

Frequently Asked Questions about the Jarvis Street Streetscape Improvement EA

What is the purpose of the Jarvis Street Streetscape Improvement Environmental Assessment?

The purpose of this study is to improve Jarvis Street's public realm in a manner that compliments the area's existing built form and redevelopment, while recognizing the street as a cultural corridor with an emphasis on its historical significance.

What is an Environmental Assessment (EA)?

An EA is a standard decision-making process involving the comparison of multiple potential solutions to a defined problem and evaluating them using multiple criteria in order to determine the preferred solution. All municipal projects must undergo an EA, and receive approval from the Ontario Ministry of the Environment before implementation.

What is the difference between a Schedule 'C' and Schedule 'A+' EA?

There are different levels (or 'Schedules') of EAs accepted under the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act. The Schedule is determined based on the anticipated impacts of a project. Projects with no anticipated environmental impacts, such as repair of existing infrastructure (like repaving an existing road) are classified as Schedule 'A.' Schedule 'A+' EAs are for projects with minimal impact. Schedule 'B' and 'C' projects are expected to have greater impacts (for example, the redesign of an existing road or the design of a new road). The higher the level of assessment, the greater level of scrutiny, public involvement, etc. is required.

Why has the Jarvis Street Streetscape Improvement EA (JSSI) been changed from a Schedule 'C' to a Schedule 'A+'?

Based on previous studies and the objectives of this study, the JSSI EA compared various options for redesigning Jarvis Street (ie. moving the curbs). This work was expected to have a significant impact on the environment, and was judged to require approval under a Schedule 'C' EA. City Council voted to implement bike lanes on Jarvis Street rather than to accept the recommendations resulting from the Schedule 'C' EA study. Since the implementation of bike lanes does not require the road to be redesigned, this work will have minimal impact, and only requires approval under a Schedule 'A+' EA.

How is approval given under a Schedule 'A+' EA, and what opportunity is there to provide comment or to change this decision?

A Schedule 'A+' EA has minimal environmental impact and is pre-approved by the Ministry of the Environment. As such, there is no opportunity to provide comment to the Ministry.

Why did City Council vote to implement bike lanes?

A staff report was brought before the Public Works & Infrastructure Committee (PW&IC) on May 5, 2009. Several deputations were made by the public and Committee members debated the report's recommendation. The Committee voted to amend the recommendation of the staff report. The amended recommendation then went before Council on May 25, 26 and 27, 2009. Council members debated the recommendation and voted to endorse it.

Documents:

- Staff Report
<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2009/pw/bgrd/backgroundfile-20558.pdf>
- PW&IC Meeting Minutes
<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2009/pw/minutes/2009-05-05-pw24-mn.htm>
- PW&IC Report to Council
<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2009/pw/reports/2009-05-05-pw24-cr.htm>
- Council Meeting Minutes
<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2009/cc/minutes/2009-05-25-cc36-mn.htm>