



Artist Rendering of Marlee Avenue

Beltline Gap Connections

May 2024

Project Overview

The project proposes a safe and connected route for people cycling and pedestrians over the Allen Road Expressway closing the gap between the York Beltline Trail and Kay Gardner Beltline Trail.

The project is part of the [Cycling Network Plan Near-Term Implementation Program](#). The proposed road safety improvements and bikeway connections will be installed at the same time as overlapping state of good repair road work. In addition to closing the gap between the existing trail network, this project will connect to the existing Marlee Avenue bikeway and future cycle tracks as part of the [eglintonTOday Complete Street Project](#).

What We Did

A variety of methods were used to notify people of the project and opportunities to provide feedback:

- Project web page toronto.ca/BeltlineGap (832 unique visits between March 26 – April 30, 2024)
- Notice delivered through Canada Post (11,702 addresses in the project area)
- Individual letters delivered to property owners and tenants with right-of-way impacts adjacent to their properties through Registered Mail (16 addresses in the project area)
 - Additional letters will confirm impacts once detailed design is undertaken by Engineering and Construction Services.
- Email to residents, interest groups including resident associations, community groups, organizations, institutions and elected officials (91 contacts)

Comments on the project were received through the following activities:

Activity	Date	Participation
Interest Group Meeting	April 16, 2024	6 participants
Email/Phone	March 26 – April 19, 2024	121 comments received from 98 individuals

What We Heard

Overall, public feedback received by email and phone following notification indicated a range of support and concern for the proposed route over the Allen Road Expressway to close the gap between the York Beltline Trail and Kay Gardner Beltline Trail.

The highest level of support was expressed for providing safer cycling facilities and better connections to the Beltline Trail for all road and trail users.

The lowest level of support was expressed for removal of the westbound left turn lane at Roselawn Avenue and Marlee Avenue with requests, if removed, to consider a left turn advance signal to help move motor vehicle traffic through the intersection. There was also concern that narrowing travel lane width in addition to any changes in the neighbourhood following 10+ years of construction from the Eglinton Crosstown LRT could worsen traffic congestion.

Summary of Comments from Residents

Support for Improved Road Safety

Providing safer cycling facilities and better connections to and between the York Beltline and Key Gardner Beltline Trail is a priority for pedestrians, people cycling and families with young children. Comments included:

- The Beltline Trails are a major route for people cycling and improved access is long overdue and particularly beneficial for residents on the west side of Allen Road who currently must travel on busy streets to access Beltline Trail.
- Currently, Marlee Avenue and Roselawn Avenue do not feel safe for people cycling.
- Ensure that there is equitable access for all road users to the space in a way that's safe, enjoyable, and inviting.
- Agreement with safety improvements for intersections like Marlee Avenue and Eglinton Avenue West and segments like Elm Ridge Drive between Newgate Road and Marlee Avenue.
- Active transportation infrastructure is critical for safety, encouraging residents to take climate-friendly modes of transit, and contributing to the revitalisation of Marlee Village.

Concerns about Increased Motor Vehicle Traffic

An overall concern was shared about any changes that will worsen traffic congestion and movement in the neighbourhood. Comments included:

- Any new proposal is a very sensitive matter for neighbourhood who has been significantly impacted by traffic, construction and planning of the Eglinton Crosstown for 10+ years.
- Requests to focus efforts on Future York Beltline Trail Extension instead of a parallel route along Roselawn Avenue and Elm Ridge Drive.
- Worried about any impacts to surrounding green areas.
- Requests to address cars and trucks parking in the cycle tracks.
- Narrowing roads will make it difficult for residents to receive deliveries and delivery trucks will block road causing further traffic problems (i.e., apartment building on Roselawn Avenue).
- Elm Ridge Drive and Roselawn Avenue are used heavily by commercial and other motor vehicles to bypass Eglinton Avenue.
- Worried about conflicts between pedestrians and people cycling on multi-use trail sections and crowding situations.

- Request to see construction management plan so that community can provide feedback on least impactful alternative routes and mitigation.
- Construction fatigue and request to leave neighbourhood alone.
- Adding more cycling facilities and reducing travel lane widths will make it more difficult to get in and out of the area as there is already a constant back-up from the entrance to the Allen Road up through Marlee Avenue, sometimes extending past Roselawn Avenue on Marlee Avenue and up Roselawn Avenue and to Elm Ridge Drive.

Concerns about Removal of Left Turn Lane (Roselawn Avenue to Marlee Avenue)

Requests were received to not remove the left turn lane for the following reasons:

- Eglinton Avenue traffic forces residents to rely on secondary routes through neighbourhood like Roselawn Avenue.
- Even with the existing left turn lane, the queue at that light can be significant.
- One of few access routes in/out of neighbourhood.
- Important for local school commuting as the left turn and route maintains traffic flow.
- Fear that removal will create bottleneck situation and make peak hour travel even worse.
- Addition of new condos on Marlee Avenue will mean more traffic and congestion.
- There are already bike lines on Marlee Avenue (north of Roselawn Avenue) so why introduce further complications.
- Requests to see traffic study warranting removal.
- Concern about driveway access being made more difficult (e.g., 135 Marlee Avenue).

Not supportive of Additional Cycling Facilities

The main comments for not supporting the proposed route over the Allen Road cited low usage of people who cycle not warranting the new cycling connections and a sentiment that the existing access to the Beltline Trail works and doesn't warrant proposal.

Design Details and Art

Requests for detailed design information and interest in public art included:

- Inquiries about transition between and from bi-directional cycle tracks to uni-directional cycle tracks (e.g., Castlefield Avenue west to east side).
- Inquiries about intersection improvements with Eglinton Avenue (i.e., Marlee Avenue, Winona Avenue) in terms of pavement markings, protections, and signal patterns.
- Enthusiasm about the mural project along the Allen Road/Allen Greenway sound wall to enhance the community's cultural landscape and celebrate artistic diversity.

Suggestions

Suggestions were received on ways to mitigate removal of the proposed left turn lane, future cycling connections and trail maintenance:

- Consider adding a left turn signal/advance green or add new left turn lane on Ridell Avenue at Marlee Avenue.
- Interest in a future bridge connection between the Kay Gardiner and York Beltline trails and see on-street project as precursor for both connections.
- Extend Allen Greenway one block south from Wembley Avenue to Eglinton Avenue.
- Requests for physical separation to address cars that park in bike lanes and improve protection for vulnerable road users (e.g., more bollards).
- Upgrade Marlee Avenue bikeway with protection all the way to Lawrence Avenue (not just the stretch from Roselawn Avenue to Castlefield Avenue.).
- Preference to see the Kay Gardner Beltline Trail paved all the way across.
- Beltline Trail requires attention and maintenance which should include lighting the entire route.