

Getting Scarborough biking

LATENT DEMAND

By Geordie Gordon

While commuter cycling is not the norm in areas that are less dense than downtown Toronto, research shows there is a latent demand in areas of Scarborough.

Toronto Centre for Active Transportation conducted the research in partnership with **CultureLink Settlement and Community Services**, UofT hosted **Toronto Cycling Think & Do Tank** and **Cycle Toronto**. The focus of the team's work stems from the researchers interest in focusing on areas of cities and small towns where cycling has not traditionally been popular. The research was presented at the Ontario Bike Summit earlier this week.

Toronto Cycling Think & Do Tank principal investigator **Beth Savan** told *NRU* that most of her previous work has focused on cycling in downtown Toronto, where there is a significant proportion of the population that use cycling as their primary means of transportation. She said the intention is to take what has been learned through that work and apply it in other areas.

With funding from the **Metcalf Foundation**, the team focused on speeding up cycling adoption in Scarborough through a variety of different interventions. [CONTINUED PAGE 4](#)

Social procurement program

SUPPLY CHAIN DIVERSITY

By Leah Wong

Following the lead of the private sector, the **City of Toronto** is one step closer to adopting a social procurement policy that seeks to diversify the city's supply chain and increase training and employment opportunities for its economically-disadvantaged residents.

After receiving support from executive committee Monday, the social procurement program heads to council for the final say next month. While private companies and American municipalities have a history of adopting similar policies, Toronto is a leader among Canadian municipalities in developing a social procurement policy.

"It is really time for us to catch up with the rest of big cities in the United States as well as countries like Scotland... where this is just a matter of business," Ward 28 Toronto-Rosedale councillor **Pam McConnell** told committee. She added that the social procurement program is an essential step in meeting the objectives in the city's poverty reduction strategy. "One of the main drivers of the [strategy] is jobs and social procurement is a terribly, terribly important piece of that."

The program builds on the city's social procurement framework. Since 2013, when council adopted [CONTINUED PAGE 5](#)

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LATENT DEMAND

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“We want to apply what we’ve learned to environments that have fewer cyclists and where people are more hesitant to do cycling interventions,” Savan said.

Toronto Cycling Think & Do Tank project manager **Trudy Ledsham** told *NRU* that when looking at the GTA as a whole, the emphasis is often on the intensity of cycling in the central core. By parceling off areas, in this case Scarborough, it is possible to look at what areas within those parcels are best suited for cycling.

“You’re not comparing Scarborough to downtown Toronto, you’re looking within Scarborough itself, where would be the best approaches, where would be the best places to start?” she said.

Through initial mapping work done for downtown Toronto, Savan said the intent was to find out what factors appear to be most aligned with cycling.

The strongest correlation with higher cycling transportation mode share, Savan explained, is the existence of cycling repair facilities. Another is having a variety of destinations within a five km ride of the starting point. Also, topography was found to play a role in cycling activity—the less hills the better.

The researchers then took the data gleaned from downtown Toronto and used it to identify where those factors align in Scarborough. Their intent was to find those areas with the greatest latent demand for cycling interventions.

“We’re getting a handle on where you can build it and they

will come, and where you can build it and they won’t come... What it’s about is being very targeted, so you’re targeting a specific mode type. You aren’t saying ‘we’re looking at areas where people might want to get out of their cars’, we’re saying ‘we’re looking at areas where people might want to get onto bikes’, and it’s quite a different approach.” Savan said.

Following the identification of areas in Scarborough where latent demand would likely be highest, the team began to seek out community partners to create cycling interventions—in this case two cycling hubs. Partnerships were formed with **Birchmount Bluffs Neighbourhood Centre** and **AccessPoint on Danforth Community Hub**.

Savan told summit participants that a key to finding community partners is to look for organizations whose primary goal is not transportation related, but which have strong links with the community and a vision that could be enhanced by cycling.

“Maybe their mission is health related, maybe their mission is social integration, maybe their mission has to do with access to employment and skills training. And those missions can be advanced through cycling. So this is a really important way to both mainstream cycling but also to build a network of community groups who are dedicated to increasing cycling for transportation within their communities,” she said.

The research project is in the first of two-years. Two cycling hubs are scheduled to open in June. [nrU](#)

RECORD BREAKING

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“It has to work both architecturally, from the exterior, and programmatically from the inside, in terms of how the building relates to the façade... We concluded very early in the project that the more commercial or non-residential components would be best suited to fit into that base of the building,” he said.

The façade influences the entire project. Kazerouni said that the podium that extends west along King Street and south along Blue Jays Way draws inspiration from the Westinghouse façade. Kazerouni noted that the Westinghouse building, constructed in 1927, is a classic example of the buildings that

emerged in late 19th century Chicago.

“A key characteristic of this building was the detailing and the application of the terra cotta trim on the brick surface, which really makes it stand out,” he said.

Kazerouni said that the approach to the rest of the podium is to reference the façade’s terra cotta trim and brick, but by using a darker brick, allowing the Westinghouse façade to stand on its own at the corner and be highlighted.

Construction began in September 2015, and is scheduled to be completed in June 2019. [nrU](#)