

Scenic Corridors Study Stakeholder Comments

Via Email: Received January 14, 2020

Re: Lakeshore Road Scenic Corridor - Additional Comments

As outlined in past, we are quite supportive of the approach to scenic roads and special character streets outlined in the document prepared by the Region of Waterloo, previously submitted to staff. That document denotes a change in attitude on behalf of municipalities regarding these municipal assets: ***“the function of transportation corridors is shifting from being a pure capacity conduit for motor vehicles to serving as a part of the community identity and fabric. The understanding of the road as a “place” and as a contributing element in the character of its surroundings provides the foundation for the planning, development and conservation of special character streets and scenic roads”***

Suggested Scenic Corridor Definition: a road or street with highly aesthetic or cultural value that reflects a quality and quantity of scenic attributes and special character. Its intrinsic qualities may include scenic, natural, historic, cultural, archaeological or recreational qualities.

The Road as a Place

As with our neighbourhoods, Lakeshore Road West has a special overall character. Likewise, just as towns evoke a feeling when we are in them, so too does Lakeshore Road as we walk or drive its length. As such, we need to treat it as a place rather than a simple conduit.

Lakeshore Road’s character is not determined by one single factor, such as mature trees. It is a composite that includes structure, topography, vegetation and overall visual character of the road right-of-way and immediate abutting lands. This character includes ragged road edges, mixtures of bushes and trees, a roadway that meanders slightly, old bridges, creeks, open ditches, etc. While this is considered an urban road, it possesses many rural attributes that are an integral part of its character.

What We Desire:

- to conserve and protect the road’s special character, biodiversity and native habitats, cultural heritage resources, recreational opportunities and sense of place
- to recognize and protect the specific history and visual or natural character of the road and its roadside features
- to ensure that changes are limited to only those that are absolutely necessary and when undertaken, those changes respect context sensitive design.

General Comments

- Our overall feeling is do no harm. In its present two-lane state, the road functions at more than acceptable ratings and is forecast to do so into 2031 and beyond. As such, change should be limited to only those things that would enhance the road, not endanger its special character.
- Over 90% of the road between Third Line and Dorval already has a sidewalk and a pathway. While these may not be to current road building standards, we feel they are adequate and need not be touched. We see no need for an additional “multi-use” path.
- We do not see a need for curbs other than at places where they currently exist (intersections at Dorval, Third Line, Fourth Line, etc.)
- If enhancements to stormwater drainage is required, we would suggest it be undertaken, only in specific areas where required and that natural processes and green technologies or open ditch solutions be considered before any other concept.
- We are in favour of the addition of bike lanes, however we wish that care be taken in accommodating them into the existing road deck. Should their addition require changes to a pathway, sidewalk or roadside, extreme care should be taken to ensure that these changes are undertaken without the loss of trees, gardens, bushes, etc. We are sincere in our belief that creativity and craftsmanship can overcome design obstacles.