

Appendix E: Public Engagement Summary: Benefits and Challenges Identified

Benefits:

- Safety and comfort of pedestrians and cyclists on Lancaster;
- Easier for pedestrians and cyclists to use in winter/poor weather conditions;
- Improved safety and traffic flow for vehicles on Highway 85 at the Bridgeport Road southbound on ramp (can extend ramp and remove conflict);
- Improved safety and traffic flow for vehicles on Highway 85 before the Bridgeport Road northbound off ramp; and
- Can use the land from the on/off ramp for other uses (i.e. there is an opportunity for MTO to consider a third through lane extensions northbound and southbound in the Lancaster Bridge area).

Challenges:

- Will increase traffic at Bridgeport Road and Wellington Street on/off ramps and local streets/ Inconvenience to the few that use these ramps regularly.
 - Staff Response: There will be some increases to traffic at the Bridgeport Road and Wellington Street on/off ramps, but analysis shows it can be accommodated reasonably.
- Will lengthen time to access highway by vehicle/truck to local businesses.
 - Staff Response: Given the limited access today at the Lancaster Street interchange, the time to reach alternative interchanges is minimal, estimated to be about two-three minutes maximum in the peak hours, less off peak.
- Cost.
 - Staff Response: The MTO has a reconstruction project that can include the ramp closures; thereby minimizing the cost of construction. 100% of the construction costs will be covered by MTO.
- Impact to local development vehicle traffic.

Staff Response: Some trips will be longer for people with origins and destinations close to the ramps (i.e. just south of Union Street). Alternative routes are available (Appendix C) and upgrades to the Bridgeport Road interchange are proposed through the Waterloo Cycling Network Study project (for project limits see Appendix D). Continued high vehicle demand on Lancaster Street where there is an inability to widen roads to meet the demand will cause travel delays in the area if no infrastructure exists for shorter trips that can be taken by cycling, walking and transit. Therefore, in the long term, area businesses that use large trucks will benefit from more active transportation because there will be less vehicles causing delays.