

Minutes of Meeting

Date of Meeting	May 8th, 2018	Start Time	6:00 p.m.
Project Name	Eglinton West LRT		
Location	Etobicoke Civic Centre, Council Chambers, 399 The West Mall, Toronto		
Regarding	Eglinton West LRT Community Working Group #3		
Attendees	CWG Members, City of Toronto, AECOM, Metrolinx, TTC, Councillor representatives		
Distribution	CWG Members		
Minutes Prepared By	Lolia Pokima, AECOM		

1. Overview

The third Community Working Group (CWG) meeting for the Eglinton West LRT was held on Tuesday, May 8th, 2018, from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. The purpose of the CWG is to gather local community input and engage local residents, businesses, and stakeholders on the Eglinton West LRT technical planning, design work, and evaluation process.

The objectives of this third meeting were to:

- Build capacity in the CWG to consider matters of strategic fit, including transit network, user experience, and community fit; and,
- To identify strategic values that are most important to community members.

The format of the meeting included presentations with a question and answer (Q&A) session, followed by a discussion on strategic values. The minutes below outline the questions, comments, and feedback received during the CWG meeting.

2. Attendance

CWG Member Name		Absent
Philip Poulos	John DiSalvo	Mike Mattos
Joseph Lorincz	James Chapman	Jurij Fedyk
Martin Green	Janice Charles	Frank Pallotta
Don Charles	Christopher Solecki	
Steven Tufts	Margareta Shpir	
Laila Strazds		

Also in attendance were:

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Project Team Members	
Mike Logan – City of Toronto	David Phalp - Metrolinx
Maria Doyle – City of Toronto	Kaya Sabag – Metrolinx
Nithya Vijayakumar – City of Toronto	Scott Haskill – TTC
Brian Anders – City of Toronto	Dominic Ho – TTC
Emily Rossini – City of Toronto	
AECOM (Facilitators)	
Alicia Evans	Lolia Pokima
Observers	
Katie Andrachuk (Councillor Campbell's office)	
Dion Angelini (Councillor Holyday's office)	

3. Introduction

Alicia Evans (AECOM) opened the meeting, introduced herself as the facilitator and informed the CWG Members that the CWG Chair, Laila Strazds, would be presenting the opening remarks. Laila provided an overview of the meeting’s agenda and objectives, reviewed her role, facilitated a brief discussion about CWG matters, and led the approval of the meeting minutes.

3.1 Approval of Meeting Minutes

CWG Members confirmed they received the minutes from the previous meeting. No issues were identified and the minutes were considered final.

3.2 CWG Matters

CWG matters discussed by the CWG Chair, Laila Strazds and Members include the following:

- Google Drive: Laila indicated that she will be creating a Google Drive to share documents with CWG Members, as requested by Martin Green.
- Sharing of email addresses: Laila informed CWG Members that she will be creating a sign-in sheet for the Google Drive and will require the email addresses of CWG Members to send out invitations to join the drive.
- Minute Taker: Laila asked fellow CWG Members if any member wished to take on the task of taking minutes in addition to the minutes taken by AECOM; no members volunteered.
- Timekeeper: Laila asked fellow CWG Members to volunteer as timekeeper; Janice Charles offered to be timekeeper during CWG meetings.
- CWG Report: Laila proposed the idea of a group report between CWG Members to be sent to staff and council. The idea was deferred for future consideration.

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4. CWG Design Options Presentation

Brian Anders (City of Toronto) presented a general overview of the amalgamation of design options CWG Members submitted at the last meeting. (Attachment 1)

4.1 Question and Answer (Q&A)

Q1: Were these options derived from what CWG Members submitted?

A1 (City): Yes, some of the design options submitted were duplicates, particularly Option 1. The Project Team also received a couple of entirely below grade options and entirely elevated structure options.

Q2: Could you please provide more clarity on Option 4? Where will these diamond lanes be located within the confines of the road?

A2 (City): The diamond lanes, as identified by the CWG member, would be located on the outermost lanes with one in each direction, leaving one lane in each direction for through travel. The Project Team assumed that this design option would be based on the current number of lanes (two in each direction).

Q3: Option 4 has a similar road layout to Dundas and Kipling which offers three road lanes with diamond lanes in each direction that are restricted to bus-only and multiple vehicle occupancy use in the evening. By expanding Eglinton Avenue West to three lanes in each direction, the City would be able to service multiple travel modes during peak hour as cars would have two lanes available and the diamond lane would only be used by buses and higher occupancy vehicles.

A3 (City): The addition of an extra lane of travel could lead to "induced demand". Induced demand is an established engineering phenomenon, which states that increased road capacity often leads to an increase in traffic congestion as people (commuters and travelers) shift their travel behavior in recognition of the road expansion. Expanding road width often ends up working against improving congestion in the long term. In particular, since Eglinton Ave is often used as a bypass by people exiting Highway 401 and merging onto Eglinton, increasing capacity will only make the behavior get worse -- more people could choose to travel via Eglinton even during off-peak periods to bypass the 401.

C4: We would like the Project Team to assume, based on our discussion, that Option number 4 (the diamond lanes) includes expanding the road capacity to three lanes in both directions.

A4 (City): The design will be modified to reflect this.

C5: When looking at the first three options, there is agreement that the segment between Martin Grove and Royal York should be underground. Since the two ends of the Eglinton corridor are quite distinct with varying issues, I suggest we consider them separately.

Q6: Regarding left-hand turns and U-turns, what is the difference between the above ground and at-grade options? Does one allow them and one not?

A6 (City): The Project Team has no determination of where the left-hand turns are located. The presented design options were submitted by CWG Members at the last meeting. It is dependent on the CWG Members to determine whether left-hand turns should be restricted or permitted in your design options.

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5. Strategic Values Presentation

David Phalp (Metrolinx) provided a general overview of the Metrolinx 2041 Regional Transportation Plan. Mike Logan (City of Toronto) presented the City of Toronto's Transit Network Plan, and Scott Haskill (TTC) explained how the TTC evaluated transit user-experience. CWG Members were given an opportunity to ask questions and clarify issues or concerns after the presentations.

5.1 Question and Answer (Q&A)

Q7: What does ROW mean?

A7 (TTC): ROW stands for Right of Way, which means the width of the legal allowance for the roadway including lanes for traffic, curbs, sidewalk and shoulder.

Q8: The segment of Eglinton Avenue West from Keele to Laird has a lot of transit stops. A number of these stops will be eliminated when the LRT is operational since stops only at major intersections are proposed in the EA. You had previously said that if any of these stops are removed, the City will have to run a parallel bus service. However, some of the subway stops on Bloor Street are spaced further than the distances between the proposed stops on the Eglinton SmartTrack corridor, yet there is not parallel bus service during the day along Bloor Street.

A8 (TTC): Yes, if any of the proposed stops for the SmartTrack line along the Eglinton West corridor are removed, TTC would likely have to run a parallel bus service. If the Bloor line was built today, we would have to provide a surface bus service on Bloor Street because expectations have changed. The Bloor west bus used to travel all the way to Jane as a secondary service but was canceled in the 1980's; that bus service would not likely have been cancelled today.

Q9: Does the 45 m ROW along Eglinton Ave West include the land that is designated for transit? Has this ROW been impacted by the sales of land by Build Toronto?

A9 (City): Yes, this includes the land required for the LRT. There is sufficient land for the construction of the at-grade LRT. The roadway may seem narrower in some locations, but as mentioned before, the ROW extends past the roadway boundaries. The sale of property by Build Toronto has not impacted the space available to the approved at-grade LRT.

Q10: Will the roads be widened on the north or south side?

A10 (City): The City has preserved the necessary width of ROW to build what was approved in the 2010 EA. The roadway lanes are not always situated in the centre of the ROW. In certain sections along the corridor they occupy more of the north side of the ROW and in other sections they occupy more of the south side of the ROW. However, the total width is sufficient.

Q11: On the south side of the ROW there is land that is currently being used for a bike path; would the bike path be sacrificed to extend the width of the ROW?

A11 (City of Toronto): No, the bike path will be maintained. In the EA-approved version of the EWLRT, the ROW has enough space to accommodate the preservation of the bike path as well as the provision of sidewalks.

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Q12: Is there enough width to accommodate three lanes of car traffic in both directions instead of building the LRT at-grade?

A12 (TTC): Conceptually speaking, it would be possible; however, it is not something the Project Team is currently considering.

Q13: Can you please offer a bit more explanation on the current bus ridership numbers presented, specifically how many people are getting on and off at different stops and how many riding it from one end to the other?

A13 (TTC): The ridership histogram (Attachment 2) shows current bus ridership in the busiest hours in the morning peak period, and the typical pattern of ridership. The blue cross shows the total number of people boarding and the red dash is the total number of people alighting at each of these stops. The orange bar represents the total number of people on the buses (i.e. load) as they leave that stop. These ridership data are used to plan current transit services. These ridership counts do not actually tell us who is getting off at specific stops, or how far people are going. The Transportation Tomorrow Survey that is released every 5 years includes detailed origin and destination information for all municipalities in the GTA, which gives a more accurate picture of where people are traveling. (Total boardings and alightings table included in Attachment 2 for information)

A13 (City of Toronto): The City of Toronto uses the Transportation Tomorrow Survey to calibrate the models used to estimate the number of people that will require the service in the future.

C14: The Islington stop is one the busiest according to the current bus ridership histogram. There is a lot of activity there, yet none of the CWG design option maps provide Islington as a station stop. CWG Members should have been provided with this important information prior to last week's workshop.

A14 (TTC): Yes, the Islington stop has high ridership because there are connecting bus routes to key destinations, as well as the high school.

Q15: What recent ridership trends has the TTC observed with the opening of the new Mississauga transitway?

A15 (TTC): Since the station recently opened in October/ November, the TTC has not yet taken any counts. We expect to take a count before summer begins. With transit, a six-month wait period is advised as it takes commuters a while to change their travel patterns.

Q16: What are our objectives in terms of mode share? What is our strategy to move the modal split towards transit?

A16 (Metrolinx): It comes down to the question of offering people a choice. As traffic gets worse, transit may become a more attractive choice, and improving the transit system will encourage people to switch to taking transit instead of driving. However, driving may be a better option for people traveling from one suburban area to another, or carrying a lot of groceries, or traveling with several family members. The intent is to improve the transportation system so that all types of travelers have options to travel in the way that is most convenient to them.

Q17: In regards to the coordination between the transit development and the land use population centers, what we have here is transit trying to respond to where the population is and where people work. I do not see the urban planning around population density being bent to align with what we can do in the provision

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of transit. We are still building low density and still maintaining single-family houses in the vast majority of Toronto with no possibility of change in the near future. Why hasn't any accommodation been made to increase the growth density and development along the Eglinton corridor?

A17 (Metrolinx): Eglinton Avenue has a lot of demand for people wanting to go to jobs in Mississauga and people wanting to access the subways. We know that providing better transit service increases the interest of users.

A17 (City): The growth plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) and the Regional Transit Plan are at the regional level. In regards to the City level, the Transit Implementation Unit at the City of Toronto resides in the City planning division for the exact reason you are addressing. We understand that there needs to be better coordination of land use and transportation infrastructure; and we are working to address it.

Q18: Could you clarify what you mean when you say you are looking to "*address it*"?

A18 (City): The City is looking to align transit infrastructure and land use. The City of Toronto's Official Plan identifies areas for growth intensification which includes growth centers and avenues. Avenues are great opportunities for transit corridors since the City encourages midrise buildings and higher densities where people are relying on transit to get to and from destinations. On the Eglinton East LRT, every stop along the route falls within a Neighborhood Improvement Area, which are socioeconomically disadvantaged areas. For the East, the City is currently undergoing a study to explore how it can incentivize development in social services and economic development that optimally utilizes the transit infrastructure proposed. A land use study is also currently being done on the Eglinton West corridor to identify opportunities where midrise development could be considered. While growth development is important, urban planning also needs to be respectful of existing communities. There are currently multiple development applications and proposals active along the corridor and the City is proactively looking at the corridor as a whole to determine how the transit infrastructure and land use work together.

C19: Considering the modal split, I think it's more representative of what people need rather than an efficient transit system. Many people downtown are single and can conveniently use transit to complete their task. People with families have different needs and will often require a vehicle to complete tasks like going to soccer games or Costco.

A19 (City): Providing choice is crucial. For certain kinds of trips like going to Costco or taking the kids to soccer it may make more sense to travel by car but if everybody has to use a car to travel to all of their destinations, then the roads will be clogged. Provision of choice maximizes the use of City infrastructure.

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6. CWG Discussion

Alicia Evans (AECOM) facilitated the CWG discussion in the following format:

- As a large group, the various users of the corridor or those who would be impacted by the EWLRT were identified
- In table groups, the following questions were discussed:
 - What network/ user experience/ community-fit considerations are important in identifying the best solution for the EWLRT; and,
 - How do the design options stack up against the considerations you have identified? What are the pros and cons of the design options?

6.1 Question and Answer (Q&A)

C20: I am puzzled by this exercise because the design options we are supposed to discuss vary quite a lot. One option is a diamond lane for buses; the other one is an LRT that is grade separated at almost all intersections. What happens at the two ends is largely depending on the topography and what could physically be done in a sensible manner.

A20 (AECOM): It is up to you and your table to decide how you want to approach that. The aim of this exercise is to get an idea of the strategic values your community considers to be important in determining the best solution for the Eglinton West LRT.

C21: The biggest consideration that we need to look at is the contrast between an at-grade LRT compared with an underground LRT. We should be examining this as a primary focus, not as a consideration.

A21 (AECOM): We ask that you evaluate the design options in light of the specific theme assigned to your group - network connection considerations, community fit considerations and user experience considerations.

6.2 Identification of Corridor Users

The CWG Members identified the following users of the corridor:

- Students
- People traveling through and entering and leaving the corridor
- Cyclist
- Pedestrians
- Employees
- Truckers
- Car drivers
- Transit
- Airport travelers
- North/South–East/West commuters
- Minority groups
- Emergency vehicles
- Multi - abled people
- Mobility issues
- Utility
- Construction
- Sports team and spectators
- Families apartment dwellers
- Local residents
- Seniors
- Children
- Wildlife/pets

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7. Identification and Discussion of Strategic Considerations

In table groups, CWG Members identified important considerations related to network connection, community fit and user experience, and reviewed the CWG Members' design options against these considerations.

7.1 *Community Fit Discussion*

CWG Members: Joseph Lorincz, Martin Green, Christopher Solecki, Laila Strazds

Staff: Dominic Ho (TTC), Emily Rossini (Community Planning), Nithya Vijayakumar (City of Toronto)

Community Fit Considerations Identified:

- Speed; an express service will not serve the local community but it would move a lot of people
- Traffic impact; reduce diversion of traffic into the community
- Streetscape
- Safety and accessibility; Eglinton has already become too busy to bike on
- Visual impact; an elevated structure over the river
- Noise and vibration
- Property value; value decrease is bad for the community, values increase will increase property taxes
- Air Quality; a tunnel offers better air quality than above ground
- Maintaining greenspace along the corridor
- Designing the project to be flexible to future technology

Discussion:

- A transit system with fewer stops was identified as offering better network connectivity since it will move more people faster. Surface buses can be provided to capture local trips.
- It was suggested that if growth development and increased density on Eglinton Avenue is one of the goals of the project then north-south connections should be eliminated since everyone will be living on the corridor. Mulham was identified as having the greatest potential for development; however, a station should only be built there after development occurs.
- Many people are not interested in stopping anywhere before the airport. Following this line of reasoning, the City should reconsider building LRT stations at stop locations that are currently low performing.
- A fully underground transit option that has stops removed will not be appropriate because it does not provide enough accessibility and opportunities to transfer to users. If an underground solution is selected, all underground stations at every intersection must have connected with north/ south buses. Option 3 addresses community fit the best and Option 4 turns Eglinton Avenue into a highway.
- The City should not consider putting a bridge (above-grade option) over Jane/ Scarlett as it will not be visually appealing; an at-grade option is better and cheaper. Adding another bridge across the river would disturb the floodplain; it's better to use the existing bridge.

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- Widening Eglinton Avenue to provide LRT and platforms would make the road even more daunting to cross and further divide the north and south sides of the neighbourhood.

7.1.1 Question and Answer (Q&A)

Q22: There is currently little housing on the north side of Eglinton between Renforth and Martin Grove. This area will be less impacted by the LRT because it is already removed from the Eglinton corridor – fenced off and with the rear end of the lot facing the street.

A22 (City of Toronto): Yes, there is little housing on the north side but there is significant residential activity on the south side.

Q23: Could a third rail be included in the design to allow for both local and express service? This would address the needs of people looking for fast service to major destinations like the Airport and for the local community that wants to travel within this segment.

A23 (City of Toronto): While it would facilitate express services this is not typically done for an LRT service; as it is much more expensive and requires additional space to implement. Bypasses and turnaround points are usually addressed through pocket tracks and crossover tracks.

7.2 User Experience Discussion

CWG Members: Janice Charles, Philp Poulos, Steven Tufts

Staff: Brian Anders (City of Toronto), Scott Haskill (TTC), Kaya Sabag (Metrolinx)

User-Experience Considerations Identified:

- Reliability of service;
- Physical comfort of service, such as availability of seats and room on vehicles;
- Accessibility for individuals with limited mobility, as well as ease of access for individuals with babies and strollers;
- Ease of transfers between the LRT and other transit routes, including avoiding introducing a transfer at Mount Dennis between Eglinton West LRT and the Eglinton Crosstown LRT
- Vehicle amenities, such as bike racks, or baggage racks for passengers heading to the airport;
- Comfort of stops and waiting areas, including weatherproofing;
- Safety and security at stops and onboard trains;
- Station services or amenities, such as washrooms or WiFi/ cell reception;
- Reducing noise, both in and out of trains; and,
- Integrating stations into the streetscape and providing good pedestrian connections — CWG Members cited subway stations integrated into their neighborhoods with good pedestrian access such as Chester or Pape rather than stations like Kipling or Leslie.

Discussion

- Speed of service was identified as an important factor in the transit user experience — riders must feel like they are getting to their destinations quickly. The trade-off between speed and number of stops should also be considered.

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- One of the goals of the LRT is to get cars off the road, and providing a good user experience is essential to that goal. If the user experience is not right, it will not achieve that goal.
- A good user experience that builds ridership can also help encourage economic development. For example, major employers will partly base their location decisions on their ability to attract and retain employees. In the Airport Corporate Centre, employees will need to commute from elsewhere, and workers are increasingly interested in high-quality transit connections to and from their workplaces.
- In considering broader corridor users' experience, members of the CWG present largely agreed that:
 - Drivers' and residents' experience in automobiles should not change;
 - Drivers should continue to be able to turn down streets where they can presently and generally be able to navigate the area as they do today, and;
 - Cars should not be passing through neighborhoods where they are not doing so now.

7.2.1 Question and Answer (Q&A)

Q25: If we lost a stop, what are the time savings? Two or three minutes?

A25 (TTC): No, more like 25-30 seconds per stop dropped, with much of those time savings offset by people losing their stops traveling further to the next stop or waiting and transferring from a local service.

Q26: Is cost (i.e., fares) a user experience consideration?

A26 (TTC): Not really. It has also always been assumed that the LRT would be part of the TTC network and so would use TTC fares integrated with the rest of the system.

7.3 Network

CWG Members: John DiSalvo, Don Charles, Margareta Shpir, James Chapman

Staff: Mike Logan (City of Toronto), David Phalp (Metrolinx), Lolia Pokima (AECOM)

Network Considerations Identified:

- North-south connection, how will the LRT link with local transit routes?;
- Ease of transfer; limit access to elevators and escalators when connecting to other transit services;
- Speed;
- Consistency of experiences, providing connections at similar grades;
- Mississauga connections, higher speed service for a better connection of the corporate centre to Weston; and
- Airport connection; how quickly can the transit line get people to the airport.

Discussion

- Transit systems that are friendlier to the environment in terms of weather conditions with fewer points of friction along the way will be used more often. An at-grade solution might be ideal during the

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summer months for commuters accessing connections but during the dead of winter, an underground station will be preferred.

- The advantage of an at-grade network connection is that it will give users flexibility to connect to any bus route; however, that can still be achieved with a below-grade transit service. Grade separated stops that required people to go up and down stairs and escalators regardless of cost are more complicated.
- When designing the Eglinton West LRT, the City should look at the entire picture of transit service and factor in impacts from areas not within the study areas jurisdiction.
- Option 2 is a convenient option for riders accessing the airport and corporate centre but performs poorly in regards to local and community connectivity. It cannot be used by our neighbours and students and also performs poorly in north-south connection as people travelling southbound from Jane do not have a stop.
- The best way to serve the community and surrounding areas, as well as all users of the corridor, would be a combination of Option 1 and Option 3. The combination of these two options will be more convenient for the traveler in all modes. Option 43 can only work if Eglinton became 3 lanes in both directions and accommodates all modes of travel.

7.3.1 Question and Answer (Q&A)

Q27: Option 2 and 3 both suggest similar alignment around Jane and Mount Dennis, why is that?

A27 (City): I suspect that the CWG members who suggested these alignments, had consideration for the grade separation work back in fall. At that time, the reason for the preference for an elevated structure is because this section is a floodplain and a major constraint against building along the surface of a floodplain is that the structure will be prone to flooding.

7.4 Share Back and Prioritization

Each table group shared back the considerations they identified and summarized their discussions, including modified design options that better align with the strategic considerations:

Community-Fit:

- The best option is Option 3; the next best is Option 2 with stops at Martin Grove, Islington, Scarlett and Jane

User-Experience:

- There is not a lot of employment in the Eglinton West corridor, so a lot of people who will use it will be travelling through the community.
- We would like to see a wiser use of taxpayers' money; is this going to attract drivers off the road? Is it going to attract multinational companies to the airport area? Is that going to be a successful hub for us here in Toronto? Are we providing the kind of transit those people are going to want to take?
- The EWLRT should not have a negative impact on existing traffic patterns and car users or disruptive to the community with traffic infiltration into the neighborhoods.
- One CWG Member proposed that the best fit for user-experience is Option 3 with stops added, however there was not a consensus about this in the table group

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Network:

- Option 3 is the best, however, a combination of option 1 and 4 would be the most efficient for all modes of travel along the corridor.
- Option 2 is good for people travelling through the corridor from east to west, but not for people travelling within the corridor; there should be a stop at Jane for people travelling from the north

The CWG Members were asked to identify their priority considerations. The CWG Members expressed concerns about diminishing the importance of certain key items identified on the list by undergoing a vote. In response to this, the Project Team suggested grouping the considerations identified and sending it to the CWG Members to rank/ prioritize offline. CWG Members agreed to the proposed format.

7.4.1 Question and Answer (Q&A)

Q28: We believe the considerations identified on this chart are important and do not want a repeat of the first CWG meeting where we did a similar exercise and all the valid points we identified disappeared.

A28 (City of Toronto): We acknowledge that you wish to retain all of your ideas. None of those statements identified at the first Eglinton West LRT meeting were eliminated. The purpose of asking the CWG to prioritize was to identify the topics of most importance to the group. The Project Team has included a table at the back of the work plan that includes all the statements written down during the first meeting. These ideas have been theme and were incorporated into every meeting as best we can.

Q29: What is the rationale for asking CWG Members to prioritize these considerations?

A29 (City of Toronto): All considerations are important. Council provided two directions for this group. The first was to identify options for further analysis; the second was to evaluate these options with greater consideration of the communities' priorities. While you have provided a great list, we want to get a better sense of what is most important to the community.

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8. Next Steps and Meeting Adjournment

Alicia Evans (AECOM) provided an update about the timing of the remaining meetings:

- May 23 meeting date is cancelled due to scheduling issues
- June 5 and June 26 are currently available for meetings
- An additional (7th) meeting is proposed for Fall 2018 to present back the City's analysis of the CWG's preferred option(s)

For the remaining CWG meetings, the following options were considered:

Option 1:

- Meeting #4 – June 5
- Meeting #5 – June 26
- Meeting #6 – summer 2018

Option 2:

- Meeting #4 – June 5
- Meeting #5 and #6 (combined) – June 26

CWG Members preferred Option #1. It was decided that the City would propose dates for the summer meeting based on venue availability, and circulate to the CWG. It was also decided that the traffic analysis would be discussed during the next meeting (Meeting #4).

No further comments or questions were raised.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

9. Parking Lot

Technical details about the traffic study.

10. Attachments

1. Original CWG Options
2. New CWG Options
3. Ridership Histograms – (Q14) and Ridership numbers chart
4. Themed Chart of Strategic Consideration