NOTICE OF VIRTUAL PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE #2
Downtown Streetscaping
Class Environmental Assessment

The Study

The City of Brantford has initiated a Class Environmental Assessment (EA) for streetscaping the Downtown to improve walkability, accessibility, and underground infrastructure to allow for development, enhance the infrastructure for all transportation modes, and increase pedestrian capacity. The goal of the streetscaping improvements is to create a Downtown that is attractive, vibrant and safe for users and provides the infrastructure needed to accommodate expected growth. Illustrations of the proposed study limits are available on the other side of this page.

The Process

The EA is being undertaken in accordance with the planning and design process for Schedule "C" projects as outlined in the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment document (October 2000, as amended in 2007, 2011 and 2015), which is approved under the *Ontario Environmental Assessment Act.* This study will define the problem, identify and evaluate alternative solutions to the problem, evaluate alternative design concepts for the solution, and recommend a preferred design concept after assessing potential environmental impacts and identifying mitigation measures associated with the preferred design.

Virtual Public Information Centre

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City is hosting the Public Information Centre (PIC) virtually. The virtual PIC will present alternative solutions that will be evaluated based on the technical studies that have been completed to date. A live question and answer period will follow the presentation, and we welcome interested parties to register.

All content and instructions on how to submit questions or comments and how to register to attend the virtual PIC will be available at www.LetsTalkBrantford.ca/Downtown.

PIC #2 Schedule:

May 6, 2021 at 3:00 PM	PIC boards posted on project webpage
May 13, 2021 at 6:00 PM	Virtual Live PIC. First question and comment period will be open for two weeks
May 27, 2021 at 4:30 PM	Question / comment period closes
June 3, 2021 at 3:00 PM	Consolidated list of questions and answers will be posted on project webpage

We Want to Hear from You!

This Notice and all future project updates will be posted on www.brantford.ca/NewDowntown. If you have any questions or comments regarding the EA or wish to be added to the EA mailing list, please contact either of the project team members:

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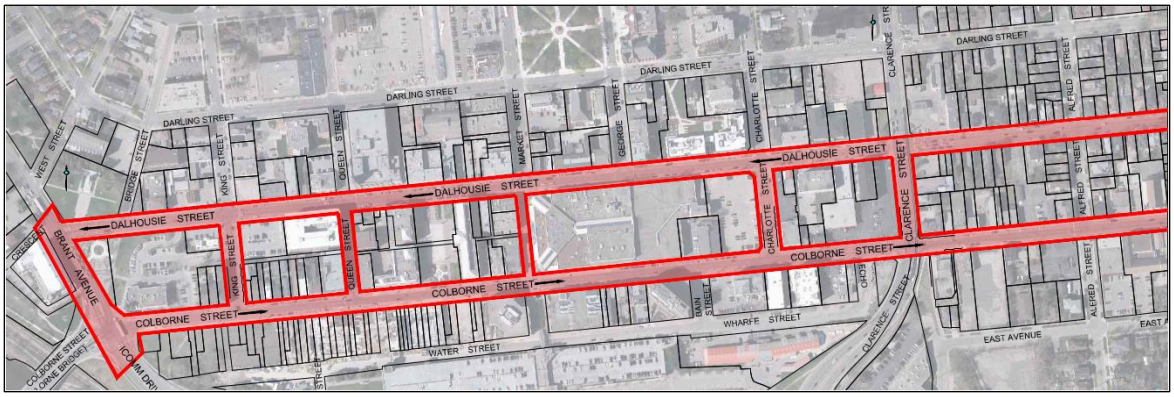
Information collected for the study will be used in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Except for personal information, including your name, address and property location, all comments received throughout the study will become part of the public record and included in project documentation.

Proposed Study Area:

Map 1 - Full Study Area



Map 2 - Close up of Study Area, Part 1

Map 3 - Close up of Study Area, Part 2

This notice first issued on April 29th 2021.

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF BRANTFORD

Project Name: Downtown Brantford Streetscaping **MTE File No.:** 46995-100

Purpose: PIC#2 - script **Date:** May 13, 2021

Slide No.	Discussion
1.0	**PIC Intro**
	Gagan
2.0	**Agenda**
	Gagan
3.0	**Previous Studies**
	Gagan
4.0	**Study Area and Scope**
	Study area includes: Colborne Street and Dalhousie Street from Brant Avenue and Icomm Drive to the east limit where Colborne Street and Dalhousie meet. North/South streets between Colborne Street and Dalhousie Street including Brant Avenue, King Street, Queen Street, Market Street, Charlotte Street, and Clarence Street. The project includes replacement of underground infrastructure as well as above-ground streetscaping improvements – which include the road configuration, street furniture, plantings, etc. One of the main drivers of this projects is the need to replace the aging underground infrastructure, including watermain, sanitary sewer, storm sewer, and other utilities.
5.0	**Constraints**
	One of the first steps the project team took, was to conduct a walk-through of the study area and identify some of the constraints in the corridor. There are a few significant constraints that were quickly identified, including areas which would not meet current accessibility standards. Curbside management was identified as a key constraint for the downtown, especially given that there is garbage collection 6 days a week, meaning there is garbage at the curbside nearly every day.

The speed of drivers through the downtown is also apparent when you're downtown. The speeds can be attributed to the width of the lanes.

The lanes are generally 4m wide, which gives drivers a sense of comfort travelling at higher speeds. The lack of delineation of on street parking also contributes to the open feeling, and can contribute to speed. The high speeds make it challenging for pedestrians to cross the street safely.

We noticed that there was no distinct loading area or delineation for key features, and there was little to no greenery in many areas.

As was mentioned, the main driver for this streetscaping project is the need for replacement of much of the underground infrastructure in the downtown. The infrastructure improvements will result in disturbing a majority of the right of way, or the land that the City owns from property line to property line. This is a great opportunity for the City to improve the streetscape, as the surface features will need to be restored regardless. Streetscaping projects like this one often coincide with underground infrastructure improvements because the entire surface is being replaced anyway.

6.0 Project Guiding Vision

After looking at the constraints and opportunities, we developed a vision, and problem opportunity statement. These act as reminders of what the objectives of the project are, as it can be easy to start thinking about other things that are in need of improvements as we go along.

The vision for this project is adapted from various downtown and City documents. The official plan for the City and the Downtown Master Plan were incorporated when creating the vision for this project: to create a Downtown Brantford that is attractive, vibrant, and safe for all users while providing the necessary infrastructure needed to handle growth in the City's core. The main objectives of this project and all overarching work being done in the Downtown are to make it a destination place; enhance infrastructure for all transportation modes including pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, and to improve the accessibility and safety in the Downtown.

Specifically, this project to streetscape the downtown is addressing the problem/opportunity statement – to revitalize Brantford's core by improving infrastructure, accessibility, safety, and rebuilding an aesthetically beautiful and adaptable Downtown.

7.0 Class EA Planning & Design Process

This project is following a Municipal Class 'C' Environmental Assessment process.

The study was started in July of 2020. In August of 2020, we held a number of in person stakeholder workshop sessions to gather feedback on the proposed streetscaping.

We took the results of the workshops as well as various stakeholder meetings to the public at PIC#1 held in December of 2020.

We are at PIC#2, where we will be presenting the technically preferred alternative.

	A 3rd and final PIC is planned for sometime this summer, with the Environmental Study Report expected to be submitted before the end of the year.
8.0	**PIC #2 Main Objectives**
	At this evening's PIC, we have 2 main objectives: The first is to present the design alternatives that were generated by the project team based on stakeholder feedback, as well as a run through the evaluation process. **The second is to present the technically preferred alternative, and the rationale supporting the selection of the alternative.**
9.0	**Common Themes and Questions**
	To really get into the alternatives that we are presenting, this slide shows some of the results from the workshops sessions and public surveys. - The main takeaway themes from all of our engagement are: - Create a pedestrian friendly environment - Include cycle lanes - Reduce the speed of traffic through downtown - Beautify the area with more greenery and other features - Ensure downtown is more accessible and age friendly - Maintain a high level of on-street parking - Increase overall safety - Attract visitors
10.0	**Cycling Connectivity**
	Through stakeholder engagement it was clear that having a dedicated cycling facility was important for the downtown. If cycle lanes are going to be successful long term, successful in that they will dramatically increase the number of cyclists downtown, then there needs to be connectivity with other cycling facilities. Creating cycle lanes in isolation will not be successful long term. This figure shows the existing and proposed bikeways as identified by the City's Transportation Master Plan, which also shows plans for Colborne Street and Dalhousie Street being part of the cycling network. As seen from this, there is potential to connect the proposed cycling facilities on Colborne and Dalhousie Street with the existing trails along the Grand River. While not pictured here, there is also potential to create a greater cycling network by connecting the Downtown with the pedestrian/cycling bridges over the Grand River.
11.0	**Key Studies**
	As part of the Environmental Assessment, a number of supporting studies have been completed, and the results of the studies factor into the evaluation of the alternatives. A Natural Environment study was completed, which indicated that there were no significant impacts expected to the natural environment. By including additional street trees, we will actually be improving the overall habitat for wildlife. Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Studies were also completed. They both indicated that there were features within the study area that we should be aware of during the design process. The expectation is that any reconstruction will be limited to the City's right of way, which is considered previously disturbed, and has low archaeological and heritage potential.
12.0	**Traffic Study Findings**

	Also included was a traffic study, which looked at how traffic moves through the downtown under current conditions. We use the results from the traffic modelling to determine the level of service at each intersection, and then give that level of service a letter grade. The levels of service indicated will represent the AVERAGE of all turning movements at that intersection, meaning that even if there is significant delay in one direction at the intersection, if traffic in other directions moves well, the level of service will still be shown to be acceptable. A level of service A would be an intersection that moves with little to no delay. An F would be an intersection with significant queueing and delay. When the level of service is displayed at each intersection we get a picture of how traffic moves along Colborne and Dalhousie. We focused our attention on the intersections from Brant Avenue to Clarence Street for this evaluation. When you're looking at this figure and the next couple, please note that a level of service D is generally considered acceptable for an intersection in a downtown core.
13.0	**Traffic Study Findings (One Way)**
	The traffic study included an evaluation of the corridor under a one-way and two way scenario, and using 2041 traffic projections as per the City's transportation master plan. Under the one-way scenario, we see significant impacts traffic along Clarence Street in the PM peak, but the rest of the corridor maintains a sufficient level of service. The issues we see along Clarence Street come from the fact that currently there are no turning lanes at Colborne or Dalhousie, and this causes backups when someone does turn left. Through this EA, we will be looking at the whether there is an opportunity to add turning lanes along Clarence. The main constraint that currently exists are the active train tracks that run along the east side of Clarence.
14.0	**Traffic Study Findings (Two-Way)**
	Under the two-way scenario we see the same problems along Clarence in the PM peak, but now we see delays in the AM peak as well. We also start to see some further delays at the Brant Ave intersection with Colborne.
15.0	**Traffic Study Findings (Summary)**
	This table compares the change in level of service at each intersection. Overall, what we find is that in the 2041 scenario, that one-way traffic moves traffic more efficiently through the corridor. In both scenarios there are significant delays along Clarence, and so we will need to explore options for introducing turning lanes. The traffic study has some limitations, and so there are certain factors that impact traffic that don't show up in these results. Factors like garbage collection, loading/unloading, curbside management, maintenance, etc. We will capture the impact of these factors in the evaluation of each alternative.
16.0	**Parking Study Findings**

	The parking study looked at the capacity of on street, and off street parking in the downtown. There are 1,682 parking spots downtown, including 1,141 off street, and 541 on street spots. For the purpose of analyzing parking, we have assumed on Colborne and Dalhousie, parking will be on one side of the road only. The decision to remove parking from one side of the street in our alternatives was to accommodate feedback received throughout the project that the downtown should create more opportunities for other modes of traffic, including cycling lanes. In the vision for this project as well as the City's transportation master plan, the City's commitment to active transportation is apparent, and for this reason the options being presented will prioritize creating a more pedestrian-friendly and cycling friendly environment. With parking on one side of the road, we see that it will reduce the number of on street spots by 84 (40 on Colborne, 44 on Dalhousie). Prior to COVID, the parkade operated at approximately 60% capacity. The overall reduction in parking downtown would be 5% As the design progresses we will look at a variety of ways to reduce the amount on street parking that is lost. One approach is to introduce flexible parking spots that can be changed throughout the year.
17.0	**Evaluation Criteria**
	The main criteria we used to evaluate the design alternatives were vision, social environment, Safety, traffic operations and cost. To help give some clarity, this table lists some of the elements that represent what would meet that criteria. They are broken down into things that benefit the individual user, and things that would benefit the community as a whole. So looking at Vision, elements that lead to improving walkability, increasing pedestrian capacity, and making downtown a people place would score higher under the vision criteria. Under the social environment category, we were looking at things like addressing curbside management, improving accessibility, improving cycling facilities, accommodating for public transit, and considerations for parking. If an element had any impact on cultural heritage structures or the natural environment, it would score lower. The safety category includes improving safety for pedestrians, cyclists, as well as drivers. Traffic Operations - includes the results of the traffic study we just discussed, but also factors in things like garbage collection which occurs 6 days a week in the downtown, and how that will impact the flow of traffic. Much of the overall cost for this project will come from the replacement of the infrastructure below the road, and the road itself. And a lot of that cost will be the same under all of the alternatives, and so for the cost comparison, we focused on the cost of streetscaping features, and maintenance.

18.0	**Evaluation Summary**
	This table shows how the alternatives were evaluated. The evaluation of each of the alternatives is represented by the circles as shown on the screen. The fuller the circle is, the better that alternative met the criteria for each category, ranging from Good (full), fair (half) to poor (empty) The alternatives, which we will discuss in detail in a moment, were: - Do nothing - Two-way traffic (bi-directional bike facility) - Two-way traffic (separated bike facility) - One-way traffic (bi-directional bike facility) - One-way traffic (single separated bike facility) Please note that the alternatives noted above were generated based upon the feedback and comments received through consultation with stakeholders and the public up to this stage of the project. In creating these alternatives, it was made clear that due to the restrictions from the narrow right of way in the downtown core – 20m – that not elements of streetscaping could be included at the same time. For this reason, cycling lanes, pedestrian space, parking on at least one side of the street, and vehicular lanes were prioritized. Based upon our evaluation, we've determined that the technically preferred alternative is a one way traffic alternative that includes a single lane bike lane – as demonstrated by Alternative #5. The following slides will provide a brief overview of each of the alternatives that were assessed, and how each fared in relation to the evaluation criteria as noted.
19.0	**Alternative 1 – Do Nothing**
	As part of the Municipal Class EA process, it is necessary to evaluate the do nothing alternative (#1). In this case, 'Do Nothing' suggests that we drop the project completely. If we were to take this approach, the streetscape would remain as is. Obviously, without making any change, the **opportunity** to implement enhancements which complement the City's Vision for the public realm of Downtown would be missed. In order to meet the vision of a more attractive, more vibrant, and safe destination that is welcoming and accessible for residents and visitors, which can accommodate future growth and development of the Downtown, change – in the form of repair or enhancement is required. This applies to both the aging infrastructure below grade, as well as the surface treatments and elements at-grade. Without any improvements to the aesthetics, accessibility, and without the provision of cycle lanes, this alternative scores low in terms of social environment.

	From a traffic perspective, the current configuration of lanes and curbs does move traffic well through the downtown. However, despite accommodating current traffic, the current condition does not address the speed of traffic downtown, which is a major contributor to the overall safety of drivers, and pedestrians downtown. As a result, this option does not provide the most opportune condition for creating a safer public realm for pedestrians. In terms of cost, because this option proposes to do nothing, it is the cheapest alternative in terms of capital cost. Long term costs relating to the operation, maintenance and repair of the existing surfaces do present implied costs for this alternative. Utilities below ground will still need to be maintained, replaced, and potentially upsized to meet growth projections, and this also has a cost associated with it.
20.0	**Alternative 2 – Two Way with Separated Bike Facility**
	This alternative includes a conversion to two-way traffic on both Colborne and Dalhousie, and has a dedicated bi-directional cycle facility, along with lay-by parking on one side of the road. Through our evaluation, we considered the opportunities this alternative presents to align with the overall vision, as it addresses active transportation, improves pedestrian facilities, and narrows the roadway which should lead to traffic calming and slower speeds. A limitation to this alternative is that with the introduction of the cycling facility and layby parking, the space available for patios and street furniture is the same as the existing condition. While the opportunity with this option would allow for resurfacing of the pedestrian realm and increase accessibility for pedestrians, the limited space available for additional pedestrian amenities is limited. Although there are current sub-grade technologies that allow for street tree plantings within a narrow space, the addition of any trees to the streetscape would further constrain the widths available within the sidewalk area. Another challenge to consider with this two-way traffic alternative, is a greater impact on traffic from curbside management. With only one lane in each direction, a stopped garbage truck or delivery vehicle would bring traffic to a stop. As a result of this, in combination with the traffic study analysis which indicates that two-way traffic does not function as well as one-way traffic, this alternative has received a lower measure of score towards traffic operations criteria. ***Vince – do we need to also acknowledge the challenge of the dual cycle lane with curbside management on that side of the street, as trucks would need to either stay in lane or roll onto the cycle lanes to access waste on that side of the street - or should we just limit the reference to only the vehicular traffic?*** The narrower road widths, layby parking that is located behind curb, and the provision of a separated cycling facility result in a higher safety evaluation. With respect to

	pedestrian crossing, two-way would require increased attention when considering vehicular movement. From a cost perspective, the cost of maintenance, specifically plowing and snow removal for the cycle lanes is higher than other alternatives. ***Vince – was there any mention on the feasibility shared laned suggested in the TMP or through the stakeholder comments as an option to reduce widths and free up space for the sidewalk?*** ***Shared lanes were screened out due to implication on safety***
21.0	**Alternative 3 – Two Way Traffic with Separated Cycle Lanes**
	Similar to #2, this alternative also proposes two-way traffic with lay-by parking provided on one side of the road. This alternative differs by locating individual cycle lanes on opposite sides of the road, in the same direction as traffic. As outlined through the evaluation of the previous alternative, the provision of two-way traffic is not as efficient as one way traffic, with the same conflicts expected through curbside management. Although the cycle lanes are distributed on either side of the road, there is also no net increase in the space that would be available for pedestrian walkways, seating areas, furnishings and street trees with this alternative. Maintenance costs for this scenario will be similar to the previous alternative. ***Vince - Do we suggest any slight increases for winter management and snow loading given the bike lanes are separated, or too technical?***
22.0	**Alternative 4 – One Way Traffic with Bi-Directional Cycle**
	Alternative 4 proposes a one-way alternative that includes a bi-directional cycle facility which is protected behind curb, and parking on one side of the road only through a lay-by which is also behind curb. As per the previous alternatives presented so far, the cycle facility, along with reduction of traffic lane widths, and surface improvements to the pedestrian walkways results in a favourable rating towards aligning with the project's overall Vision for Downtown. Also similar to the two-way options, the provision of two cycle lanes, and parking on one side mean that the functional space remaining for pedestrians would again remain relatively the same as the current condition. Given the space constraints of the right of way, there is a trade off with every feature we include as each requires their own minimum footprint within the right-of-way. Where we see the biggest difference between the one-way and two-way options is in the operation of traffic, and the impact of curbside management. In a one-way scenario, when there is garbage collection or loading, cars can change lanes to pass the parked vehicle without any delay, and there is little need for dedicated loading zones, or laybys for curbside management. ***This could also reduce the need for any curbside**

	management or delivery vehicles to move onto the cycle lane areas to avoid conflicts with traffic – see comment in Alternative #2. In all of the alternatives we expect a high level of safety, as the main factors that will contribute to improved safety will be narrower lanes that slow traffic, reduced pedestrian crossing distances, and cycle lanes that are separated from the travel lanes. A common thought is that two-way traffic operations have the effect of slowing traffic, however, in a one-way scenario the slowing of traffic can be achieved by narrowing the lanes to naturally reduce the speeds at which people drive, addition of more pedestrian crossings, etc. As improving safety is a main focus of this alternative, these safety measures are applied in the evaluation of each cross section alternative which propose change to the right-of-way.
23.0	**Alternative 5 – One-Way Single Bike Lane**
	Alternative #5 is a two-lane, one-way roadway that includes parking on one side, and a uni-directional separated cycle lane. Per our review of the evaluation criteria, this alternative was determined to be the most favourable towards aligning with the vision of the downtown, as it is the only alternative that allows for widening the pedestrian and patio space from what exists currently. Due to the reduction of space required for two lanes of cycling on each street, there is extra width (1.50m – if anyone asks) gained in the cross section. As a result, there is increased opportunity available for pedestrian seating or patio areas, street plantings, and other pedestrian amenities that create a more walkable and accommodating public realm and increase social opportunity. Similar to the previous one-way alternative, there is less impact to traffic for curbside management, and overall one-way traffic moves traffic more efficiently. In this preferred alternative, cyclists would ride in the same direction as vehicles and the side streets can be used as a connection between Colborne and Dalhousie, similarly to how they are used for vehicles. From a cost perspective this alternative would have the least amount of maintenance required for the upkeep of the cycle lane. Based upon **the opportunity to widen the pedestrian realm, and the benefits which come with this increased space,** Alternative #5 is **determined as** the preferred **alternative for allocation of programming in the right-of-way**.
24.0	**Preliminary Options – Screened Out**
	- There were some additional alternatives for elements of the right-of-way that were explored during consultation for this project. - On-street cycle lanes – as either shared or dedicated lanes, that were not separated by a curb were considered, however the drawbacks included further widening of the asphalt / lanes that may encourage faster speeds – therefore reducing opportunity for traffic calming, and a reduction in the safety for cyclists. This option created too many conflict points between vehicles and cyclists maneuvering in and out of parking spaces or laybys, so it was not carried forward.

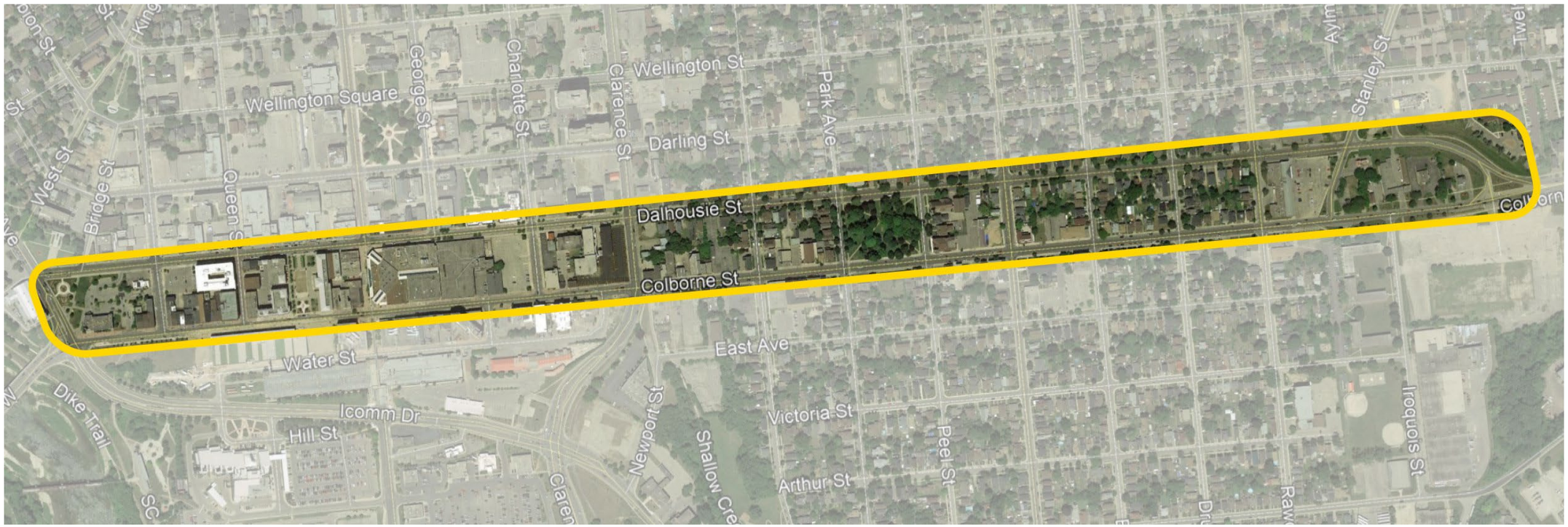
	- One way traffic with a single lane to maximize the space available for sidewalks and treatment behind curb was also explored, however a single traffic lane would significantly hinder traffic flow during curbside pick-up, and would likely reduce response times for emergency service vehicles moving through the Downtown. We also considered applying varying right-of-way alternatives for Colborne and Dalhousie, but there was concern over the potential for creation of inequality of cycling, parking, or pedestrian opportunities for businesses and residents. As a result, it was determined that applying a consistent cross-section for both streets was the most equitable approach.
25.0	**Example – Downtown Kitchener**
	- Upon review of the alternatives proposed and the evaluation criteria used to determine a preferred approach, you may be left wondering why these criteria are so important. To demonstrate the impacts that some of the enhancements proposed can have on the revitalization of streetscapes, and their contribution towards creating a more welcoming and walkable destination for pedestrians, we felt it was important to once again show how some of these principles were applied and implemented in other municipalities, and the effects they had on the pedestrian realm. - The first example is King Street in Downtown Kitchener. The images at the top of the slide show the pre-construction condition of the right-of-way, as the design of King Street was more conducive to vehicular movement, rather than the accommodation of pedestrians and cyclists. Narrow sidewalks with limited space for streetscape amenities such as street trees, or seating areas provided for a bleak pedestrian experience. - The image on the top-right shows a typical raised planter, with limited soil volumes, resulting in trees of poor or deteriorating condition. - Extending from Frederick to Francis Street (5 street blocks), the images at the bottom of the slide show the post-construction condition, which shifted the emphasis of the operation of the road to prioritize pedestrians and cyclists by narrowing traffic lanes, and increasing the width of the pedestrian realm behind curb. This allowed for the provision of sidewalks with dedicated travel paths and furnishing zones which provide consistent seating elements, increased opportunity for street trees, and space for flexible parking or seasonal patio space for the benefit of existing businesses and restaurants along the King Street right-of-way. - Bollards located along the back of curb are moveable, and can be pulled away from the curb to release space for alternative uses, or moved into the roadway to close street blocks during special events. Traffic lanes are shared between cyclists, transit and vehicles, with the overall width of roadway reduced to assist with slowing traffic and increasing pedestrian safety.
26.0	**Example – Wilson and Carden Street, Downtown Guelph**
	- This slide shows an example from Downtown Guelph. The image to the top of the slide shows the pre-construction condition Wilson Street, looking south towards Carden Street and City Hall. - In this example, vehicles are once again given the priority with wide traffic lanes, with asphalt extending directly into parking on both sides of the street, leaving

	little room for pedestrians between the back of curb and building frontage, or for streetscape elements such as tree plantings or decorative lighting. - The image to the bottom left is taken from above Carden Street, looking back towards Wilson Street, showing the initiative to reduce the width of the traffic lanes, with re-orienting the on-street parking and locating it behind curb. The use of precast pavers to provide additional contrast and differentiation of the parking from the roadway also assists with traffic calming by slowing traffic and clearly delineating the extents of the parking and sidewalks from one another. - Replacement of the existing utility poles and cobrahead lighting also adds to the placemaking and character of the street. - The image to the bottom right shows a view looking west along Carden Street towards Wilson Street, and shows the widened sidewalks with clear delineation of the a site furnishings zone (including trees and bollards to separate the space from parking), the pedestrian walkway, and space for seating or displays along the storefronts which line the street. Similar to King Street in Kitchener, Carden Street is a flexible street that can be closed for special events, and is primely located across from City Hall and the exterior splash pad / seasonal rink which adds to the programming for the street and creates a destination for residents and visitors throughout the year.
27.0	**Example – Downtown Stratford / Stratford Market Square**
	- The final example we've provided is from Stratford, focusing on Market Place and Market Square, and the side streets of Wellington Street (west) and Downie Street (east). - The above image is taken looking along Market Place from Downie Street towards the existing Square and Wellington Street. - The pre-construction condition demonstrates a space that is once again primarily designed for the accommodation of vehicles, as it provided parking on both sides of this one way street, with the existing transit hub located in the northern half of the Square. - This condition provided a very open and uninviting feel for pedestrians with narrow sidewalks, and a high amount of vehicular traffic and congestion in the Square and on the adjacent streets. The use of the space and surrounding streets for pedestrian use was limited, with limited amenities to frame the space. - Commercial space along Market Place was subject to vacancy and turnover, with limited space for storefront displays or patio seating. - The aerial image to bottom left shows the post-construction condition, where different paving materials were used to distinguish Market Square and the pedestrian realm from the surrounding streets, with curbs along Wellington and Downie pushed out to narrow the road width, and provide lay-bys for buses as traffic calming elements to slow the speed of vehicles on the surrounding streets. - The extension of the pedestrian paving into Market Place also acts as a traffic calming element, and the laneway is narrowed, and sidewalks in front of the storefronts are widened. New lighting and bollards are utilized to delineate the extent of parking areas. Pedestrian seating, at-grade planting and other site furnishings assist in creating a more comfortable experience for pedestrians, and creates a distinguished landmark and destination in the heart of Stratford's Downtown of residents and visitors.

28.0	**Whats Next?**
	Gagan
29.0	**Next Steps**
	Gagan
30.0	**Questions**

Downtown Brantford Streetscape Class Environmental Assessment (EA)

Public Information Centre #2



GSP group

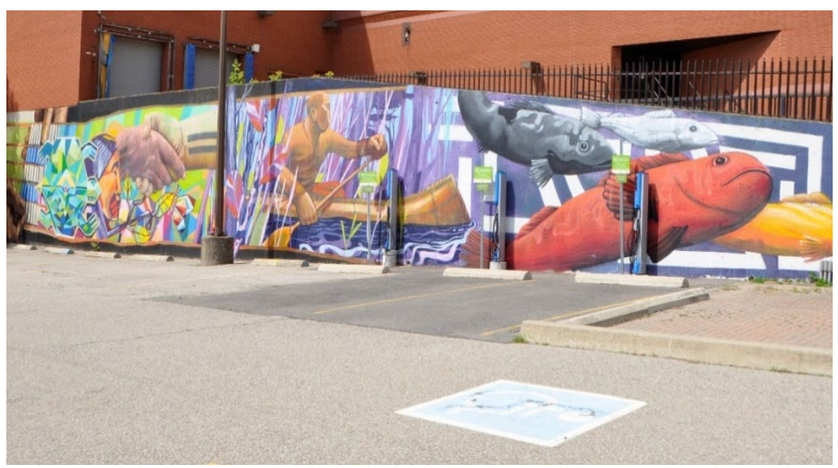
MTE

BRANTFORD

Downtown Brantford

Agenda

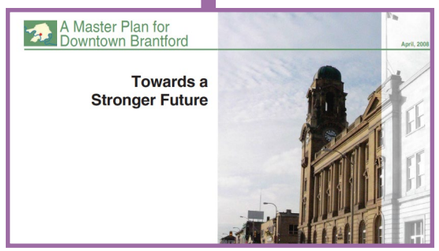
1. Previous Studies
2. Review of study area, process and status
3. Purpose of Public Information Centre (PIC) #2
4. Review feedback to date
5. Evaluation criteria
6. Present alternatives
7. Present technically preferred alternative
8. Next steps



Previous Studies

2008

Master Plan for Downtown Brantford

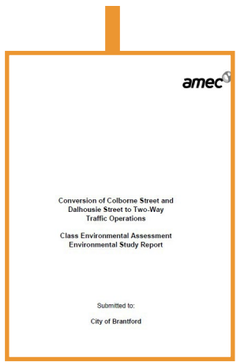


2010

Waterfront Master Plan

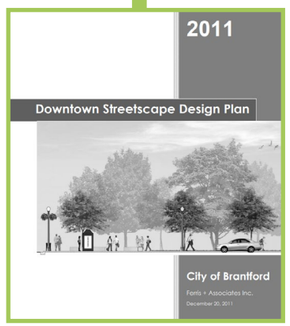
2010

Conversion of Colborne Street and Dalhousie Street to Two-Way Traffic Operations EA



2011

Downtown Streetscape Design Plan



2021

Urban Design Manual

Transportation Master Plan

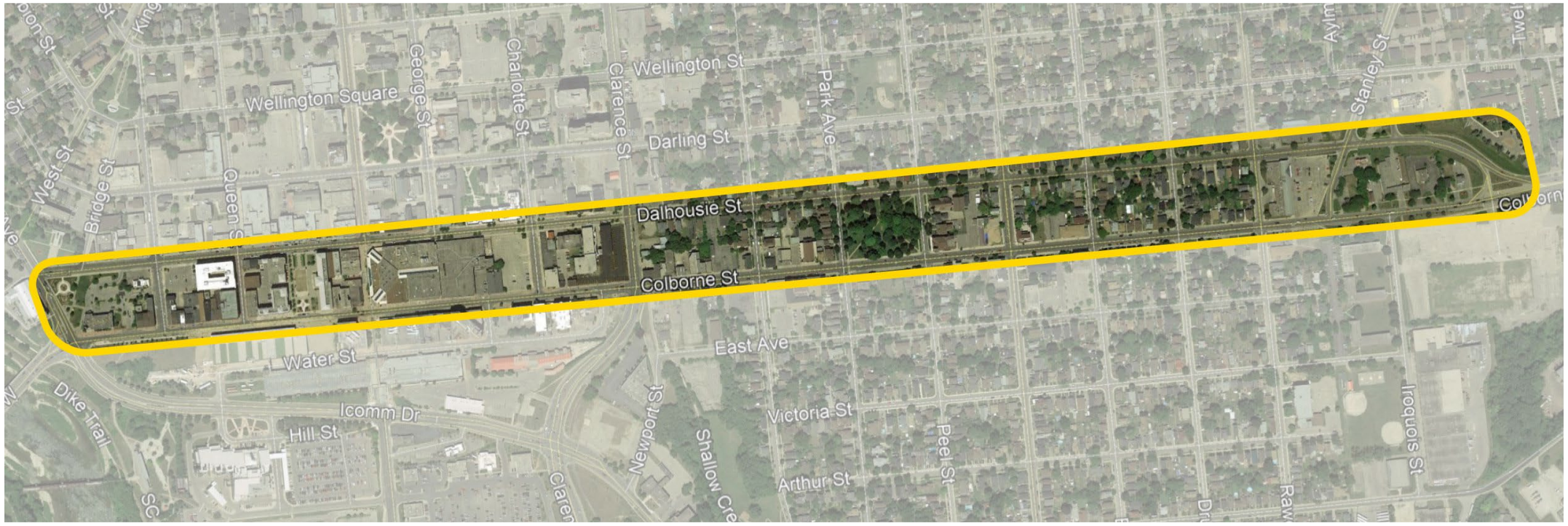
Master Servicing Plan

Official Plan

2021

Downtown Brantford Streetscape

Study Area and Scope



Study area includes:

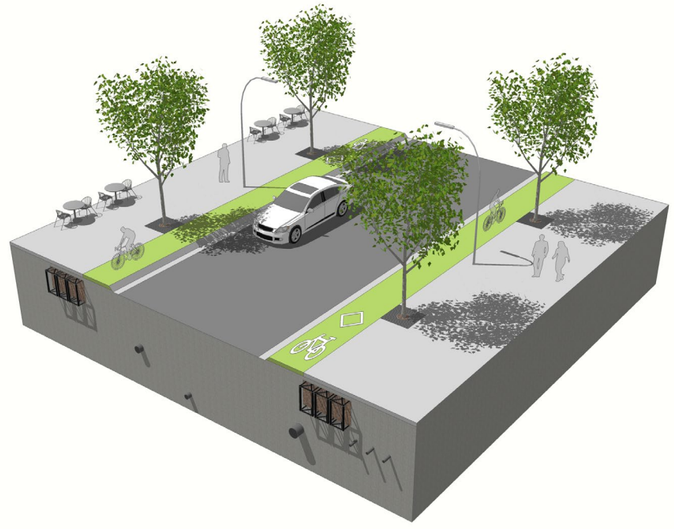
- Colborne Street and Dalhousie Street from Brant Avenue and Icomm Drive to the east limit where Colborne Street and Dalhousie meet.
- North/South streets between Colborne Street and Dalhousie Street including Brant Avenue, King Street, Queen Street, Market Street, Charlotte Street, and Clarence Street.

The project includes underground infrastructure and above-ground streetscaping improvement – road configuration, street furniture, plantings, etc.

Due to aging infrastructure in the Downtown area, capacity will be reviewed.

Infrastructure improvements include watermain, sanitary sewer, storm sewer, and replacement of all utilities.

Constraints



Curbside Management: garbage collections six days a week.

Wide Lanes: Encourages faster travel.

Loading: No drop-off area for key destinations.

Aesthetics: Absence of greenery.

Project Guiding Vision

Vision

Create a Downtown Brantford that is attractive, vibrant, and safe for all users while providing the infrastructure needed to handle growth in the City's core.

- Make Downtown a destination place;
- Enhance infrastructure for all transportation modes including pedestrians, cyclists, transit users; and
- Improve accessibility and safety in the core.

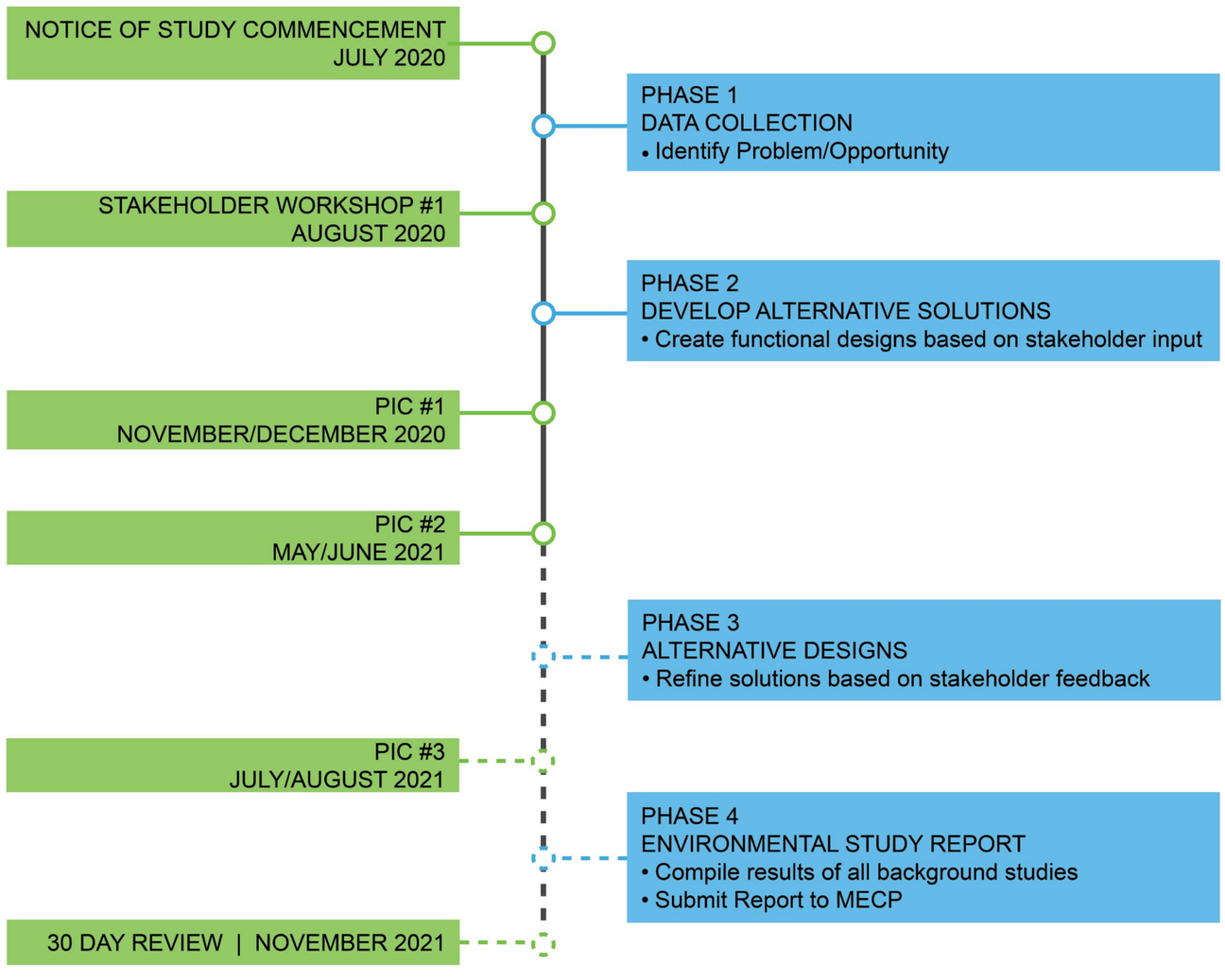
Problem/Opportunity Statement

Revitalize Brantford's core by improving infrastructure, accessibility, safety, and rebuilding an aesthetically beautiful and adaptable Downtown.

The Vision and Problem/ Opportunity Statement were developed at the beginning of the project and act as reminders of the objective of the project as it moves along.

Class EA Planning & Design Process

Municipal Class Schedule 'C' Environmental Assessment Process



This project is following the Municipal Class Schedule 'C' Environmental Assessment process.

PIC #1 was used to present the public with example cross sections and introduce the project.

We are at PIC #2 where we are presenting a technically preferred alternative.

PIC #3 will take place in the Summer of 2021.

Public Information Centre (PIC) #2

Two Main Objectives of PIC #2

1. Present the design alternatives that were evaluated, including proposed cross sections.

- Each design alternative has been evaluated based on results of background studies.

2. Present the technically preferred alternative, and rationale behind how and why it was selected.

Common Themes and Questions

Public Survey, Stakeholder Workshops, PIC #1

How do you usually travel to Downtown?

74% of survey respondents drive.

How do you usually travel within Downtown?

49% of survey respondents walk to their destination.

What are some things that make you want to visit a City's Downtown?

Shopping and Services – 44.1%

Restaurant Cafes, Patios – 39.5%

Festivals and Special Events – 27%

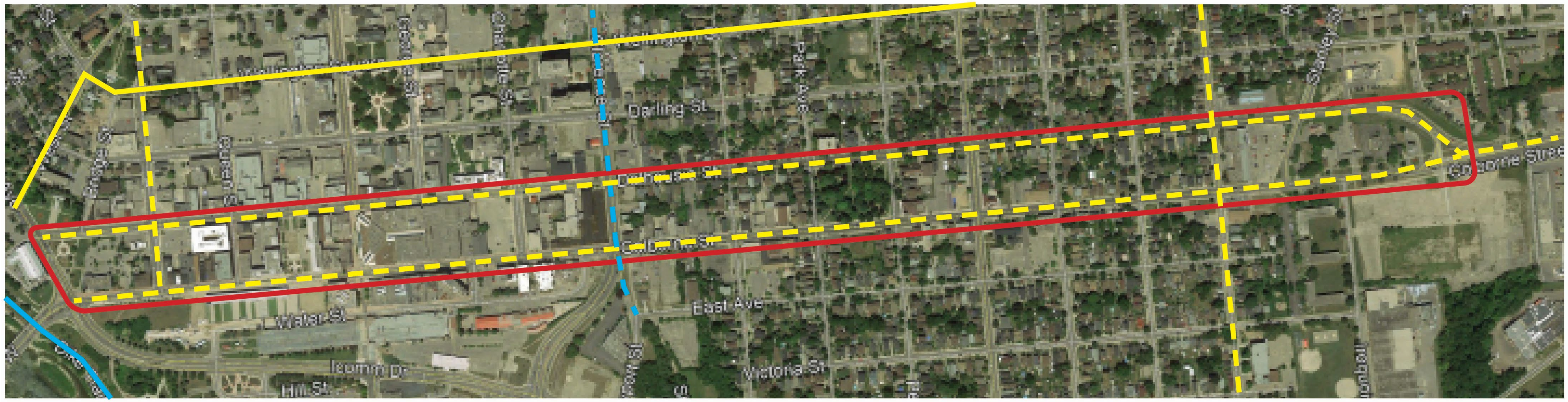
Top 5 priorities for Downtown Brantford

1. Enhance public safety.
2. Attract new business.
3. Improve walkability.
4. Keeping streets and walkways clean.
5. More greenery.

Stakeholder Workshops and PIC #1 Feedback

- Create pedestrian friendly environment.
- Add bike lanes through Downtown.
- Reduce speeding Downtown.
- Beautify the area – more greenery.
- Make Downtown more age-friendly and accessible.
- Maintain high level of on-street parking.
- Increase feeling of safety.
- Attract visitors.

Cycling Connectivity



- Functional cycle lanes Downtown can connect to existing and proposed cycle lanes.
- Existing bike route on Wellington Street.

PROJECT SITE

EXISTING ON ROAD BIKEWAY

PROPOSED ON ROAD BIKEWAY

EXISTING OFF ROAD BIKEWAY

PROPOSED OFF ROAD BIKEWAY

Downtown Brantford

Key Studies

Summary of Background Studies

Natural Environment

No significant impacts to ecology of natural features.

Proposed streetscaping is likely to provide improved overall habitat due to increased cover and green space.

Archaeological

Mixture of areas with archaeological potential.

Cultural Heritage

- 201 Built Heritage Resources.
- 6 Cultural Heritage Landscapes.
- Detailed designs should avoid impacting heritage locations.

Anticipated reconstruction is contained within City's right of way, does not include any buildings or structures.

Right of ways are considered disturbed and low potential of any archaeological or cultural heritage potential.

Traffic Study Findings

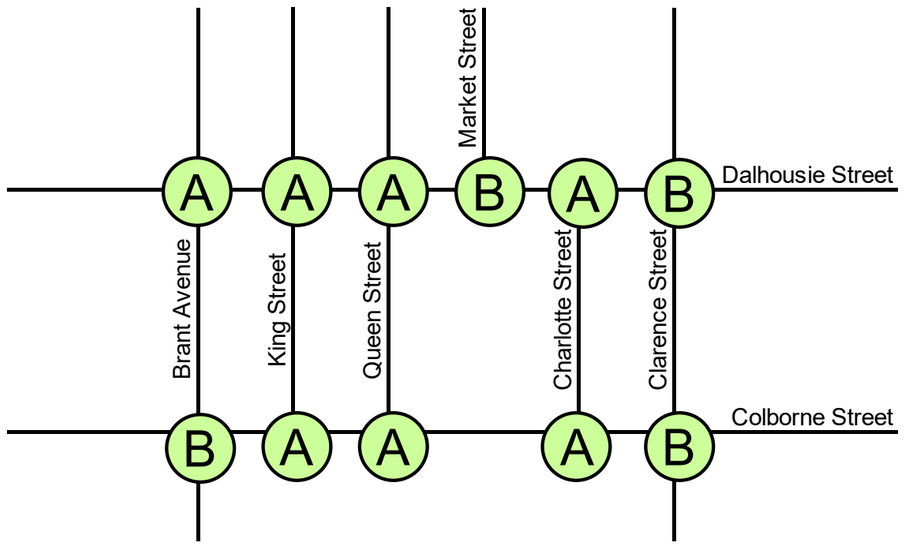
Existing Operations

- Traffic analysis has been conducted at strategic intersections.
- Overall Levels of Service (LOS) are acceptable under existing conditions.
- This figure provides a snapshot of how the corridor operates under current conditions in the AM and PM peak.
- To evaluate, a letter grade is assigned to each intersection based on the Level of Service it provides

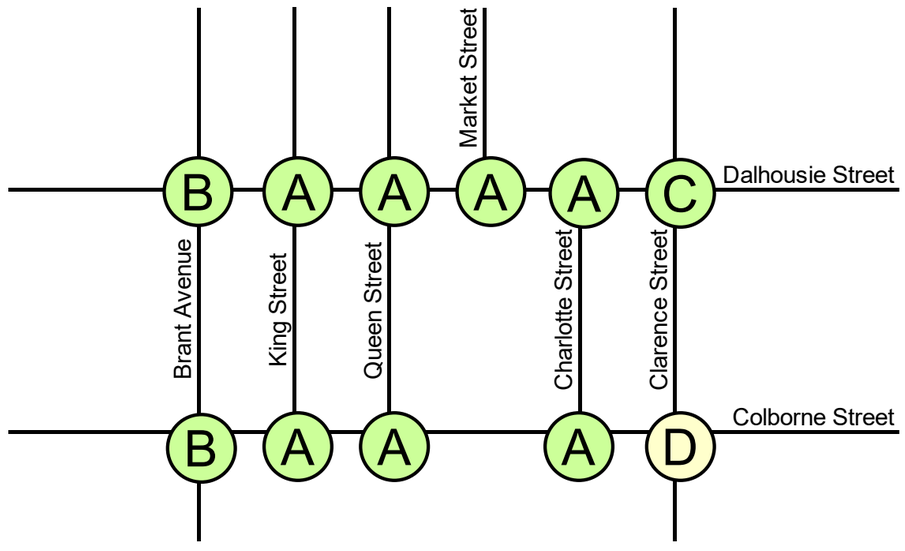
LOS (Delay s)	DESCRIPTION	LOS (Delay s)	DESCRIPTION
A	Little to no delay	D	Frequent queuing and delay
B	Minimal delay	E	Increased queuing and delay
C	Some queuing and delay	F	Significant queuing and delay

- A Level of Service A is an intersection that has little or no delay when travelling through it.
- A Level of Service F is an intersection that has significant queuing and delay.
- The letter grade represents an average of all the movements associated with the intersection.
- The focus of traffic study was Colborne Street and Dalhousie Street, from Brant Avenue to Clarence Street.
- An intersection with a Level of Service D is considered acceptable for a downtown setting.

Weekday AM Peak Hour



Weekday PM Peak Hour



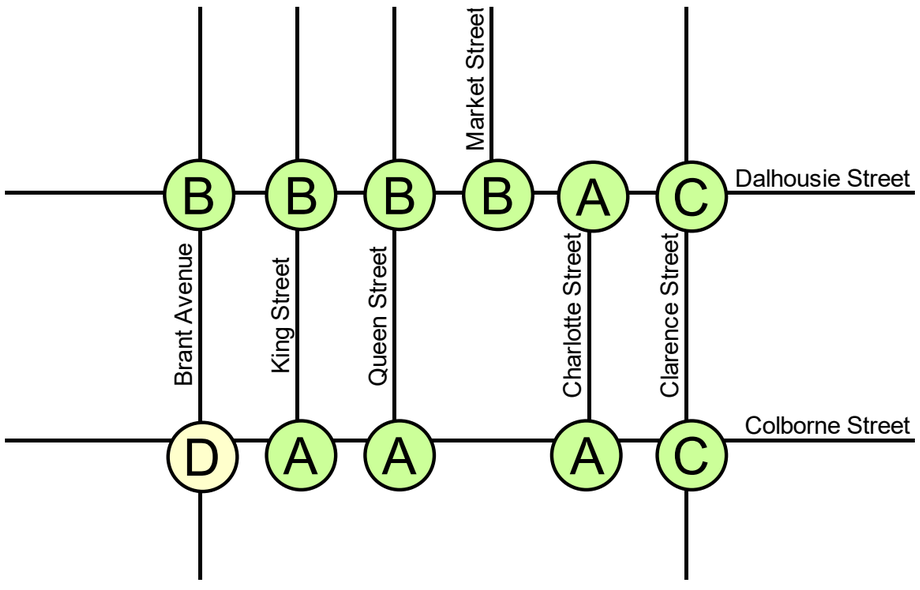
Traffic Study Findings

2041 Operations (One Way)

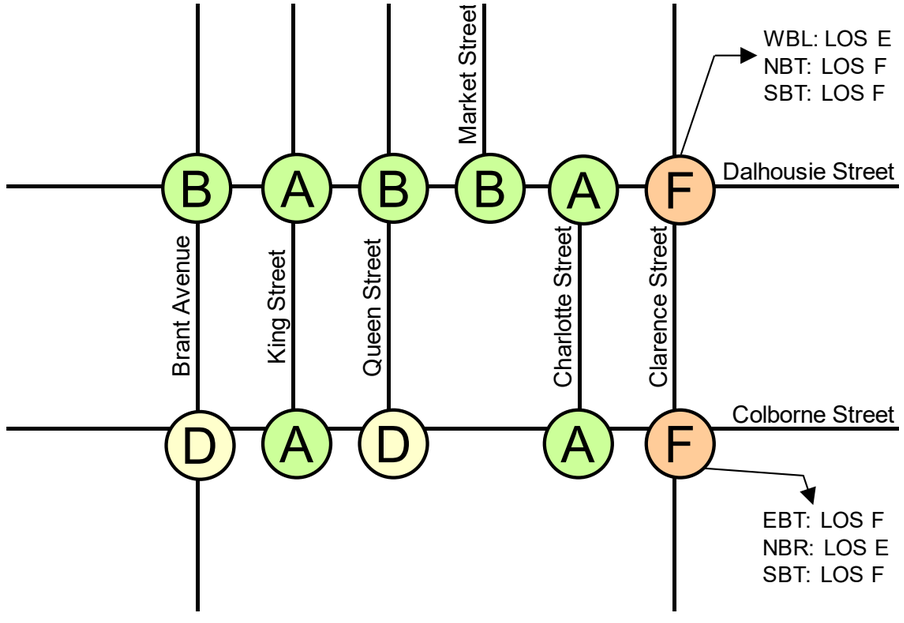
- Results based on 2041 traffic projections.
- Signal timings optimized in assessment.
- Under the one-way scenario, significant queuing and delay is projected along Clarence Street corridor.
- Under this scenario, there is significant queuing and delays occurring along Clarence Street at Colborne and Dalhousie.
- The addition of turning lanes would need to be considered to improve the level of service along Clarence Street.
- Train tracks along east side of Clarence Street are a significant constraint.

LOS (Delay s)	DESCRIPTION	LOS (Delay s)	DESCRIPTION
A	Little to no delay	D	Frequent queuing and delay
B	Minimal delay	E	Increased queuing and delay
C	Some queuing and delay	F	Significant queuing and delay

Weekday AM Peak Hour



Weekday PM Peak Hour



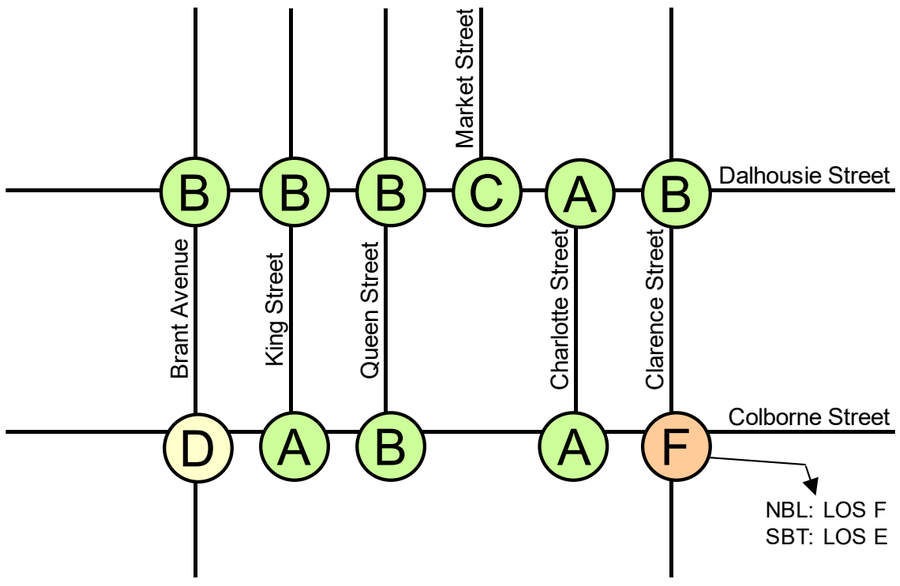
Traffic Study Findings

2041 Operations (Two Way)

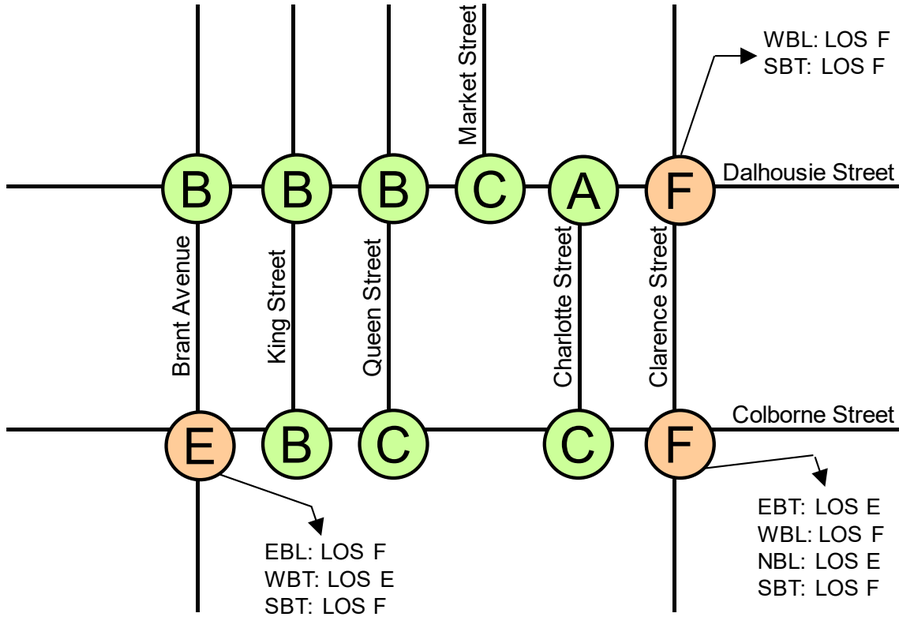
- Results based on 2041 traffic projections.
- Signal timings optimized in assessment.
- Under the two-way scenario, increased delays projected along Brant Avenue corridor.
- Under this scenario there is significant queuing and delay projected along Clarence Street corridor.

LOS (Delay s)	DESCRIPTION	LOS (Delay s)	DESCRIPTION
A	Little to no delay	D	Frequent queuing and delay
B	Minimal delay	E	Increased queuing and delay
C	Some queuing and delay	F	Significant queuing and delay

Weekday AM Peak Hour



Weekday PM Peak Hour



Traffic Study Findings

Changes in Level of Service (LOS)

Intersection	Existing	2041 One-Way	2041 Two-Way
Brant/Colborne (AM)	B	D	D
Brant/Dalhousie (AM)	A	B	B
Brant Colborne (PM)	B	D	E
Brant/Dalhousie (PM)	B	B	B
Clarence/Colborne (AM)	B	C	F
Clarence/Dalhousie (AM)	B	C	B
Clarence/Colborne (PM)	D	F	F
Clarence/Dalhousie (PM)	C	F	F

One way is more efficient.

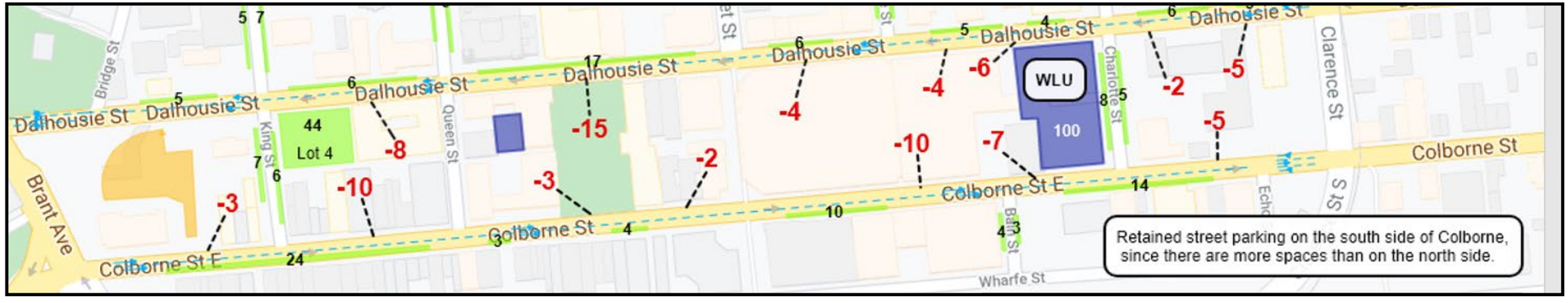
One way is more efficient.

Two way is more efficient .

- One-way traffic is more efficient than two-way.
- Clarence at Colborne and Dalhousie still both F's.
- In both scenarios, improvements to Clarence Street should be considered, including curbside management and garbage collection, loading and unloading, emergency vehicles, etc.
- There are additional factors that are not directly represented in the traffic study.
- The results of the traffic study we completed using the current Transportation Master Plan.

Parking Study Findings

Existing and Proposed Parking Removal



	Existing	Proposed	Gain/Loss	Gain/Loss (%)
On-Street Parking	541	457	(84)	(15%)
Off-Street Parking	1,141	1,141	0	0%
Total	**Total**	**1,682**	**1,598**	**(5%)**

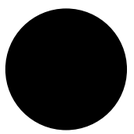
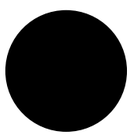
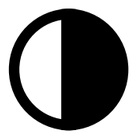
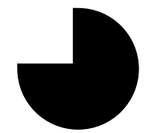
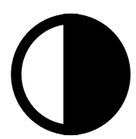
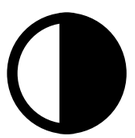
- One way and two way both have a loss of 84 on-street parking spots and will retain parking on only one side of the streets. These spots are lost to accommodate bike lanes.
- Before COVID-19, the parkade operated at 60% peak capacity, 380 available spaces
- Through further design, may be able to retain some of the lost parking spots
- Design will attempt to incorporate on street parking on side streets where possible

Evaluation Criteria

	User Benefits	Other Benefits
Vision	· Improved walkability through Downtown. · Increased pedestrian capacity. · Is a “People Place”, streets are animated.	· Necessary infrastructure improvements – all modes. · Attractive, vibrant, unique.
Social Environment	· Addresses curbside management issues. · Accessibility is addressed for all users. · Improved pedestrian and cycle facilities. · Accommodation for public transit. · Consideration for parking.	· Minimal cultural heritage and archaeological impacts. · Improves natural environment. · Contributes to improved quality of life and public health. · Addresses climate change.
Safety	· Feeling of comfort and safety. · Street-level activity encouraged. · Roads and sidewalks are safe and accessible for all users.	· Reduction in vehicular accidents overall. · Encouraging safe use of sidewalks and roads under all conditions. · Safer pedestrian crossings – shorter crossing distances, dedicated crossings.
Traffic Operations	· Sufficient level of service. · Minimizing traffic disruption from loading/unloading.	· Integrated transportation network. · Minimize need for widening. · Encourages decrease in single-occupant vehicle travel.
Costs	· Minimal property impacts.	· Capital construction costs. · Consideration for long-term maintenance costs. · Constructability – disruption during construction.

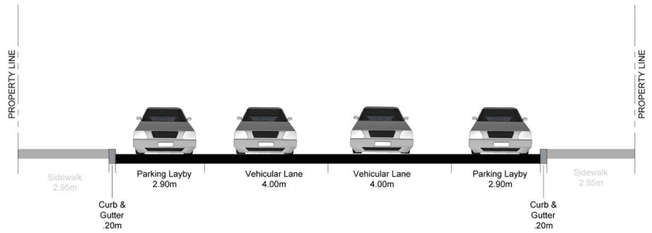
Evaluation of cost is limited to streetscaping features and maintenance – excludes cost of underground infrastructure replacement, as that will be the same under all scenarios.

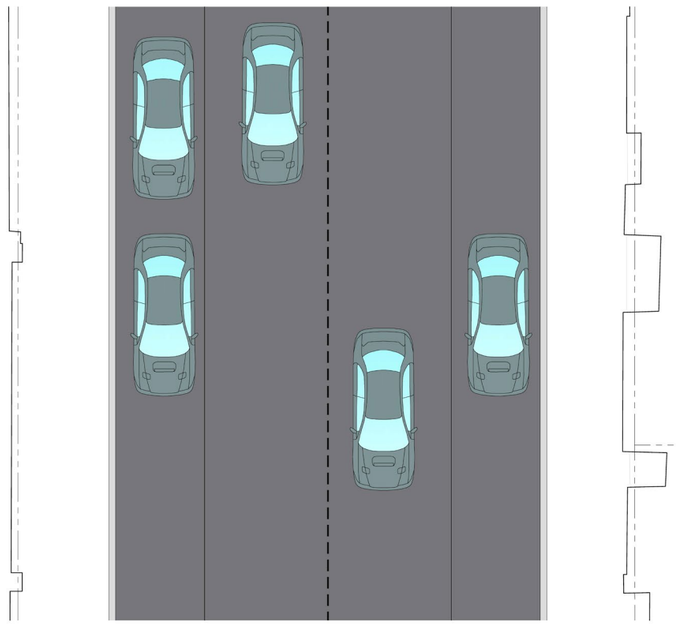
Evaluation Summary

Evaluation Criteria	Alternative 1: Do Nothing	Alternative 2: Two Way (Bi-Directional Bike)	Alternative 3: Two Way (Separated Bike)	Alternative 4: One Way (Bi-Directional Bike)	Alternative 5: One Way (Single Bike)
Vision					
Social Environment					
Traffic Operations					
Safety					
Cost					
Preferred					

Alternative 1: Do Nothing

Do not proceed with the project any further





Vision: Doing nothing does not meet the City's vision for creating a Downtown that people want to visit, and make it more walkable. Underground infrastructure will need to accommodate needs of planned growth.

Social Environment: No improvement to aesthetics, walkability, no cycling facility.

Traffic Operations: Under current conditions, traffic will not be impacted, and capacity does not appear to be an issue.

Safety: Speed of traffic through Downtown not addressed.

Cost: The lowest cost option is to do nothing. Will still require some cost to improve so that accessibility is addressed.

Evaluation

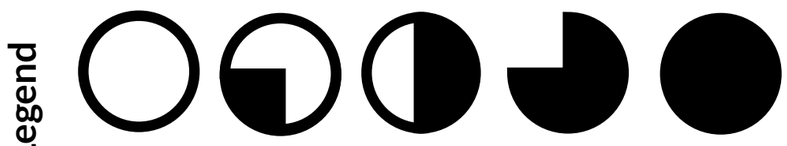
Vision

Social Environment

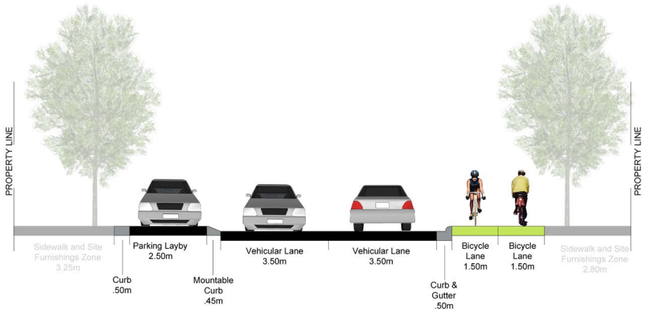
Traffic Operations

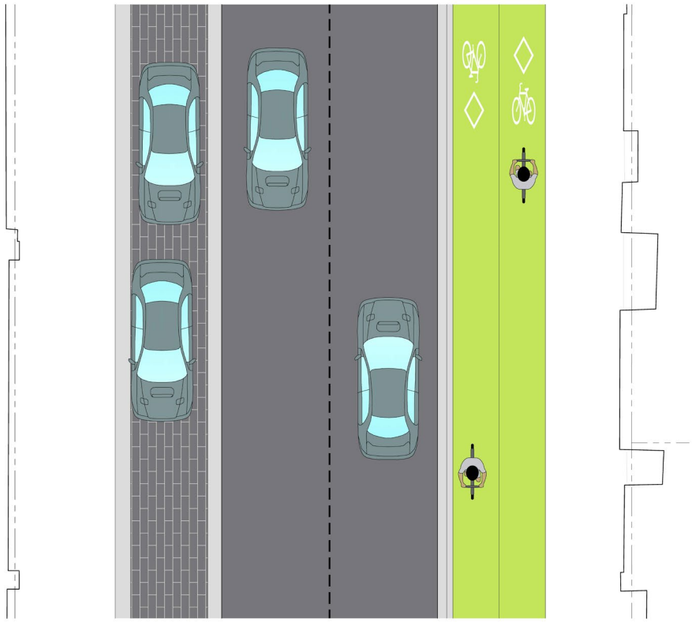
Safety

Cost



Alternative 2: Two-Way Traffic with Separated Bi-Directional Cycle Facility





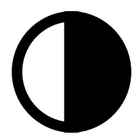
Evaluation

Vision: This alternative is in-line with the overall vision. Provides dedicated cycling facility addressing active transportation, maintains parking on one side of the street, narrows the travel lanes to reduce speeds, and allows street furniture.

Pedestrian space is not any wider than the existing, meaning no additional space for patios is available.

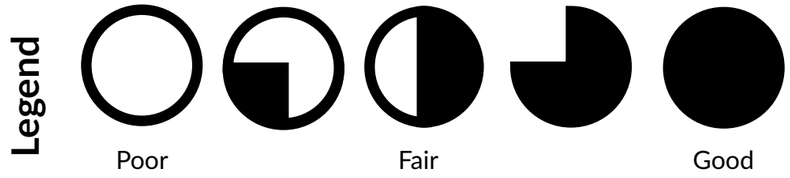
Social Environment: Space for street trees, improving natural environment, maintains parking on one side. Two-way traffic operations are affected by the need for curbside management (ie garbage pick up, loading, unloading)

Traffic Operations: Overall the two-way traffic does not perform as well as the one-way option, and is also more greatly impacted by curbside management, loading, emergency vehicles etc.

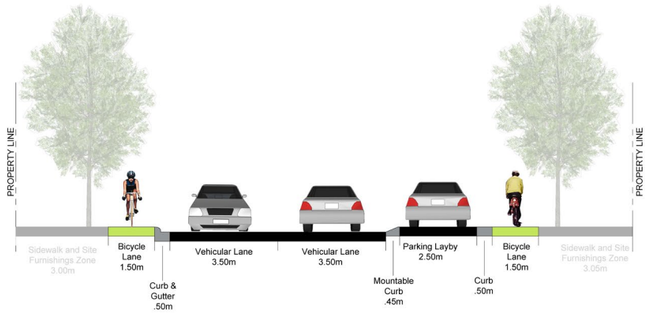


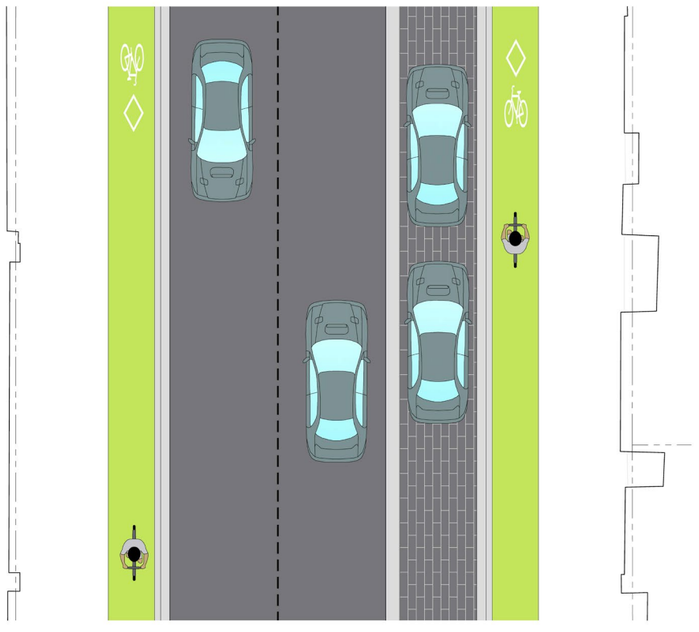
Safety: High level of cyclist safety as bike lanes are fully protected. Parking is also separated.

Cost: Slightly higher cost of maintaining bike lanes, as plows might need to pass twice to clear snow.



Alternative 3: Two-Way Traffic with Separated Cycle Lanes





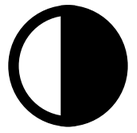
Evaluation

Vision: This alternative is in-line with the overall vision. Provides dedicated cycling facility addressing active transportation, maintains parking on one side of the street, narrows the travel lanes to reduce speeds, and allows street furniture.

Pedestrian space is not any wider than the existing, meaning no additional space for patios is available.

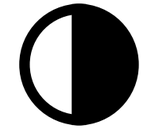
Social Environment: Space for street trees, improving natural environment, maintains parking on one side. Two-way traffic operations are affected by the need for curbside management (i.e. garbage pick up, loading, unloading).

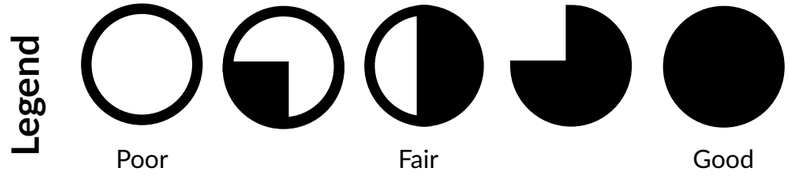
Traffic Operations: Overall the two-way traffic does not perform as well as the one-way option, and is also more greatly impacted by curbside management, loading, emergency vehicles etc.



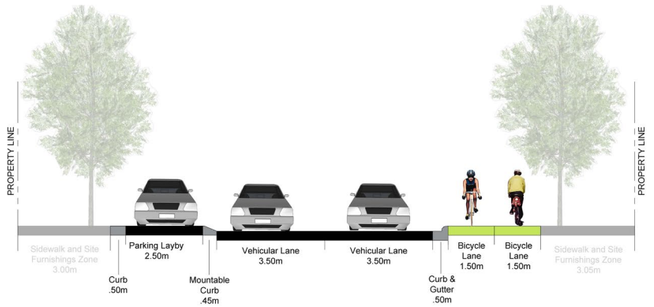
Safety: High level of cyclist safety as bike lanes are fully protected. Parking is also separated.

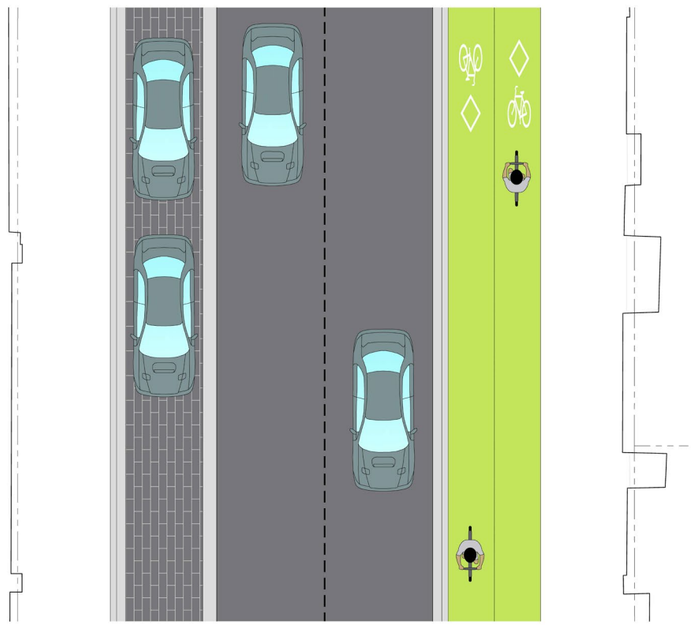
Cost: Slightly higher cost of maintaining bike lanes, standard sidewalk plow can clear in one pass, but plowing on both sides is required.





Alternative 4: One-Way Traffic with Separated Bi-Directional Cycle Facility





Evaluation

Vision: This alternative is in-line with the overall vision. Provides dedicated cycling facility addressing active transportation, maintains parking on one side of the street, narrows the travel lanes to reduce speeds, and allows street furniture.

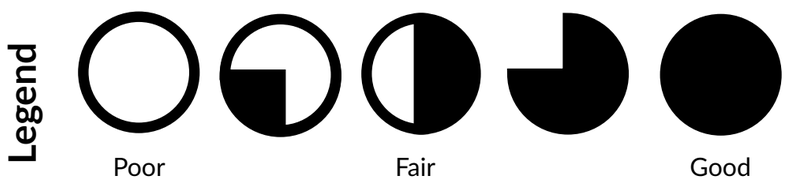
With this cross section, the pedestrian space is not any wider than the existing, meaning no additional space for patios is available.

Social Environment: Space for street trees, improving natural environment, maintains parking on one side. Two lanes of traffic allow for curbside management (i.e. garbage pick up, loading, unloading).

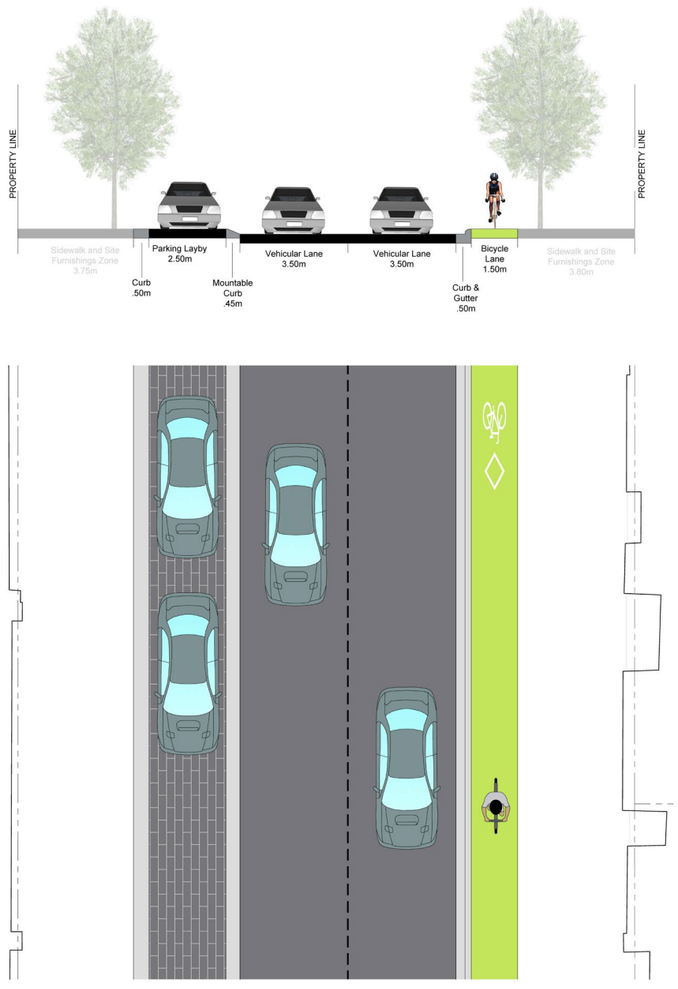
Traffic Operations: One-way streets move traffic more efficiently.

Safety: High level of cyclist safety as bike lanes are fully protected. Parking is also separated.

Cost: Slightly higher cost of maintaining bike lanes as plows might need to pass twice to clear snow.



Alternative 5: One-Way Traffic with Separated Single Cycle Lane (Preferred)



Vision: This alternative is in-line with the overall vision. Provides dedicated cycling facility addressing active transportation, maintains parking on one side of the street, narrows the travel lanes to reduce speeds, and allows street furniture.

In this option, 1.5m of space is gained from only having one bike lane, which can be used for additional patio or pedestrian space.

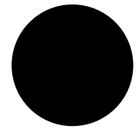
Social Environment: Space for street trees, improving natural environment, maintains parking on one side. Two lanes of traffic allow for curbside management (ie garbage pick up, loading, unloading).

Traffic Operations: One-way streets move traffic more efficiently. Slight reduction in capacity based on 2041 projections.

Safety: High level of cyclist safety as bike lanes are fully protected. Parking is also separated.

Cost: Slightly reduced cost of maintaining bike lanes, standard sidewalk plow can clear in one pass.

Evaluation

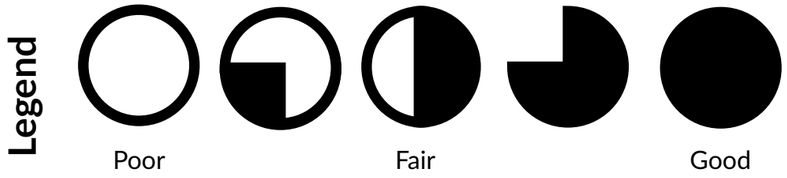

Vision


Social Environment

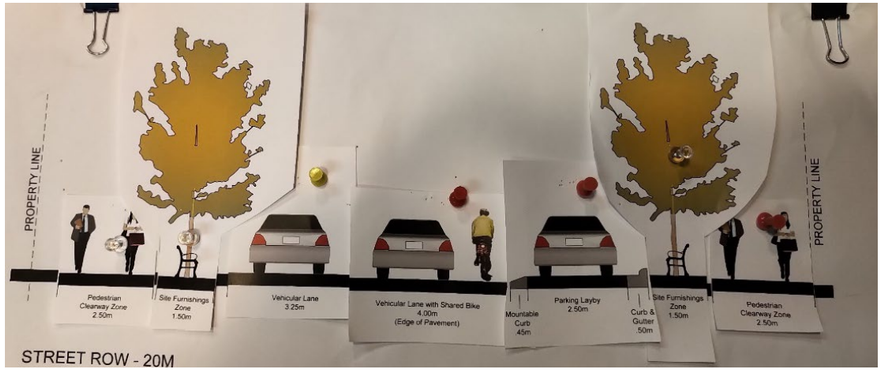

Traffic Operations


Safety


Cost



Preliminary Options – Screened Out



On-Road Cycle Lanes

- Add to asphalt width, encouraging faster speed.
- Reduced cyclist safety.

One-Way Traffic with One Lane

- Hinder traffic flow during curbside pick-up.
- Could not accommodate deliveries.

On-road cycle lanes: They were ruled out from a safety perspective. With on-street parking expected, creates greater number of conflict points between pedestrians and cyclists. It also gives the roadway a wider “feel”, which may encourage faster vehicular speeds

One-way traffic with one lane: (One on Colborne, and one on Dalhousie). Given needs for garbage collection, loading and unloading, deliveries, emergency vehicles, etc., one lane would create significant traffic issues throughout the day.

Different treatment: Applying different treatments to Colborne and Dalhousie. There was concern that this may create inequalities and concerns for businesses and residents. Proceeded with alternatives that apply the same cross section to both streets.

Example – Downtown Kitchener

Before

- Downtown Kitchener was used by drivers as a through street to get across the City.
- Was not pedestrian friendly, accessible.

After

- Narrower lanes were introduced, dramatically slowing traffic.
- Introduced flexible parking. Spaces used for parking or patio depending on business preference.

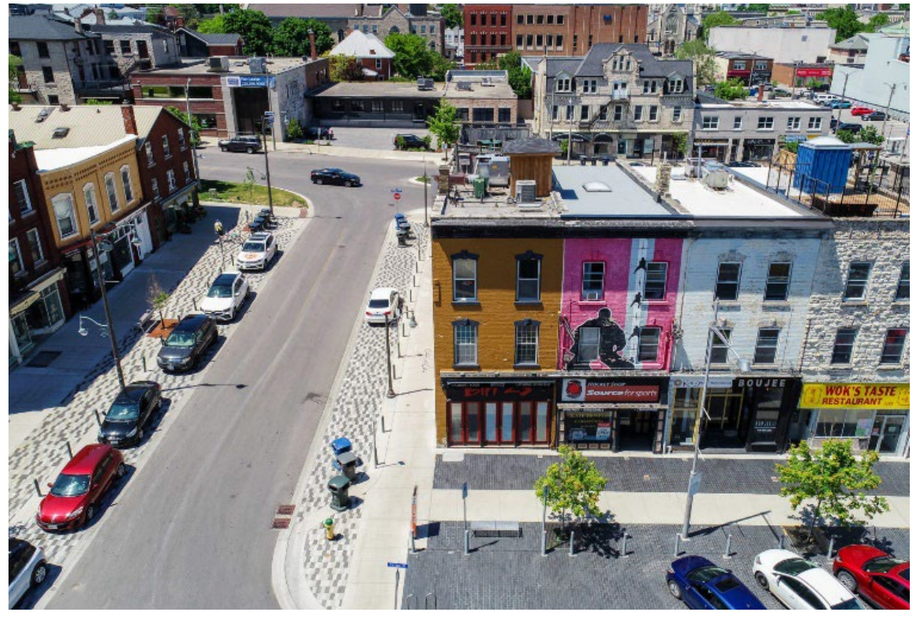
Example – Downtown Guelph

Before

- Wide lanes.
- Narrow sidewalks.

After

- Lane widths reduced, increased pedestrian/patio space.
- On-street parking differentiated.



Example – Downtown Stratford

Before

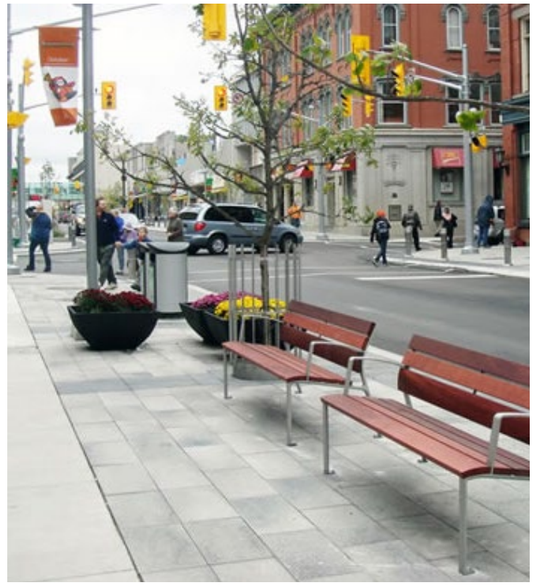
- Not pedestrian friendly.
- High vacancy rate near project area.

After

- Lane widths reduced, increased pedestrian/patio space.
- On-street parking differentiated.

What's Next?

Implementing safe pedestrian crossings.



More detail about specific streetscaping elements.

Infrastructure to improve curbside management.

Next Steps

May 6, 2021

Presentation slides posted.

May 13, 2021

Live Presentation PIC – Question and Comment Period open for two weeks.

June 3, 2021

Q/A document posted.

Questions and Comments

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Date of contribution	Q&A Question	[redacted]	[redacted]
Apr 30 21 02:12:02 pm	What is the possibility of closing Colborne Street to through traffic, with the exception of timed access for service vehicles such as taxi cabs and accessible transit vans?	[redacted]	[redacted]
May 04 21 02:07:38 pm	When you are presenting the project, findings, issues, suggestions etc. I see the point about slides... when is the actual presentation? Is that the 13th? You still need to sell us on the value of this work....	[redacted]	[redacted]
May 10 21 01:16:22 pm	This is a once in 25-year project. Stage one includes an online survey that 418 people responded to. What value does this have? It is not research. It is not a statistically valid measure. At best this is just 0.4% of the city; a random group of people who happened to fill out the survey. You cannot make decisions based on this simplistic survey. Even with this number, just 26 people say they cycle. If this was representative of the city, that would be 0.026 of the population. How does this justify the cost and space on the roads? Do you have other research data that provide more accurate indications that people will ride downtown? For what purpose? It will never be a place of many jobs, nor will it ever offer many retail opportunities. I have lived in much bigger cities with numerous types of big lanes and robust downtowns. Secondly, where do I find the assumptions for the 2041 traffic projections?	[redacted]	[redacted]
May 20 21 01:48:58 pm	How long till you fools think its time to reverse the new two-way back into one-way ? You're constant incompetence just proves that mental illness runs rampant in Brantford. You idiots really screwed up Elgin St with those unused unwanted stupid bike lanes. might as well screw up our downtown too.	[redacted]	
May 21 21 07:08:48 am	Given that hardly anyone goes biking toward downtown, but rather driving and possibly walking, what conceivable net benefit comes from trading a driving lane for a bike lane? That is the gist of this proposal, yet this is shrouded in "beautification" and other fuzzy wuzzy words.	[redacted]	[redacted]

May 21 21 12:16:57 pm	As a resident of West Brant I have only two routes to the Lynden Road area where so many businesses and restaurants are located. One is Colborne thru downtown to Wayne Gretzky,the other Veterans Memorial to Clarence than to Colborne and on . Both the routes are slow and indirect already. How will these plans effect my drive ?To bad the city didn't go ahead with the original plan for the BASR instead of the proposed Oak Park Road Extension ,it would not only of provided access to the 403 but would also solve this problem. With a proposed Costco in that area and explosive growth in West Brant traffic along this corridor will only get worse.	[redacted]	
May 21 21 05:05:33 pm	Hi, I am a résident of West brantford. I want to ask about the road infrastructure related to this downtown project and overall Brantford as it needs major improvement. I moved from Markham so that can be considered an example that how the économie activity improved in markham due to excellent road infrastructure. 2ndly, west brantford traffic has to pass through the downtown to connect to hwy 403 so there should be à direct road/bridge from west brantford to hwy 403. 3rd, there are lot of buildings in downtown which have important in terms of rich héritage so include that in project also and make the downtown move Lively, safe, visually attractive and entertaining. Thanks Sami	[redacted]	

May 26 21 12:50:01 pm	1. What is the approximate cost of removing parking spaces downtown and creating the proposed bike lanes? 2. Have all downtown merchants been asked if they are in favour of removing 84 parking spots for bike lanes, and how this change might affect their business? 3. Where will people park to shop downtown, when customers already complain about limited parking options? 4. Is there a database of cycling enthusiasts who could be surveyed to see if they would visit downtown more frequently if there were bike lanes, or if they prefer to use the trail system? 5. What was the cost of the bike lane projects on North Park and Memorial Drive? Has there been any follow up to track the number of cyclists using these lanes? 6. Do any of the decision-makers or workshop respondents live, work or own businesses downtown? 7. Will there be pedestrian crosswalks (ie at Bain and Market) with push button signals for safe crossing and to slow traffic? (like in Paris). 8. Where does the funding come from for the streetscaping project? Taxpayer dollars?	[redacted]	
May 26 21 05:05:39 pm	What we need is something to deal with the trash littering the streets and the homeless people doing drugs on the streets, leaving garbage, needles everywhere and scaring all customers. Putting a bike lane in makes no sense at all. Deal with the issues at hand. Changing to two way traffic would be ideal and having more police patrolling every day and city staff cleaning trash littering the streets.	[redacted]	
May 27 21 12:35:53 pm	Why does the city ask for public opinion, but then not listen when we speak up? The recent Expositor article made it sound like the changes were already decided upon. So many downtown merchants and residents have told me that they have been trying to get things changed for years and no one listens to their concerns.	[redacted]	[redacted]

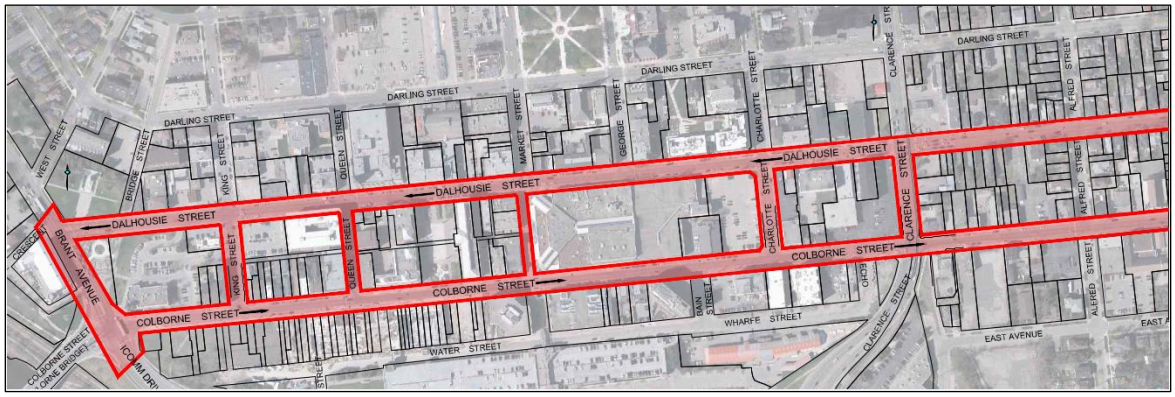
VIRTUAL PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE (PIC#2)
Downtown Streetscaping Class Environmental Assessment (EA)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

MTE GSP group CITY OF BRANTFORD Downtown Brantford

1.0 Introduction

The City of Brantford has initiated a Class Environmental Assessment (EA) for streetscaping the Downtown to improve walkability, accessibility, and underground infrastructure to allow for development, enhance the infrastructure for all transportation modes, and increase pedestrian capacity. The goal of the streetscaping improvements is to create a Downtown that is attractive, vibrant and safe for users and provides the infrastructure needed to accommodate expected growth.



Map 1 - Close up of Study Area, Part 1

Map 2 - Close up of Study Area, Part 2

2.0 Frequently Asked Questions

A number of questions and comments were submitted to the project team throughout the second Virtual Public Information Centre process. Questions and comments were grouped into various themes in the section below.

Question Theme Index

2.1 One-way versus Two-way

Question

Why is two-way traffic being considered?

Answer

The Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) process requires that a variety of solutions are being considered. To meet the requirements of the EA, the project team determined that if consideration was not given to the two-way alternative, that we would not have done our due diligence in evaluating a variety of alternatives. Considering only one method of moving vehicles, pedestrians, and other forms of transportation through the Downtown would be a disservice to the study.

Question

Is one-way traffic safer than two-way traffic?

Answer

There is not a clear answer as to whether one-way traffic is safer than two-way traffic. The features that we are looking to implement like narrower lane widths to reduce speed, bump-outs at intersections to reduce crossing distances for pedestrians, better pedestrian crossings, will all improve the overall safety downtown. These will be implemented under a one-way or two-way scenario, and will contribute to much of the improvement in safety. From a traffic perspective, one-way and two-way are very similar with respect to safety.

2.2 Safety Downtown

Question
In what ways can this study and the work being proposed improve perceptions of safety downtown? Will the study be addressing vacancy rates, open lots, alley ways, and how will crime prevention through environmental design principles be incorporated?

Answer
While this work will not provide a complete solution to the problems noted, there are a few ways that the outcomes of this study can improve the perception of safety. This includes consideration of open sight lines and reducing the potential for 'hiding spaces' with the placement of streetscape elements and lighting (also known as CPTED or Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) and attracting more residents and visitors to the Downtown to increase the presence of others and eyes on the street through both the placemaking elements that may be proposed, or through the increased servicing capacity for future development.

Question
Why is safety the same in all alternatives?

Answer
Safety is evaluated the same in each alternative, because in each of the alternatives, for one-way and two-way, all of the same safety improvements will be included.

- Narrower lanes to slow traffic
- Improved pedestrian crossing, including reduced crossing distances
- Improved pedestrian and cycling facilities

These features will greatly improve the overall safety downtown, and will be applied regardless of the alternatives.

2.3 Downtown Parking

Question

Why is on street parking being prioritized downtown? While the majority of people surveyed arrive downtown via driving?

Although there is a general movement towards the accommodation of active transportation over the reliance on single vehicle traffic, parking still plays an important component towards a successful downtown. Convenient, short term parking for deliveries or pick-ups, or for accessibility reasons should still be provided.
The preferred alternative for the right-of-way would reduce the overall on-street parking provision for Downtown, requiring further utilization of off-street parking.
Please also note that although the parking area in the alternatives is shown as a continuous lay-by, that the parking areas should be interrupted with bump outs to shorten crossing distances and provide traffic calming, or be treated as flexible use areas to accommodate additional pedestrian amenities during special events, or potentially for street tree planting.

2.4 Community

Question

What is the value to the community of all of the work you are proposing?

Answer

There are a few ways that this project will provide value to the community:

- Improved underground infrastructure - the improved underground infrastructure is needed to support development within the downtown. The new development will mean more people living and working downtown.
- Streetscaping – With the infrastructure improvements being made, most of the downtown will be disturbed, and so this is an opportunity to think about how to renovate the downtown. An option would be to simply reinstate everything as it is today, at nearly the same cost as it would be to do the streetscaping.
- Businesses – The vision for downtown is to attract people back to the downtown, and more people downtown will be good for the businesses.

Question
What value do cycling lanes add to the business community?

Answer
The addition of cycling lanes downtown is intended to promote more active transportation. The objective is to make the downtown more of a destination, and if we are successful at creating a downtown that is a destination, we want to be sure that there is a variety of means of getting there. The feedback they we have seen shows that most people drive to downtown. Given that there are no cycle lanes, we hope that introducing them will encourage people to use them. There is also a great deal of expected development in and near the downtown, and as more people live near the downtown, they are more likely to walk or bike.

2.5 Cycle Lanes

Question
How are we justifying the inclusion of cycling lanes in the design, is it based solely on the survey responses that we received, or is there a fulsome study that was completed that indicated the need for cycle lanes?

Answer
Part of the rational for including the cycle lanes is that the City's transportation master plan indicates Colborne Street and Dalhousie Street as bikeways. What was established in the workshop sessions with stakeholders, and with the City was the vision for the project. The City is aligned with with finding ways to encourage active transportation, downtown and throughout the City. If there are no cycling facilities, there will be little expectation that cyclists will ever come downtown.

Question
Have other cycling routes been considered?

Answer
At this point we have not considered alternate bike routes. We have tried to ensure that our findings are in line with the City's transportation master plan. As we get into more detailed design, we will look at whether consideration for alternate cycling routes is feasible.

Question
Why did all alternatives presented include cycle lanes?

Answer
Cycle lanes have been a feature that has been endorsed by stakeholders throughout this study. At the stakeholder workshops, nearly every group indicated that they would like to see cycle lanes, and all of the feedback showed that they were important to people. Additionally, the City's transportation master plan indicates Colborne and Dalhousie as part of the City's bikeway network.

Question
What's the benefit of single bike lanes rather than bidirectional?

Answer
The main benefit of the single bike lane is that it limits the space taken up by cycle lanes within the cross section. Having one lane, rather than two on each street means more space on each street for wider pedestrian walkways, patio space, etc.

2.6 Construction Timing

Question
When is construction going to occur?

Answer
There is quite a significant amount of design and utility coordination that needs to be completed before construction activities can begin. This study is expected to be completed by the end of 2021, and detailed design could begin in early 2022. Detailed design would need a minimum of a year. The first phase of construction would be relocation of utilities, ensuring they are in their ultimate location (Bell, Rogers, Enbridge, etc.) Construction of the road is likely to start in 2024, and would be phased over a couple of years.

Question

Will you be doing the full roadway at one time? How will you reduce disruption to businesses and activity in the core?

Answer

The full roadway would not be constructed all at once. While we don't have the complete phasing determined at this time, we expect that construction would take place a block or two at a time. There would be provisions in place so that safe pedestrian access would be maintained at all times, and that businesses would have access and be able to stay open during construction. These provisions may be creation of temporary protected pedestrian access through the construction area keeping access to businesses. These techniques are fairly commonly used when construction takes place in downtown areas. Much more detail would be available once the design progresses.

2.7 Miscellaneous

Question

What is the possibility of closing Colborne Street to through traffic, with the exception of timed access for service vehicles such as taxi cabs and accessible transit vans?

Answer

While the closure of streets is an option to be considered when determining how right-of-ways in the Downtown may be programmed, we have proposed the right-of-way to still accommodate through traffic to meet current and anticipated service levels as outlined in the TMP. Streets however should be designed to offer flexibility in order to accommodate change in use over time. Before a street is fully closed, we would encourage that pilot projects first be undertaken to close off a street to in order to evaluate how that closure, or a modification to the service level is received. Flexible streets, which incorporate rolled or flush curbs can be considered as we move into the detail design phases of the project to ensure they can better accommodate potential street closures in a barrier-free manor.

Question

How will public feedback be incorporated into this study and final recommendations being made? If we provide comments how can we ensure they'll be considered in the study?

Answer

The project team is dedicated to receiving and responding to all of the responses we get. We review each response, and evaluate the feasibility of all the comments we receive. When looking at individual feedback, we have to balance all of the priorities or preferences we see to make decisions, then we use the evaluation criteria outlined in the study to make decisions.

Every comment received will be part of the Environmental Study Report document filed at the end of the project, including the individual response to each comment. As part of each individual response, suggestions that may not align or be feasible for this study will be responded to with rationale. If there was a particular reason why the comment or suggestion was not taken, you would receive a response as to why it may not be feasible.

Question

What are the demographics of the workshop attendees?

The workshop attendees consisted of City staff, councilors, business owners, and representatives from a variety of organizations including the police department, library, Laurier University, and Conestoga College to name a few.

Question

What types of greenery will be planted downtown?

Answer

As we proceed further with the streetscaping design, we will definitely be looking into the varieties and locations of plantings within the downtown. We will be looking at underground cells that promote and allow for larger growth of street trees, while also managing stormwater runoff as well.

Question

When will you be looking at specific elements like furniture, plantings lighting, etc.?

Answer

The next phase of this assignment will begin to put a picture together of what the overall streetscape will look like. As we complete this round of public engagement, we will be taking the feedback we have received to date, and start to determine what features will be included, as well as how and where they will be located. We anticipate that the details will be presented at the next PIC which is expected later this summer.

Question

Will the EA look at widening the roadway on Colborne and Dalhousie Street?

Answer

When we look at the traffic study, which provides projections for traffic downtown through 2041, there is no need identified to widen the roadway in downtown. The City has a very narrow right of way through downtown, and widening the roadway would have significant impact to properties and buildings. There is a need for widening identified on Clarence Street, which will be looked at as our study progresses.

3.0 Comments/Questions

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