



**MEMO / NOTE DE SERVICE**

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**TO: Chair and members of Transportation Committee**

**DESTINATAIRE : Président et membres du Comité des transports**

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**DATE: October 15, 2024**

**15 octobre 2024**

**FILE NUMBER: ACS2024-PDB-TP-0005**

**SUBJECT: Tremblay Station Multi-Use Pathway Crossing of VIA Rail Station  
Environmental Assessment Study Update**

**OBJET : Mise à jour de l'Étude d'évaluation environnementale du sentier  
polyvalent de la station Tremblay et de la gare VIA Rail**

## **SUMMARY**

The purpose of this memo is to provide an update on the status of the Environmental Assessment (EA) study for the Tremblay Station Multi-Use Pathway Crossing of VIA Rail Station. Staff will be pausing the EA study because the most effective solution for the crossing is to incorporate it directly into the VIA Rail site. However, since VIA Rail's redevelopment plans for the site are not yet known, it is impractical to continue with the study under the current conditions. While VIA Rail has indicated a willingness to integrate its development with the City's mobility plans, it has not yet commenced its planning work and is unable to provide a timeline for when this will occur. In the absence of a redevelopment plan, VIA Rail would like to preserve all options, thereby ensuring no negative impact on its property. Consequently, this significantly restricts the practical and effective long-term options available for the City to pursue.

In the meantime, the EA study has identified the opportunity to provide a new multi-use pathway (MUP) along Riverside Drive to improve connectivity between Tremblay Road and Terminal Avenue. Staff will include this connection in the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) Update for consideration by Council when the TMP is brought forward in 2025.

## **BACKGROUND**

The City's 2014 [Transit Oriented Development](#) (TOD) Plan for Tremblay Station identified a pedestrian and cycling crossing of VIA Rail Station to connect Tremblay Station to the Trainyards retail area, offices, and future mixed-use redevelopment. On 2 February, 2022, Transportation Committee approved the [Statement of Work](#) for an Environmental Assessment (EA) study to examine options for the crossing. The study area for the EA is shown in Figure 1. As part of the EA, extensive consultation was undertaken with VIA Rail. One of the main concerns expressed was the need to protect VIA Rail's property for future redevelopment, which includes the federal government's High Frequency Rail (HFR) project.

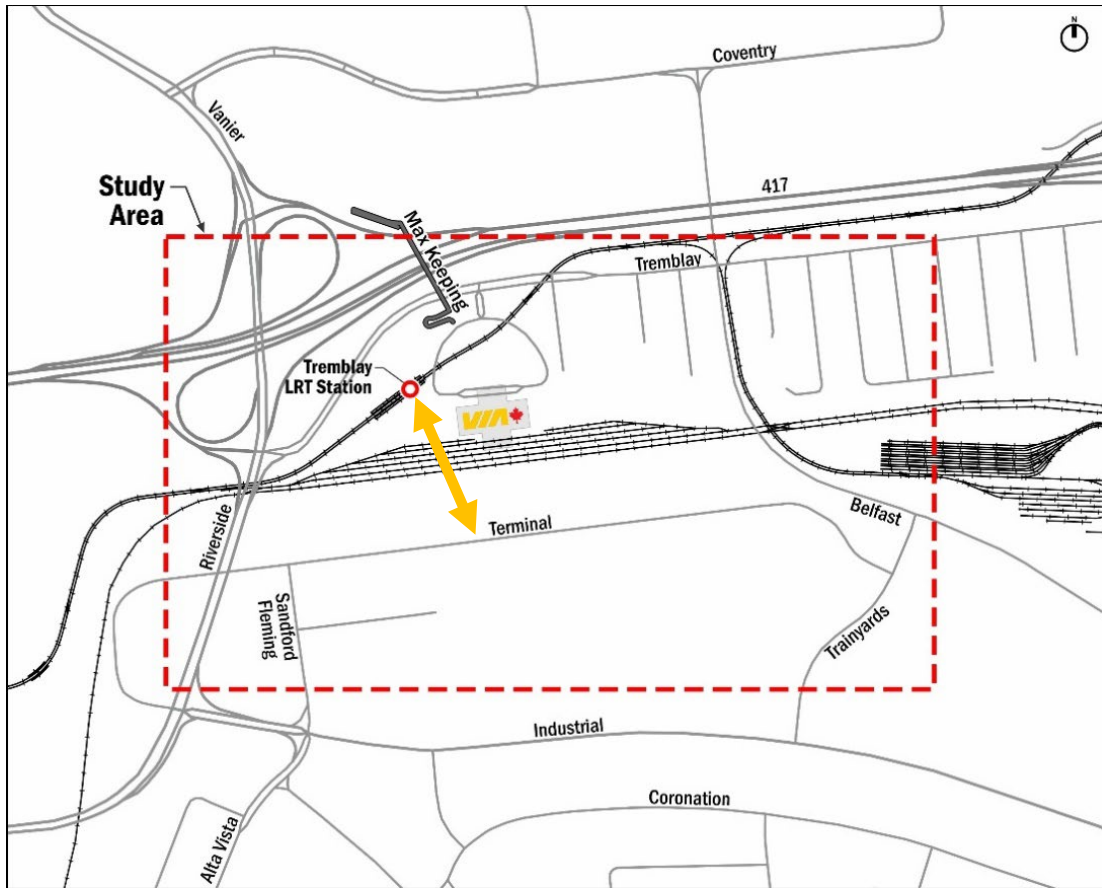


Figure 1: Study Area

## EA STUDY FINDINGS AND STATUS

Various options were identified to cross the VIA Rail tracks (Figure 2) and three short-listed options (1, 3 and 8) were developed further (Figure 3). While Option 3 provides the most direct route and is more centrally located to the redeveloping area, Option 1 minimizes impacts on VIA Rail property and operations during construction. Option 8, however, avoids all impacts to VIA Rail property and was the only option considered acceptable by VIA Rail. For all three options, the routing results in a circuitous path that is inconvenient for pedestrians/cyclists and would likely not be well used if constructed.

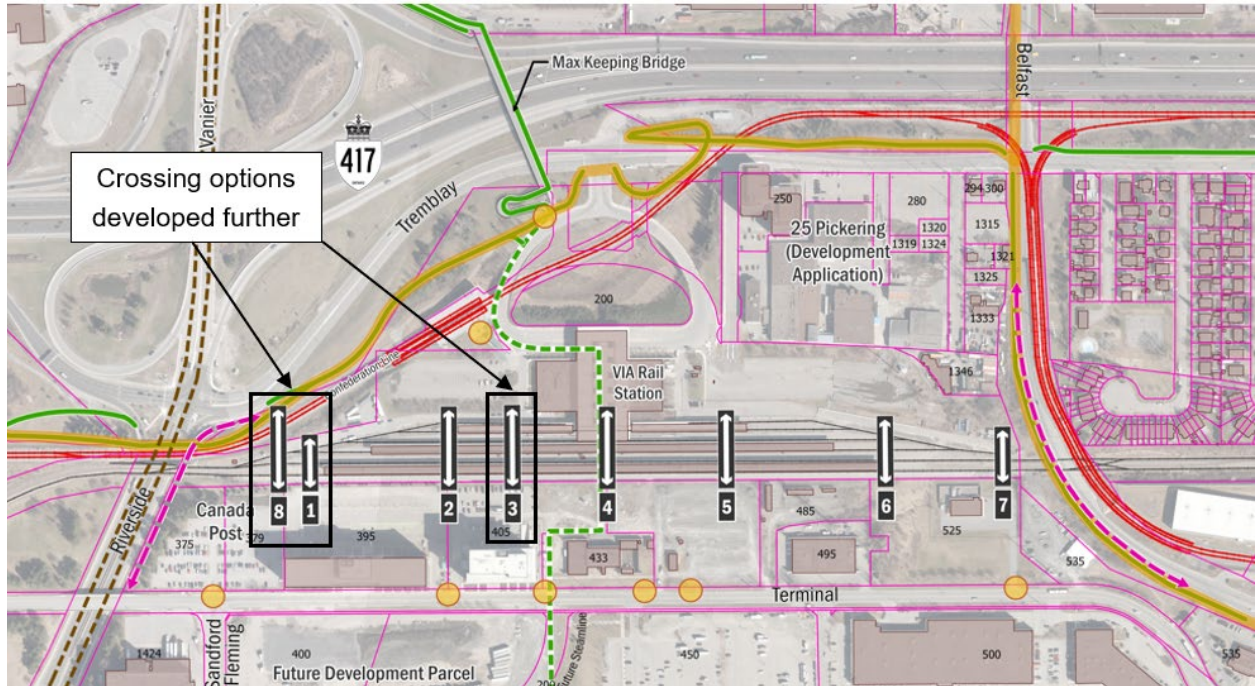
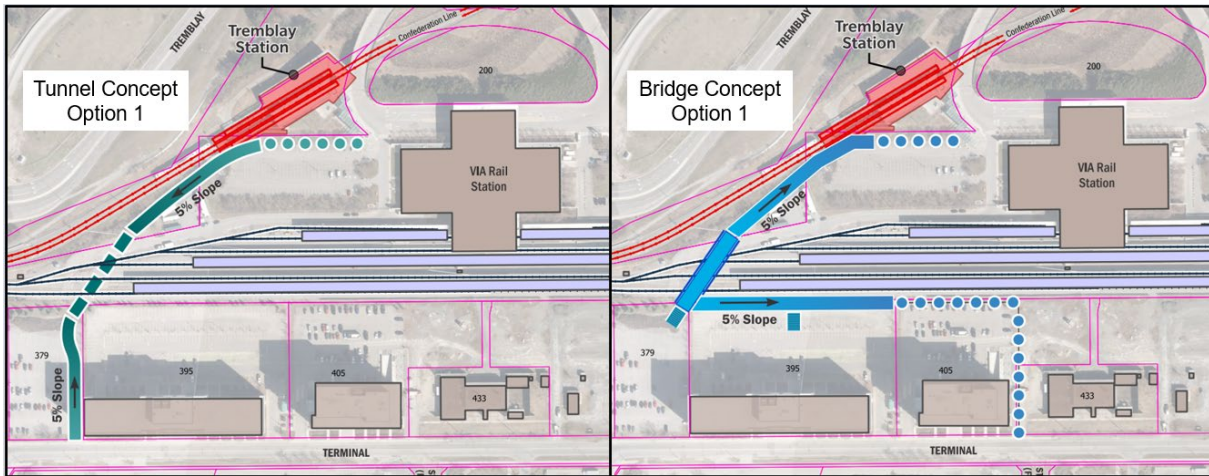


Figure 2: Crossing Options Identified in the EA Study

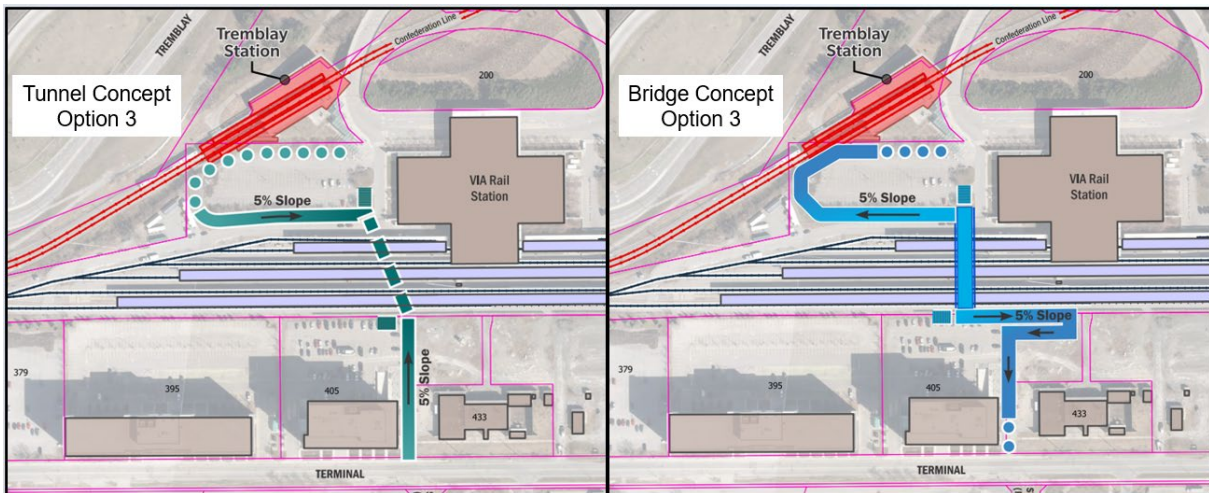
Through further discussions, VIA Rail expressed an openness to incorporating a direct connection to Tremblay Station into its redevelopment plans. This provides a better solution and offers a shorter, more convenient route for pedestrians and cyclists while maximizing the integration between the VIA Rail site and Tremblay Station. It also has the potential to benefit from economies of scale if coordinated or bundled with VIA Rail's construction. In anticipation of this potential future integration, the City constructed Tremblay Station with a knockout panel, a design feature that allows for a future tunnel passageway with direct access to VIA Rail Station.

However, an integrated solution can only be developed once the planning phase of VIA Rail's redevelopment is initiated, the timing of which is unknown. As a result, the EA study will be paused and the consultant assignment will be closed out until VIA Rail's plans for the site are known. There are no study throw-away costs since the analysis completed to date will provide background when the project recommences.

Option 1



Option 3



Option 8

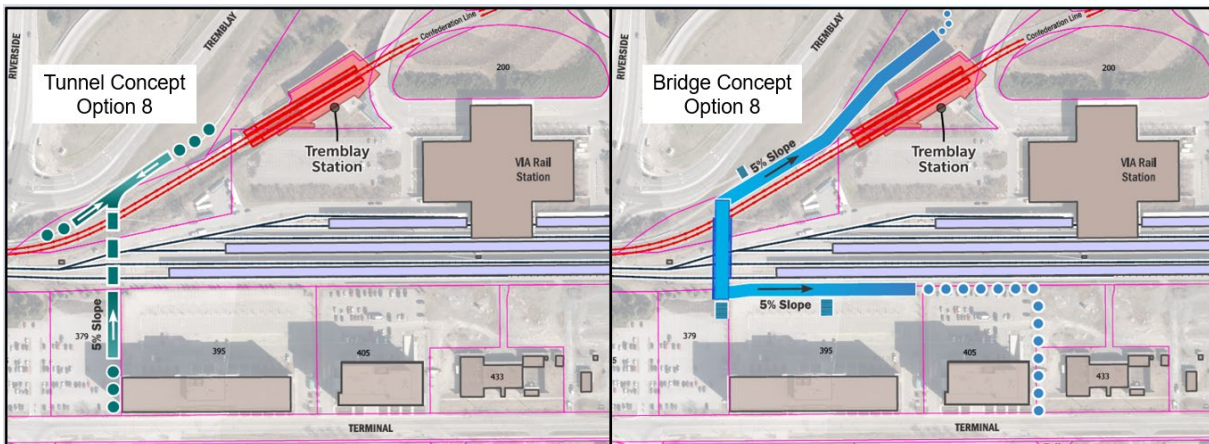


Figure 3: Routing for Tunnel and Bridge Concepts Developed Further

## RIVERSIDE DRIVE PATHWAY CONNECTION

The EA study also identified the opportunity for a relatively low-cost solution to improve active transportation connectivity between Tremblay Road and Terminal Avenue that can be implemented without the involvement of VIA Rail.

Currently, the VIA rail corridor forms a barrier for pedestrians and cyclists destined south of Tremblay Station (Figure 4). While there are sidewalks along Riverside Drive connecting Industrial Avenue to Tremblay Road, there is no direct connection to Terminal Avenue due to the bridge structures for the LRT and VIA rail corridors. An informal foot path between the Canada Post parking lot off Terminal Avenue and Riverside Drive along a steep grassed slope provides evidence of active transportation demand for this movement. This was confirmed by a pedestrian and cycling count which showed an average of 60 users per day in the spring of 2023. Consequently, a multi-use pathway (MUP) was developed to formalize this route, with the alignment shown in Figure 5.

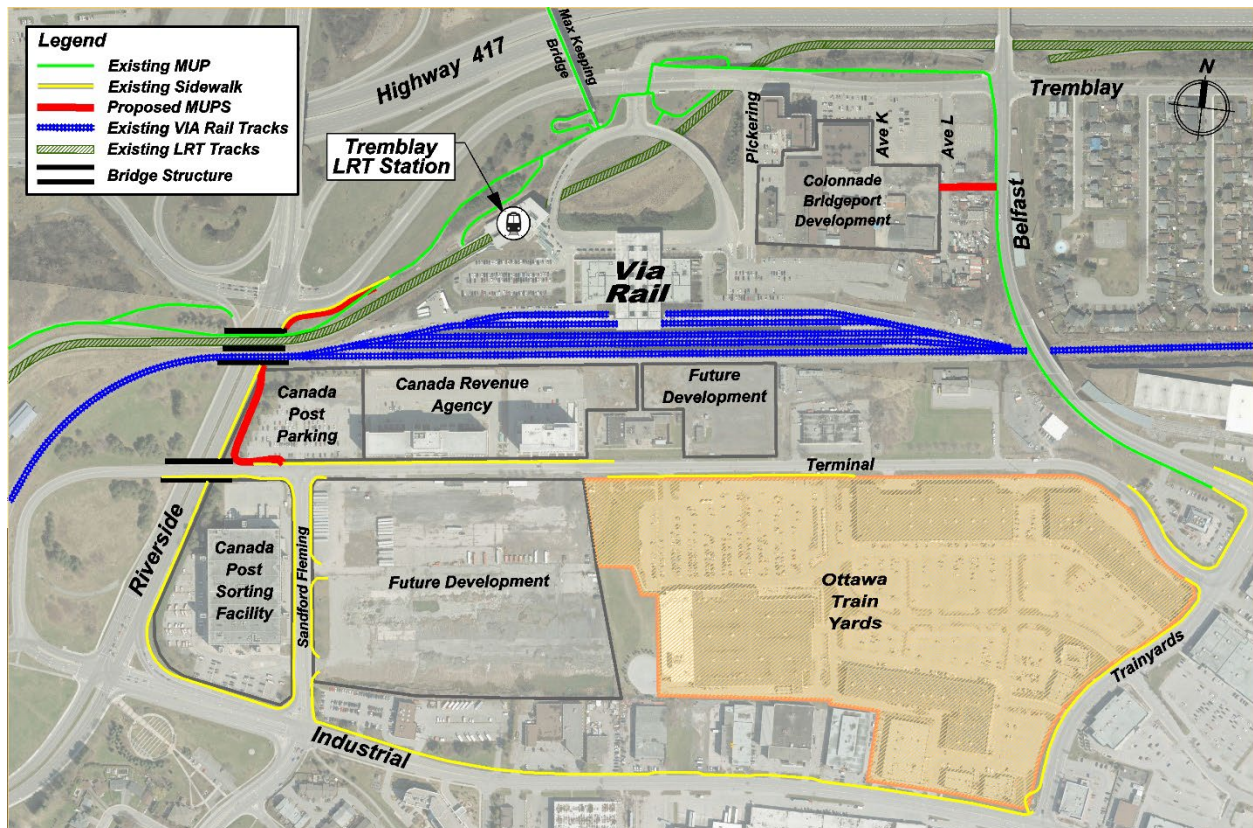


Figure 4: Existing and Proposed Active Transportation Connectivity from Tremblay Station to the South

The proposed MUP will extend from the existing MUP along Tremblay Road, continuing west and down the slope to Riverside Drive. Along Riverside Drive, the existing



The cost of the MUP - including design, construction, property, public art and contingencies - is estimated at \$3M in 2024 dollars. This cost was developed in accordance with the Council-approved Project Delivery Review and Cost Estimating process for capital projects.

Based on current EA legislation, the proposed MUP is exempt from EA requirements. Staff will include the project in the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) Capital Infrastructure Plan (TMP Part 2) for consideration by Council when the TMP is brought forward for approval in 2025. Implementation timelines will depend on how the project prioritizes against other active transportation projects in the TMP; this information will also be brought forward as part of the TMP Capital Infrastructure Plan.

## **PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

In accordance with the EA process, consultation to date has included a technical workshop and one round of meetings with the Agency Consultation Group, Business Consultation Group and Public Consultation Group. Participants included representatives from various City departments; the National Capital Commission (NCC); VIA Rail; utility companies; Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks; Ontario Ministry of Transportation; Transport Action; community associations; Bike Ottawa; Accessibility Advisory Committee; and local business owners (Controlex, Colonnade Bridgeport, Canada Post, Professional Institute for the Public Service).

Indigenous Communities were also contacted at the start of the study to seek comments and feedback, although no responses were received.

In general, stakeholders indicated support for the multi-use crossing as current cycling and pedestrian access to Tremblay Station is inconvenient and involves out of the way travel.

## **NEXT STEPS**

The EA study for the Tremblay Station Crossing of VIA Rail Station will be paused and will relaunch once VIA Rail's redevelopment plans for its site are known. Staff will ensure that all work completed to date is fully documented and the contract for the EA study will be closed out. All stakeholders and individuals on the project mailing list will be advised and a notice will be posted on the project webpage.

Finally, the Riverside MUP will be added to the TMP Capital Infrastructure Plan which will be brought forward for Council consideration in 2025.



Original signed by

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