

Date: Tuesday, June 24, 2025

Meeting Type: Virtual

Start time: 2:00 p.m. **End Time:** 3:30 p.m.

Project Overview:

The City of Toronto is designing ways to increase pedestrian space and improve the way people move through and experience Yonge Street between College/Carlton Street and Queen Street. The watermain beneath Yonge Street will soon need replacing and this construction provides an opportunity to consider a new street design and bundle the two projects to better serve everyone.

Meeting Objectives:

Moving from the completed Environmental Assessment into the Detailed Design phase, to introduce (or reintroduce) the yongeTOMorrow project to the members of the Community Advisory Group (CAG) and provide a general overview of the roadway and landscape design elements that will be incorporated into the overall design of Yonge Street.

Receive feedback on interests/concerns from the CAG to inform the design of the roadway and Operational Plan.

Meeting Overview:

The meeting was facilitated by Matthew Carreau, Public Engagement Specialist (O2 Planning + Design). Councillor Saxe and Councillor Moise welcomed the group and provided introductory comments. A presentation was provided by Violetta Savage, Senior Project Manager (City of Toronto), Nick Onody, Urban Design Lead (O2 Planning + Design) and Yannis Stogios, Project Manager (Parsons). A waterfall chat activity was conducted where participants shared their thoughts or concerns for the project. A short Question and Answer (Q&A) period was provided at the end of the presentation. Questions and comments were submitted by participants through the Teams chat throughout the meeting.

Discussion

The discussion from the Waterfall Chat Panel Activity (i.e., opener questions) and Q&A is summarized below.

The CAG shared the following responses to the Waterfall questions:

1. What is the most exciting for you/have the most transformative impact?
 2. What is something you are cautious/concerned about?
- Reimagining the busiest stretch of Yonge Street for people (i.e., improving accessibility, safety, active transportation and space to connect with people) is exciting.
 - Excited to have improved pedestrian safety. Concerned about reducing traffic lanes, without consideration for laybys for rideshare, deliveries, and coaches.

- Creating a street where teenagers can chat, hang out, and shop. There is too much car traffic or traffic moving too quickly making the street too loud, unsafe, or unpleasant.
- Finally rebalancing the corridor to respond to the needs of the 21st century with a beautiful City vision for Toronto.
- Looking forward to improved aesthetic quality of the public realm but concerned about too many simultaneous closures downtown postponing the project again.
- Looking forward to seeing how the City rebrands Yonge Street as a newer, safer place. Very concerned about retail and restaurant delivery problems associated with the reduced vehicle lanes.
- Excited to make Yonge Street physically a pedestrian-first zone (i.e., as it is already in terms of use) and not just safe, but also attractive and a place where people will be keen to stroll.
- Interested in expanding the tree canopy on Yonge Street to improve the microclimate.
- Concerned about maintaining front door curb access for hotel guests that arrive by vehicle/taxi.
- Excited for the possibility of creating further spaces for activations/animation and public art along Yonge Street. Concerned about the impact on event loading during the construction phase.
- Excited about the new look and function and increased safety. Cautious about finding the right balance between a change of this nature and still being able to bring people to this dynamic area.
- Service vehicles, deliveries, laybys all need to be considered to allow business operations.
- Time. We need to keep testing and changing behaviours through tactical interventions and changing the side streets with every opportunity knowing that is planned on Yonge Street.
- The provincial government will step in and the growing polarization of making space for people over cars will impact design solution.
- Excited to see this will clean up Yonge Street and make it easier for pedestrians.
- Exciting improvements to create a more welcoming and safer environment on Yonge Street than currently exists. Concern with appropriate transit capacity (e.g., adding TTC second exits/additional runs to relieve presumed increased use, delivery access and maintenance of additional space).
- Looking forward to the project's completion and moving on to the north section. With no BIA on the north section of Yonge Street there needs to be a lead to harmonize Yonge Street to Bloor Street.
- Excited about making Yonge Street a more pleasant experience in general and more walkable, more activations, more aesthetically pleasing. Concerns about how to service the area generally (deliveries, utilities, etc.). Downtown Yonge Street in general has felt less safe since COVID so unless reasons for that are addressed, it will impact how successful this could be.

- Happy to see progress and expanding the space into encouraging a continued and renewed space for people to gather. The ongoing vibrancy of the space is important. It is also important to acknowledge the original space was built around having exciting messaging and offerings to those coming into the square using the business and cultural happenings within the corridor.

Additional comments were made within the MS Teams chat as captured below:

- Speed should absolutely be 30 km/h max in this section to create a pedestrian-friendly environment.
- I appreciate that Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is being implemented.
- Consider the many parades and protests that happen on Yonge Street.
- Consider one-way streets that egress on/off Yonge Street.
- FIFA would be a great opportunity to show the world we are painting a future vision.
- Support for mixed use and consider the project through multiple perspectives (pedestrian, cyclist, car etc.) to keep an open mind for future needs.

Question and Answer period comments and responses are captured below:

Questions & Comments	Project Team Response
How will provincial legislation removal of bike lanes affect the project?	Bill 212 does not prevent the removal of vehicle lanes for pedestrian space. The City is waiting for details of accompanying regulations related to the Bill to be released.
Will the Clock Tower Trail be integrated into yongeTOmorrow?	We will be working with the internal City team to ensure the green loop/the Clock Tower Trail is incorporated into the yongeTOmorrow as necessary when they intersect - e.g. signage, cohesive design features. The pedestrian crossing we are adding between McGill Street and College Park will help form a connection for the Clock Tower Trail.
Have you considered pedestrian only? Or Yonge Street one-way southbound and Church Street one-way northbound?	Inclusion of pedestrianization and/or one-way streets along Yonge Street between College/Carlton Street and Queen Street have not been determined yet, this will be determined in this phase of work through the preliminary design and Operational Plan.
Can pollinator gardens be integrated into the design?	This will be considered as we move forward with the design.

Questions & Comments	Project Team Response
<p>Curious how the team will be futureproofing the design. For example, e-bike deliveries were not a problem in the past. How will it be managed? What about the emerging problems in 5/10/15 years?</p>	<p>The design will consider strategies to address emerging trends and challenges, for example e-bike deliveries and other evolving mobility needs.</p>
<p>Given the construction is five years away, and that capacities are already impacted by the Ontario Line constraints, would it not be worth painting the future vision (as was done on Adelaide Street east of Yonge Street) to include testing the narrowing, and optimizing the furniture zone /delivery concerns, possibly considering meander lanes and expanding the boulevard for high needs areas with temporary boulevard expansions.</p>	<p>There are no plans right now to put in place a temporary condition with paint, the City will take that back for consideration.</p>
<p>Can we gather data north and south of the project area? Comments above have raised continuing a pedestrian and cycling improvements north of Gerrard Street, and Old Town Toronto BIA wish to consider how to make a connection to the bike lanes south of Front Street. There are four blocks that connect all modes served by yongeTOmorrow to the Lake and can't wait until 2030 to start that process.</p>	<p>The EA study area was expanded further north of College Street in anticipation for a future project, this project has not started yet. The yongeTOmorrow project boundaries are between College Street and Queen Street. There are no current plans to expand the yongeTOmorrow project further south. The project team is aware of the work the Old Town Toronto BIA is doing and the desire to expand enhancements and changes south of Queen Street and will discuss this internally with our counterparts in Cycling and Area Transportation Planning.</p>
<p>Are there any plans for interim improvement on Yonge Street? Sidewalks are quite narrow – is there potential to use paint to decrease the street widths and increase the sidewalks?</p> <p>Paint is a good way to keep the discussion going and build enthusiasm. It can identify where a layby may be useful or missing. It provides opportunities to make small adjustments – that's what happened on the Esplanade with cycling. It is better to paint, than build and realize we did it wrong.</p>	<p>There are no plans right now to put in place a temporary condition with paint, the City will take that back for consideration.</p>

Questions & Comments	Project Team Response
<p>How will the team futureproofing the design? For example, managing e-bike deliveries and emerging problems in 5/10/15 years?</p>	<p>The design will consider strategies to address emerging trends and challenges, like e-bike deliveries and other evolving mobility needs. The Project Team will consider flexible infrastructure to accommodate changes, such as dedicated loading zones. The Project Team will be focused on working within existing regulations/standards/guidelines and collaborate with interested parties to understand potential changes in the future. Overall, the design will aim for a flexible design, functional for all users while considering future needs and evolving technologies.</p>
<p>Have you considered making Yonge Street pedestrian only? Or, have a design that wouldn't preclude that option in the future??</p>	<p>Inclusion of pedestrianization and/or one-way streets along Yonge Street between College/Carlton Street and Queen Street have not been determined yet, this will be determined in this phase of work through the preliminary design and Operational Plan.</p>
<p>There is lots of vanity noise on Yonge Street (e.g., motorcycles, adjusted vehicles) and can the design take into consideration noise mitigation (e.g., noise absorption materials or water for white noise)?</p>	<p>We are taking a dual approach – slowing down the street will help clean up some of the noise and the selection of materials will play a critical part, for example tree and vegetation plantings can help with noise filtering.</p>
<p>Has the project team explored putting Yonge Street shuttle buses on Bay Street (which is just 200 m away)?</p> <p>Comment that all night buses would be disruptive to the thousands of residences.</p>	<p>Discussions with TTC during the EA included retaining TTC emergency shuttle bus service on Yonge Street. This comment will be considered during Operational Plan work.</p>

Questions & Comments	Project Team Response
<p>Is there a timeline for Phase 2 College to Davenport?</p>	<p>There is a future project planned between Davenport Road and College Street which will continue the work of yongeTOmorrow Phase 1 focusing on improvements to the public realm and the way people move along Yonge Street. Background data was collected for this project as part of the Phase 1 Environmental Assessment. An infrastructure study will occur in the future, the City is determining the timing based on coordination with adjacent projects, potential upcoming changes to regulations, and confirming budgeting and resourcing.</p>
<p>FIFA would be a great opportunity to show the world we are painting a future vision.</p>	<p>There are no plans right now to put in place temporary conditions with paint, the City will take that back for consideration.</p>
<p>Where is a layby required or where is it useful? Start with a straight line and notice that there are certain locations or sides where this is needed. This is an opportunity to create a more meandering street that is safer.</p>	<p>A parking access, loading and goods strategy study will be completed as part of this project, the study will verify the proposed layby areas from the Environmental Assessment, identify needs and potential changes where needed.</p>
<p>I saw the picture of Sparks Street in Ottawa-Kevin McCall is responsible for Spark Street's downtown BIA and would be good to speak to about pedestrian safety and the impact of fully removing vehicles from local businesses. The picture labelled CF Pathway is actually Williams Street-it opened up into a larger pedestrian walkthrough and then was narrowed by patios. I'm a big advocate for mixed use. Consider the project through multiple perspectives (pedestrian, cyclist, car etc.). Keep an open mind for future needs. This is a great initiative and I am open to having more dialogue. If there is interest to speak to the Ottawa folk, I'm happy to arrange that.</p>	<p>Thank you for the offer, the City will let you know if we need an introduction made with the City of Ottawa staff.</p>

Follow Up Required:

- Tara Zacher request for TOR
- Meeting Summary to be shared with CAG

Attendees**Councillor Office:**

Councillor Chris Moise

Councillor Dianne Saxe

Tyler Johnson, Chief of Staff, Councillor Moise

City of Toronto:

Violetta Savage, Senior Project Manager, Major Projects

Michele Blackwood, Public Consultation Coordinator

Maogosha Pyjor, Senior Public Consultation Coordinator

Parsons:

Yannis Stogios, Project Manager

Irene Hauzar, Public Consultation & Env Services Lead

Skyler Goudswaard, Technical Coordinator

Lucy Huang, Public Consultation & Env Services Support

Will Rose, Senior Civil Engineer

O2 Planning + Design:

Nick Onody, Urban Design Lead

Matthew Carreau, Public Engagement Specialist

Renaldo Jordan, Senior Landscape Architect

Community Advisory Group:

Atrium (Triovest, Colliers), Elizabeth Green

Bay Cloverhill Community Association, Al Rezoski, Christine Dingemans

Branded Cities Canada, Kevin Thurlbeck

Canada Post, Scott Watson

Downtown Yonge BIA, Cheryl Diego

Canderel, Diane Horvat

Central YMCA, Liam Dick

CF Toronto Eaton Centre, Brian O'Hoski

Church Wellesley Neighbourhood Association, Connie Langille, Paul Farrelly

City Sightseeing Toronto, Chris Norman, Aoife Noctor

Concord Adex, Concord Sky, Jennifer Yeaman

Corporation of Massey Hall and Roy Thomson Hall, Brian Lidster

Cycle Toronto, Alison Stewart

Financial District BIA, Andrew Robertson

McGill-Granby Village Residents' Association, Louis Miranda

Mirvish Productions, Jason Powell

Old Town Toronto BIA, Al Smith, Mark van Elsberg

Salad King, Alan Liu

Sankofa Square, Julian Sleath, Taylor Balint

St. Michael's Choir School, Geoff Rawlinson

Sussex Strategy Group on behalf of Milkin Holdings, Sophie Russen

The Tenor, Eli Waxman

Thornton Smith Building, Ken Rutherford

Toronto Metropolitan University, Molly Anthony

Toronto Metropolitan University, Tara Zacher



Triovest, Carrie Ashfield
University of Toronto Schools (High School), Jacob Binder
Walk Toronto, Dylan Reid
Yonge Suites / Firkin on Yonge, Elisabeth Antonacci

Not Present:

Elgin Winter Garden Theatre, Ellen Flowers
GWL Realty Advisors, Waleed Ahmed
Kingsett Capital (Atrium), Bill Logar
McDonalds on Yonge, David Parreira
St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association, Sharon McMillan
St. Michael's Hospital, Tom Parker