

REPORT

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEETING

MEETING DATE: OCTOBER 3, 2016

FROM: Engineering and Construction Department

DATE: September 21, 2016

SUBJECT: Lakeshore Road Streetscape Project - Furnishing Theme Recommendation

LOCATION: Downtown Oakville

WARD: Multiple Wards: 2 & 3

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RECOMMENDATION:

1. That a traditional theme for downtown Oakville streetscape furnishings, as detailed in the report from the Engineering and Construction department, dated September 21, 2016, be approved; and
2. That staff move forward with traditional themed furniture palette options to present to the public and recommend specific selections early in 2017.

KEY FACTS:

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

- Town Council previously approved the Downtown Transportation and Streetscape (DTS) study which included a streetscape masterplan for all downtown streets based on a contemporary theme for streetscape materials and furnishings.
- Council also previously approved moving forward with the Lakeshore Road Reconstruction and Streetscape Project commencing in 2019, based on the DTS study recommendations
- The engineering design phase of for the Lakeshore Road Reconstruction and Streetscape Project resulted in significant negative feedback being received about the contemporary theme of some of the recommended furnishing choices.
- Council directed staff to recommence a public engagement process for further input on furnishing theme choices (traditional, contemporary and classic)
- Staff has relaunched the public engagement process and are reporting back to Council on the results of the first phase regarding the furnishing theme.

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BACKGROUND:

The Downtown Plan, launched in late 2013, was comprised of two studies: the Downtown Cultural Hub (DCH) study and the Downtown Transportation and Streetscape (DTS) study. Both studies were undertaken concurrently to coordinate public engagement and collaboration opportunities.

The DTS study component of the Downtown Plan reviewed traffic and roadway conditions within downtown Oakville and presented options to enhance the roadway operation, beautify streets, improve pedestrian/cycle mobility and to revitalize Towne Square.

Public consultation for the DTS study included numerous workshops, stakeholder meetings and public gatherings with residents, business owners and interested individuals with the intent of sharing ideas, reviewing facts and discussing design options. In addition, a focus group was established to provide input into the project. The group consisted of representatives from the resident associations (Lakeside and Trafalgar/Chartwell) the Downtown BIA and various arts/cultural groups.

The DTS study was completed and presented to Council in the spring of 2015. The study recommendations included a streetscape masterplan for all downtown streets as well as changing the existing one-way street system to two-way operation. The streetscape masterplan included a contemporary theme for street materials and furnishings (benches, bike rings, bollards, waste receptacles, light standards and curb/boulevard pavement treatment).

Council approved the study and directed staff to proceed with the engineering design phase for the Lakeshore Road East Reconstruction and Streetscape Project (Navy to Allan) and also the Lakeshore Road Bridge Rehabilitation Project (Forsythe to Navy), with the construction to be phased over two (2) years commencing in 2019. Both projects were planned to be implemented as a single large coordinated construction contract.

Engineering work commenced in the summer of 2015. Early work revealed additional concerns with the condition of the Lakeshore Road Bridge at Sixteen Mile Creek. As a result, Council approved a staff recommendation to accelerate the bridge rehabilitation portion of the project; the Lakeshore Road Bridge Project will be undertaken in 2017. At its recent meeting of September 19, 2016, Council approved the funding for the bridge project (\$10.5 million).

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The engineering design phase for the Lakeshore Road Reconstruction and Streetscape Project included a review of material and furnishing options to suit the contemporary theme that was recommended as part of the approved streetscape masterplan. The project team met with representatives from the town's operating departments to narrow down the materials and furnishings palette to two choices which was presented to the public and stakeholders.

Two (2) public meetings were held in the spring of 2016 to present the contemporary palette options. Each meeting was setup to host members of the Downtown BIA separately during the morning and the general public later in the evening on the same day.

The first public meeting was held on March 1, 2016 where staff presented two (2) contemporary palette options. Turnout for the evening portion of the meeting was light for the first meeting, most likely due to weather conditions. Comments received from the public who were in attendance as well as from those who commented online after the meeting were generally split between both options; while some preferred one option over another, others preferred some elements from both options. There was some negative reaction to the contemporary palette at the first meeting but this sentiment was not in the majority.

A second meeting was held on June 15, 2016 where staff presented the recommended palette option to the public based on public feedback. Staff recommended materials and furnishing that included elements from both palette options. Turnout for the second public meeting was significantly greater than the first meeting. In addition, approximately 250 online comments/emails from residents were received.

The second meeting (and online comments/emails) resulted in significant negative feedback in regards to the contemporary theme for some of recommended furnishings, in particular, the recommended light standards, benches, bike rings and bollards. The public sentiment was not negative; however, about the recommended granite pavers/curbs and waste receptacles.

As a result of the feedback received, at its meeting of July 25, 2016, Council passed a motion directing staff to:

- Relaunch a public engagement process this fall with traditional, classical and contemporary furniture options — streetlights, benches, bike rings and bollards
- Move forward with granite pavers/curbs and waste receptacles.
- Develop options for Lakeshore Road that would provide, in whole or in part, a flexible (curbless) street.
- Report back in early 2017

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This report has been prepared to advise Council on the results of the first phase of the relaunch of public engagement process and to recommend a theme for streetscape furnishings (light standards, benches, bike rings and bollards).

COMMENT/OPTIONS:

Relaunch of the Public Engagement Process:

As per Council's direction, staff relaunched the first phase of the public engagement process in September 2016, to seek feedback on the selection of a style — traditional, contemporary or classic — for the streetlights, benches, bike rings and bollards in downtown Oakville.

The first phase of the engagement process was all about getting a consensus on what the theme should be. An online feedback website that included a photo gallery providing examples of materials for each theme was launched on September 8, 2016. The online site also provided interested stakeholders an opportunity to select a preferred theme choice and provide comments on the three presented themes until September 23, 2016. It is important to note that the photo gallery was simply an illustration to represent the three theme choices in order to make it clear what they could look like. The photos were not necessarily the actual furnishing options that may be presented in the second phase of the engagement process.

In order to connect with as many residents as possible from across town, staff setup an information booth at various high-traffic events/locations including:

- Downtown Oakville Farmer's Market on September 10 and 17
- Sixteen Mile Sports Complex on Wednesday, September 14
- Iroquois Ridge Community Centre on Thursday, September 15
- QEP Community and Cultural Centre on Wednesday, September 21
- Glen Abbey Community Arena on Thursday, September 22

A Public Information Centre was also held at town hall on Tuesday, September 20, 2016.

At all of these sessions, staff provided display boards featuring sample furniture photos representing each style, and asked visitors/residents to select the style they preferred.

Communications promoting the engagement sessions began as soon as the online feedback website was launched. This included communication to the downtown BIA and the resident associations, newspaper advertisements, eNewsletter articles, digital screens, media release, web updates, and social media posts.

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The Downtown BIA also undertook their own internal survey of its members regarding a preferred theme. The BIA executive will be providing their results as part of a delegation to Council.

Public Engagement Results:

The seven (7) in-person sessions resulted in 309 individuals who indicated a preferred theme choice as follows:

- Traditional - 198
- Contemporary - 64
- Classic - 47

The online feedback resulted in 1122 individual preferred theme choices as follows:

- Traditional - 669
- Contemporary - 200
- Classic - 253

It should be noted that during an analysis of the online feedback results, there was one significant anomaly discovered. A total of 1221 selections in favour of a traditional theme were received from the same IP address, most likely utilizing a computer based program ("Bot"). In order to ensure a fair feedback process for all involved, all but one of these selections were removed from the traditional category. The above online results presented is the corrected version.

Combining the in-person and online feedback provides the following total result:

- Traditional - 867 (60.5%)
- Contemporary - 264 (18.5%)
- Classic - 300 (21%)

It should be noted that many comments accompanied the various choice selections and these were reviewed by staff.

Recommendation:

Based on the results of phase 1 of the relaunched public engagement process, staff are recommending that Council approve a traditional palette theme for light standards, benches, bike rings and bollards.

Next Steps:

Upon Council's approval of the traditional theme, the next step in the process will be about selecting the individual furniture pieces to suit the approved theme. Staff will commence the second phase of public engagement later this autumn.

Staff will be meeting with internal operating departments to review furnishing choices in advance of presenting them to the public. It should be noted there were

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many comments received from individuals during the first phase indicating a preference to keep and re-use the existing streetlight poles. The project team will be undertaking a review of the existing “acorn” street light poles, including a cost/benefit analysis, to determine their suitability for re-use as part of the streetscape project as they have some challenges that would need to be addressed.

An online feedback site, including a photo library of the proposed palette choices will be launched and a public open house will be scheduled where some samples of the materials will be on hand to allow the public to see the options in person. Based on the feedback received from the online site and the public meeting, a preferred suite of materials will be presented to the public in early 2017.

Staff will report back to Council as early as possible in 2017 with the results of the second phase of the public engagement process as well as provide a recommendation for the preferred suite of materials. Staff will also reporting to the Heritage Committee.

Once finalized and approved, the new streetscape materials and furnishings will be specified for the Lakeshore Road Reconstruction and Streetscape Project as well as other streets in downtown Oakville as they are programmed for reconstruction in the future. The new streetscape materials and furnishings will also be included when the town undertakes to rehabilitate the Lakeshore Road Bridge at Sixteen Mile Creek starting in early 2017, which included the streetscaping of the roadway approaches between Navy Street and Forsythe Street. The contract for the bridge project will be awarded prior to the final selections of the streetscape furnishings; these items will need to be added via “Change Orders” to the contract.

Council’s direction also included that staff develop options for Lakeshore Road that would provide, in whole or in part, a flexible (curbless) street. Staff will be working to achieve this and will include this as part of the second phase of the public engagement process. As there may be significant engineering issues to resolve, staff may not be in a position to present this to Council at the same time the final furniture selections are presented in early 2017 – staff will advise Council on the timing in the near future.

CONSIDERATIONS:

(A) PUBLIC

The second phase of the public engagement process will be scheduled to commence in the autumn of 2017 where staff will be presenting two palettes of materials for the streetscape furnishing selections. Staff will report back to council in 2017 with the results of the public engagement process and the preferred suite of streetscape materials.

(B) FINANCIAL

None

(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS

Roads and Works Operations, Planning, Engineering and Parks and Open Space will be involved in the internal review of the materials palettes as the project moves forward.

(D) CORPORATE AND/OR DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC GOALS

This report addresses the corporate strategic goal to:

- enhance our economic environment
- continuously improve our programs and services
- provide outstanding service to our residents and businesses
- be accountable in everything we do
- enhance our cultural environment
- enhance our social environment

(E) COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY

The Lakeshore Road Reconstruction and Streetscape project addresses all the pillars of sustainability; linkages between streets, business, promotes social, improving active transportation promotes environmental, the vibrancy of the downtown promotes economic and community sustainability.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Photo Gallery of Theme Choices

Prepared by:

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Submitted by:

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Manager – Design & Construction

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Recommended by:

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