



# Guelph Downtown Renewal Fall Engagement 2023 Summary

November 2023

**What We Heard – Fall Engagement 2023 Summary: Downtown  
Infrastructure Renewal**

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# What We Heard – Fall Engagement 2023 Summary: Downtown Infrastructure Renewal

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## Introduction

### Background

Downtown Guelph is the heart of the city. A place where residents and visitors come to play, live, shop, and work.

The City of Guelph has a great downtown, and we want it to stay that way for years to come. There are aging water and sewer pipes, roads, and sidewalks that must be replaced—some underground pipes are over 100 years old! The City is replacing aging infrastructure and upgrading utility services, but before they put the roads back together, they will have an opportunity to modernize and upgrade the streetscape.

Improving this important infrastructure is expected to have a significant positive ripple effect on the local economy, the environment, and the social well-being of people living, working, and visiting downtown and the wider community.

Work like this takes time. It takes years to study, engage with the community, plan for, and implement a generational renewal of municipal downtown infrastructure. This important project will improve the City of Guelph's downtown for all businesses, residents, users, and visitors.

The [Downtown Infrastructure Renewal](#) project is one of many projects under the overarching Downtown Renewal efforts. The [Downtown Renewal](#) program will transform and revitalize how Downtown looks, feels, and functions— making it future-ready to support growth to 2051 and beyond.

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Figure 1: Map of Study Area

The primary project study area is north of the railway tracks. Key streets include:

- Baker Street from Quebec Street to Woolwich Street (part of Baker District)
- Quebec Street from Wynnham Street North to Norfolk Street
- Wynnham Street from Carden Street to Woolwich Street
- Macdonell Street from Norfolk Street to Carden Street
- Woolwich Street from Macdonell Street to Norfolk Street
- Macdonell Street and Allan’s Dam structures over the Speed River

Planning for Downtown Infrastructure Renewal began in the spring of 2021. During the planning phase, the study looked at the existing infrastructure and the future needs of downtown to determine what needed to be updated.

This project was initiated as a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (MCEA) in January 2021. It includes two streams of activity:

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- The [Wyndham Street EA](#) examines the function of Wyndham Street for all users, including the number of traffic lanes and available active transportation infrastructure. The project includes technical studies and input from the community. This EA has been revised to “Exempt” from the Municipal Class EA Process given the proposed solutions; however, the City is continuing to follow “Schedule B” public consultation measures.
- The [Macdonell and Allan Dam structures EA](#) confirms the required improvements and modifications to the Macdonell and Allan structures. It includes technical studies and consultation.

The City expects to present the preferred options for the Wyndham Street Corridor and the Wyndham Street, Quebec Street and Douglas Street intersection (St. George’s Square) to Council in 2024. The City will determine phasing and staging by developing the Capital Implementation Plan in 2024. Detailed design will begin in 2025, and construction will begin no sooner than 2026. The overall design and construction process is expected to last approximately eight to 10 years. A better estimate of the construction timeline will be set keeping in mind the needs and wants of Guelph’s community and the pace and capacity for construction.

### What we did

In September 2023, the City of Guelph hosted the second public open house for the Downtown Infrastructure Renewal Program. The open house shared the project purpose, goals, and recommended solution for the Wyndham Street Corridor. It presented three short-listed layout options for St. George’s Square for public input. The open house followed a “drop-in” style, where materials were displayed in-person and online for public review. Project team members were available in person to provide additional context and answer questions.

After reviewing the display materials, the public was invited to provide feedback on display boards or complete a comment form (either in hard copy or through the Have Your Say webpage). The form solicited thoughts about the recommendation for the corridor and options for the St. George’s Square intersection. Some community members submitted feedback to the project team via email.

- The open house (in-person) was held on September 27, 2023. Forty individuals were in attendance.
- [Have Your Say webpage](#) included a comment form and survey that was available from September 27 – October 15, 2023. There were 695 visitors to the website, of which 137 completed the survey.
- One emailed submission was received on August 30, 2023.
- One individual filled out a comment form and mailed it to the project team.
- A meeting was held with the Downtown Guelph Business Association (DGBA) on September 19, 2023, to complement the feedback collected from the public.

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### **Who we heard from**

In total, 40 individuals attended the public open house, 137 completed the survey (note not all respondents answered all questions), one filled out a comment form, and one emailed a response. Most participants were Guelph residents (residing within or outside Downtown). A handful of business owners, students and visitors also completed the survey.

Participants ranged in age from under 18 to over 75, with the majority falling between 25 and 54. Survey participants replied to the demographic questions as follows:

- Forty-five (45) were residents of Downtown Guelph, 73 were residents of Guelph (outside downtown), four were students, three lived outside of Guelph, five worked at or owned a business downtown, six selected 'other' and two did not respond.
- Sixty-four (64) noted their preferred method of travel was walking, 35 preferred cycling, 29 preferred driving, four preferred taking transit, one preferred carpooling, and five did not respond.

### **What we heard**

#### **Wyndham Street Corridor**

Recommended corridor design

The recommended corridor design proposed for Wyndham Street is two lanes with a uni-directional bike path. This design:

- Reduces the current four-lane configuration to two-lanes, providing traffic calming while accommodating transit and personal vehicle usage.
- Introduces dedicated lanes for cyclists with a physical buffer from vehicles following the recommendations of the Transportation Master Plan.
- Provides layby parking for a similar number of vehicles to what is there now, maintaining on-street access to businesses.
- Introduces a formalized planting/furnishing zone, providing permanent space for flexible uses to create an improved pedestrian zone.
- Provides equitable access to businesses, use of furnishing zones and space for flexible uses, including patios (i.e., on both sides of the street as opposed to one), if desired.

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Figure 2: Recommended Wyndham Street corridor design - two lanes with a uni-directional bike path

## Feedback on the recommended corridor design

Participants shared comments or ideas to enhance the recommended Wyndham Street corridor design. One hundred and one (101) individuals responded to this question.

Overall feedback supported prioritizing pedestrian and cyclist-friendly features, reducing car traffic, and creating a more vibrant downtown space. There are differing opinions regarding the role of on-street parking and how best to accommodate various modes of transportation.

A summary of responses is below.

## Support for the corridor recommendation

- Most survey and open house participants supported the recommended corridor design of two-lanes with uni-directional bike paths.
- Strong support was expressed at the open house and survey for the protected bike lanes, as respondents felt the physical barriers would enhance safety and comfort for pedestrians and cyclists.

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- A few respondents indicated that protected bike lanes were not needed.
- There was general support for the flexible design to balance cycling, parking, and patios.
- There was support for integrating greenspace and trees as much as possible.

### Suggested enhancements

Respondents provided additional ideas to enhance the corridor recommendation.

The key themes emerging from comments are below:

- **Bike path enhancements** - There was general support for the bike paths. Some respondents recommended making bike paths as wide as possible. Others indicated that the bike lanes take up a disproportionate amount of space, and they need to consider the impact on marketing zones and their relationship to the buildings. A few respondents indicated the bike paths need to work as part of a larger active transportation network that connects into /out of downtown.

Some participants indicated a preference for bike paths on one side of the street and the removal of parking on both to accommodate a variety of uses, including enhanced patios or wider traffic lanes.

- **Dedicated accessible parking spaces and pick-up and drop-off zones** – Some participants indicated that accessibility requires further consideration in the design, including dedicated pick-up and drop-off zones, transit on and off-boarding, and more accessible parking spaces downtown that do not conflict with bicycle paths.
- **Green space** - Several respondents advocated for more green space, mature shade trees to provide shelter from the sun, and realistic maintenance plans to enhance the streetscape. There was further suggestion that the solution should reduce the heat island effect.
- **Pick-ups and deliveries** - Some survey respondents highlighted the importance of zones for pick-ups and deliveries.
- **Parking** - Several participants noted parking as a key consideration in the recommended design. Some favour reallocating, repurposing or removing parking for bike lanes or to provide more space for pedestrians, patios, or green spaces. Many of these responses recognize that some parking should remain to meet accessibility and business needs. A few participants suggested that removing parking on one side of the street would provide further cycling and pedestrian use.

In contrast, some respondents questioned if the volume of cyclists in Guelph justified the need for protected bike paths and the reallocation of parking spaces. They noted parking is a critical part of the street, providing year-round business access. They indicated there is a critical need for adequate parking downtown. Amongst those who want to retain parking on Wyndham, there was support for angled parking.



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- **Patios** – At the open house, several comments were received about retaining the patios permanently. There was a suggestion to ensure there is enough space on widened sidewalks for patios instead of moving the bike lanes to accommodate parking.
- **Road design** - Participants noted additional considerations, such as ensuring adequate turn lanes and mitigating conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists through signage.
- **Transit** - Some participants noted the importance of ensuring transit on and off-boarding needs are considered, while others showed concern that bus stops slow traffic movement downtown.
- Other suggestions include discrete waste management facilities and ample bike parking to match the proposed increase in cyclist presence.

### DGBA Board feedback on corridor design

In concert with the public open house, the City and consulting team met with the DGBA to gather their perspectives on the recommended corridor design. Highlights of the feedback provided at the meeting with DGBA are below.

- DGBA Board members were not supportive of the recommended corridor design. They noted that the recommendation limits parking access for businesses and residences to accommodate cycling, which occurs during limited summer months.
- The presence of bike lanes and cyclist traffic concerned the DGBA Board, who identified that most people drive downtown. They indicated vehicle access and parking must be prioritized for their businesses to thrive and for this area to become a commercial centre.
- The DGBA would like to ensure the City's Parking Master Plan is appropriately considered and that loading zones can be accommodated along Wyndham.

### St. George's Square Intersection Options

The City is reviewing the intersection at Wyndham Street, Douglas Street, and Quebec Street (i.e., St. George's Square) to support ongoing downtown vitality and revitalization efforts. The public open house presented three intersection layout options for feedback (see below).

### Design considerations that best serve the community

Survey participants ranked elements of the intersection to identify those that would best serve the community in the future from 1 to 8, with 1 being the most important and 8 being the least important. The table below shows the results, noting that the lowest number is the highest-ranked element.

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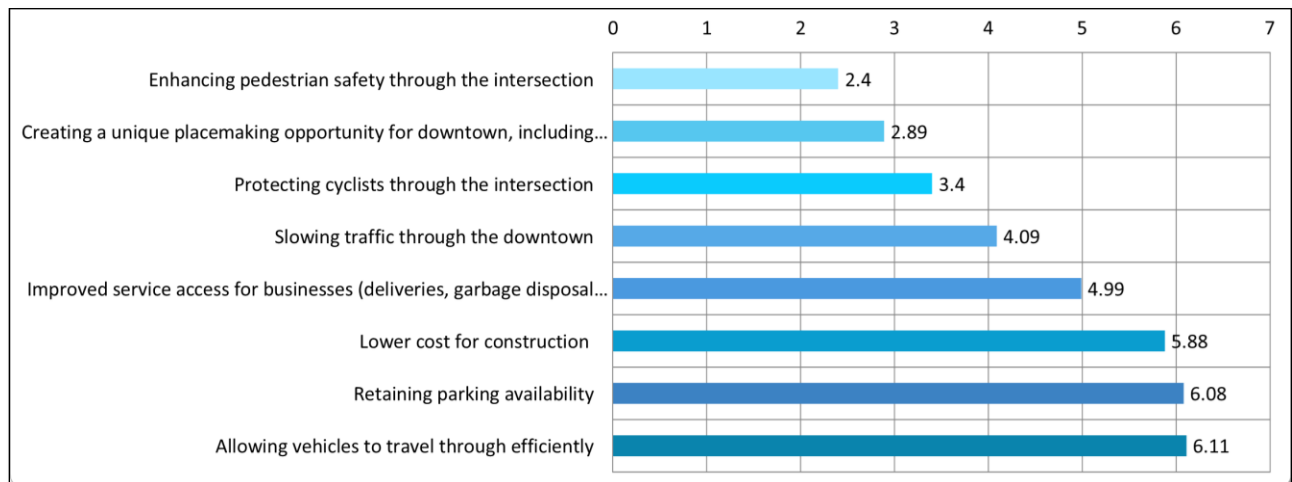


Figure 3: Ranking of most important considerations for the intersection, where 1 is the most important and 8 is least (n=135)

One hundred thirty-five individuals responded online, and one responded through a comment form. They indicated that the most important elements are enhancing pedestrian safety through the intersection, creating a unique placemaking opportunity for downtown, and protecting cyclists. These were followed by slowing traffic downtown and improving service access for businesses. The lowest-ranked elements were costs for construction, retaining parking availability, and allowing vehicles to travel through efficiently.

### Considerations that are important to you

Ninety participants identified what they felt are the most important considerations for the City when designing the St. George's Square intersection. Key themes are below:

- **Placemaking** – Several respondents at the open house and through the survey highlighted the opportunity for placemaking and the opportunity to make the downtown a destination. They called for a visually appealing, well-maintained, and vibrant downtown core. Some respondents highlighted the need for spaces for public art, events, activities, heritage and ensuring the square is a place for people.
- **Prioritizing pedestrians and cyclists** - Several survey respondents envision closing streets to traffic and creating a pedestrian-only or car-free environment that prioritizes pedestrians and cyclists. There was a recommendation to ensure the solutions are walkable.
- **Public space** - There is a strong theme of creating a welcoming downtown that integrates public space amenities such as seating, plantings, trees, and patios.
- **Reducing traffic and traffic flow** - Many respondents highlighted the need to slow traffic through downtown. They identified downtown as a destination

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rather than a thoroughfare and are interested in integrating traffic calming measures. While most respondents commented on the need to slow traffic, others indicated they appreciate solutions that efficiently allow traffic to flow through downtown.

- **Transit** - While many focused on reducing traffic and prioritizing pedestrians, there was an emphasis on maintaining transit and the efficient flow of public transit and emergency vehicles through the intersection.
- **Addressing homelessness** - When considering options for downtown, several respondents raised concerns about those who are unhoused in the downtown area. Some indicated they want solutions that help make everyone feel safe and included downtown.
- **Ensuring accessibility and safety** –There were recommendations that whatever option is selected, it prioritizes safety and ensures that downtown is accessible for all.
- **Integrating green spaces** – There were several comments about ensuring the designs integrate green spaces, canopy and other furnishing that add to the appeal of downtown.
- **Engaging the business community** – There was a recommendation to engage all businesses along the corridor and consider the impacts on businesses, particularly deliveries.

### Feedback on St. George’s Square Options

Participants indicated what they liked most and least about each of the three options for consideration.

#### Option 1: Standard intersection improvements

Option 1 includes minor improvements to vehicle and pedestrian operations (i.e., left turn lanes, signage, pavement markings, curb radii, etc.), upgrades to St. George’s Square, and can provide flexibility for events with the intersection closed.

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Figure 4: Option 1 - Standard intersection improvements

### Overall

We received feedback from both open house participants and survey respondents covering different design elements they liked most and least about this option. Many respondents noted this solution was not a significant change from the current intersection layout. Some suggested this was potentially the simplest, most cost-effective, or inexpensive option. Respondents noted Option 1 might prioritize vehicle traffic, doesn't fully address current issues, and does not change the face of downtown as much as the other designs. Common responses indicated they expect fewer construction impacts with this design compared to the other options. A few respondents supported this option as preferred overall; however, many who strongly emphasized a new opportunity for placemaking identified it as the least supported solution.

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### Most liked aspects of Option 1 - Standard intersection improvements

A summary of the most liked aspects of Option 1 emerging from the open house and survey feedback are captured thematically below. One hundred and two (102) responses were received.

- **Cost-effective and simple** – Several responses were accepting of the least amount of change and cost-effectiveness of the solution.
- **Provides a familiar layout** – There were several comments that this option retains the same layout, prevents traffic from moving too quickly, and would be familiar to residents.
- **Protects bike lanes** - The addition of protected bike lanes was well received for connection possibilities and safety priorities.
- **Increases safety** – Some respondents noted this as the safest option for pedestrians and cyclists.
- **Pedestrian-friendly features** - The pedestrian-friendly features, such as protected corners, left-hand turn lanes, curb bump outs, decreased crossing distances, and the separation from vehicular traffic, were appreciated.
- **Preserves public spaces** - Other responses noted that it maintained the cultural heritage of Downtown Guelph and preserved existing public spaces, including the fountain, with little impact.
- **Slows traffic** - In terms of vehicular access, respondents noted that reduced lane widths and sharper turning radii have the potential to make downtown less attractive to traffic—a positive feature for pedestrians and cyclists alike.

### Least liked aspects of Option 1 - Standard intersection improvements

A summary of the least liked aspects of Option 1 emerging from the open house and survey feedback are captured thematically below. One hundred and four (104) responses were received.

- **Not a significant change, lack of inspiration and placemaking** - The most common responses noted this option as an underwhelming change that does not increase the sense of place already in the area. Not only was the lack of change noted, but maintaining the offset intersection was said to retain the sense of a sometimes confusing and disjointed space for some respondents.
- **Amount of traffic** - Many respondents were concerned that maintaining a large intersection through the downtown core is designed with cars as the priority.
- **Concern about safety** – Some respondents expressed concern about safety and confusion for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists.
- **Traffic flow to Douglas** – Some commented that the option does not address the flow through Douglas and that the Douglas Street entrance is very wide with no noticeable traffic signal.

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- **Amount of parking** – A few respondents commented on the need for parking; others noted the amount of parking and suggested further eliminating parking.
- **Lack of green space and trees** - Responses identified that the lack of trees would lead to limited shade and biodiversity.
- **Loss of connection at crossings** - Pedestrian crossings being further apart, especially losing the connection between Quebec Street Mall and “The Family” Fountain, was said to increase the likelihood of jaywalking, segregated pedestrian areas, and decreased safety.
- **Protected bike lanes** - Though the bike lanes were protected through the corridor, respondents indicated further considerations in the design for cycling safety are required due to the street’s unaligned configuration. Other comments indicated there was too much space reserved for bicycles.
- **Need for more detailed design** – A few respondents noted a need for a more comprehensive design to show the option. There was an interest in having raised crossings and removing curb space. Respondents indicated this is a missed opportunity to realign the intersection and does not address the intersection’s safety and aesthetics.
- **Use of public space** – There was concern from a few respondents that the public spaces in this option would continue to feel segregated and underused.

### [DGBA Board feedback on Option 1 - Standard intersection improvements](#)

DGBA Board members were supportive of Option 1. They noted Option 1 as desirable for pedestrians due to the intersection not being closed off, as it would allow pedestrians to stroll and encourage free movement.

### [Option 2: Realigned 4-Leg Intersection](#)

Option 2 involves realigning Quebec Street and Douglas Street to tie into Wyndham Street with a moderate reconfiguration of St. George’s Square to accommodate the new intersection layout, which can provide flexibility for events with an intersection closure.

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Figure 5: Option 2 - Realigned four-leg intersection

### Overall

Some respondents identified this as their preferred option as it simplified the intersection, was viewed to protect pedestrians and cyclists, increased safety overall at the intersection, and retained some opportunities for placemaking in public spaces. Some viewed it as allowing traffic to flow well through the intersection and Douglas Street.

For others, this option was seen as status quo, with limited change and still focused on vehicular traffic movement. It was noted as negatively changing the character of the space, impacting traffic flow on Douglas Street. It was seen as a limited return on the investment for a modest improvement.

### Most liked elements of Option 2 –Realigned four-leg intersection

A summary of the most liked aspects of Option 2 emerging from the open house and survey feedback are captured thematically below. One hundred and nine (109) responses were received.

- **Provides a simple and logical design** – Several respondents were happy with how straightforward this intersection is. They believe it is a logical and more efficient solution than the current design.
- **Increases safety** – Several comments noted this layout as safer for pedestrians due to the maximization of pedestrian space, wider sidewalks, and streamlined crossing connections. Some noted it as safer for all road

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users by improving sightlines so traffic can flow with little congestion and ease of navigation, prioritizing pedestrians and cyclists.

- **Traffic flow, management, and calming** – Some respondents noted this solution presents a more efficient traffic flow and improves traffic management. The clear paths of travel were appreciated for lessening the potential points of conflict between transportation modes, and the connection between streets was user-friendly.
- **Efficient vehicle movement** – Some respondents noted this option provides efficient vehicle movement, ease of navigation, and fewer points of conflict for drivers.
- **Pedestrian-friendly** – Some respondents felt this option provided improvements for pedestrians and better pedestrian paths.
- **Improves usability** – Respondents provided positive feedback about the improved usability, clear connections, and travel paths provided by the realigned intersection.
- **Improves the intersection** – Respondents felt the realigned four-leg intersection addressed several concerns with the current configuration, including improving traffic flow, alignment, and safety by creating a more standard intersection.
- **Improved safety for cycling** – There were positive comments about cycling improvements, especially for left turns.
- **Opportunities for green spaces** – Respondents felt this option provided opportunities to create more green space than the current layout. With the potential for greenspaces, the opportunity to remove concrete from the square was also seen as a positive.
- **Access to Douglas Street** – Some responses noted how access to Douglas would be improved and more event opportunities would exist.
- **Retains public space** – Respondents liked that this option keeps the public space available on both sides of the street in front of shops. They noted it is slightly expanded on the corner of Douglas and Wyndham, making it safer and allowing people to continue to gather for various events.

### Least liked elements of Option 2 - Realigned four-leg intersection

A summary of the least liked aspects of Option 2 emerging from the open house and survey feedback are captured thematically below. One hundred and five (105) responses were received.

- **Increased traffic flow and speeds** – Many participants shared concerns that an aligned intersection enables faster moving traffic, potentially making the intersection unsafe. There were concerns that this option could potentially create a preferred through-traffic route downtown. Further feedback was that the design may not be aligned with traffic pattern needs.
- **Changes to Douglas Street** – Several respondents noted that Douglas Street is a unique element of the downtown, and changing the intersection



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will change the area's character. Respondents were concerned that not many cars continue down Douglas Street, and enabling easier vehicular access is unnecessary, as they would rather keep it more pedestrian-friendly.

- **Cost** – A number of respondents questioned if the project's cost was justifiable for the limited change and benefits.
- **Lacks inspiration** - Many commented that although the intersection was recognized positively for being straightforward and the design is acceptable, it is not inspiring or innovative. Respondents felt this option was not worth the investment for "status quo" or limited change.
- **Impacts on public space** – Respondents desire gathering spaces, and a decrease of plaza space in front of businesses and restaurants was a concern and not reflective of how people want to use downtown space.
- **Need for protected bike lanes** - Some respondents felt that bikes could share the road through the intersection and that protected bike lanes are unnecessary.
- **Pedestrian safety** – Some respondents were concerned about pedestrian safety and the potential for increased wait times at signalized intersections.

### [DGBA Board feedback on Option 2 - Realigned four-leg intersection](#)

Highlights of the feedback provided at the meeting with DGBA are provided below.

- DGBA members noted that Option 2 allows pedestrians to stroll and encourages free movement through the space, as the intersection is not closed off.
- There was concern about realigning towards Douglas Street, as it is currently a unique part of the city and "nook" with a lot of charm. Switching traffic directions would not be an additional benefit.
- One member stated that downtown was a great space already and that there are other ways to create a sense of place and reconfigure elements for use.

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### Option 3: Traffic Circle/Central Square

Option 3 involves creating a traffic circle or central square where traffic flows continuously in one way around the circle, there is a public plaza in the centre, and it allows events in the central plaza without closing the intersection.



Figure 6: Option 3 - Traffic circle/central square

### Overall

We received feedback from both open house participants and survey respondents. Overall, the traffic circle generated the most discussion. While many comments were positive about Option 3, others shared strongly opposing views. For some, this was the preferred option as an opportunity for placemaking downtown. It provides a safe, interesting, and functional solution that prioritizes pedestrians and provides a unique public space and placemaking opportunity for the city.

Others who did not support this option had concerns that it creates potential confusion and safety issues for users of the traffic circle. Some felt that the public space inside the traffic circle was too small for most events, it may have access barriers, and limited programmed activities.

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### Most liked elements of Option 3 – Traffic circle

A summary of the most liked aspects of Option 3 from the open house and survey responses are captured thematically below. One hundred and fifteen (115) responses were received.

- **Creates an opportunity for placemaking** – Several respondents appreciate the potential for placemaking and creating a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly downtown. This option increases the sense of community and benefits placemaking efforts. Respondents view this option as the most interesting and creative, making Downtown Guelph a destination worth visiting.
- **Improves traffic flow and calming** – Several respondents appreciate the potential for improved traffic flow and slower traffic. The traffic circle was seen as a more efficient way to move vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians through the area without stoplights. The traffic circle would deter traffic through the area and calm traffic, improving safety for all road users.
- **Integrates a central public space** - Many respondents like the large public space and park-like area in the middle for gatherings, events, and community activities. Many noted the opportunity for flexible programming.
- **Pedestrian-friendly** - Several comments focused on the positive elements of making the area more pedestrian-friendly and felt this was the most people-friendly option.
- **Increases safety** – Several comments noted that traffic circles can be safer for drivers and pedestrians.

### Least liked elements of Option 3 – Traffic circle

A summary of the least liked aspects of Option 3 from the open house and survey responses are captured thematically below. One hundred and twenty (120) responses were received.

- **Uncertain use of the public space** – Many expressed concerns about how the central space within the traffic circle will be used when no events are taking place. Some worry that it might become an underused or unwelcoming space. Some respondents were concerned about the amount of space allocated, with some feeling that it prioritizes vehicle traffic over pedestrians and takes up too much space that could be used for pedestrians, cyclists, or plantings.
- **Decreases safety** - Many are worried about pedestrian safety, including concerns about yielding and whether drivers will stop for pedestrians and cyclists. The most common question was about the space in the center of the circle surrounded by live traffic.
- **Increased traffic flow and speed** – Some respondents felt that traffic circles are a traffic solution that prioritizes vehicles instead of cyclists and pedestrians. Some respondents noted traffic circles are effective in other areas of the city but may not be the best application downtown or in heavily

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pedestrian areas. Some felt the traffic circle may encourage increased traffic speed, which could be a safety issue.

- **Cost and construction impact** - This option was considered by respondents to be the most expensive and would have the longest, most impactful construction period.
- **Limited pedestrian crossing** – The limited pedestrian crossings concerned respondents, as pedestrians would feel forced to cross to the center space at unsafe times in unsafe places. There were several suggestions to include refuge islands or raised crossings—respondents would like to see pedestrian safety measures in more detail.
- **Unintended uses** - Other responses identified that if the public space in the traffic circle is underused, it may become a site for encampments. Also, the reduced public spaces outside the circle were seen as a concern for business activation and overall connectedness. The idea of having a traffic circle in the heart of downtown is a concern for many, expressing it might not be a welcoming place for people to spend time.
- **Additional concerns** - There were noise and pollution concerns due to the lack of trees and greenery and the proximity of vehicles to recreating pedestrians in the center space. Additionally, a couple of respondents noted that The Family statue and fountain need to be kept for historical significance.

### DGBA Board feedback on Option 3 – Traffic circle

Highlights of the feedback provided at the meeting with DGBA are provided below.

- There was concern that the space in the middle of the traffic circle would fail to be programmed effectively and actively, potentially becoming a site for encampments.
- One comment was unsure how effective a traffic circle may be in getting vehicles to drive slower through the intersection, raising concern for pedestrian safety.
- Some DGBA members recognized that it takes a lot of work to get events to take place downtown, with many of the public not coming downtown even though they want to.
- The increase in events downtown due to this intersection option was a concern for the DGBA should events extend across multiple days and take away from day-to-day uses. It was theorized that the traffic circle may have a negative impact on events such as the Santa Claus parade.

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### Additional feedback

Participants provided the following additional feedback for consideration:

- Several respondents repeatedly highlighted an interest in a car-free downtown, prioritizing pedestrians and cyclists. In a car-free downtown, there would be exceptions for deliveries, transit, emergency, and electric vehicles.
- Downtowns are ideally thought to be vibrant destinations where people want to visit. According to many respondents, having a central, high-visibility public space and pedestrian-friendly street design would be most revitalizing.
- Many respondents would like to see this central stretch of Wyndham Street or Douglas Street as car-free.
- Respondents would like to see more bike-friendly infrastructure in addition to the proposed bike lanes, such as bike racks and storage facilities.
- According to some respondents, the future transportation needs of Downtown Guelph are generally seen as being pedestrian, cycling, and public transit friendly.
- Some respondents expressed concern for the project's feasibility in terms of cost-effectiveness, construction impact on the community and businesses, and the city's ability to implement meaningful change.
- A few respondents were interested in heritage preservation, especially of the fountain.
- A few respondents noted they prefer the current configuration and find it walkable and traffic-slowing.
- There were additional comments about the importance of increasing green space, adding trees, and safe pedestrian traffic flow.
- A few noted more details were desired in the visuals of the options, potentially including safety measures such as bollards and sidewalk heights or even the size and type of trees used.
- A respondent encouraged the use of plain language for the design information, including ensuring key terms, such as uni-directional and layby parking, are defined.

### Feedback received relating to other City initiatives

During engagement, some comments received were beyond the scope of the Downtown Infrastructure Renewal project. These comments are captured and will be shared with respective City departments to inform other projects and initiatives. Comments were received on the following topics.

- There was concern for those experiencing homelessness and finding solutions to support those in need.
- Police enforcement of traffic infractions and parking violations were noted several times.
- Promoting transit-oriented density was suggested.

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- Other city areas, such as Carden Street in front of City Hall, can use a revitalization and potentially be closed to become pedestrian-only.

### **Next steps**

The City and its consultants will use feedback from the open house and Have Your Say, along with research and best practices, to inform the information gathering studies (i.e., Capital Implementation Plan, Environmental Assessment for the Macdonell Street Bridge and Wyndham Street). The recommendations will be presented to Council in early 2024. Additional opportunities for public and stakeholder engagement will continue as the project progresses.