



OAKVILLE

## REPORT

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEETING

MEETING DATE: MARCH 20, 2017

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**FROM:** Economic Development Department

**DATE:** March 6, 2017

**SUBJECT:** Downtown Mitigation Strategy Framework

**LOCATION:** Downtown BIA

**WARD:** 3

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### RECOMMENDATION:

That the report on the *Downtown Mitigation Strategy Framework* from the Economic Development department be received for information, and that staff report back to Council with detailed mitigation plans in Q1 2018.

### KEY FACTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- Two major construction projects affecting the downtown commercial business district are the Lakeshore Bridge Reconstruction in 2017 and the Lakeshore Road Streetscape Project in 2019-2020.
- In 2016, various initiatives were implemented and planning undertaken as part of early mitigation efforts to address the business impact of the construction projects.
- This report provides a framework for the mitigation strategy that will be developed, the details of which will be presented to Council in Q1 2018.

### BACKGROUND:

The Lakeshore Road Bridge in downtown Oakville has been closed to vehicular and pedestrian traffic until December 2017 for reconstruction. The design of the Lakeshore Road Streetscape has been initiated and is planned for completion prior to the end of 2017. It is recognized that these projects will have an impact on businesses in the downtown commercial district; accordingly, a detailed plan is being developed to address construction, communications, marketing and economic mitigation. This report outlines initiatives and planning that took place in 2016 that

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contribute to the mitigation plan, as well as the framework for the detailed plan that will be completed in Q1 2018.

## **COMMENT/OPTIONS:**

### **2016 Accomplishments**

There were many initiatives completed in 2016 that will benefit visitors to downtown and contribute to the mitigation strategy, including the following:

#### Downtown Transportation/Streetscape

- ✓ Furniture theme and material selection
- ✓ Selected interim intersection repairs along Lakeshore Road
- ✓ Sharrows on Robinson Street
- ✓ Two-way conversion of Navy Street

#### Parking:

- ✓ Bike corral parking pilot
- ✓ Church Street parking garage rehabilitation

#### Downtown Cultural Hub

- ✓ Public opinion survey
- ✓ Student ambassadors
- ✓ Cultural connections programming
- ✓ Market moved to George Street

#### Official Plan Review

- ✓ Public consultation

#### Other Initiatives and Studies

- ✓ Trafalgar Road/QEW bridge reconstruction
- ✓ BIA boundary expansion process
- ✓ Harbour master plan
- ✓ Workshop and consultations regarding interim use of the post office building
- ✓ Ongoing patio pilot project

### **A Renewed Streetscape for Downtown Oakville**

The renewal of the downtown streetscape will be the result of a significant financial investment by the Town to improve its appearance and functionality. The final outcome will provide benefits to the community and help improve the economic activity in the area. It is recognized that in realizing these benefits, there will be some level of disruption to the businesses in the area during the construction period.

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The mitigation strategy is premised on the desire of Council to provide support to the commercial district that may be impacted by the construction project.

The reconstruction project will begin in the spring of 2019 and include two phases over a two-year period, with a projected completion date of mid-November 2020. The design of the streetscape has begun and is expected to be complete by the end of 2017. The project will need to be tendered in late Q3 or early Q4 of 2018 in order to meet the construction timeline. Phase one will commence in March/April of 2019 and be completed in mid-November of that year. Phase two will commence in March/April of 2020 and be completed by mid-November. The phased approach will help to provide some relief to businesses during the construction period, particularly during key points in time such as the Christmas shopping period.

As part of the design process, permanent signage and wayfinding will be identified and the introduction of smart technologies will be explored and implemented where practical. This may include technology such as public WiFi, digital screens or banners, electric vehicle charging stations, and automated vehicular and/or pedestrian measurement.

During 2017, public consultation and the design of Towne Square will also be undertaken, together with a plan for its implementation.

### **Mitigation Strategy Framework**

There are four main categories that form the framework for the downtown mitigation strategy: construction, communications, marketing, and economic. The detailed components in each category, along with a timeline and associated costs will be developed over the next eight months and presented to Council in the first quarter of 2018. The mitigation details need to align with the design and implementation plans for the streetscape and as such, they are being developed in tandem with that process. As a starting point, the categories will address the following:

1. Construction
  - Storefront construction office
  - Community liaison resource
  - Temporary signage and wayfinding
  - Emergency management
  - Issues management
  - Noise and dust control
  - Hours of operation
  - Management of pedestrian and vehicular access/movement
  - Parking options

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2. Communications
  - Website and web management
  - Media relations and establishment of protocols
  - Ensure residents and businesses are aware of the construction process and questions are addressed
3. Marketing
  - Coordination with the BIA to market the renewed downtown business district and to encourage people to be a part of the change
  - Create a storefront information office that showcases the renewed streetscape
4. Economic
  - Celebrate construction milestones through events and special functions
  - Provide Town programming such as Cultural Connections to encourage people to come downtown
  - Provide discounted fees for patios and outdoor displays
  - Coordinate with the BIA for special events to draw people downtown
  - Create visual displays and attractions during the construction period to catch people's attention and introduce the change that is happening
  - Explore use of the former post office building as an Innovation Hub

The detailed mitigation plan will outline how the above-noted components will fit with the construction timeline. Financial and human resources associated with the mitigation plan will also be identified.

#### **CONSIDERATIONS:**

##### **(A) PUBLIC**

Public consultation has been an ongoing process in the various projects identified in this report. The Downtown BIA has also been involved in consultations and will continue to provide input as the detailed mitigation plan is developed. The content of this report will be presented at the Downtown BIA Annual General Meeting on March 21, 2017.

##### **(B) FINANCIAL**

There are no financial costs associated with this report. The costs of the mitigation strategy will be identified as detailed plans are developed and will be presented to Council for approval at a future date.

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**(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS**

Many departments will be involved in the planning and implementation of the mitigation strategy for downtown including Engineering & Construction; Culture & Recreation; Economic Development; Parks & Open Space; Finance; Strategy, Policy & Communications; and Municipal Enforcement.

**(D) CORPORATE AND/OR DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC GOALS**

This report addresses the corporate strategic goal to:

- enhance our economic environment
- provide outstanding service to our residents and businesses

**(E) COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY**

The mitigation strategy for downtown Oakville addresses the economic pillar of community sustainability through the development of a plan to assist with the business impact of the Lakeshore Road Streetscape project.

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