



**Town of Aurora
General Committee Report**

No. PDS19-063

**Subject: Library Square – Church Street Parking - Design Options
Recommendation Report**

Prepared by: Andria Sallese, Senior Policy Planner

Department: Planning and Development Services

Date: July 16, 2019

Recommendation

- 1. That Report No. PDS19-063 be received;**
- 2. That Council direct staff to proceed with Design Option 2B for the Church Street right -of-way; and,**
- 3. That Town Staff continue to liaise with York Region Transit and the consultants to ensure there are no conflicts with the existing bus route.**

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a summary of public feedback received at the Church Street Public Open House on May 23rd, 2019. The report also seeks Council direction on the preferred design option for the Church Street right-of-way. The report can be summarized as follows:

- Four parking options were presented for feedback from the public;
- Public feedback on the Parking Design Options was mixed; and,
- Option 2B was selected as the preferred design option for Church Street.

Background

Since 2000, Council has directed Staff to undertake various studies to address the parking supply in the downtown. A summary of those initiatives are summarized in Report No. PDS19-018.

At a Special Meeting of Council on March 21st, 2019, Council approved the following recommendation directing staff to consult with the public relating to additional on-site parking on Church Street:

1. 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.

Staff have prepared the following report to summarize feedback from the public open house and additional correspondence, and to provide a recommendation on the preferred option.

Analysis

Four parking options were presented for public feedback

Further to Council direction on March 21st, 2019 (Report No. PDS19-018), the Town of Aurora and the consultants hosted a Public Open House on Thursday May 23rd, 2019 at the Aurora Public Library. The purpose of the Public Open House was to introduce potential options to modify the Church Street right-of-way as part of the Library Square redevelopment and seek public feedback. Approximately 15 residents attended the public open house to provide feedback.

Four parking options were presented to the public, three of which were modifications of the option presented to Council on March 27, 2019 (Staff Report No. PDS19-018) (Table 1).

The first option was a 'Do Nothing' option (see Attachment 1) that maintains existing on-street parking permissions on the north side of Church Street, retains existing street trees and sidewalk in the boulevard. With the redevelopment of the Library Square site and removal of the existing driveways, this Option could provide 3 to 4 additional on-street parking on the north side of Church Street. In total, this Option could see a total of 16 on-street parking stalls (13 of which are existing).

Option 1 (see Attachment 2) proposes a slight modification to the "Do Nothing" option by adding a paved area in the boulevard to accommodate three new on-street accessible spaces and one on-street loading space. In total, Option 1 could see a total of 12 on-street parking stalls, 3 accessible stalls, and 1 loading stall for a total of 16 (13 of which are existing).

Option 2A (see Attachment 3) removes the existing boulevard treatment and street trees on the north side of Church Street and replaces it with lay-by parking. The soft

landscape area (sod and heritage trees) is maintained within the tree protection zone. On-street parking would be introduced on the south side of Church Street. In total, Option 2A could see a total of 9 lay-by parking stalls, 11 on-street stalls, 3 accessible stalls, and 1 loading stall for a total of 24 stalls.

To address potential issues related to the removal of many of the existing street trees on Church Street, and introducing additional on-street parking on the south side of the street, Option 2B proposes a hybrid of Options 1 and 2A (Attachment 4). Option 2B removes the boulevard treatment and street trees on the north side of Church Street (west side) in front of the Library, and replaces it with lay-by parking. The boulevard treatment including the existing street trees in front of 22 Church Street and the plaza would continue to be maintained.

On-street parking would be provided on the south-west side of Church Street mirroring the lay-by stalls on the north side of the street. This option also limits on-street parking on the south side of Church Street in front of the existing residences. In total, Option 2B could see a total of 3 lay-by parking stalls, 14 on-street stalls, 3 accessible stalls, and 1 loading stall, for a total of 21 stalls.

Public feedback on the Parking Design Options was mixed

Feedback received on the parking options from participants at the Public Open House was mixed (see Attachment 1). Generally, however, participants were supportive of a design option that balanced good streetscape design, preserving existing trees, promoting walkability, and providing additional parking on Church Street and the balance of the site.

Planning staff also spoke with two residents and one business owner on Church Street. While some residents on the south side of Church Street preferred the design options that did not include on-street parking in front of their properties, one of the business owners indicated that they were in favour of providing additional on-street parking for their patrons.

Option 2B was selected as the preferred design option for Church Street

The Options were also reviewed by the Transportation consultant hired by the Town (BA Group). The consultant's recommendation is that it is important to find a balance between good design, costs, and accommodating additional parking demand. Based on these factors, public input and the consultant's recommendations, Town Staff

recommend Option 2B. Option 2B provides a total of 21 parking stalls, including 8 additional parking spaces, maintains many of the existing street trees on Church Street, protects for the heritage landscape in front of the Cultural Centre, and provides the street width necessary to accommodate two-way traffic. The Transportation consultant and the Town's Transportation Analyst advise that alternating parking could provide additional traffic calming on Church Street.

The consultant also recommends further consultation with York Region Transit on the design of Option 2B and the proposed perpendicular parking configuration on Victoria Street. The consultant advises that the perpendicular parking configuration on Victoria Street could impact existing transit routes with vehicles reversing into a live traffic lane. Finally, with respect to the design of the parking lot on the north-east side of the site, the consultant recommends, where possible, to reduce hardscaping and create additional space for trees and landscaping.

Advisory Committee Review

The proposed approach to accessible parking was presented to the Accessibility Advisory Committee as part of the Library Square review. The current design includes additional accessible parking as requested by both the Committee and Council.

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.

Financial Implications

On March 21, 2019, as per the Library Square – Funding Strategy Report FS19-012 Council approved an increase of \$145,740.00 to the Library Square budget for additional on-site parking on Church Street subject to further public consultation and conditional upon the approval of the addition to the Church Street School. The addition to the Church Street School was approved on March 21st and the required public Open House in this regard was held on May 23rd, 2019.

Based partially upon the feedback received from the Public Open House, working with its consultant, the Town has generated four options to address additional on-site parking on Church Street. Table 1 below provides a summary of these noted options,

including the relative cost of each option. The Town’s consultant notes that, as a result of the cost of replacing a section of the sidewalk along the accessible parking spaces on Church Street, and the need for a continuous curb cut, design Option 2A being the original option approved by Council on March 21st would require an additional \$15,010 from the initial amount budgeted. The cost of the preferred, Option 2B, is approximately \$93,500, resulting in a savings of approximately \$52,240, which can be redirected to other parking needs. The additional cost relating to the design of Option 2B would be funded from these noted savings.

Table 1: Church Street Parking Options

Option Name	Proposed Parking	Total Parking	Estimated Cost		
			Total Investment	Approved Budget	Estimated Savings / Short-fall
Do Nothing	No change.	13 existing on-street parking stalls	\$145,740	\$145,740	\$0
Option 1	12 on-street parking stalls, 3 accessible stalls, and 1 loading stall	16 (3 new, 13 existing)	\$145,740	\$145,740	\$0
Option 2A	9 lay-by parking stalls, 11 on-street stalls, 3 accessible stalls, and 1 loading stall	Up to 24 (14 new, 13 existing)	Approximately \$160,750	\$145,740	(\$15,000)
Option 2B*	3 lay-by parking stalls, 14 on-street stalls, 3 accessible stalls, and 1 loading stall	Up to 21 (8 new, 13 existing)	Approximately \$93,500	\$145,740	\$52,240

*Recommended Option

Communications Considerations

Notice was provided to residents and business owners within 120 metres of the subject area. Staff also hand delivered notices to all property owners on Church Street who are directly affected by the proposed design options.

Approximately 15 members of the public attended the Public Open House, many who reside or own businesses in the area. Attendees provided feedback by speaking directly with staff, by writing their comments on sticky notes, or on a comment card.

Copies of the notice and a reduced copy of the display panels from the May 23rd Public Open House were delivered by hand to the property owners and residents on the south side of Church Street.

Feedback from the Public Open House was summarized and, on June 11th, 2019, a draft of the summary document was emailed to attendees to allow participants an opportunity to review the document and provide additional comments. Comments from the Public Open House, including any additional comments received by email, are listed in Attachment 1.

Link to Strategic Plan

The development of Library Square supports the following Strategic Plan goals and key objectives by supporting an exceptional quality of life for all in its accomplishment in satisfying requirements in the following key objectives within these goal statements: investing in sustainable infrastructure, celebrating and promoting our culture, encouraging 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 promoting economic opportunities that facilitate the growth of Aurora as a desirable place to do business.

Alternative to the Recommendation

None

Conclusions

On the basis of the consultant and Town Staff's recommendations to find a balance between good design, costs, and accommodating additional parking demand, and input from the public, Option 2B is recommended as the preferred parking Option. The implementation of this option will cost approximately \$93,000. The cost of the design Option 2B would be funded from the Church Street budget for Library Square.

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The consultant further recommends consulting with York Region Transit on Option 2B, as well as the proposed perpendicular parking on Victoria Street. Finally, with respect to the design of the parking lot on the north-east side of the site, the consultant recommends, where possible in the site design, to reduce hardscaping and create additional space for trees and landscaping.

Attachments

Figure 1: Existing Context and 'Do Nothing' Option

Figure 2: Option 1

Figure 3: Option 2A

Figure 4: Option 2B

Attachment 1: Public Feedback Summary

Previous Reports

Special Meeting of Council Report No. PDS19-018, dated March 21, 2019.

Pre-submission Review

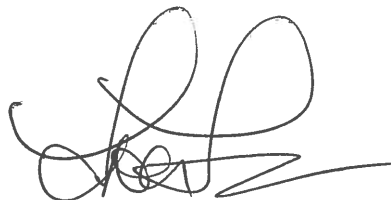
Agenda Management Team Meeting review on June 28, 2019.

Departmental Approval

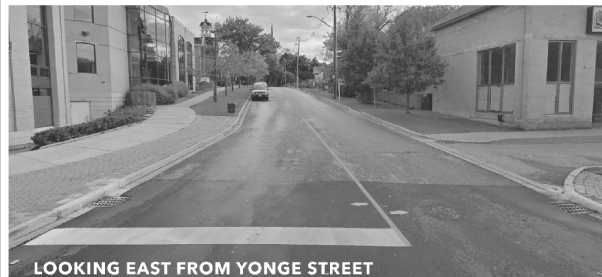
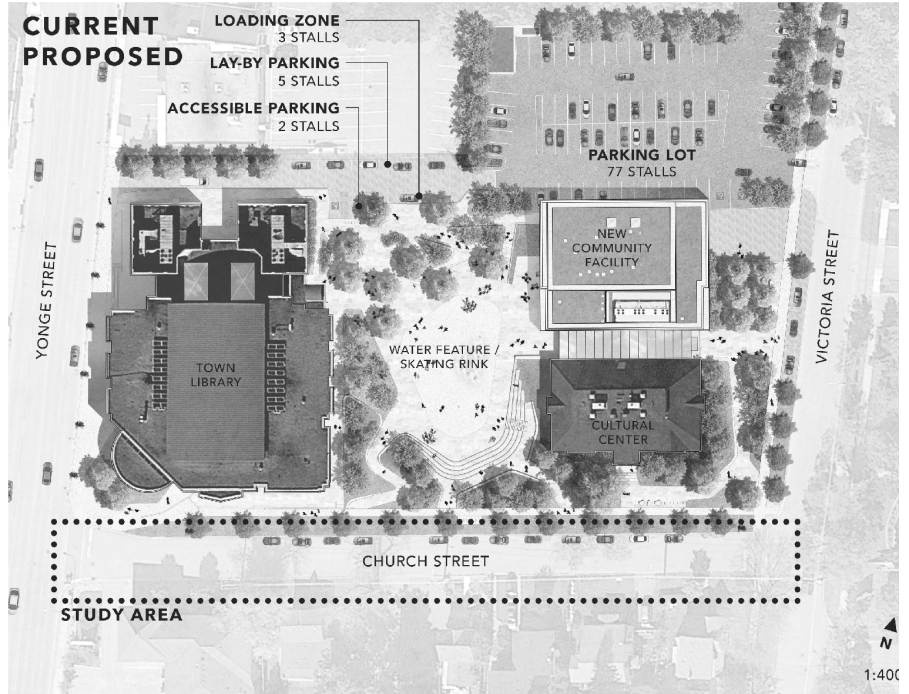
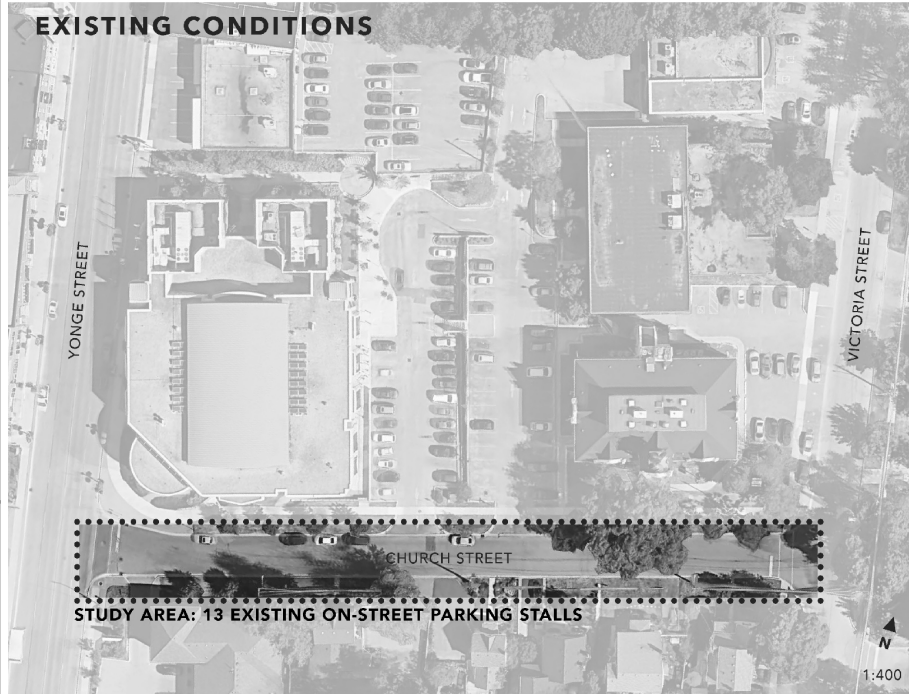


**David Waters, MCIP, RPP
Director
Planning and Development Services**

Approved for Agenda



**FOR Doug Nadorozny
Chief Administrative Officer**






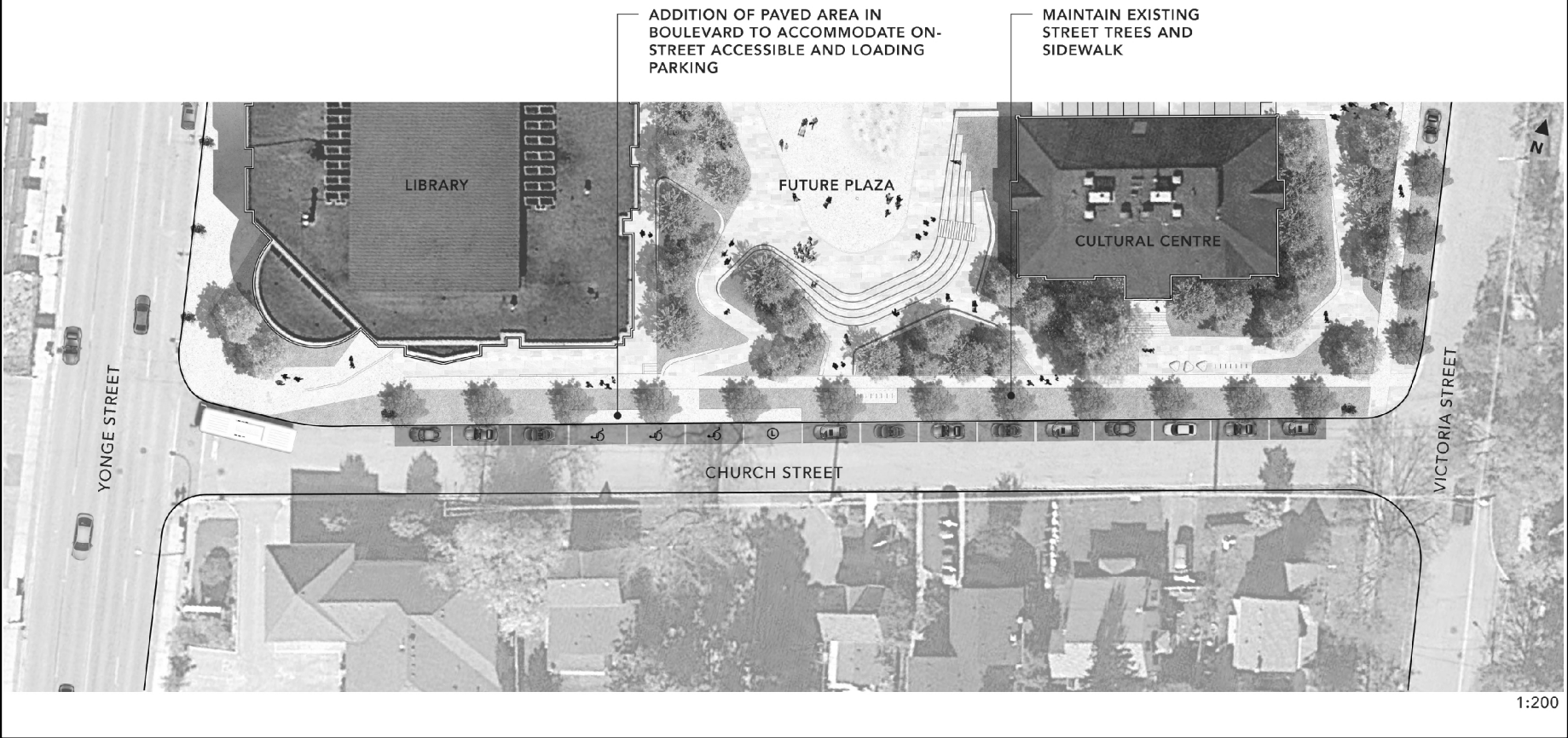
“DO NOTHING” OPTION

FIGURE 1



16 STALLS TOTAL:

-  12 ON-STREET STALLS
-  3 ACCESSIBLE STALLS
-  1 LOADING STALL



OPTION 1

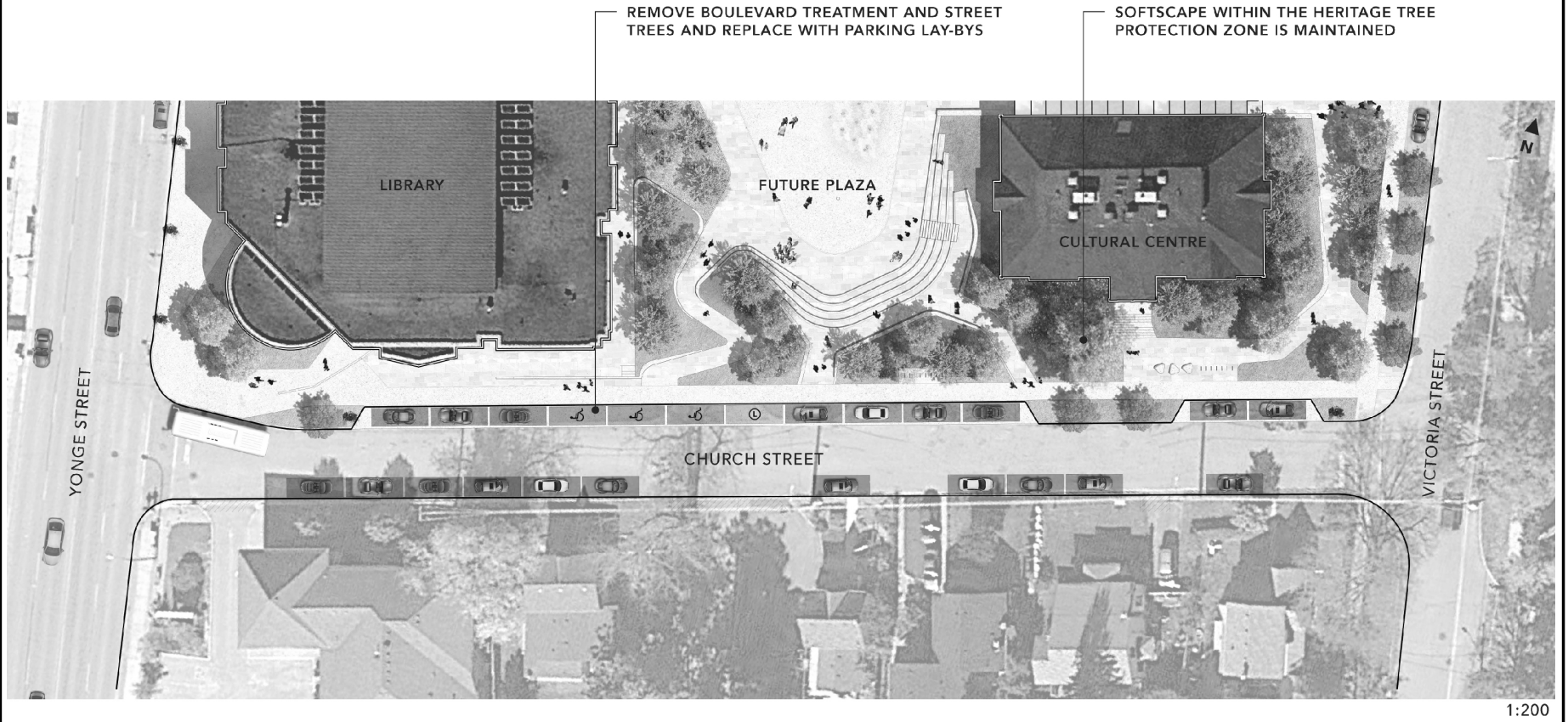
FIGURE 2



Map created by the Town of Aurora Planning & Development Services Department, June 18, 2019. Base data provided by the Planning Partnership

24 STALLS TOTAL:

- 9 LAY-BY STALLS
- 11 ON-STREET STALLS
- 3 ACCESSIBLE STALLS
- 1 LOADING STALL



OPTION 2A

FIGURE 3



- 21 STALLS TOTAL:**
- 3 LAY-BY STALLS
 - 14 ON-STREET STALLS
 - 3 ACCESSIBLE STALLS
 - 1 LOADING STALL



OPTION 2B

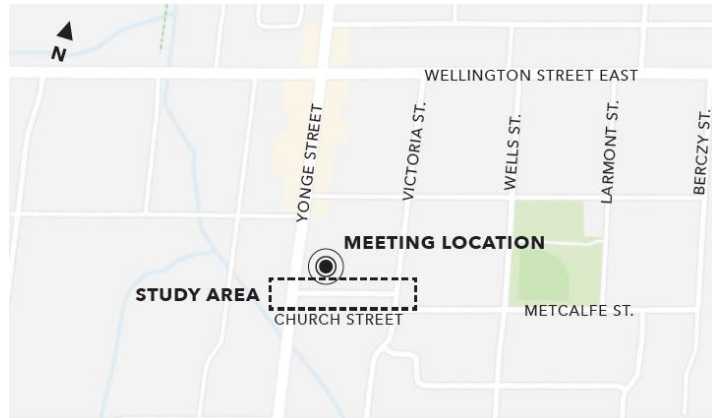
FIGURE 4



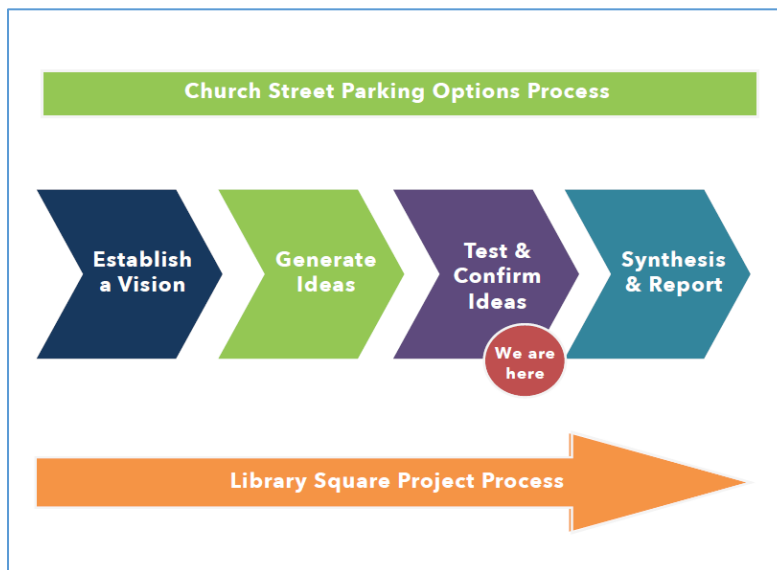
**Church Street Parking (Library Square)
Public Open House Summary**

Event Overview

The Town of Aurora and the consultants hired on behalf of the Town (The Planning Partnership and BA Group) hosted a Public Open House on Thursday May 23rd, 2019 at the Aurora Public Library (15145 Yonge St, Magna Room). The purpose of the Public Open House was to provide information about the review process, introduce potential options to modify the Church Street right-of-way as part of the Library Square redevelopment, and seek feedback from the public.



The Public Open House included display boards containing information on the Parking Options, which were prepared by the consultant team and Town of Aurora staff. In addition to the consultant team, staff from Planning, Corporate Communications, and Transportation Services were present at the community meeting to answer questions from the public.



Approximately 15 members of the public attended the Public Open House, many who reside or own businesses in the area. Attendees provided feedback by speaking directly with staff, by writing their comments on sticky notes (see photos below) or on a comment card.

Parking Options

Four parking options were presented to the public. The first option was a ‘Do Nothing’ option (see Figure 1). This Option maintains existing on-street parking permissions on the north side of Church Street, retains existing street trees in the boulevard and the position of the existing sidewalk. With the redevelopment of the Library Square site, this Option could provide 3 to 4 additional on-street parking on the north side of Church Street. In total, this Option could see a total of 16 on-street parking stalls (13 of which are existing).



Figure 1: “Do Nothing Option”

Option 1 (Figure 2) proposes a slight modification to the “Do Nothing” option by adding a paved area in the boulevard to accommodate three on-street accessible spaces and one on-street loading space. In total, Option 1 could see a total of 12 on-street parking stalls, 3 accessible stalls, and 1 loading stall for a total of 16 (13 of which are existing).



Figure 2: Option 1

Public Feedback:

- This option is preferable as it maintains the existing street trees;
- Consider a secondary entrance to the south-east corner of the library for easier access from Church Street;
- Widen the intersection at Yonge Street and Church Street to accommodate bus turning movements;
- Focus on changing behaviours and get people walking rather than adding more parking spaces for cars;
- Consider converting on-street parking on Yonge Street to a 15-minute drop off to take advantage of the accessibility ramp connecting to the west entrance of the Library; and
- Make sure there are enough drop-off spots per building (Library, Cultural Centre, and the new Community Facility).

Option 2A (Figure 3) removes the boulevard treatment and street trees on the north side of Church Street and replaces them with parking lay-bys. A softscape area is provided within the heritage tree protection zone. On-street parking is provided on the south side of Church Street. In total, Option 2A could see a total of 9 lay-by parking stalls, 11 on-street stalls, 3 accessible stalls, and 1 loading stall for a total of 24 stalls.

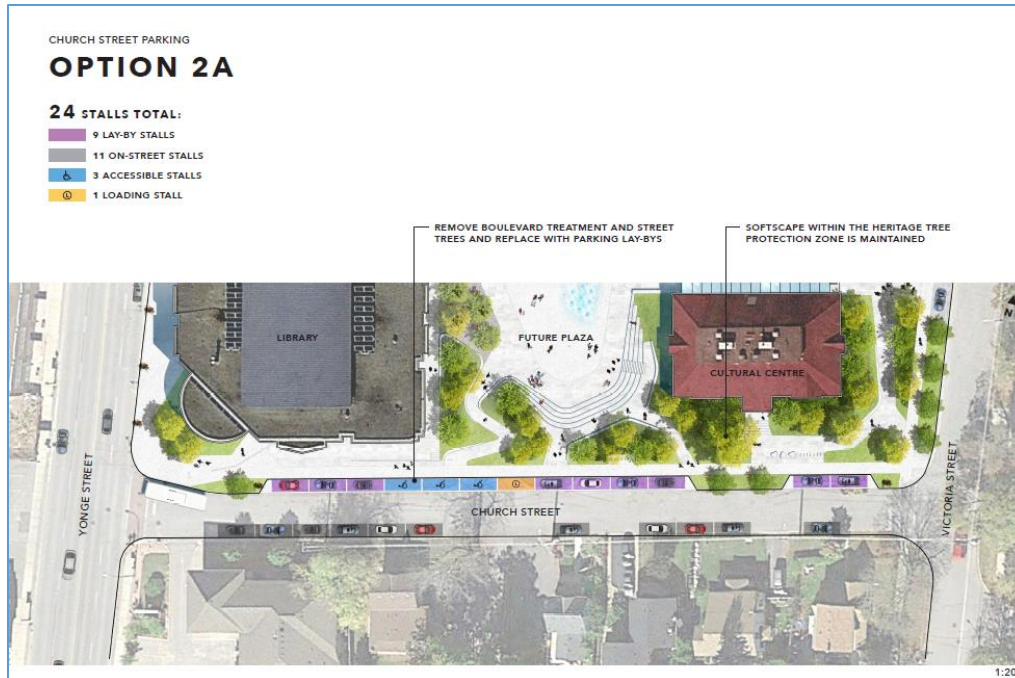


Figure 3: Option 2A

Public Feedback:

Option 2A

- Like pathways through the site that connect to places and streets;
- Consider moving the existing bus stop at Church Street and Yonge Street to a safer location;
- Limit street parking on Yonge Street;
- Consider changing Church Street to one-way movement;
- Take away the left turn movements from Church Street onto Yonge Street to promote safer vehicular and pedestrian movement at this intersection;
- Consider ‘bump-outs’ along the layby to provide space for street tree plantings;
- Provide 2 loading and drop-off/pick-up spaces;
- This option changes the character of houses on the south side of Church Street. Clarify if the houses are offices or homes. The use makes a difference in terms of the level of impact;
- There are not enough parking spots or enough room for emergency services;
- There is currently a lot of through traffic on Church Street;
- Parking on the south side of Church Street will increase pedestrian movement in a south-north and north-south direction across the street. Make sure there are plenty of safe pedestrian crossing;
- Do a survey to see where cars in the library parking lot are currently coming from and consider parking study on a Sunday to monitor church activity in the parking lots and on on-street parking;

- Try Option 2A without parking on the south side of Church Street. Could monitor and implement on-street parking later, if additional parking is required;
- Option 2A looks good. If issue with south side go to option 2B;
- Make the landscaping and building a learning experience for kids; and
- Undertake an analysis of turning movements and traffic flows from existing and new uses.

Option 2B (Figure 4) removes the boulevard treatment and street trees on the north side of Church Street, west side, in front of the Library and replaces them with parking lay-bys. The boulevard treatment, including street trees, in front of the cultural centre and the plaza will be maintained. On-street parking is provided on the south side of Church Street in front of the businesses only (west side of Church Street), mirroring the lay-by stalls on the north side of the street. This option also limits on-street parking on the south side of Church Street in front of the residences. In total, Option 2B could see a total of 3 lay-by parking stalls, 14 on-street stalls, 3 accessible stalls, and 1 loading stall, for a total of 21 stalls.



Figure 4: Option 2B

Public Feedback:

- Option 2B is a good compromise that saves trees.
- Option 2A is preferable over option 2B. If you change the design of the road and boulevard, do it all, not just half the plan (in 2A);
- Consider a parking study on Sundays to monitor Church activity and parking needs;
- Consider the possibility of allowing food trucks and vending machines in or near the square;

- Put a bin/book drop off spot on Yonge St. near the Library Square entrance;
- Consider speed bumps as a traffic calming measure on Church Street;
- This option is preferable because it introduces traffic calming with parking on both sides of the street;
- Consider changing the bus route on Church Street with this option;
- Church Street has significant landscaping on Victoria Street. Mirror this landscape treatment on the west side of Victoria Street;
- By not providing parking, it is an incentive for people to walk to the site;
- Consider a dedicated pedestrian crossing at Church Street and Yonge Street Parking
- More cars parked on Church Street is not acceptable.

General Feedback from the Public on the Parking Options

- Street parking on Church Street creates sightline issues at the corner going around the church;
- For aging people it will be difficult because they have to walk a far distance to the entrance of the library;
- Parking on Church Street will make it more dangerous to get out of cars, especially if someone has children;
- With the new plan, many people that only want to return books will have to park farther, whereas now they only park in front of the door and immediately come back;
- Consider traffic calming on the laneway using different paving materials or a gate;
- Library needs a loading space near the north entrance;
- Concern not enough parking in any option to service combined draw of Library, Cultural Centre and events at Library Square;
- Concerns about the total number of parking spaces in the parking lot.
- There is the potential for more public parking in the lot south of the creek, where there is currently a sales office;
- Make sure the laneway is 1-way movement only;
- Consider controlling turning movements and traffic on Church St during peak hours;
- Closest wheelchair parking spots should be under cover;
- Introduce traffic calming on Victoria Street;
- Make Victoria Street one way with angled parking;
- Keep trees; do not take out existing landscaping;
- Place Library book return drop-off close to the driveway (laneway, north side);
- Permeable pavers should be used for the parking lot to address runoff and stormwater flows;

While the intent of the Church Street Public Open House was to solicit feedback from the public on the design options for this street, members of the public also provided more general comments on the Library Square Plan and surrounding context. These comments are listed below:

- Consider shifting some indoor programming from the Library into the Square;
- Make it an inclusive space for people of all ages and abilities;
- When buses travel on Church Street there is currently not enough space for cars going in opposite direction;
- Change bus route because Church Street is not narrow enough;
- Project would help revitalize Yonge Street and bring new development to the area;
- The plaza should be enclosed for year round activities;
- The plaza will become a skateboard park; consider a skateboard park in Town Park;
- Consider parking limits (1 hour)
- As population increases, more people come to the neighborhood and will increase traffic congestion;
- The corner of Church Street and Victoria street is congested, there are accidents at this intersection;
- Extend bridge structure to provide “carport” style cover (snow and wheelchairs don’t mix);
- Create a walking path from Berczy Street to Library Square to connect to the Metrolinx parking lot;
- This project would help retailing to Yonge Street and bring development to the area;
- Accessibility pathways seem to be limited and there may be issues arising at the "new" North Laneway to Yonge Street;
- Infrastructure to deter cars, like traffic buffers, to create single accessibility purpose lanes to the front doors of the library and from Victoria Street. The same can be applied to the corner of Church Street and Yonge Street, and for bicycle paths to the library;
- Reduce the number parking areas to reduce emissions, pollution and noise to the public;
- Put pedestrian weather protection on the front doors of the Library and/or Cultural Centre. Pedestrian weather protection is especially helpful for seniors, those who have accessibility needs and those who need assistance, reduce costs run for snow and ice clearing and provide protection from the sun & rain;
- A green friendly area should not be all concrete;
- We always want to encourage walking and cycling; and
- Reducing traffic congestions and pedestrian is a major concern. Drop-off access points are critical based on people’s routes and behaviours. The goal of the area is to make it Town friendly and to complement Town Park in this urban area.

Questions and Answers

- Are there bicycle racks in front of the library?
 - *Bicycle racks are currently located at the parking lot entrance off of Church Street. Bicycle racks will continue to be provided for the Library and as part of the comprehensive re-design of the site.*

- Where are emergency routes in the three parking scenarios?
 - *The fire access route for the existing building at 22 Church Street and the proposed addition will be from Church Street, with access to the fire hydrant at this location. The Fire Truck Access to the site is from the surrounding streets.*

- With the amphitheatre right at Church Street, will there be sufficient room for a snowplow to operate on the right-of-way and will it be wide enough to accommodate a wide front end plough? The road seems to be less 9m wide.
 - *The amphitheatre does not encroach into the Church Street right-of-way. Any modifications to the design of the Church Street right-of-way would need to meet the minimum standard in the Town's Design Criteria Manual, where the pavement width for residential streets is between 8.0 to 8.5 metres. The pavement widths outlined in The Town's Design Manual are designed to accommodate snow plow operations.*