

# Downey Road

# Transportation Improvement Study

## Workshop 2 Participant Handbook

Workshop 1  
May 18 and 19, 2016

Workshop 2  
June 23 and 28, 2016

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# Summary of feedback from Workshop #1

The public and stakeholders were invited to comment on traffic calming options for Downey Road at two public workshops on May 18 and 19 and online. Participants at the workshops marked up maps of Downey Road with the types of traffic calming measures they would like to see at various locations. The materials from the workshops were also posted online so that others could provide feedback using the comment sheets or the online MindMixer page. In total, the project team has received feedback from over 120 individuals, representing community residents, local businesses, stakeholders and agencies.

Several themes have clearly emerged from the feedback:

- Need to improve access to and from Woodland Glen Drive including options such as signalization, a roundabout, adding turning lanes and/or providing a crossing for pedestrians.
- Need for improved traffic control on Niska Road either as a roundabout or with signalization.
- Need for a pedestrian crossing at Hazelwood Drive, including crosswalks, pedestrian refuge islands, chokers and/or a raised intersection.
- Need for improved pedestrian crossing at Ptarmigan Drive and Quail Creek/Pheasant Run .
- Need for speed reduction south of Teal Drive, from Quail Creek/Pheasant Run to Teal Drive, and between intersections throughout the study area. Speed humps and dragon's teeth were the most popular proposed traffic calming features.
- Strong support for parking along Mollison Park on Downey Road.
- Support for bicycle lanes included buffering cyclists from traffic using the parking lane.

The three conceptual design options have been developed with consideration to all of the feedback collected up to June 17, 2016.

# Decision-making criteria

A number of factors contribute to the final decision on what will be recommended to council. These include technical aspects, safety and access, public feedback and financial considerations. These four factors are given equal weight when evaluating the proposed options. Put another way, each category carries a weight of 25% in the final decision-making.

## 1. Technical requirements

### **Regulatory and legislative compliance:**

The City of Guelph follows the Transportation Association of Canada's guidelines for road design, as well as the Ontario Traffic Manuals for lane markings and signage requirements. Guelph's Official Plan is governed by the Municipal Act, and directs the total width of the Right-of-Way as well as the classification of Downey Road.

### **Impact to the function of the roadway:**

The function of the roadway as defined by the Official Plan must be maintained.

### **Compatibility with existing policies:**

The Cycling Master Plan, the Bicycle Policy and the Guelph Trails Master Plan have routes that use or cross Downey Road. Recommendations within these plans must factor into the final design considerations.

### **Effectiveness at traffic calming:**

The project team reviews each option to make sure it will have the desired effect on travel speeds, pedestrian crossings and cyclist access.

## 2. Safety and access factors

### **Impacts to emergency vehicles and transit access:**

As a transit route, the road design should not impede the ability of Guelph Transit to deliver on-time service to customers. Emergency vehicle access must be maintained.

## 3. Public feedback

Public feedback gives residents and stakeholders the opportunity to indicate their preferences for the street design and to identify issues, concerns or impacts that come from personal experience living on and/or using the roadway.

Collecting feedback also serves to identify potential impacts to adjacent land owners, such as noise and access to driveways.

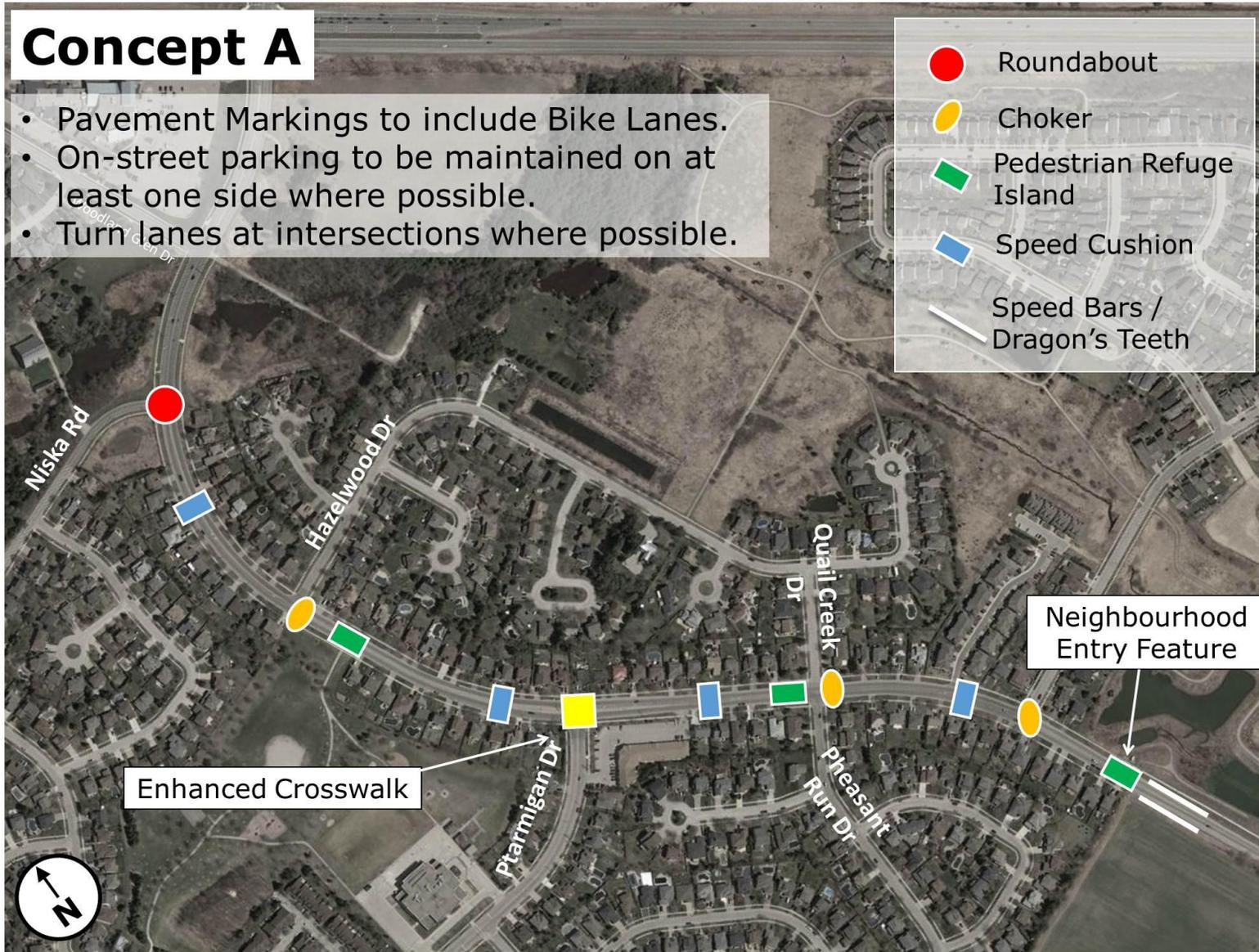
## 4. Financial Considerations

The more complex the design, the greater the cost will be.

Certain designs may contribute to higher operating and maintenance costs over the long term.

# Proposed options

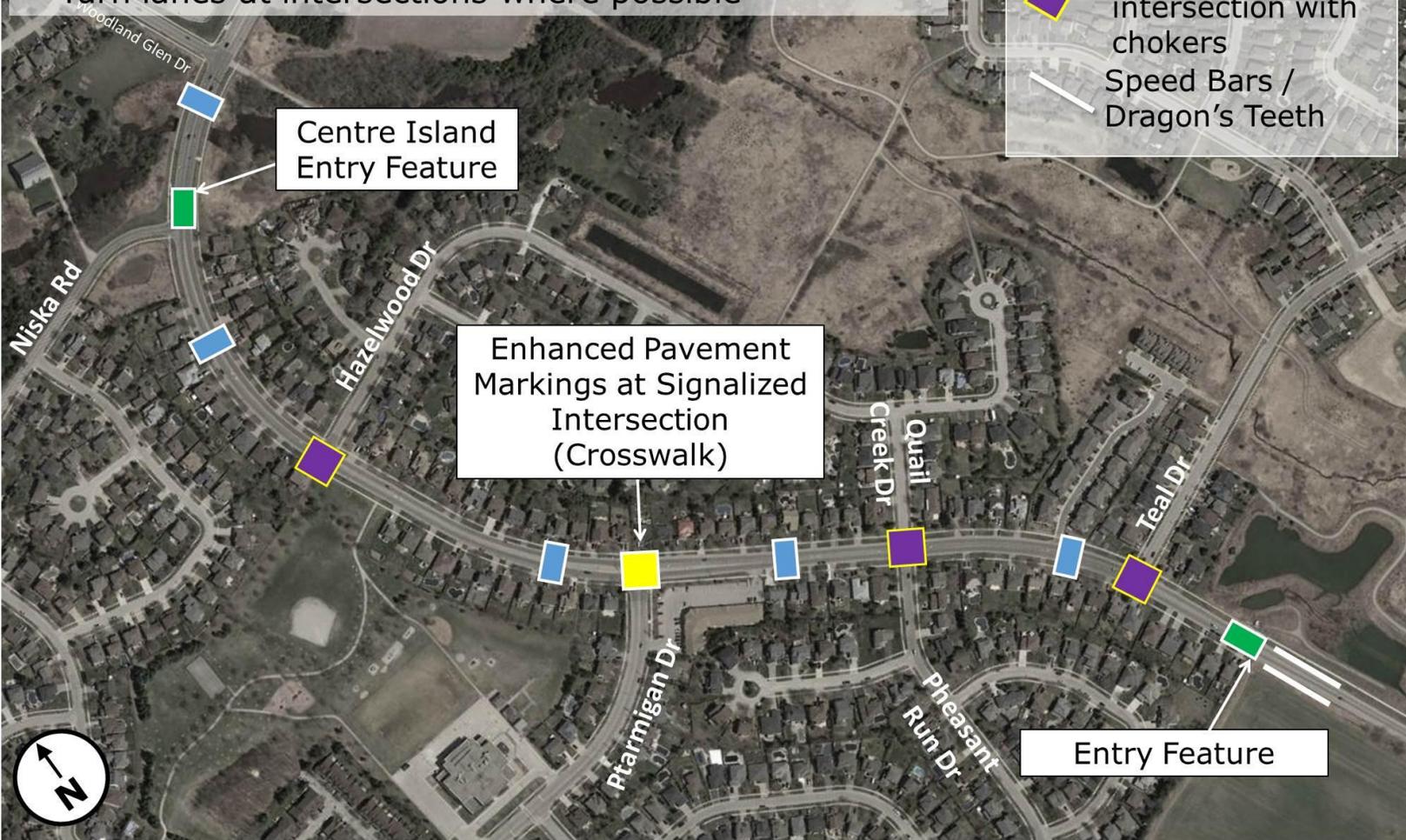
The proposed options on the following pages have been constructed by Paradigm Transportation Solutions Limited in consultation with City of Guelph Staff and using the feedback received from the two public up until June 17.



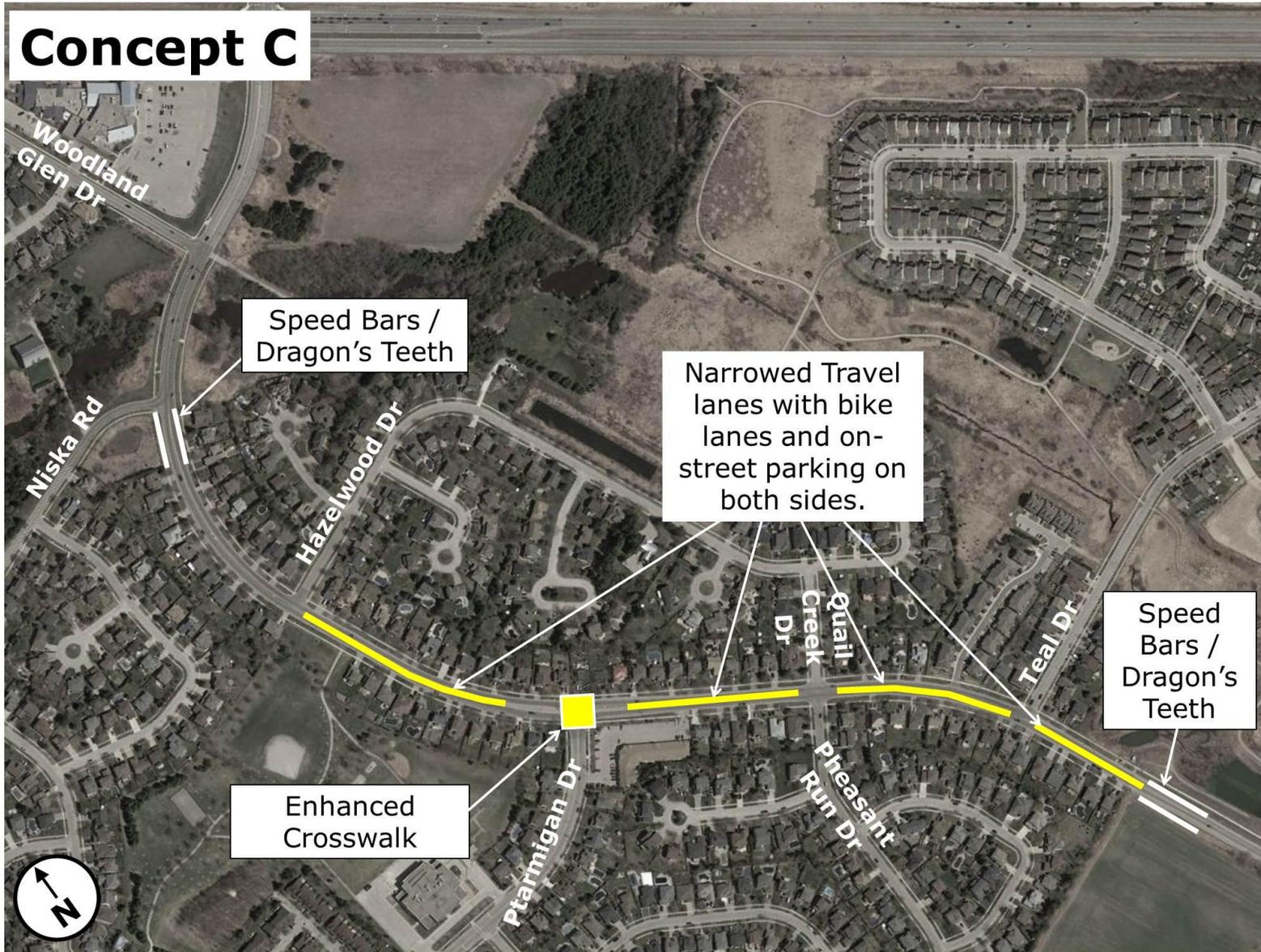
# Concept B

- Pavement Markings to include Bike Lanes
- On-street parking on at least one side where possible
- Turn lanes at intersections where possible

- Pedestrian Refuge Island
- Speed Cushion
- Raised intersection with chokers
- Speed Bars / Dragon's Teeth



# Concept C



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# Study background

## Project timeline

- June 2013: City engages the residents of Downey Road in selecting a design for the Council-approved inclusion of bike lanes on Downey Road between Niska Road and Teal Drive. Residents ask staff to defer one year.
- June 2014: The City holds community walk-about to collect feedback on proposed road designs and to hear concerns about road traffic.
- July 2014: Guelph City Council direct staff to report back with a design for Downey Road that includes bicycle lanes and traffic calming elements, as well as a recommendation on the classification of Downey Road.
- May 18 and 19, 2016: City and Paradigm Transportation Solutions Ltd host first set of public workshops to collect feedback on preferred traffic calming elements.
- June 23 and 28, 2016: City and Paradigm Transportation Solutions Ltd host second set of public workshops to evaluate proposed options for traffic calming on Downey Road.



## Study objectives

1. To engage area residents and other community stakeholders in a review of safety and traffic concerns along Downey Road; and
2. To plan and build safe, accessible and efficient transportation improvements to Downey Road that can be enjoyed by all users (pedestrians, cyclists, drivers), while supporting Council-approved policies and master plans.

## What is traffic calming?

Traffic calming is “the combination of mainly physical measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behaviour and improve conditions for non-motorized street users” (Institute of Transportation Engineers, 1997).

The primary purpose of traffic calming is to reduce speeding within residential neighbourhoods and thus improve safety for pedestrians and residents. Traffic calming is a proven, long-term behaviour change tool. Traffic calming measures are permanent or semi-permanent design features of the roadway that makes drivers feel the need to slow down and creates a lasting change in driver behaviour.

Traffic enforcement has limited and more short-term influence on driver behaviour. Enforcement requires constant monitoring (costly) and fines must be high enough to discourage repeated offences.

Stop signs are not traffic calming measures. The purpose of a stop sign is to assign right-of-way. Stop signs installed at locations that are not warranted based on technical guidelines can lead to non-

compliance, such as rolling stops, and can result in new safety hazards for other road users. Stop signs also slow traffic only in the immediate vicinity, and drivers typically speed up after a stop sign.

**Table 1 - Summary of traffic calming options (matrix of applicable measures for minor arterial / major collector roads)**

Traffic calming measure	Traffic issue				
	Speeding	Accidents	Congestion	Noise	Pedestrian safety
Roundabouts	◊	◆	◊	◊	◇
Traffic circles	◆	◆	◊	◊	◇
Chokers	◆	◊	◇	✘	◊
Pedestrian refuge islands	◆	◊	◇	◇	◆
Raised intersections	◆	◇	◇	◊	◊
Speed cushions	◆	◊	◊	✘	◊
Lane striping	◆	◊	◇	◇	◇
Dragon's teeth / speed bars	◆	◊	◇	◇	◇

Key:

- ◆ Strongly applicable
- ◊ Moderately Applicable
- ◇ Indifferent
- ✘ Not applicable

**Roundabouts**



**Neighborhood traffic circle**



**Mid-block or intersection choker**



**Pedestrian refuge island**



**Speed cushion**



**Raised intersections**



**Lane striping**



**Dragon's teeth / speed bars**



## Questions and answers

**Q. What is the timing for implementation of the final recommendations of this study?**

A. The results of this study will be reported to Council in September 2016 with a recommended conceptual design for traffic calming on Downey Road. Depending on the complexity of the measures proposed, some or all of the design may be implemented within the next 1-5 years through the budget process. Any complex components such as reconstructing intersections may be further studied within the scope of the Transportation Master Plan update.

**Q. Could Downey Road be closed to traffic at Teal Drive? What is the process for requesting a road closure?**

A. Because Downey Road is currently classified in the Official Plan as an arterial roadway, staff would need to make a recommendation to Council to amend the Official Plan. An Official Plan Amendment requires a public commenting period as legislated by the Municipal Act of Ontario.

If the decision is made to proceed with an Official Plan Amendment to close Downey Road, Council would have to pass a bylaw and follow specific procedures for notifying the public and inviting comment.

Challenges with supporting an Official Plan Amendment to close Downey Road include:

- Defending the Amendment to the Ontario Municipal Board, a provincial development tribunal for planning and development-related disputes
- Emergency services would be negatively impacted by longer travel times and distances to reach certain addresses
- Economic development could be negatively impacted. Since job creation is prescribed by the Places to Grow Act of Ontario for Guelph, this could impact Guelph's ability to meet provincially-assigned targets and result in penalties by the Province.
- Adjacent municipalities and townships would need to be consulted to provide comment.

**Q. Can multi-use paths in the boulevard be considered as a possible cycling facility for Downey Road?**

A. A multi-use boulevard path is a 3.0-meter asphalt pathway in the boulevard (between the property line and the road curb). It can be used by cyclists and pedestrians.

Downey Road is not considered a suitable candidate for a shared path in the boulevard. This is a relatively new type of facility in North American cities, and most drivers have not been taught to check for fast-moving cyclists in the boulevard when backing out of driveways or turning in/out of side streets. Cyclists are most frequently struck when they are on the sidewalk according to police collision statistics. For these reasons, shared paths are most suitable in locations where there are relatively few driveways, side streets or access roads. Boulevard paths currently exist on Woodlawn Road between Nicklin Road and Silvercreek Parkway.

**Q. How will the Province's proposed changes for the Hanlon Expressway at Downey Road/Kortright Road affect traffic volumes on Downey Road?**

A. The Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) has jurisdiction over Hanlon Expressway interchanges. MTO has proposed building a partial interchange at Downey Road/Kortright Road and the Hanlon. The interchange will provide Downey/Kortright users with southbound access to the expressway, and northbound Hanlon users with an off-ramp to Downey/Kortright Roads. These plans mean there would be no northbound access from Downey/Kortright onto the Hanlon, and no direct southbound access from the Hanlon to Downey/Kortright. The proposed changes are

intended to encourage commuters and trucks to use the Laird Road interchange to access the Hanlon Creek Business Park and Puslinch Township. The proposed changes are also expected to reduce traffic volumes on Downey Road. The MTO has not provided a timeline for this work.

**Q. Are bike lanes still required if Downey Road is not classified as an arterial road?**

A. Yes, the Ontario Traffic Manual recommends on-street bike lanes where traffic volumes are greater than 2,000 vehicles per day and speeds are 50 kilometers per hour or greater. Downey Road meets these criteria. The Bicycle Policy and the Cycling Master Plan recommend bike lanes for all arterial roadways in Guelph because arterial roadways typically meet or exceed these volume and speed thresholds for bicycle lanes.

Cycling facilities will connect Downey Road to our Active Transportation Network of on- and off-road routes that promotes active forms of transportation such as walking, running, cycling and inline skating. Cycling facilities will also improve access to key destinations such as the YMCA-YWCA of Guelph and the public school. Cycling facilities can help calm traffic by narrowing the roadway.

**Q. What is being proposed at the intersection of Niska and Downey roads?**

The Niska Road and Bridge Environmental Assessment report recommended a signalized intersection at Niska Road and Downey Road. However, Council directed staff not to make the recommended changes to the intersection as part of the scope of the Niska Road Environmental Assessment (EA).

**Q. How will the Niska Road bridge replacement and road improvements affect traffic on Downey Road?**

A. Improvements to Niska Road and the bridge are will not change the traffic patterns on Downey Road. No additional travel lanes are being added to Niska Road, and the road capacity remains the same. Traffic calming measures are also proposed for Niska Road and will be included in final designs.

**Q. Why has the city studied Niska Road separately from Downey Road, rather than studying traffic in the whole Kortright Hills neighbourhood?**

A. The Kortright Hills neighbourhood has always been an integral part of the City's Transportation Master Plan (2005), and both Niska Road and Downey Road are important parts of the area's road network. Whenever a site-specific study is undertaken, changes and impacts on surrounding neighbourhood streets, and on the city-wide road network, are considered.

**Q. Can we postpone traffic calming on Downey until the Niska Road intersection treatment is determined?**

A. The intersection of Niska Road is only one piece of the traffic calming solution for Downey Road, and the timing of any redesign of this area does not require the rest of traffic calming on Downey Road to be postponed.

**Q. How will on-street parking be affected?**

A. The impacts to on-street parking will depend on the final design resulting from community input and other decision-making criteria. On-street parking may be affected in some areas and not others, or not at all.

**Q. Why is Downey Road classified as an arterial road?**

A. Downey Road was classified as an arterial road in 1988.

One of the primary functions of arterial roads is to provide movement of people and goods through and within the city. Downey Road is identified in City of Guelph's Official Plan and Transportation Master Plan as serving as a connection between Kortright Road and east of the Hanlon Expressway, and Puslinch County to the south.

Based on a review of recent and historical traffic studies conducted by Paradigm Transportation Solutions Ltd., Downey Road still fits the definition and characteristics of an arterial road as defined by the Transportation Association of Canada and the Institute of Traffic Engineers.

Characteristics of arterial roads include:

- Uninterrupted flow (except at signalized intersections)
- Accommodation of all vehicle types and frequent accommodation of cycling with dedicated on-road facilities
- Some degree of access control
- Volumes between 5,000 and 20,000 vehicles per day on a two-lane cross section
- Accommodation of pedestrians with sidewalks on both sides of the street and appropriate crossings

Guidelines for traffic engineering and transportation planning (Context Sensitive Solutions) identify Downey Road within the "C3-Suburban" context zone, and is defined as an "Avenue" according to this definition:

"Walkable, low-to-medium speed (40 to 60 km/h) urban arterial or collector thoroughfare, generally shorter in length than boulevards, serving access to abutting land. Avenues serve as primary pedestrian and bicycle routes and may serve local transit routes. Avenues do not exceed four (4) lanes, and access to land is a primary function. Goods movement is typically limited to local routes and deliveries. Some avenues feature a raised landscaped median. Avenues may serve commercial or mixed-use sectors and may provide curb parking."

In terms of functional classifications, Avenues can perform principle arterial, minor arterial or collector functions.

**Q. What policies influence this project?**

A. The following is a summary of the policies, plans and legislation that influence the Downey Road transportation improvement study:

- Downey Road is identified in the **City of Guelph Official Plan** and the **2005 Transportation Master Plan** as an arterial road.
- The **Cycling Master Plan** (2013) designates on-street bicycle lanes for Downey Road based on the criteria supported by the Ontario Traffic Manual Book 18.
- The **City of Guelph Neighbourhood Traffic Calming Policy (2006)** states that safety concerns on arterial roadways or four-lane collector roadways are dealt with on a case-by-case basis
- The **2005 Guelph Trails Master Plan** identifies several trail crossing locations along Downey Road between Woodland Glen Drive and Teal Drive
- The City of Guelph is required to make all public property accessible according to **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)**.