

Highland Creek Village Transportation Master Plan: Stakeholder #3 Meeting Summary

Prepared by Maogosha Pyjor
In cooperation with AECOM

Meeting Date: May 28, 2015
Location: Royal Canadian Legion, 45 Lawson Road

Participants (12 people in total)

Centennial Community & Recreation Association
Grahams Travel
Highland Creek Village Community Association
In the Spirit of Yoga Studio
La Lune Medi spa
Louis Koutsaris
University of Toronto, Scarborough Campus
Local property owners and residents were also in attendance.

City of Toronto Staff:

Ed Presta, Transportation Services
Andrew Chislett, Transportation Services
Allan Filipuzzi, City Planning
Katrien Darling, Community Planning
Sheri Harmsworth, AECOM
Nicholas Day, AECOM
Paul Martin, Public Consultation Unit
Maogosha Pyjor, Public Consultation Unit

Meeting Purpose

Meet with participants from previous two stakeholder meetings to review, discuss and receive input on:

- Preliminary recommendations for transportation infrastructure improvements
- Materials for the second public meeting on June 24, 2015
- Address potential issues and questions

Meeting Summary

1. Workshop Welcome & Warm-up Exercise

Participants were first welcomed and introductions were made by stakeholders, City staff, and consultant team.

Attendees were asked to pick one word to describe their feelings about this study. Responses included:

- Excited
- Concerned
- Overdue

- Timing
- Long Overdue

The definition of a “Preliminary Recommended Solution” was then provided to the group by the study team:

The Preliminary Recommended Solution outlines the proponent’s (City) preliminary conclusions, and is not a decision, but is a preliminary preference based on a rational evaluation of available information.

Key Points from the discussion:

- Some concerns expressed over the use of the word “preliminary” - this indicates that the decision making process and implementation may be a long time away
- Preliminary means that nothing is finalized yet
- Opportunities throughout the study process to provide feedback including at this meeting, June 24th public meeting, and the 30 day public review period following completion of the Transportation Master Plan document, City Council motion, and Notice of Completion

2. Presentation: Overview of Study

Project Manager Edward Presta reviewed background information, alternatives considered, and the preliminary recommended solution.

During and following the presentation the following key topics were discussed with stakeholders:

- Concerns related to the conversion of angled/perpendicular parking to parallel parking were discussed. Morrish Plaza businesses noted that they have already expressed their support for maintaining angled parking at previous consultation events (Public Information Centre #1 and Parking Stakeholder Meeting). The conversion to parallel parking would reduce the number of spaces in the immediate vicinity of the Morrish Plaza and the businesses were concerned about negative impacts to customers. The businesses questioned why the recommended solution still includes the conversion to parallel parking.
 - o Other examples of existing angled parking in the City were noted (Coxwell Avenue and O’Connor Drive). The study team responded that the angled parking will slowly be converted to parallel parking throughout the city as areas redevelop and roads are reconstructed.
 - o The Project Manager indicated several reasons why angled parking cannot be supported including: Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act requirements, safety backing out, City standards and best practices including City policy to convert angled parking to parallel as part of redevelopment and resulting improvements to the public realm.
 - o New development will be required to supply parking to support the new use.
- A discussion of timing and scenarios followed. Study team staff indicated that the conversion of parallel/perpendicular parking to angled parking would most likely occur as part of redevelopment. There is a possibility for the streetscape improvements to be implemented through the City’s Public Realm initiatives but this would require a push from local residents and Toronto City Council.
- Some concerns were expressed about increased traffic congestion resulting from converting Highway 2A into an arterial road with traffic signals. Will Highway 2A be widened? The study team recognized that traffic signals will add delays to through traffic along Highway 2A.

However, local traffic is provided with new access opportunities onto Highway 2A and to/from the Village. The existing Highway 2A cross-section includes 2-3 lanes in each direction, while the arterial is proposed to include 3 lanes in each direction.

3. Workshop – Breakout Tables

Following the presentation, participants were asked to provide feedback in small breakout groups. Each table had a facilitator and note taker. The groups completed two exercises:

- I. Identify the benefits and challenges of the preliminary recommended solution
- II. Provide feedback on how the study team is doing leading up to public meeting #2

General points of discussion included:

- While the study team heard earlier in the meeting from businesses that are opposed to the conversion of angled/perpendicular parking to parallel parking, there was support from other participants for changes to parking and the resulting improvement of the streetscape
- Question asked about the potential for queues south of Highway 2A on the south approach of the new Highway 2A/Lawson Road intersection – it was agreed that this is a potential issue with traffic backing up along Lawson Road, particularly during the AM peak hour
- Concern regarding the timing of removal of the ramps, particularly those that provide access to Colonel Danforth Trail. Existing off-ramp from eastbound Highway 2A should remain open until the Highland Creek Overpass is taken down and replaced with a new at-grade traffic signal
- University of Toronto Scarborough is preparing a cycling plan as part of their Master Plan process
- Suggestion to consider a one-way loop road for the Morrish Road / Kingston Road loop
- Support for improvements to the streetscape to make the area attractive for pedestrians and recognition that these improvements have the potential to benefit the area and build on the existing Village character
- Some noted that it can be difficult to visualize a pedestrian and cycling friendly future (associated with more people living and working in the Village) since the area is currently very automobile centric - suggestion that renderings of what the streetscape could look like in the future would be useful
- Recognition of lack of connectivity in the Village right now and support for new connections to/from Highway 2A
- Questions about how new development would attract young people/students to the area (positives and negatives)

Notes from this discussion are available in the Appendix.

4. Closing Remarks / Discussion

- Discussion about private parking and the large overall supply of parking in the Village, particularly when considering private parking in the Highland Centre (CIBC Plaza) and Woodland Court (Shamrock Plaza) - though it is recognized that this parking cannot be generally used since it is reserved for the patrons of the businesses of each plaza (property owner has the right to ticket)
- It was noted that some illustrations of public realm would be useful to allow the public to visualize the proposed changes to the road network.

Discussion Highlights

- Improving Connectivity
 - o “Existing configuration is terrible”
 - o Agreement on existing lack of network connectivity
 - o Some concerns about additional delays resulting from new traffic signals on Highway 2A
- Parallel Parking
 - o Plaza businesses re-iterated concerns from previous consultations about reducing parking along Old Kingston Road and negative impacts to their businesses
 - o Will eliminate awkward turns from angled/perpendicular parking and be safer
 - o Recognition of resulting improvements to streetscape
 - o Suggestion to design smaller streetscape to maintain current parking configuration
- Timing - Changes are overdue
 - o “Future development waiting for these lands”
 - o Some are excited for these changes to occur in order to allow for future development and improvements to the street
- Bike Lanes
 - o “Hwy 2A too fast for bike lanes”
 - o General preference for bike lanes to be located off-road on Lawson Road instead of on-road bike lanes
 - o Some would like to see bike lanes on the boulevard along Military Trail between Old Kingston Road and Hwy 2A
- Enhanced Streetscape
 - o “Make it a village”
 - o Support for improving the public realm and making Highland Creek Village a walkable pedestrian friendly destination
- Morrish Loop
 - o “Better Village format”
 - o Some discussion of the possibility for a one-way loop and whether it could enable parking to be available on both sides of the street

Appendix

Exercise 1: Issues Identification for Preliminary Recommended Solution

Improvement	Benefits	Challenges	Other Comments
1. New Laneway	-Servicing development parcel - Less traffic on Hwy 2A -Keep larger traffic off Old Kingston Rd -Connectivity B4	-Lighting and security - Limiting access to laneway only - Keeping frontage on Old Kingston Rd.	-Why? - Make this point clear in public meeting -"Postive Improvement"
2. New "T" intersection at Hwy 2A – Military Trail	- Improved connectivity to Hwy 2 east -Safety improvement- not having to use over pass -More efficient TTC service/ public transit Morningside to Hwy 2 -Straight/direct route through to UofT	-Increased traffic? -Access to centennial-with removal of ramps & Col. Danforth Park	-Existing Configuration is terrible -Limited access for Centennial community
3. Closure of accesses to Hwy 2A (Military Trail)	-Removal of tri-road is a confusing road configuration	-Timing	-Inclusion of a "gateway" feature to the village. - Future developments waiting for these lands
5. Realignment of Kingston Rd. and Morrish Rd. (option 2)	-Allows in/out movement -More walkable/pedestrian friendly - Increased connectivity - Better village format	-With closure, no future opportunity for transit realignment - Timing crucial and implementation property acquisition	-Should use Kingston for transit to get south -Great do it
6. Closure of accesses to Hwy 2A (Morrish Rd & Kingston Rd)	- Same as #3 - Normalizes access to/from 2A	Timing	Same as #3
8. Conversion of angled parking to parallel	-Safer -Awkward turns, movement eliminated -Creates more pedestrian walk ways - Public realm (improvements)	-Potential paid parking in the new building	-Existing business is gone due to redevelopment -What is the status of interim parking at SE corner of Morrish and Old Kingston? -Strong agreement for progress

9. Reconfigure intersection of Old Kingston Rd and Kingston Rd	- We like it - On street parking	-Some restricted movement- turning left/right	-Review as one way loop to Morish 2 way
12. New signal at Lawson Overpass and Hwy 2A	-Increased connectivity/pedestrian cycling -Development opportunities	-Removal of Lawson bridge should be a much higher priority -Traffic increase -Lane configuration -Potential for congestion	- Excellent long term idea
13. Removal of Hwy 2A on and off ramps	-Create development opportunities - better land use	-Refer to #10	
16. Closure of accesses to Hwy2A (Lawson Rd)		-Cut off direct access to Danforth park	-Timing
Bike Lanes	-Slows Traffic-lanes are narrowed	-Lack of continuous connections to the city possible impacts on traffic	-Hwy 2A- bike lanes- not logical -Bike lane connectivity of UofT: from UofT Military Trail to South of Hwy2A(Cycling) -Current/Master Plan UofT bikes secondary (area) -Hwy 2A too fast for bike lanes -Better on Lawson -Military Trail is a good bike route opportunity
Enhanced Streetscape	-Makes village more inviting- walkable/more walkable/ invisible space	- Removal of political challenges	-Must - How to make it a village (through public realm enhancements) - Restaurants and patios - Density means more foot traffic
Additional on Street Parking	-Increased parking -Address loss of angled parking	-Potential paid parking-meter parking?	

Exercise 2: In preparation for the upcoming public meeting, how are we doing?

Questions	Feedback
A. Was the presentation clear and easy to understand? Was anything confusing?	-Maps need improvement for clarity. Include place markers. Eg. Lawson bridge removed rendering? Cross sections: 1. Three separate drawings: existing, proposed, proposed and development 2. Concept plan is/should be main conversation point
B. What would you add or change to improve the presentation and information materials?	Re: Parking- highlight first the 2 scenarios for parking conversion -reorganize this
C. Are there any questions you would like to see added to the comment sheet?	