



**Town of Aurora  
General Committee Report No. PDS19-018**

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**Subject:** Library Square – Parking Strategy

**Prepared by:** Andria Sallese, Senior Policy Planner  
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**Department:** Planning and Development Services

**Date:** March 21, 2019

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### **Recommendation**

- 1. That Report No. PDS19-018 be received;**
- 2. That Parking Strategy Phase 1: ‘Quick Wins’ as outlined in this report be adopted; and**
- 3. That Council approve \$87,882.00 to the Library Square budget to be funded as per Funding Strategy Report FS19-012 for additional on-site parking on Victoria Street, conditional on the approval of the addition to the Church Street School; and**
- 4. That Council approve \$185,376.00 to the Library Square budget to be funded as per Funding Strategy Report FS19-012 for additional on-site parking within the laneway, conditional on the approval of the addition to the Church Street School; and**
- 5. That Council approve \$145,740.00 to the Library Square budget to be funded as per Funding Strategy Report FS19-012 for additional on-site parking on Church Street subject to further public consultation, conditional on the approval of the addition to the Church Street School.**

### **Executive Summary**

The intent of this report is to present the findings of the draft parking strategy for Library Square and to seek Council’s approval to proceed with the implementation of the identified ‘Quick Wins’ to augment the existing parking supply. This report also seeks Council direction to continue to explore medium and long-term parking solutions. The report can be summarized as follows:

- Library Square design progressing to final approval;
- Onsite Parking supply, as currently designed, will not support expanded programming in Library Square;
- Barrier-free parking spaces meet the minimum AODA requirement; and
- Consultant recommends a phased parking strategy approach.

## **Background**

Since 2000, Council has directed Staff to undertake various studies to address the parking supply in the downtown. The following provides a quick summary of these activities.

In 2002, the Town conducted a Master Transportation Operations Study that indicated that there was an adequate amount of both on and off-street parking in the downtown area to meet demand. In 2007, the Town retained Marshall Macklin Monaghan (MMM) to update the parking component of the 2002 study to assess whether parking supply was still adequate in response to concerns raised by the Aurora Public Library. The MMM report reviewed existing parking supply and demand, and determined that the core area in Downtown Aurora generally had enough parking and was expected to continue to do so in the future, with the exception of library parking which was operating at capacity. The MMM report also determined that, while the library lot was operating at full capacity, on-street parking was poorly utilized and that there was sufficient on-street parking available to address the needs of not only the library, but also the more intensive use of the other three municipal buildings at the time.

The report proposed five options to address the shortfall of parking in the library parking lot. These options were evaluated against a set of criteria, including the ability of the option to address the parking demand, the impact of construction on additional parking, urban design considerations, and costs. On the basis of this analysis, the consultant report determined that Options A and D, which included using on-street parking on Yonge Street more effectively, and relocating some or all library employees to another site with available surplus parking, such as a church site, would free up space in the library parking lot. These recommendations were later jointly implemented by both the Town and Library.

In 2016, in response to a Council motion, Staff initiated a Downtown Traffic Management Plan for Library Square to assess a number of issues in the area, including traffic infiltration, parking demand and a plan to convert on-street parking to

angled parking on the Church Street, Victoria Street and Mosley Street boulevard, and traffic operation configuration on these streets to one-way only.

Infrastructure and Environmental Services Staff brought forward a report in September of 2016 summarizing their findings and recommendations. The report concluded at that time that, on the basis of their analysis and the 2007 Downtown Core Parking Area Study, the existing parking layout and traffic operation configuration was functioning well. The report recommended a comprehensive approach that was driven by an update to the Master Transportation Plan in order to align various initiatives with the Aurora Promenade Concept Plan.

#### *Aurora Promenade Urban Design Strategy*

In 2010, the Town of Aurora approved the Aurora Promenade Urban Design Strategy (the 'Strategy'). The purpose of the Urban Design Strategy was to guide and manage growth in a way that realizes the Official Plan and Secondary Plan vision for revitalizing the Yonge and Wellington corridors into a vibrant place to live, shop, work and play. Key to the strategy is reinforcing and enhancing the Cultural Precinct by leveraging cultural assets, enhancing public spaces and promoting a distinct streetscape.

The Strategy, building on a downtown parking assessment of the downtown area, included recommendations for further exploration of travel demand management measures, as well as the potential for a shared parking structure, to address parking demand in the area.

Among other matters, the Strategy stresses the importance of comprehensively balancing the supply of parking in the Downtown with redevelopment. Section 3.1.2 of the Strategy describes a key objective for The Aurora Promenade in transforming the area from one that is largely auto-oriented to a vibrant pedestrian-oriented one. Part of this objective requires a 'special' approach to parking that relies on a variety of travel demand management strategies to mitigate parking demand. The strategies put forward in Section 3.1.2 include:

- Subsidizing transit trips to the area;
- Improving cycling and pedestrian routes to local destinations;
- Accepting cash-in-lieu of parking or reducing parking requirements for new development; and

- Partnering with developers to provide parking underground, or with civic and institutional uses, to share parking facilities.

The above strategies are intended to reduce the demand for additional surface parking and help mitigate the visual unsightliness of large parking lots or monolithic parking structures.

The Strategy's Public Realm framework identifies a potential public parking facility on the Library Square site. Planning Staff believe that the redevelopment of Library Square represents an opportunity to continue to explore parking options and travel demand management strategies for the site and within the Cultural Precinct.

## **Analysis**

### **Library Square design progressing to final approval**

The Town is in the detailed design stages of preparing plans for Library Square. The latest design concept was approved by Council in June 2018 and proposes a 2,975 square metre addition to the Church Street School. The addition includes community programming space (program room, performing arts studio, and a multi-purpose studio visual arts room) and a 192-250 seat performance hall. The design concept also proposes re-purposing the parking lot between the Library and the Church Street School House into a 2700 square metre urban plaza with outdoor programmable space ('the Square').

In June 2018, Council approved parking for Library Square. On-site parking would be provided primarily in a parking lot on the north-east corner of the site. Five parallel parking spaces are also proposed in a laneway connecting Yonge Street, the parking lot, and Victoria Street. The laneway is intended to act as an east-west mid-block connection, realizing one of the public realm objectives for this block. Full-moves access to the parking lot is proposed from Victoria Street, with one-way access from Yonge Street.

The Council approved design for Library Square would provide a total of 83 parking spaces, which would serve the Library, School House addition and the Square.

### **Onsite Parking supply will not support expanded programming in Library Square**

The Town, in partnership with the Aurora Public Library, has hired a parking consultant to evaluate parking requirements in Library Square. The parking study examined both the existing parking supply and demand with or without the proposed School House Addition.

This study was informed by feedback received through the Library Square consultation including ongoing engagement with the Aurora Public Library and other Cultural partners. The Town's parking consultant also prepared a parking survey for patrons of the Library and Cultural Centre as well as an inventory of parking and related parking counts to support the analysis.

The consultant's report reveals that there is an existing parking supply of 89 parking spaces for the Library and the Cultural Centre. The existing uses on-site generate a total demand for 79 and 84 parking spaces during weekday and weekend peak periods respectively. The consultant report concluded that, currently, there is sufficient on-street parking supply within the Focus Area, which represents a two block radius (Figure 2), and within the Broader Area of the site (Figure 1), to accommodate the existing parking demand. Parking within the Focus Area is largely within a 5 to 6 minute (250 metres) walking distance from Library Square, with the furthest parking in the Broader Area within a 10 to 12 minute (500 metres) walking distance.

The consultant has modelled two future parking demand scenarios. The first scenario includes the demand generated by the existing uses, as well as the proposed community uses in the addition. This scenario generates a total demand for approximately 108 and 113 parking spaces during weekday and weekend peak periods respectively, or 29 additional parking spaces over the existing demand for these periods.

The consultant's report also concluded that, currently, there is sufficient on-street parking supply within the Focus Area, to accommodate the existing and forecast parking demand, even without the use of private parking lots. However, this strategy would require a significant shift in user behaviour in the use of on-street parking. Staff have completed an evaluation of the travel distance proposed in the Focus Area compared to commonly used Aurora Facilities and their parking lots to provide context as to the proposed walking distance (Figure 3).

The second scenario includes the demand of all the community uses on the site, including a full capacity theatre for events. This scenario generates a total demand of approximately 200 and 213 parking spaces during weekday and weekend peak periods respectively, or 121 to 129 additional parking spaces. These scenarios are illustrated in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1: Parking Demand Scenarios

	<b>Weekday</b>	<b>Weekend</b>
Existing On-site Parking Spaces	89	89
Existing On-site Parking Demand	79	84
Proposed On-site Parking Supply with new concept	83	83
Proposed Barrier-Free Spaces	8	8
Comprehensive Zoning By-law 6000-17 Requirement*	89	89
AODA Requirement Barrier-Free Parking	4	4
Future Scenario 1 Total Parking Demand	108	113
Future Scenario 1 (additional demand above supply, without theatre events)	<b>25</b>	<b>30</b>
Future Scenario 2 Total Parking Demand	200 spaces	213 spaces
Future Scenario 2 (Scenario 1 + additional with theatre events)	<b>117</b>	<b>130</b>

\*Section 5.4.1 "Promenade Parking Standards', 1 space per 100m2 of gross floor area.

As noted previously, the current site design would accommodate a total of 83 parking spaces. The resulting pressure on the existing parking supply suggests 29 additional

vehicles during the daytime weekday and weekend peak periods, and 121 to 129 additional parking spaces for full capacity theatre events.

Major events on-site will generate significantly greater demand that can be accommodated through on-street parking within a two block radius. The parking demand for these types events are typically more flexible and generally willing to park further away from the event venue, which suggests less concerns related to visitor behaviour.

### **Barrier-free parking spaces exceeds the minimum AODA requirement**

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) requires that, where there are between 13 and 100 parking spaces, four percent be for the use of persons with disabilities. This minimum requirement increases where there are 101 to 200 parking spaces provided on-site to 1 parking space plus three percent of the total number of parking spaces. The current site plan proposes 83 parking spaces, including eight (8) barrier free spaces or 10 percent of the total number of parking spaces.

Two barrier-free parking spaces are provided in the laneway. These barrier-free parking spots are located 23 metres from the library entrance, and 52 metres from the lower level entrance of the addition. Two additional barrier-free spaces are located at the south-east corner of the parking lot, and are located 32 metres from the main entrance of the School House addition. Three (3) barrier-free spaces are located in the lay-by on Victoria Street. The furthest stall is 15 metres from the main entrance of the addition. Finally, one barrier-free space is located at the north corner of the parking lot. This stall is located five (5) metres from the back entrance of Victoria Hall.

The Town's parking consultant has recommended that the Town proceed with barrier-free parking spaces that meet the minimum AODA requirement, while monitoring actual usage of the barrier-free spaces in Library Square once the addition has been constructed and operations have commenced. The minimum AODA requirement for barrier free spaces is 4 parking spots or 4 percent, whereas the current site plan proposes 8 barrier free spaces, or 10 percent of the total number of parking spaces.

The "Quick Wins" described in the subsequent paragraphs will offer opportunities to further expand accessible parking if necessary. It is recommended that 4 additional parking spaces be built to an accessible standard on Victoria Street as described below. This approach allows Staff the flexibility to increase accessible parking according to demand, without increasing additional capital costs.

### **Consultant recommends phased parking strategy approach**

The parking consultant has recommended a number of strategies, including travel demand management measures, to accommodate the forecast parking demand. These strategies allow the Town of Aurora to proceed with parking on a phased basis, initially with the proposed addition to the school house and reconstruction of parking on the north end of the site.

Phase 1 of the parking strategy proposes 'Quick Wins' that can be implemented in the short-term. Phase 2 of the parking strategy includes medium to long-term solutions to expand on- and off-street parking supply. The consultant's recommendations are described in more detail below:

#### PHASE 1: QUICK WINS

##### Maximize Use of Existing Off-Street Public Parking

- Develop and implement consistent signage and branding for public off-site parking lots.
- Treat the new Library Square surface parking lot as a public parking lot for use by all visitors to the area.
- Increase the prominence of the public parking lot west of Yonge Street. Add more prominent signage along the adjacent roads.
- Increase pedestrian access to the public parking lot by establishing a direct pedestrian connection from Yonge Street through future development applications along the corridor.

##### Revisit Yonge Street Parking Restrictions

- On-street parking along Yonge Street was underutilized during the study periods. Increase parking restrictions to two or three hours to allow patrons more flexibility and promote on-street parking along the Yonge Street corridor.
- Any changes to permitted parking hours should be monitored over time to determine impacts on businesses and the availability of parking.

##### Increase On-Street parking on Church Street and Victoria Street



- Through the redevelopment of the Site, remove existing curb cuts along Church Street for the public library parking lot and allocate the space to on-street parking.
- A conceptual design of lay-by parking on Church Street determined that a total of 13 additional spaces on the north side of the street could be provided. Similarly, 9 dedicated parking spaces could be provided within the boulevard on Victoria Street. This design would result in a total of 108 parking spaces, with 12 barrier-free spaces (12.5% of the total parking supply) and one loading space.

#### Transition from Private Parking Lots to Shared Public Parking Lots

- The area surrounding the site consists of many small, private surface parking lots that serve individual businesses. Over time, these lots could be consolidated into public lots in order to increase efficiency, design quality, and access opportunities.
- New buildings in the area should not be encouraged to construct new surface visitor parking and instead accommodate the parking demand from these new buildings in off-site, public lots.

#### Encourage Long-Term Parking in Less-desirable Lots

- As local area parking increases, the most desirable spaces (typically street parking outside popular destinations) will be at a premium. Work with local businesses to encourage employees to park in less-desirable spaces in order to prioritize customer parking.

#### Use Parking Pricing to Alter Behaviour and Raise Revenue for New Parking

- Many municipalities have implemented parking charges to alter behavior and raise revenues.
- The key impacts on visitor behaviour would be:
  - Discouraging unnecessary automobile trips – it will be less expensive to carpool, bike, or walk; and
  - Influencing where people park – charging more for premium street parking compared to lots that are further away will influence demand and help spread parking demands through the area.

#### Monitoring demand for barrier-free parking spaces

- In order to provide a ratio of barrier-free parking spaces that reflects what is currently in use today, meets the minimum AODA requirement, while meeting the future demand generated by new programming on-site, monitor actual usage of barrier-free parking spaces in Library Square once the addition has been constructed and operations have commenced.
- This approach allows Staff the flexibility to increase accessible parking according to demand.

#### Consider additional parking in Library Square

- Consider lay-by parking on the north-side of Church Street and further explore whether there is sufficient space within the Church Street right-of-way to permit on-street parking on the south side. This option would require public consultation with local residents and stakeholders to consider the potential impact of modifications to the existing right-of-way.
- Provide additional parking on the west side of Victoria Street within the boulevard, and in the internal laneway on-site. These improvements would need to be carefully designed to limit the urban design and heritage impacts on the site.
- Cumulatively, these options could add an additional 25 parking spaces to help offset the parking shortfall for weekday non-theatre events, at an approximate total cost of \$418,998.00.

#### PHASE 2: MEDIUM TO LONG TERM PARKING SOLUTIONS

##### Option 1: Build Structured Parking on the Library Block (Long Term)

Construct structured parking with an additional 55 parking spaces than that currently proposed in the redevelopment of the site. The 55 parking spaces would incorporate the 15 parking spaces that are being lost with the proposed parking plan in the current development proposal, as well as accommodate the additional forecast parking demand for the community centre use (approximately 40 parking spaces). The exact parking quantity can be refined and optimized as design progresses.

This would be able to accommodate the existing public library and school house parking demand, as well as the forecast community centre demand. The redevelopment of the Site would maintain the status quo, where there is no additional demand being added to the street network during a typical, non-event day. It is important to note that this would not accommodate the theatre parking demand, which would be distributed to the on-

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street parking supply. The building structure would likely limit the ability to redevelop the larger block.

The additional parking could be provided under the school house addition, the public square where the library parking currently sits or the proposed surface parking lot.

Option 2: Acquire additional lands to expand parking supply (Long Term)

Lands could be acquired within the vicinity of Library Square to expand the local parking supply. This could increase the area parking supply, to be more efficient in accommodating parking demand.

Staff recommend proceeding immediately with the implementation of Phase 1: 'Quick Wins' and continuing to explore medium and long-term parking solutions and that Staff report back to Council with recommendations.

## **Advisory Committee Review**

### Accessibility Committee

As noted in the June 2018 report, both the Heritage and Accessibility Committee were consulted on the proposed project. As there have been revisions to the concept plan since the Committees last provided comments, the latest versions of the plans have recently returned to each committee for comment. The plans have also been circulated to the Town's Accessibility Advisor for review comment. Staff have received comments from the Accessibility Advisor and shared those comments with The Planning Partnership for consideration in refining the design drawings.

### Heritage Committee

The Heritage Permit Application (HPA-19-03) to approve the addition to the Part IV designated 22 Church Street was reviewed by the Heritage Advisory Committee (HAC) on March 5, 2019. As part of this application, a Heritage Impact Assessment was produced by ERA Architects, a firm that specializes in heritage consulting. The Heritage Impact Assessment outlined that there will be minimal to no impact on the character-defining elements of the heritage resource, through the sympathetic placement, massing and materiality of the addition. Furthermore, the Ontario Heritage Trust (OHT), who has a Heritage Conservation Easement over the property, has also provided their initial support for the project and design.

Ensuring design excellence, promoting responsible growth management, providing appropriate community facilities, and conserving cultural heritage resources are all objectives of the Town of Aurora Official Plan. As part of the Library Square Project, the addition to 22 Church Street will meet these objectives and has the support of the Heritage Advisory Committee and Staff.

Should there be any further modifications to the site plan that proposes alterations to character defining elements of the site to accommodate additional parking, further input may be required from the HAC and OHT.

### **Legal Considerations**

The Town's Zoning By-law exempts the Town from complying with the parking requirements of the By-law since the site is not adjacent to a residential zone. The Town is required to comply with provincial accessibility laws and standards and will comply if the recommendations in this report regarding barrier-free parking spaces are adopted.

### **Financial Implications**

The 'Quick Wins' proposed as part of the Phase 1 implementation strategy have a fairly low cost and can be incorporated into the cost of the Library Square redevelopment. However, the refinement of the design to maximize parking supply would add additional costs to the project as highlighted in Figure 2 below:

Figure 2

Church Street lay-by parking	13 additional parking spaces	\$145,740.00	\$11,210/stall
Victoria Street parking	9 additional parking spaces	\$87,882.00	\$9,764.67/stall
Additional parking in the laneway	4 additional parking spaces	\$185,376.00	\$46,344/stall
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$418,998.00</b>	

While the four additional parking spaces within the laneway would be convenient for patrons of the Library, these spaces come at a cost of \$46,344.00 per stall. The medium and longer term solutions require further evaluation and consultation, and have a

greater cost implication. The evaluation of these options will be outlined in future reports.

## **Communications Considerations**

The plans for Library Square are premised on a significant amount of public consultation, including with stakeholders and Town partners. In addition to a webpage on the Town's website dedicated to Library Square, communication staff have prepared an internal and external communication strategy to address the effective communication of this initiative.

## **Link to Strategic Plan**

The development of Library Square supports the following Strategic Plan goals and key objectives:

***Supporting an exceptional quality of life for all*** in its accomplishment in satisfying requirements in the following key objectives within these goal statements:

- Invest in sustainable infrastructure;
- Celebrating and promoting our culture;
- Encourage an active and healthy lifestyle; and
- Strengthening the fabric of our community

Enabling a diverse, creative and resilient economy in its accomplishment in satisfying requirements in the following key objectives within these goal statements:

- Promoting economic opportunities that facilitate the growth of Aurora as a desirable place to do business.

## **Alternative(s) to the Recommendation**

1. That the recommendations in this report not be approved.
2. That Council receive the report for information only.
3. Council direct Staff to undertake further study of a comprehensive parking solution for the Cultural Precinct.

## **Conclusions**

Planning Staff believe that the redevelopment of Library Square represents an opportunity to continue to explore parking options and travel demand management strategies for the site and within the Cultural Precinct.

Staff also recommend proceeding immediately with the implementation of Phase 1: 'Quick Wins' and continuing to explore medium and long-term parking solutions, to allow Staff to continue to work with the parking consultant on additional travel demand management strategies, as well as longer term solutions, to accommodate the forecast parking demand. Staff will report back to Council with their findings and recommendations.

## **Attachments**

1. Figure 1 – Library Square – On and Off-Site Parking - Broader Area
2. Figure 2 – Library Square – On and Off-Site Parking – Focus Area
3. Figure 3 – Library Square – On and Off-Site Parking – Focus Area Distance Comparison
4. Figure 4 – Library Square - Parking Options Plan

## **Previous Reports**

General Committee Report No. IES16-073 – Library Square/Downtown Traffic Management Plan

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**Pre-submission Review**

Reviewed by the Chief Administrative Officer and Acting Director of Planning and Development Services.

**Departmental Approval**



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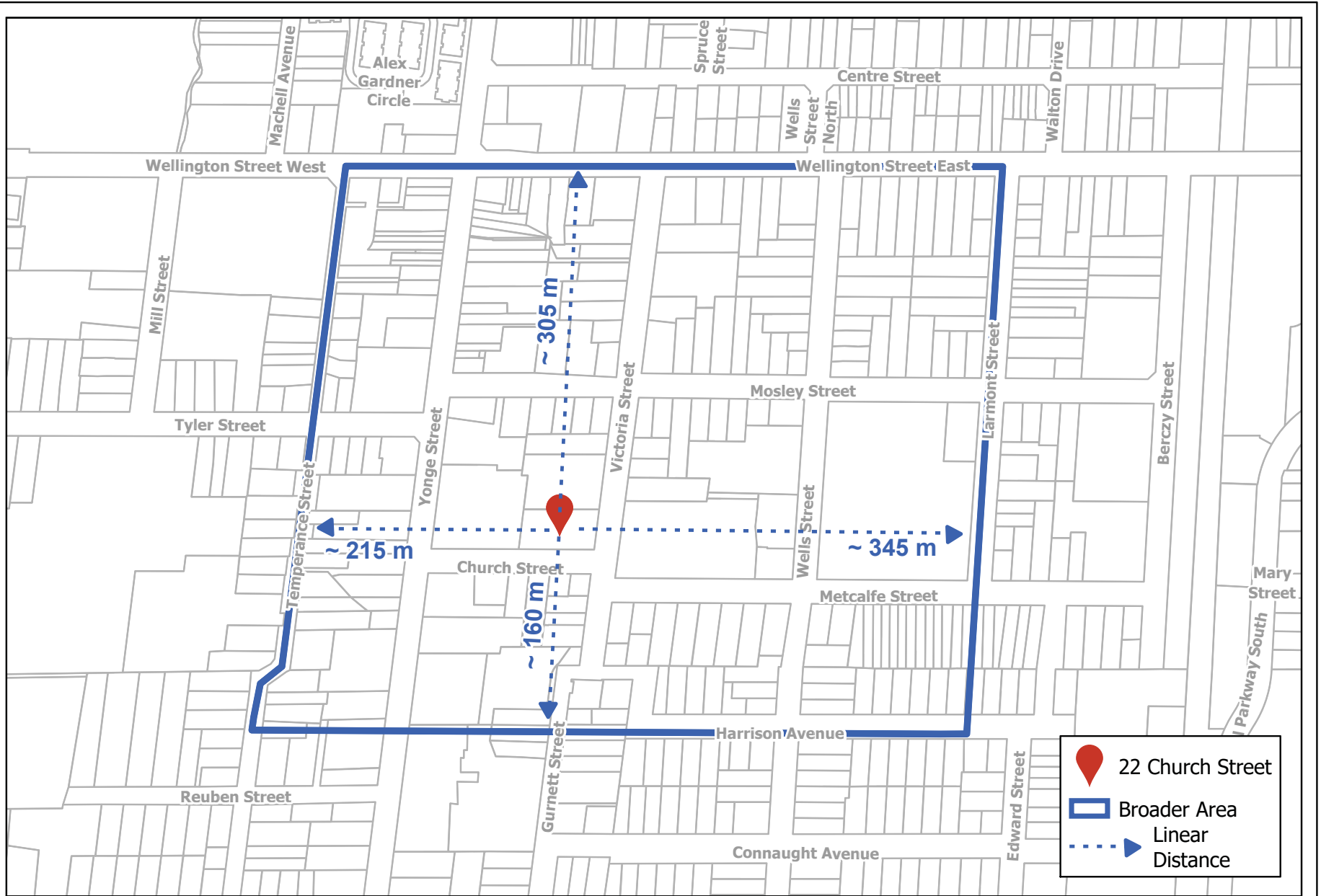
**Lawrence Kuk, MCIP, RPP  
Acting Director  
Planning and Development Services**




**Approved for Agenda**



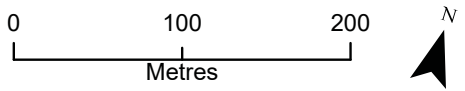
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**Doug Nadorozny  
Chief Administrative Officer**



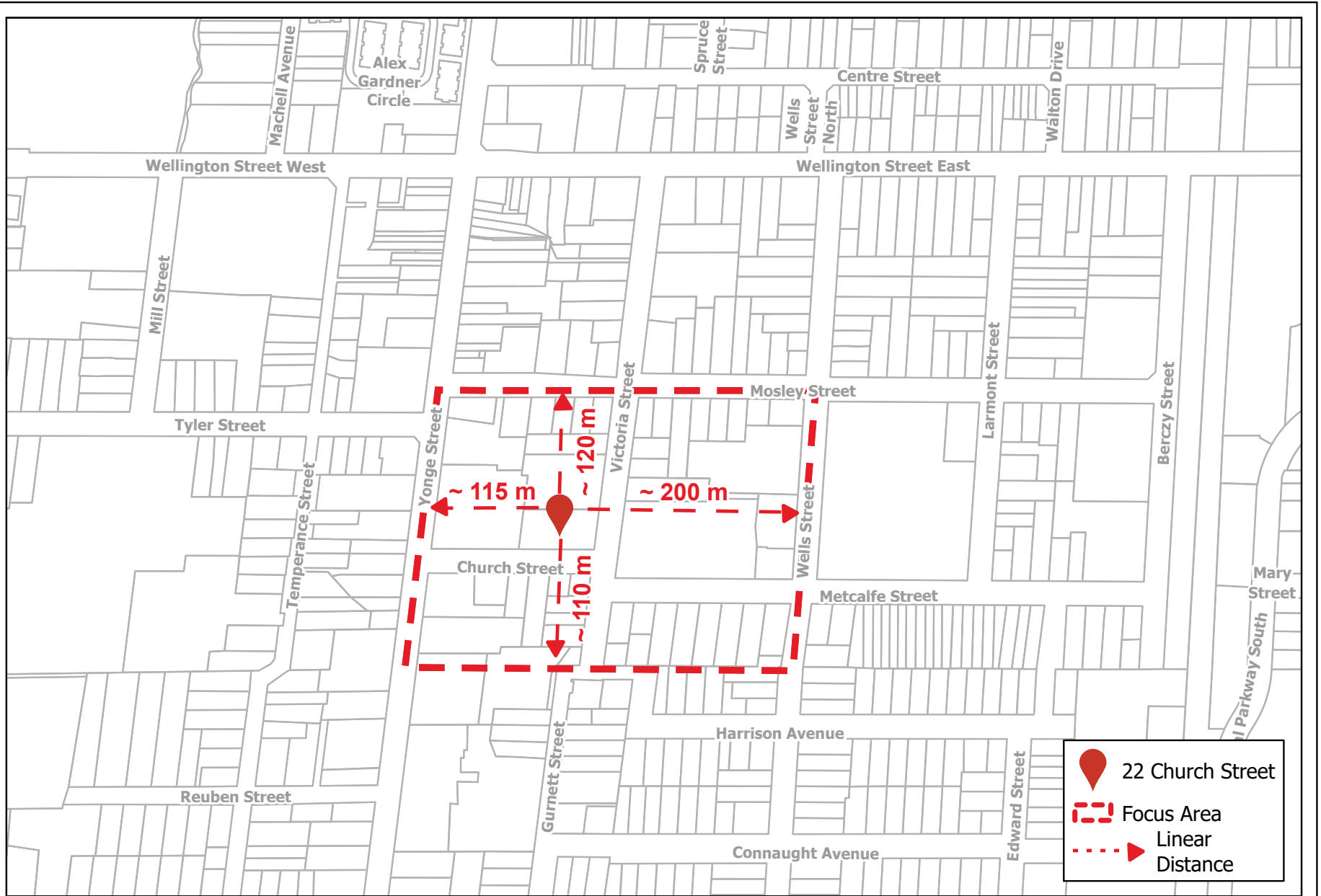
-  22 Church Street
-  Broader Area
-  Linear Distance




**LIBRARY SQUARE - ON- AND OFF-SITE PARKING**  
 BROADER AREA  
 FIGURE 1



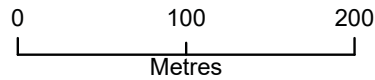
Map created by the Town of Aurora Planning & Development Services Department, March 4, 2019. Base data provided by York Region and Aurora - GIS.





-  22 Church Street
-  Focus Area
-  Linear Distance

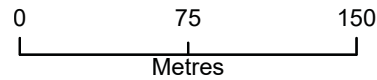
**LIBRARY SQUARE - ON- AND OFF-SITE PARKING**  
 FOCUS AREA  
 FIGURE 2



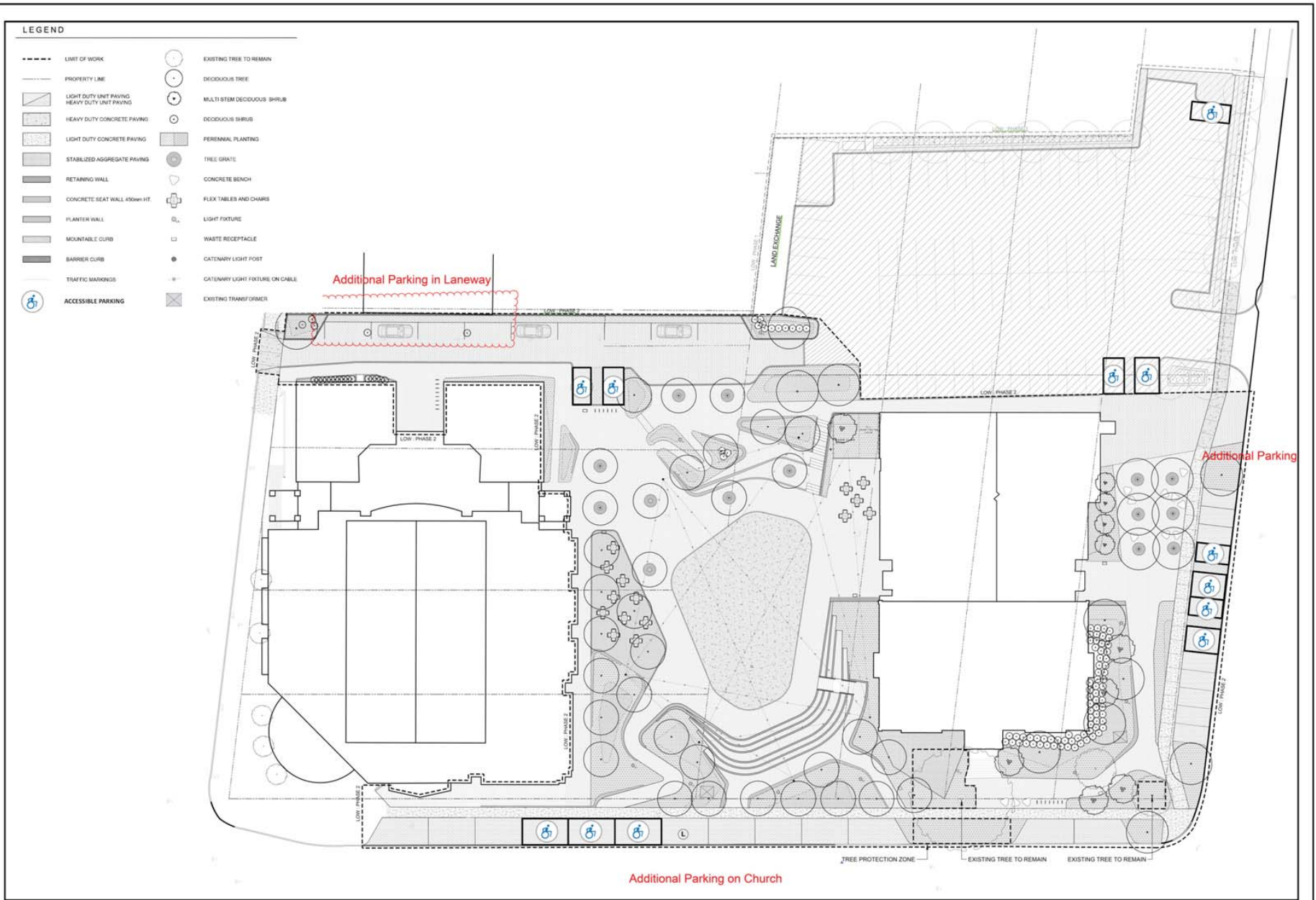
Map created by the Town of Aurora Planning & Development Services Department, March 4, 2019. Base data provided by York Region and Aurora - GIS.



**LIBRARY SQUARE - ON- AND OFF-SITE PARKING**  
FOCUS AREA DISTANCE COMPARISON  
FIGURE 3



Map created by the Town of Aurora Planning & Development Services Department, March 4, 2019. Base data provided by York Region and Aurora - GIS.



**LIBRARY SQUARE - ON- AND OFF-SITE PARKING**  
 PARKING OPTIONS PLAN  
 FIGURE 4

