

Planning for a community that is Pedestrian and Bicycle Friendly

City transportation planners are seeking your input on the potential redevelopment of George St. during an upcoming open house.

The redesign proposes adding pedestrian islands and turning lanes to the stretch of George St. between No Frills and the Art Gallery of Peterborough. A signal would be added at Dalhousie Street. The current four lanes of traffic would be reduced to two, leaving room for pedestrian islands in the middle of the road, as well as turning lanes to get into locations such as the Holiday Inn.

One of the purposes of the upcoming meeting will be to present the benefits and challenges and to gain input from the public. Many people use Del Cray Park and the improvements could provide a more welcoming environment and encourage people to come downtown. Further, this is an entrance to the downtown and a more welcoming approach would be beneficial.

Improving safety is another priority and the city also has many similar road designs to learn from in other locations. This movement towards more people-friendly streets is a trend in many cities, where these redesigns generally show a 30% reduction in the number of collisions.

The public open house takes place July 15 at the Peterborough Public Library auditorium at 345 Aylmer St. N. from 4 to 8 p.m.

Presentations take place at 4 and 7 p.m. that will include visuals of what the redone street could look like.

How this supports the our local report(s) and research:

The Peterborough Social Planning Council released our report “**Planning for Great Streets: A report on how the City of Peterborough can transform its street network into cherished public space**” (2010).

The report acknowledged that our community already has a lot of great street potential:

- We're small: Peterborough is only 14 km by 9 km wide –we can easily leave our cars at home more often.
- We have 38 km of multipurpose trails that are expanding every year
- We have a large public transit system that is constantly making improvements and whose ridership is growing

- We have one of the highest walking and cycling rates in Ontario
- We have a vibrant downtown with heavy foot traffic
- We have an ambitious and innovative plan to fill the gaps in our sidewalk system

The proposed plan for George Street supports the recommendations of the PSPC's report.

Why changing transportation systems are becoming more important to communities

The Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI) calls upon planners, the provincial government, municipalities, other related professionals, and members of the public to make active transportation a core mode of transportation for people of all ages across Ontario.

What is Active Transportation? Active transportation is defined as “non-motorized travel, including walking, cycling, rollerblading and movements with mobility devices,” according to the Ontario Ministry of Transportation’s Transit Supportive Guidelines (2012). The provincial active transportation network is shaped by many elements. These include sidewalks, on-road bicycle lanes and routes, off-road trails, multi-use pathways, bike parking, effective signage, transit equipped to support cycling and pedestrian crossings, as well as human-scaled and pedestrian oriented development patterns.

Planners recognize the relationship between how communities are designed and built and the transportation choices that people make. Planners can make a positive contribution by helping to implement the provincial Cycling Strategy, in response to the recommendations in the Office of the Chief Coroner for Ontario’s [Cycling Death Review](#) (June 2012) and [Pedestrian Death Review \(September 2012\)](#). The Office of the Chief Coroner reports that 129 cyclist deaths occurred between 2006 and 2010 and 95 pedestrian deaths occurred in 2010. In 2009 alone, over 26,000 people in Ontario visited an emergency department for the treatment of an injury sustained while cycling. The Office of the Chief Coroner states that “100% of [pedestrian and cyclist] deaths were preventable.”

Finally, the City and County through the Council on Aging will be exploring how to make this a more age-friendly community. According to the World Health Organization, increasing the ability for people to move about the community is a major determinant of success.

Sources;

www.pspc.on.ca “**Planning for Great Streets: A report on how the City of Peterborough can transform its street network into cherished public space**” (2010).

<http://ontarioplanners.ca/PDF/Healthy-Communities/2014/Moving-Forward-on-Active-Transportation-in-Ontario>
“Finding the Right Fit: Age-friendly Community Planning, ontario.ca/seniors”

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