Maple Leaf & Rustic Neighbourhood Streets Plan
Local Advisory Committee Meeting #2

Date: Monday, March 24, 2025
Meeting Type: In-Person
Start time: 6:30 p.m. End Time: 8:30 p.m.

Project Overview:

In 2020, the Etobicoke York Community Council directed City staff to work with the Maple Leaf and Rustic communities to develop a plan to address community concerns related to traffic safety issues at the neighbourhood level. City staff are using a Neighbourhood Streets Plan (NSP) process to develop this plan. The project has undergone two phases of public consultation. A Local Advisory Committee (LAC) was established following the second phase of consultation. The LAC is a non-political advisory body with a mandate to provide constructive feedback to the City project team as a part of public consultation for the Maple Leaf & Rustic NSP and provide insights into local residents' perspectives.

Meeting Objectives:

- To respond to questions on approaches to managing congestion and;
- To receive input from committee members on approaches to managing traffic infiltration in Maple Leaf & Rustic.

Meeting Summary

- There was mixed feedback about the effectiveness of measures to address traffic infiltration
- Many LAC members felt the focus of the meeting should be on congestion management on major streets.
- Staff reinforced that the NSP program is intended to focus neighbourhood streets, and not intended to recommend broad changes to major streets.
- Staff confirmed that the staff report to Council from this NSP will capture committee members' feedback about major streets that border the project area.
- The next LAC meeting will focus on potential street changes to address safety concerns.

Presentation Summary – About Congestion and Infiltration

Staff presented an overview about congestion and infiltration as it relates to the Maple Leaf and Rustic Neighbourhood Streets Plan. Link to presentation here.

Key information from the presentation:

- Congestion and infiltration are both concerns in the community.
- Neighbourhood Streets Plans address managing infiltration through changes to road design and road operations.
- Congestion is a city-wide issue, and the City has a Congestion Management Plan.
- The Maple Leaf and Rustic neighbourhoods have a road network structure and infrastructure barriers that result in certain streets having higher volumes, and there are limited routes for traffic to flow.
- It is estimated that 4-5% of all trips entering the neighbourhood during peak periods is non-local through traffic. Maple Leaf Drive is most affected with nearly 10% of morning peak trips as through trips.
- There are limited ways to enter the neighbourhood. Restricting access at one gateway intersection will adversely impact residents and worsen conditions on the other gateway intersections.

Below is a record of discussion following the presentation. The discussion captured is summarized below: **Q:** Question/ **A:** Answer/ **C:** Comment/ **R**: Response from staff

Q: The license plate survey data estimates through-traffic across the neighbourhood as 4-5% overall – when was the data collected? During rush hour, traffic is backed up within the neighbourhood collector roads all the way to Keele Street.
A: Data was taken one day in mid-June 2023, while schools were in session. Data was collected during the morning peak, midday and evening peak. A 'trip' was considered to be a 'through trip' if the same license plate exited the neighbourhood within 15 minutes of entering. It was found that the through traffic was highest along Maple Leaf Drive, just under 10% during the morning peak period. However, individual experiences may vary on different days.

C: The presentation said that signal coordination along the Keele Street corridor was last done in 2022 while we were still going through COVID, how is this data valid?
R: Throughout the city, corridors are continually under review for signal coordination. While the corridor-wide changes on Keele Street were implemented in 2022, the data used to inform the 2022 signal timing adjustments was not necessarily collected in that year; data collection is on-going and the best available data at the time would have been used. The City aims to review signal coordination along a corridor approximately every 5 years.

C: I think the 2023 data is outdated – this was when we were still in the process of resuming regular activities after COVID – an updated count is needed. Any changes/ issues on Jane Street will also have a huge impact on this neighbourhood.
R: The purpose of the traffic count survey is to study infiltration patterns, rather than determine a precise proportion of trips that are through trips.

Q: Is the 4-5% figure an average of the counts taken throughout the day? For example, in the morning it might be 15% increase, and in the evening, it could be all the way at 50%, but during the day there's a low increase – is the 4.5% figure an average figure throughout the day?
A: The overall 4-5% estimate is for through traffic from all entry points during the morning, mid-day and afternoon peak periods only. The survey involved matching the number of vehicles entering and exiting the neighbourhood within 15 minutes or less. Three periods were observed: 7-9 a.m., 1-3 p.m. and 4:30-6:30 p.m. During peak periods, between 8 and 10% of the traffic entering Maple Leaf Drive from Jane Street or Keele Street was through traffic. The rate at all other entry intersections is lower than on Maple Leaf Drive.

C: If traffic issues were found to be especially profound during those specific times, the community's challenges are only within those times.
R: The toolbox of solutions are not necessarily limited to peak hour times, unless they are time-based restrictions.

Q: Where is the high volume of traffic coming from that goes through Maple Leaf Drive?
A: There is no way for the survey to determine where traffic is coming from. The survey does not track each individual car/driver, their origin or their route. What we know is traffic is higher during peak periods, and on Maple Leaf Drive there is a higher share of through traffic as compared to other streets in the neighbourhood.

C: In the last LAC meeting, the committee commented that the main intersections were the problem, rather than the collector roads. It was thought that attention would be given to what can be done at the main intersections rather than neighbourhood collector roads. If traffic is coming from major roads, the focus should be to limit traffic from coming into the community. The community is being penalized by the traffic coming into the community.

R: The Neighbourhood Street Plan must focus on what can be done on the neighbourhood streets. It is important to distinguish between congestion on the major roads and infiltration on neighbourhood streets. Congestion is a city-wide issue, and the City manages it with a city-wide network approach along entire corridors as outlined in the presentation. Congestion on each of the arterial roads bordering Maple Leaf and Rustic neighbourhood is best managed through corridor studies, such as the Jane Street RapidTO study underway now, or major intersection improvement projects. Significant changes to major roads involve study and consultation beyond the scope of the Neighbourhood Streets Plan, which only consults with the people within Maple Leaf and Rustic neighbourhoods. Minor adjustments can be made to signal timing anytime. As a result of the Maple Leaf and Rustic NSP, signal timing updates were made at Keele Street at Maple Leaf Drive, Keele Street at Rustic Road, and Jane Street at Maple Leaf Drive.

The workshop exercise today is about managing infiltration within the neighbourhood by making local streets less attractive through-routes. While congestion may be one motivation for infiltration, we cannot control people's intentions, but we can control how traffic is managed on neighbourhood streets.

Workshop Discussion Summary

- The purpose of the workshop was to discuss which neighbourhood streets are of most concern for infiltration, acceptable options to manage it and the trade-offs to residents.
- Committee members were split into two groups centered around large neighbourhood maps showing the volumes and major turning patterns at gateway intersections.
- Guiding questions for the map activity were:
    - Which routes or patterns are most problematic?
    - Which measures help change the pattern?
    - How would these changes impact other streets?

Below is a record of discussion following the workshop, grouped by theme. The discussion captured is summarized below: **Q:** Question/ **A:** Answer/ **C:** Comment/ **R**: Response

Turn Restrictions

A: There should be a time restricted (during rush hours), left-turn restriction for southbound traffic into the neighbourhood at Jane Street and Maple Leaf Drive to discourage neighbourhood infiltration. Can similar turn restrictions found elsewhere within the City be applied to this neighbourhood?

A: Yes, but this restriction would mean residents of the neighbourhood are also restricted from turning left at Maple Leaf Drive into the neighbourhood during peak hours. The only other options residents would have to enter the neighbourhood from Jane Street would be at Falstaff Avenue and Queens Drive, which would be impacted by this restriction.

Traffic Signaling

C: There is a disconnect in sequence of lights near the Lawrence Avenue West and Jane Street intersection. Traffic signal coordination along Jane Street and Keele Street should be improved. Signal timing is crucial to improving the congestion along major arterial roads, investing in them would solve these problems sooner.

R: Signal timing across corridors is continually reviewed across the city through the Signal Optimization (Coordination) Program. There are over 2500 traffic signals across the city and roughly 200-350 signals are reviewed each year. Corridor-wide review of signal timing was last completed on Keele Street in 2022, on Lawrence Avenue in 2020, and Jane Street in 2018, but is now under active study. The most recent adjustments in 2024 to signal timing in the area were at Keele Street at Maple Leaf Drive, Keele Street at Rustic Road, and Jane Street at Maple Leaf Drive.

Managing Congestion

C: Looking at the congestion issue along Jane Street, it is most congested along this neighbourhood all the way towards Trethewey Drive, where the congestion releases. Likewise, along Keele Street, it is also congested within this area, but releases around Lawrence Avenue West. The solution should be providing smooth through traffic on major arterial roads so that infiltration into neighourhood collector roads would not be necessary.

R: Congestion is one motivator for infiltration. Infiltration management relies on making local roads less attractive to those who are motivated to make through trips on local roads for any reason. The focus of our work in the NSP is on infiltration management. The City tackles congestion through a network and corridor-wide approach. Reducing delay through optimized traffic signal systems is one part of the Congestion Management Plan, along with four other big moves including helping transit move faster and more reliably. The City aims to undertakes corridor studies to optimize signal coordination for major arterial roads every 5 years, with the vast network of arterial

roads within the City, only a fixed number of these arterial roads can be reviewed at a time. The last study done for Keele Street was completed in 2022, Lawrence Avenue West was reviewed in 2020. Jane Street will be due for study since it was reviewed in 2018. Lawrence Avenue West is one of the only routes to get across the rail corridor, this is one of the reasons why more traffic is directed along Lawrence Avenue West.

TTC bus stop(s)

C: I think that the relocation of the southbound bus stop at Keele Street and Lawrence Avenue West would allow for a better turn radius for traffic. I think it would also be beneficial to change the alignment of lanes to allow for smoother traffic.
R: TTC is aware of the request to relocate the bus stop further south to facilitate right-turning traffic. Comments received through this project that relate to bus routes and stops were shared with TTC.

Q: How would a bus stop relocation affect people who need to change buses? Would it be safe for people who need to transfer to different bus routes after a relocation?
A: TTC and City staff consider many factors before proceeding with changes at bus stops including safety, passenger convenience, and impacts to route operations such as potential delays.

Q: Have TTC and Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) been consulted on this NSP study?
A: The Jane corridor study team is in communication with TTC and MTO. Comments received through this project that relate to bus routes and stops were shared with TTC.

Building Density

C: Densification has been rapidly taking place north of the city and also within the city. Many people travel along Highway 400 to get into Toronto, this creates a bottleneck at Black Creek Drive where the highway ends, and this takes the traffic directly into the neighbourhood. The City should not allow for further high density developments near this neighbourhood while leaving the transportation infrastructure as it is without upgrading it.

C: The Jane Street and Falstaff Avenue intersection is problematic, as the high volume of traffic at the Tim Horton’s drive-thru and Petro-Canada car wash often causes backed up traffic at the intersection. The Jane Street and Black Creek Drive intersection is also busy, school children get dropped off on streets with no sidewalks, which poses a safety concern.

Traffic Calming measures within the Neighbourhood

C: Speed humps might be useful near the schools to slow down traffic, but they should be placed at collector roads, they should be kept off local roads. Not supportive of the idea of placing speed cushions along Queens Drive as this would create backed up traffic. The goal should be to divert traffic to other intersections.

R: Speed humps already existing on Queens Drive, which is a local road, and other collector road sections such as on Maple Leaf Drive and Rustic Road, west of Culford Road. Speed humps have not been an option in the past on some streets due to TTC bus routes, however speed cushions can now be proposed on streets with TTC bus routes. The feedback however is noted that it may be preferrable to propose traffic calming with speed humps or speed cushions on collector roads only.

C: Would speed humps create more safety concerns for school children rather than a solution? Would speed cameras be a better tool to slow down traffic? There is a concern on how any potential changes might affect residents and how they use their neighbourhood streets.

R: Streets that already have traffic calming measures (specifically speed humps) are not qualified for speed cameras. Additionally, automated speed enforcement is only permitted in Community Safety Zones, which designated and are typically located near schools.

Neighbourhood Streets Plan Process

Q: Why has this meeting not focused on changes to main streets and the Keele-Lawrence intersection? Will our comments be noted?

R: The NSP findings will be reported to Community Council, but a detailed study and any redesign for major corridors and its intersection falls outside of the scope of the NSP project. A major corridor study is a separate process. Corridor study of Jane Street is already underway. The Councillor will consider putting a council motion forward for a standalone study of the Keele-Lawrence intersection, and/or to accelerate corridor-wide review of the signal timing along Keele Street and Lawrence Avenue.

Next Steps:

- Meeting minutes to be shared publicly and with committee members
- The Committee will meet for a third time to discuss road safety measures within the neighbourhood.
- An agenda will be circulated with Committee members before the next meeting

Meeting Attendees:

Councillor's Office

1. Councillor Frances Nunziata, Ward 5 York-South Weston
2. Geno Orsi, Executive Assistant

City of Toronto

3. Michelle Berquist, Transportation Services
4. Marian Mithani, Transportation Services
5. Stephanie Gris Bringas, Public Consultation Unit
6. Rachel Yanchyshyn, Public Consultation Unit
7. Carol Lee, Public Consultation Unit

Local Advisory Committee Members:

8. Laura Albanese
9. David Ferro
10. Edy Francescutto
11. Luisa Giacometti
12. Irene Leslie
13. Rose Leto
14. Carla Marchetti
15. George Paschakis
16. Erin Robertson
17. Natalie Simonetta
18. Vanda Zanini