave
- New on-street parking south of Clarendon Ave, on the west side
- This option would maintain access to/from Avenue Rd, while reducing the risk of conflict by the addition of measures noted above.

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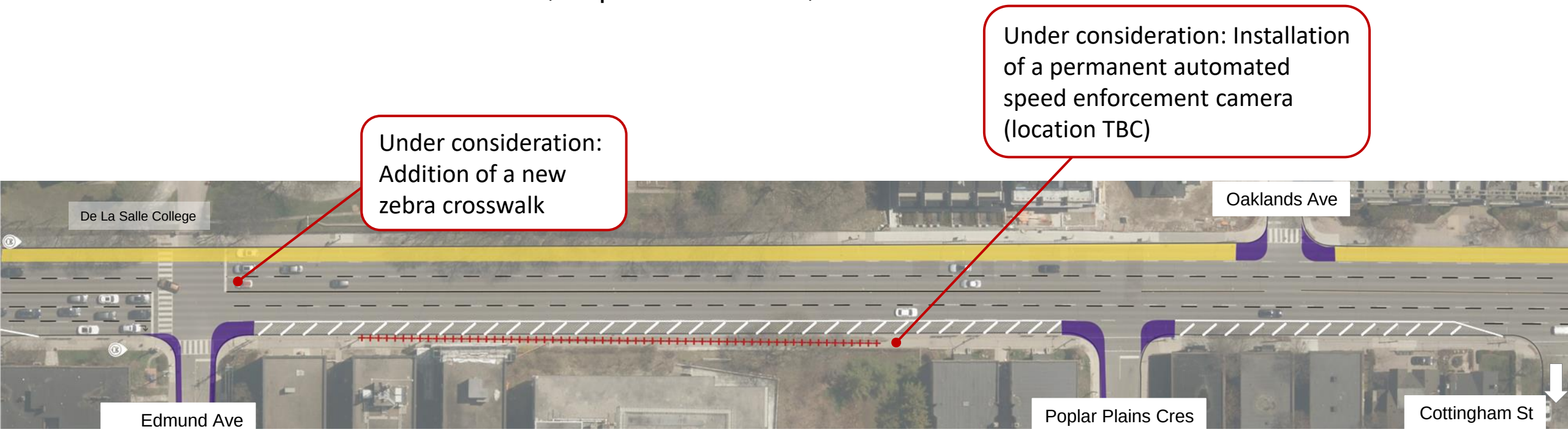
Pedestrian Space | Cycle Track | Curb Extension | On-Street Parking | Loading/ Buffer zone | Median | Grade-separated Sidewalk

Edmund Ave to Cottingham St

Preliminary design for discussion purposes

Option 1 (preferred):

- Pedestrian space on the east side, between Farnham Ave and Cottingham St
- Buffer zone on the west side, between Edmund Ave and Cottingham St
- Curb extensions on Edmund Ave, Poplar Plains Cres, and Oaklands Ave



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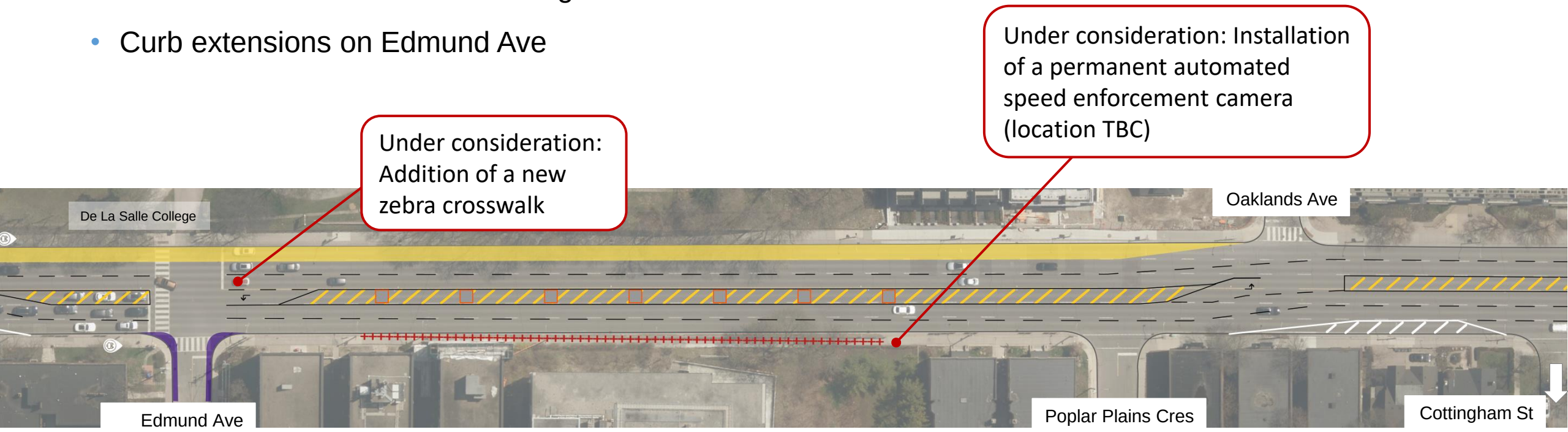
Pedestrian Space | Cycle Track | Curb Extension | On-Street Parking | Loading/ Buffer zone | Median | Grade-separated Sidewalk

Edmund Ave to Cottingham St

Preliminary design for discussion purposes

Option 2:

- Centre lane median, starting north of Edmund Ave to Cottingham St
- Pedestrian space on the east side, between Farnham Ave and Oaklands Ave
- Potential addition of left turn storage
- Curb extensions on Edmund Ave



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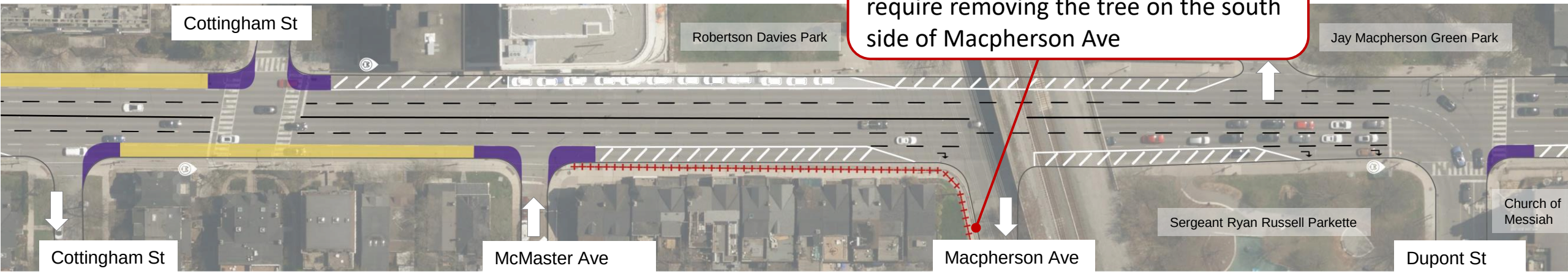
Pedestrian Space | Cycle Track | Curb Extension | On-Street Parking | Loading/ Buffer zone | Median | Grade-separated Sidewalk

Cottingham St to Dupont St

Option 1 (Preferred):

Preliminary design for discussion purposes

- Pedestrian space on the west side between Cottingham St and McMaster Ave
- Buffer zone on the west side between McMaster Ave and Dupont St
- New on-street parking and buffer zone on the east side, between Cottingham St and Macpherson Ave
- New southbound right turn only lane (buses excepted) at Avenue Rd/Dupont St
- Curb extensions on Cottingham St and McMaster Ave

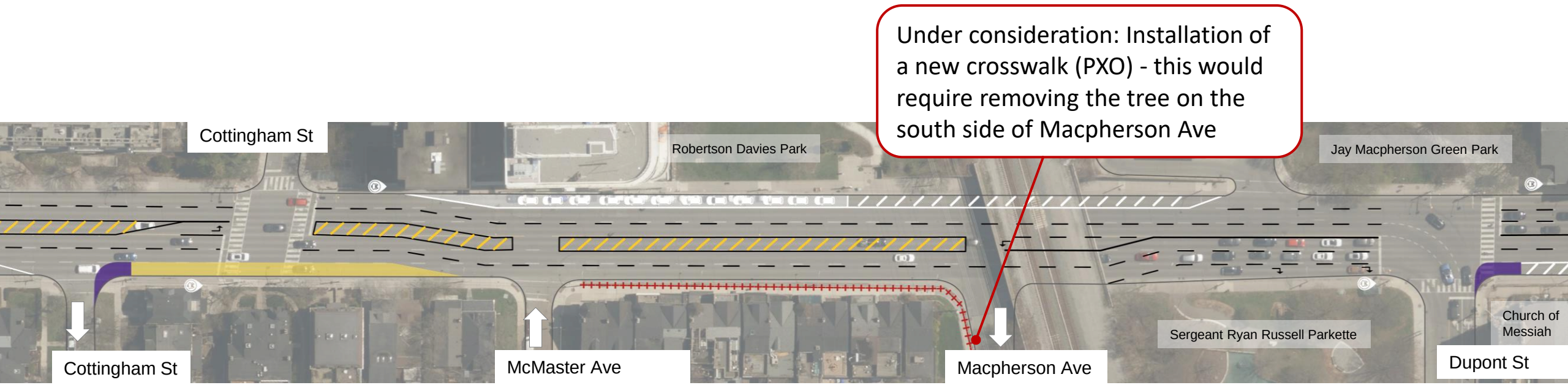


Cottingham St to Dupont St

Option 2:

Preliminary design for discussion purposes

- Centre lane median, from Cottingham St to Macpherson Ave
- Pedestrian space on the west side between Cottingham St and McMaster Ave
- Left turn lanes at Cottingham St and Macpherson Ave, and right turn only lane at Dupont St
- New on-street parking and buffer zone on the east side, between Cottingham St and Macpherson Ave



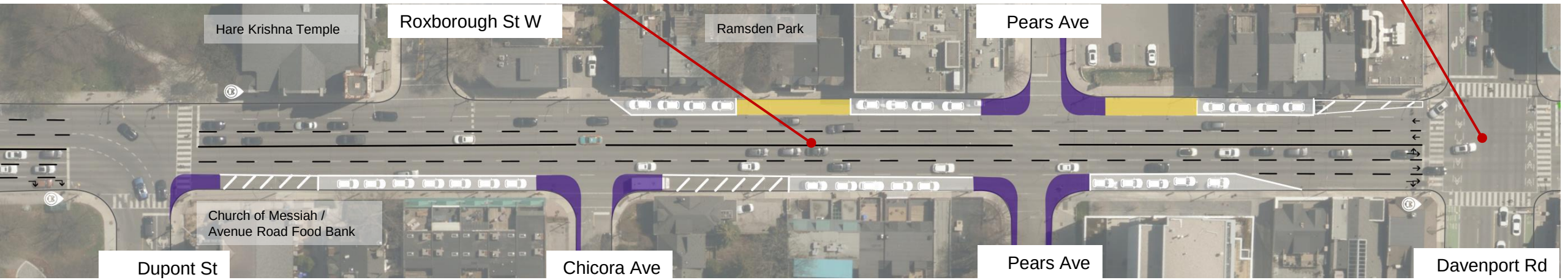
Dupont St to Davenport Rd

- New pedestrian space in front of Ramsden Park and south Pears Ave
- Buffer/loading zone in front of the Church of Messiah
- 24/7 on-street parking
- New loading zone on Roxborough Street in front of Hare Krishna Temple
- Curb extensions on Chicora Ave and Pears Ave

Preliminary design for discussion purposes

Under investigation: removal of the northbound left turn prohibition. This would require relatively long storage turn lanes for both southbound and northbound traffic

Under consideration: addition of a new crosswalk as part of future park access improvement



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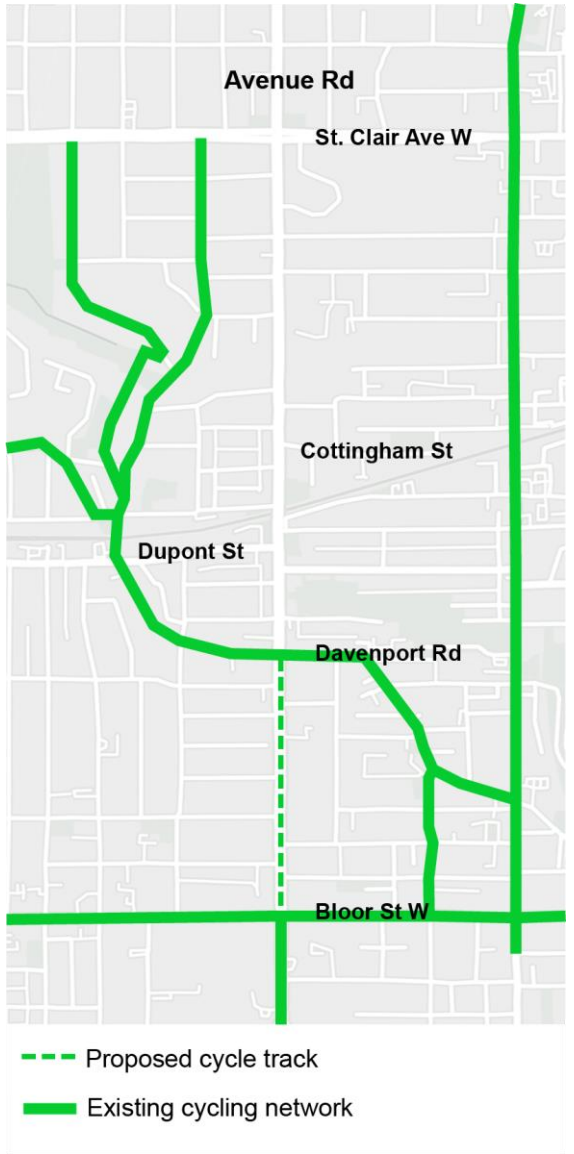
Pedestrian Space | Cycle Track | Curb Extension | On-Street Parking | Loading/ Buffer zone | Median | Grade-separated Sidewalk

Davenport Rd to Bloor St W

The proposal for this segment is to reduce the number of motor vehicle lanes from 6 to 4 and add one way physically separated cycle tracks in each direction. The next few slides provide details on the design and anticipated impacts.

The design for this segment is further advanced compared to the rest of the study area, considering the following contextual factors and past City Council decisions:

- In May 2020, City Council directed Transportation Services to study installation of cycle tracks on Avenue Road north of Bloor Street West as an extension of the ActiveTO cycling project on University Avenue. This was to be considered for installation following the clearance of development construction lane occupancies.
- It would provide a connection between Midtown (St. Clair Ave & Poplar Plains Rd / Russell Hill Rd bike lanes) and downtown via existing Davenport Road, Bloor Street, and University Avenue cycle tracks.
- Avenue Road would provide an alternative north-south cycling connection during expected TTC construction of a new subway station at Bloor/Yonge station beginning in 2024.

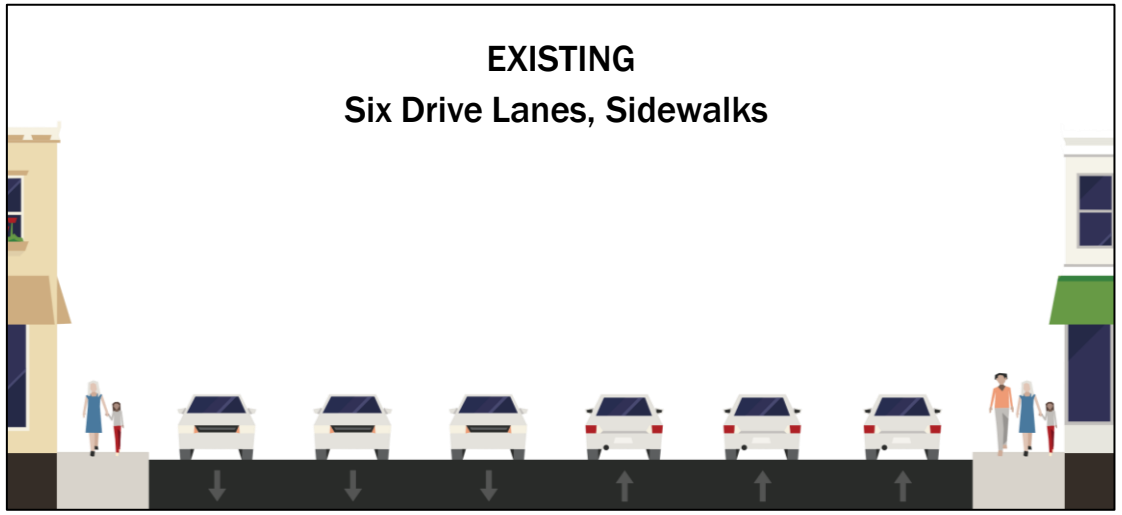


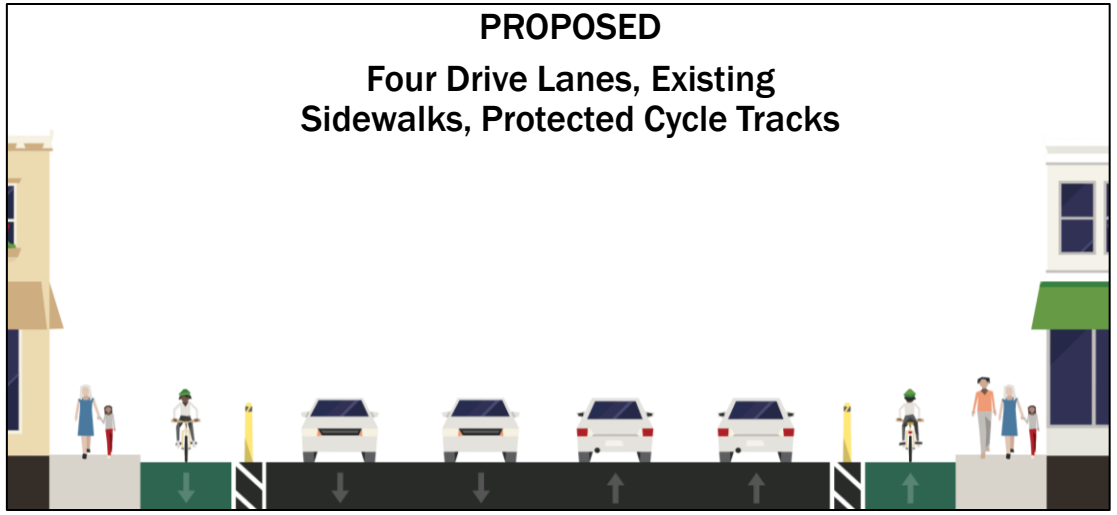
Davenport Rd to Bloor St W Proposed Design

The proposed design varies between Davenport Rd and Bloor St W.

Where there is no parking in the existing condition, no parking is proposed.

The images to the right show a typical before and after scenario for **the proposed design of two drive lanes in each direction and protected cycle tracks.**





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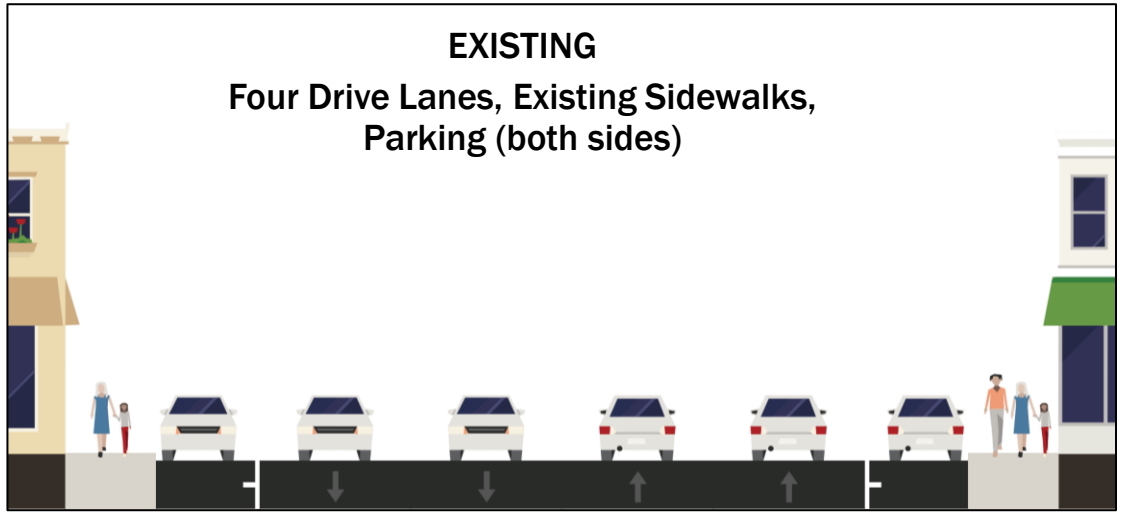
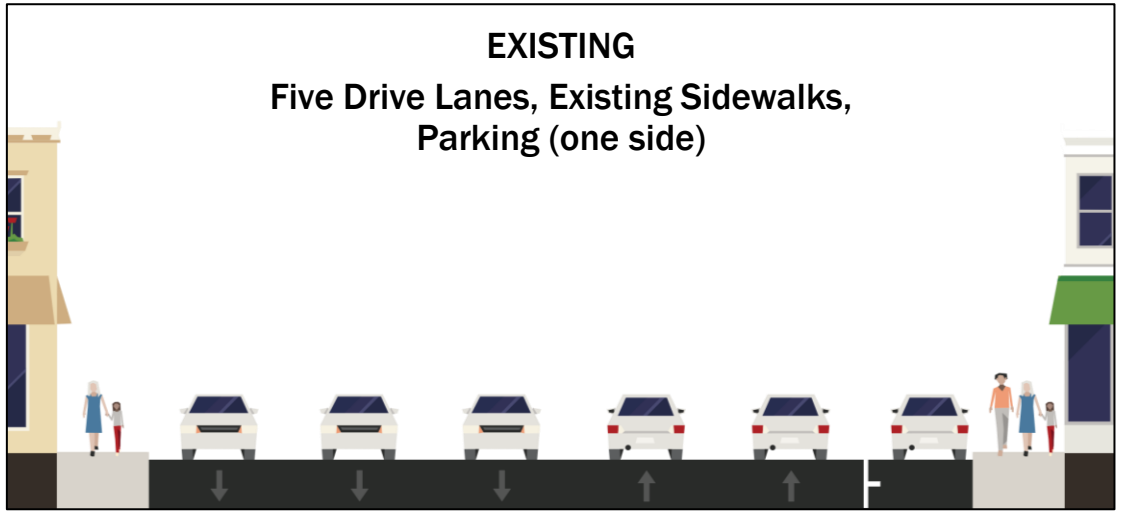
Transformation Scenarios prepared using *Streetmix.*

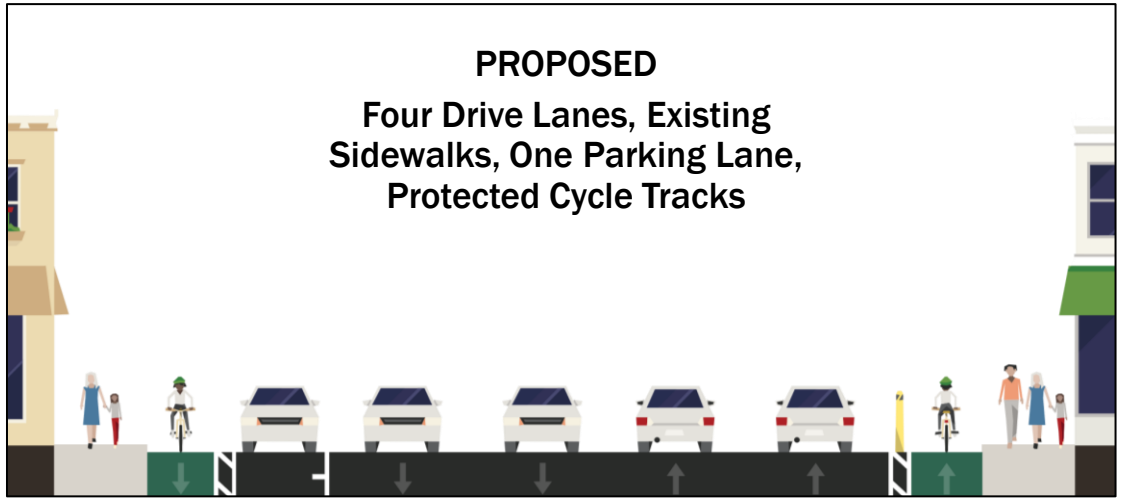
Davenport Rd to Bloor St W Proposed Design





Where there is existing parking on one or both sides, it is proposed to be maintained on one side.

The images show a typical before and after scenario for the proposed design of **two drive lanes in each direction, protected cycle tracks, and parking provided on one side.**



Note: Lane widths will adhere to the City's Lane Width Design Guidelines (Road Engineering Design Guidelines).
Transformation Scenarios prepared using *Streetmix.*

Summary of Parking and Loading Impacts

There are currently 35 on-street parking spots, 3 loading zones, and a taxi stand with 2 spots between Davenport Road and Bloor Street. The proposal would allow for 19 on-street parking spots and 1 loading zone and would maintain the taxi stand with 2 spots. This would result in a net reduction of 16 spots.

Segment	Existing Parking Spaces	Proposed Parking/Loading Spaces
Bloor St W to Lowther Ave	West: none	West: none
Lowther Ave to Elgin Ave	West: **9 + 1 loading zone**	West: **7**
Elgin Ave to Boswell Ave	West: **3**	West: **0**
Boswell Ave to Tranby Ave	West: **1 + 1 loading zone**	West: **0**
Tranby Ave to Bernard Ave	West: **7**	West: **10**
Bernard Ave to Davenport Rd	West: **4**	West: **2**
Davenport to Webster Ave	East: **5**	East: **0**
Webster to Elgin Ave	East: **6 + 1 accessible loading + Taxi stand (2 spots)**	East: **1 accessible loading + Taxi stand (2 spots)**
Elgin Ave to Bloor St W	East: none	East: none

Implementation Considerations

- Availability of funding, resources, and the City's competing priorities
- Further engagement with TTC, other City stakeholders as well as impacted businesses, stakeholders and residents would be required to develop a detailed design
- Currently no allocated budget / resources to develop detailed design, further engagement and implementation

Next Steps

Online Survey

CheckMarket Survey to capture feedback on concept designs

Concept designs provided online for reference

Timing: October 5 – November 2

Open for 4 weeks

Drop-In Event

In-person drop-in for residents to capture feedback on concept designs

Panels and roll plans for review

Timing: October 19

4pm – 8pm, Timothy Eaton Memorial Church

Report to Infrastructure and Environment Committee

Further technical work to inform impact assessment, mitigation strategies and design solutions

Finalize the concept design based on the feedback received from the stakeholders and public

Report to IEC

Timing: Winter 2024

Thank you!

Comments and questions:

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