



Guelph Protected Cycling Network Study

Engagement Summary Report

December 2022



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Executive summary

The Guelph Protected Cycling Network Study aims to create protected cycling facilities that will help all riders feel comfortable biking along the following corridors in Guelph:

- Eramosa Road from Woolwich Street to Victoria Road
- Gordon Street from Waterloo Avenue to Clair Road
- College Avenue from Janefield Avenue to Dundas Lane.

The primary goal of engagement for this study was to understand the needs of the community as they relate to designing cycling facilities that are accessible for people of all ages and abilities.

Feedback received throughout the study was positive overall, with comments emphasizing the importance of creating safe, accessible cycling facilities on the study corridors. A number of participants expressed anticipation for when the facilities will be built, and a desire for more protected cycling facilities throughout Guelph. A general preference for cycle tracks or protected bike lanes was noted among participants, and the importance of protected intersections was highlighted.

Key input provided by participants included:

- The importance of signage and education for cyclists, drivers, and pedestrians
- Consideration for vehicular traffic movements at intersections and driveways
- The need for the cycling facilities to be maintained throughout the winter
- Measures to prioritize cyclists and pedestrians, including crosswalks and dedicated traffic lights for cyclists.

Moving forward, the conceptual design for each study corridor will be refined, taking into consideration the feedback and input received to date. Detailed considerations such as lighting and winter maintenance have been considered in the designs and evaluation, and will be addressed in detail in future design and operation stages.

All three study corridors have been identified as Schedule A+ Projects under the *Municipal Class Environmental Assessment* (2000, as amended) process. As such, all three are exempt under the *Ontario Environmental Assessment Act*.

The proposed improvements for College Avenue, Gordon Street and the portion of Eramosa Road between Woolwich Street and Arthur Street will proceed to detailed design and construction, subject to funding and approvals. A preferred design option

has not been identified for the remainder of the Eramosa Road study corridor, north/east of Arthur Street, at this point. While Protected Bike Lanes and Cycle Tracks scored highest in the evaluation of design options, the ideal design for these facilities requires reducing Eramosa Road to two lanes in several sections. Emergency Services has indicated a minimum three lane cross-section on Eramosa Road is required to facilitate timely access to the Guelph General Hospital. As a result, Eramosa Road from Arthur Street to Victoria Avenue will not proceed at this time.

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Project background

The Guelph Protected Cycling Network Study aims to create protected cycling facilities that will help all riders feel comfortable biking along key streets in the city while connecting large parts of our community. As part of this study, we have developed conceptual designs for all ages and abilities (AAA) protected cycling facilities on three corridors (**Figure 1**):

- Eramosa Road from Woolwich Street to Victoria Road (study corridor A)
- Gordon Street from Waterloo Avenue to Clair Road (study corridor B)
- College Avenue from Janefield Avenue to Dundas Lane (study corridor C)

Study corridor B has a gap between Edinburgh Road and Lowes Road, where the Gordon Street Improvements Class Environmental Assessment (EA) took place. That project involved the design of protected bike facilities, which the Protected Cycling Network Study will tie into. This will create a continuous protected cycling facility on Gordon Street from downtown to the south end of Guelph.

Figure 1: Study corridors



Source: City of Guelph

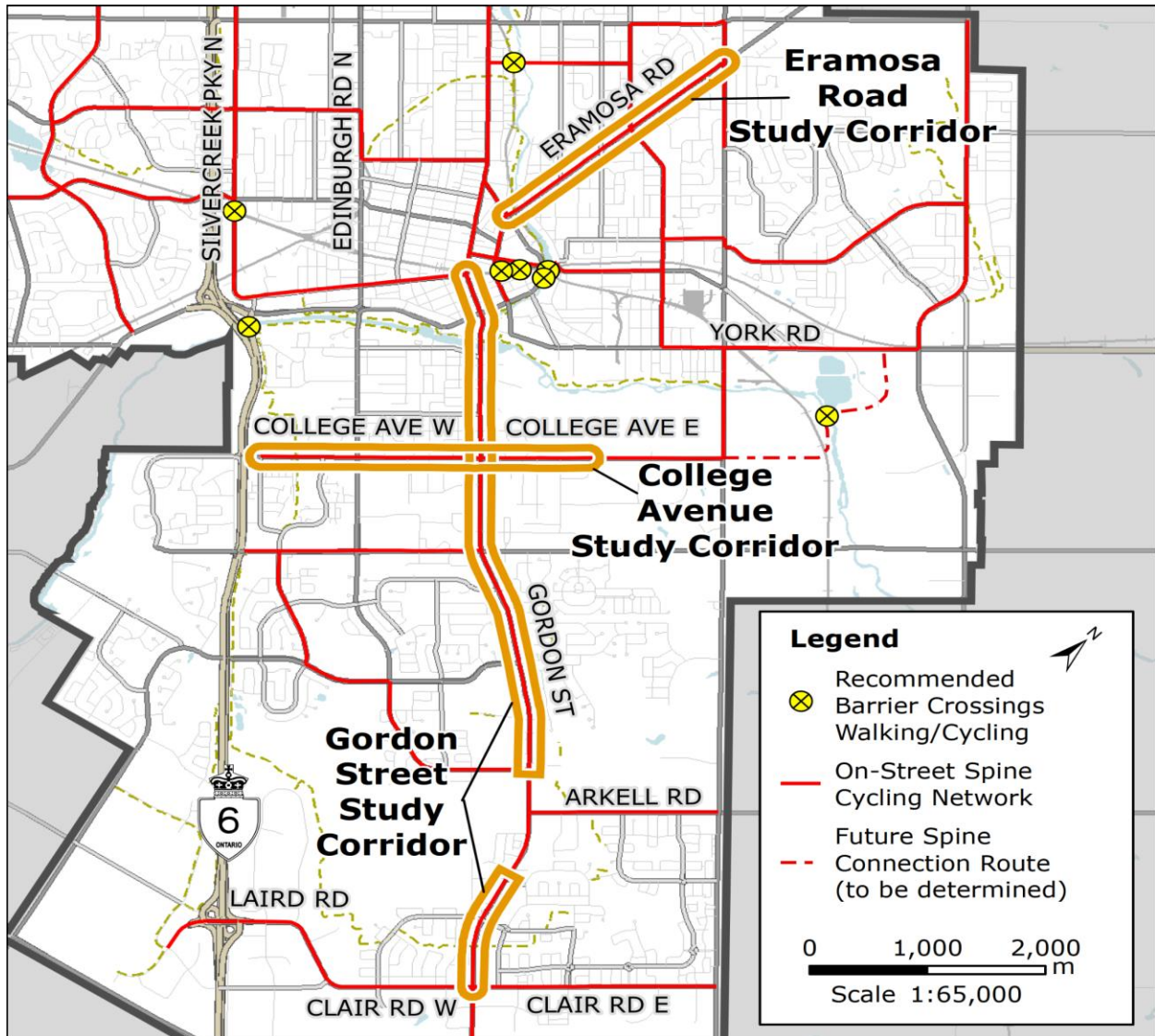
The project objectives are to develop safe, continuous cycling connections to and from major community destinations, including major transit stops. The conceptual designs considered the ability to accommodate bicycle parking, amenities, wayfinding signage, maps, pavement markings, pedestrian crossings, integration with transit, and implementation of protected intersections at key locations. The location and layout of these related elements will be determined at a later stage in the design process

The City of Guelph is embarking on developing policies and projects that will instill a culture of cycling and guide development of a cycling network that is comfortable for everyone. This study represents a major step in that journey.

Study process and timelines

This study supports the implementation of the Spine Cycling Network from the Guelph Transportation Master Plan (TMP, May 2022). The Spine Cycling Network consists of a number of corridors throughout Guelph, including the three study corridors (**Figure 2**). The TMP provides for the Spine Cycling Network to be “designed to support and encourage cycling by people of all ages and abilities.”

Figure 2: Spine cycling network with the study corridors outlined in yellow (adapted from Guelph TMP, May 2022)

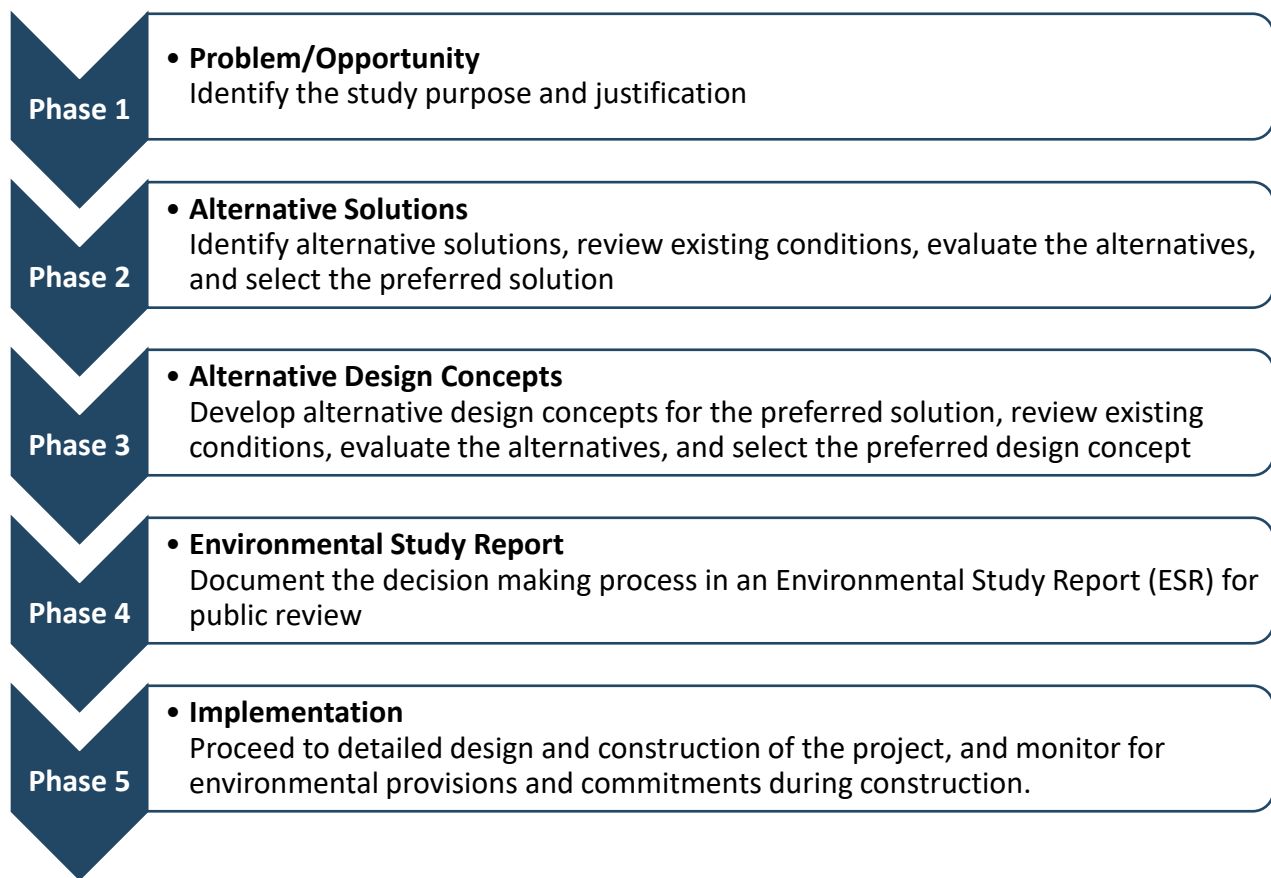


The three study corridors are priority corridors in the City's cycling network. As a result, the City has obtained funding to implement AAA cycling facilities along these corridors under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP).

Municipal class environmental assessment process

This study is following the requirements of the *Municipal Class Environmental Assessment* (EA, 2000, as amended). The planning and design process under the *Municipal Class EA* contains five phases as outlined below.

Municipal Class EA planning and design process (adapted from Municipal Class EA, 2000, as amended)



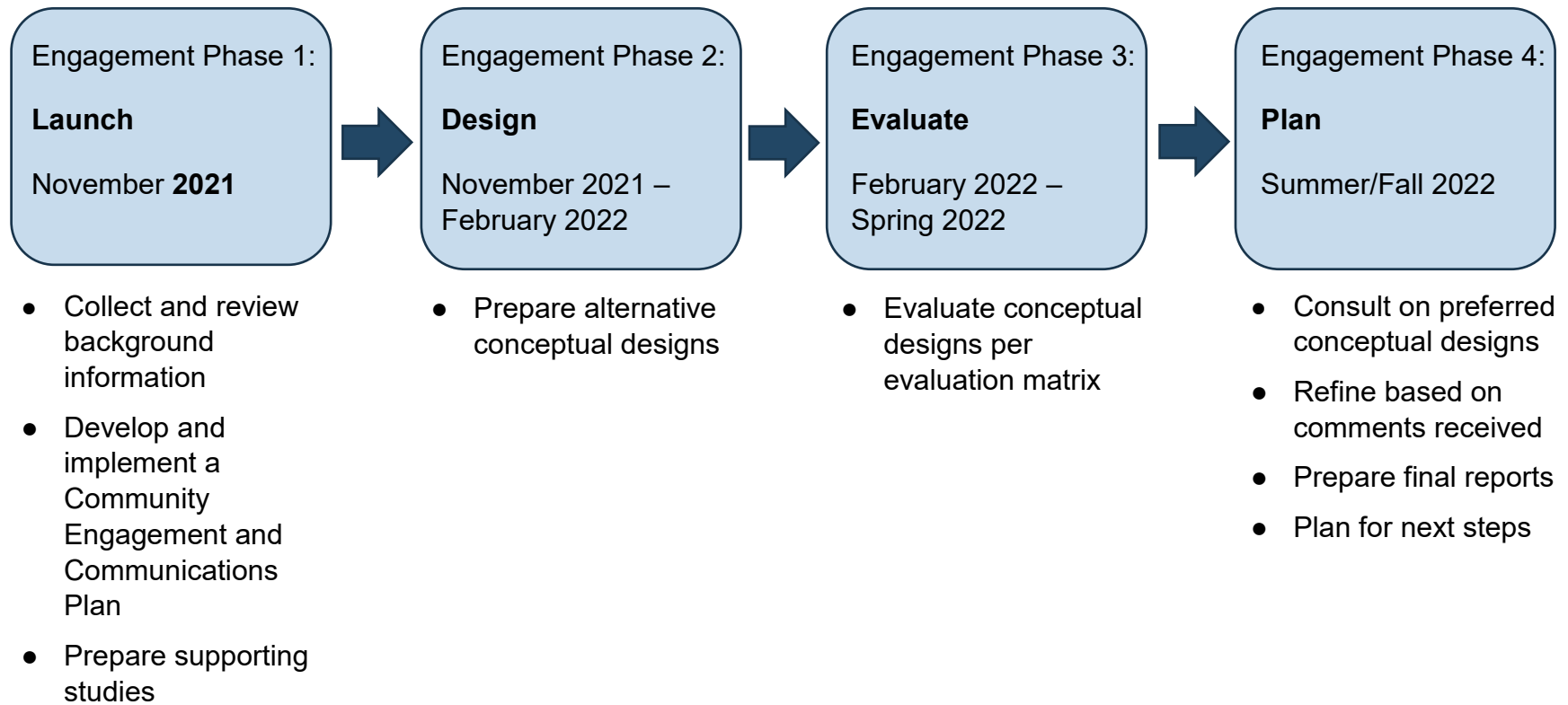
The Guelph TMP was prepared at the conclusion of Phases 1 and 2 of the planning and design process, in accordance with the Master Plan Approach #1 under the *Municipal Class EA*. Following completion of Master Plan Approach #1, more detailed investigations are required to satisfy the requirements for Schedule 'B' and 'C' projects.

The proposed works along all three study corridors fall under Item 22 of Appendix 1(a) of the *Municipal Class Environmental Assessment*, meaning they have all been identified as Schedule A+ projects. They are all therefore exempt from the *Ontario Environmental Assessment Act*.

Stakeholder engagement process

The engagement process for this study was designed to collect input from the community and stakeholders at key milestones. Feedback was integrated into the study and decision-making process at each stage. The engagement for this study was divided into four phases, as illustrated below.

Engagement Process





Engagement approach and activities

The City of Guelph used a range of communications and engagement activities throughout the study, including both in-person and online engagement. Engagement activities were designed to gather feedback on all three corridors at each stage of the study. This section summarizes the approaches used to gather feedback and input. The What We Heard section further below summarizes our findings from the engagement activities.

Walking workshop

At the beginning of the study, a walking workshop was held with staff from key departments at the City of Guelph and the consulting team to become familiar with the existing conditions of the study corridors. The workshop was held on September 27, 2021. During the workshop, staff and consultants walked key sections of the three corridors and discussed challenges, opportunities and ideas. This provided familiarity with elements including the character of the area, traffic volumes, adjacent developments, and elevation changes.

Being physically present and hearing from City staff provided an opportunity to learn about important aspects of the study corridors. The workshop also provided a chance for City Staff and the Consultant Team to discuss opportunities and challenges

associated with implementation of AAA cycling facilities along each corridor. This included consideration of cultural heritage, landscape architecture, natural heritage, right-of-way width, access requirements, future development plans, vehicular facilities, and bridges. A summary of notes from the walking workshop is included in **Appendix A**.

Key informant interviews

Key informant interviews were held early in the study to establish open lines of communication, answer questions, get initial feedback, and discuss the community engagement process. Interviews were held with the Guelph Coalition for Active Transportation and the University of Guelph, on December 15, 2021, and with the Guelph Cycling Club on January 17, 2022. A presentation was also made at a City of Guelph Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting on February 15, 2022, and on July 5, 2022. Notes from the key informant interviews can be found in **Appendix B**.

Notifications

Notifications were used to inform the community of study progress, milestones, and upcoming engagement opportunities. Notifications were distributed to the study contact list, posted on the project website, and sent through the City of Guelph's engagement newsletter. Engagement opportunities were also advertised through the City's social media, and in local newspapers including the Guelph Mercury Tribune.

This section outlines the notifications that were distributed throughout the study. The study contact list and copies of notification materials are included in **Appendix C**.

Contact list

The study contact list was compiled through a screening of impacted stakeholders and in accordance with Class EA requirements. The list includes:

- Staff and elected officials from provincial and municipal government
- Indigenous communities
- Local agencies and institutions
- Community and advocacy groups
- Employment/business organizations
- Accessibility advocates
- Senior and youth groups
- Immigration organizations

- Equity deserving groups.

Notifications were sent to the contact list to provide information and advertise opportunities to get involved as the study progressed.

Notice of commencement

A Notice of Commencement was developed to introduce the study objectives and provide an initial opportunity for engagement. The Notice included a link to the project website where recipients could find more information about the study and participate in the Map the Routes survey described below.

The Notice of Commencement was first published in the local newspapers and posted on the project webpage during the week of December 2, 2021. The Notice was distributed to the study contact list during the week of December 2, 2021, and was re-sent to contacts not originally included in the study contact list on April 19, 2022 along with the project update newsletter described below.

Project update newsletter

Following the Notice of Commencement and Map the Routes survey, a newsletter was created to provide an update on what we heard and how that input was used to inform the study. The newsletter was distributed to the study contact list and posted on the project webpage on April 19, 2022.

Notice of consultation

A Notice of Consultation was prepared to advertise the Public Open House described below. The Notice was emailed to the study contact list on July 15, 2022, approximately two weeks prior to the open house. The Notice was also published in local newspapers and posted on the project website in advance of the Public Open House.

Social media

The City of Guelph used its social media pages on Facebook and Twitter to promote the study and notify followers about upcoming meetings and engagement opportunities throughout the study. **Appendix D** contains copies of the social media posts for the study.

Project webpage

A dedicated webpage for the [Protected Cycling Network Study](#) was hosted on the City of Guelph website. This project page contained information and communications

including timelines, background documents and resources, study process and funding, and details on upcoming engagement activities. The website was updated throughout the study.

Have your say - engagement page

A dedicated page on the City of Guelph's community engagement platform, [Have Your Say](#), was created for this study. This page served as the main hub for engagement and a one-stop location for information and communications about the study.

The Engagement Page contained information about the study, key documents and videos, engagement event details, and study team contact information. Also included on the page were engagement activities including public surveys and a question and answer (Q+A) module where members of the public could submit questions which were publicly answered. The Engagement Page was updated continuously throughout the study.

A copy of the Q+A from the Engagement Page, and a table of the comments received throughout the study, can be found in **Appendix E**.

Map the routes survey

An online survey was used early in the engagement process to gather feedback from the community on existing challenges and opportunities for each corridor. As noted above, the survey was advertised as part of the Notice of Commencement for the study. The survey included an interactive map of the corridors where participants could use pins to identify key destinations, safety concerns, accessibility issues, important connections, design ideas, and other comments or concerns.

The map survey was available for approximately 6 weeks, from November 30, 2021 to January 10, 2022. A total of 384 comments were placed on the map. Comments received through the Map the Routes survey can be found in **Appendix F**.

Stakeholder meetings

Prior to the Public Open House, meetings were held with key stakeholders to share the conceptual designs and collect feedback. Meetings were held with the University of Guelph, the Guelph Coalition of Active Transportation, the Guelph Cycling Club, and the Accessibility Advisory Committee between July 4 and July 22, 2022.

Overall, feedback from stakeholders was positive and supportive of the conceptual designs. Feedback included the suggestion for more education and signage to direct

drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists on how to use the roadway safely, and to clarify the function and design of the cycling facilities. Additional feedback is summarized in the What We Heard section below, and notes from the meetings are included in **Appendix G**.

Engagement with Indigenous communities

The City of Guelph communicated with the following Indigenous communities via email and telephone throughout the project:

- Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation
- Six Nations of the Grand River
- Haudenosaunee Confederacy.

Communications with Indigenous communities included sending notifications with project information, offering to meet and discuss the study or send additional information, and sending the Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment Report for review. No concerns were raised by Indigenous communities regarding the study or the archaeological assessment report. Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and Six Nations of the Grand River expressed interest in being involved in the Stage 2 archaeological assessment.

Summaries of the communications with each community throughout the study are included in **Appendix H**.

Public open house

Following the development and evaluation of design concepts for the three corridors, a Public Open House was held. The open house was held on July 27, 2022 from 4pm to 8pm at City Hall. Approximately 45 people attended the in-person event. Materials were also posted online for a period of two weeks prior to and following the in-person event for a total of one month, to provide an additional opportunity for engagement.

The purpose of the open house was to provide an overview of the study process to date, present the preliminary preferred conceptual designs, and gather feedback from the community. The meeting was designed to be interactive and encourage broad participation by offering activities to collect feedback and opportunities for participants to ask questions to the study team.

The format of the in-person event was a drop-in style open house, with panel display boards set up for viewing and study team members available to respond to questions

and comments. A presentation and a facilitated Q+A period were held toward the end of the event. The display boards and presentation materials are included in **Appendix I**.

A mapping activity was used to gather feedback from participants at the in-person event. Large printouts of the maps with the conceptual corridor designs were placed around the room with sticky notes to collect feedback. Participants were asked to use a green sticky to tell us what's great about the design, a yellow sticky to tell us what needs to be improved, and a pink sticky to tell us any other ideas, concerns or questions. Participants were asked to place their sticky notes directly on the maps on the specific areas where their comments applied. Participants were also provided with comment forms to provide feedback on study in general and the materials.

A total of 22 sticky notes with comments were collected from the mapping activity. A summary of what we heard from the mapping activity and the comment cards at the Public Open House can be found in **Appendix J**.

To cater to members of the public who were unable to attend the in-person event, or those who had additional comments, the mapping activity was replicated in an online format through Remix, which was linked to the City's Have Your Say page for the study. Similar to the version used at the in-person event, participants were able to provide comments about specific locations within each of the study corridors. A recording of the presentation was also posted on the Have Your Say page for people to view to get background information on the study and the preliminary preferred conceptual designs.

The online mapping activity was available from July 15 to August 10, 2022 and received 108 additional comments. A full summary of what we heard on the online mapping activity can be found in **Appendix K**.

What we heard

The Guelph Protected Cycling Network Study included almost a full year of community engagement with key stakeholders and the broader public using a variety of tools and avenues to gather input.

The first round of engagement focused on gathering input about the current conditions of the corridors, which was used to inform the conceptual designs. The Map the Routes survey was used to collect community input about key destinations, safety concerns, accessibility issues, important connections, design ideas, and other comments or concerns. The ideas, input, and feedback we received during the first round of engagement informed the study direction and priorities, and shaped the development of the conceptual designs as well as the evaluation that followed.

Following the evaluation of design concepts, the preliminary preferred conceptual designs were presented to the public and stakeholders at the Public Open House. Overall feedback was supportive of the conceptual designs, with participants noting that protected bike lanes and intersections would make them feel safer. A desire for even more connections to major roads and trails was also conveyed. The desire for a consistent and easy to understand design was shared and a preference for cycle tracks/protected bike lanes emerged from engagement. Input on specific design elements will be considered in the future detailed design phase.

The following sections summarize the overarching themes and frequent comments that were received through the engagement activities for each of the corridors.

Eramosa Road

What we heard about the current conditions

Overall, participants noted that while Eramosa Road is a direct route to the downtown from the north end of the city, the road is not preferable to cycle on. Key barriers that were identified include high traffic volumes, speeding cars, turning lanes in and out of the commercial areas, steep hills, and narrow street width. Some participants suggested that they would like to see the consideration of an alternative route to Eramosa Road on a quieter, less busy street, while others suggested further extension of the route. Other comments related to the corridor are summarized below.

Accessibility Issues:

- More bike parking is needed for retail and services in the area
- The hills along Eramosa Road are steep and difficult to bike

- The existing sidewalks are narrow which poses issues for accessibility
- Trail crossing improvements are needed to access the trail across Eramosa Road between Woolwich Street and Arthur Street.
- Facilities need to be wide enough to allow a variety of wheeled users to operate and pass each other
- Facilities where cyclists and pedestrians share the same spaces are concerning, particularly on hills where users of manual wheel chairs can have issues with stopping
- Facilities where cyclists and pedestrians share the same space can be concerning for people with sight issues

Connections and Destinations:

- Guelph General Hospital
- Downtown
- Retail and services.

Safety Concerns:

- Difficult to cross traffic to make a left turn
- Crossing the street is difficult and dangerous
- Cars turning into and out of commercial areas present a safety hazard
- The road is busy with speeding traffic which makes it unpleasant or dangerous to cycle on.

Design Ideas and Other Suggestions:

- Protected intersections
- Protected bike lanes
- Safety improvements around bus stops
- Trail connections.

What we heard about the preferred design option

The preliminary preferred designs include a protected bike lane along Eramosa Road between Woolwich Street and Arthur Street to provide connectivity across the Speed River to downtown. During the Public Open House and associated online engagement, we heard the following input about the preliminary preferred conceptual design for this segment of Eramosa Road:

- Consider the traffic moving in and out of the parking garages

- Extend the design further north, to Delhi Street, or Stevenson Street
- Improved lighting at Arthur Street would be a key safety improvement
- If the Mitchell Street crosswalk were to be relocated, it would be better on the north side to discourage cut-through traffic from southbound Eramosa Road onto eastbound Arthur Street
- Signage was suggested to assist with mid-block crossings (e.g., “signalized crossing 200 metres ahead”)
- Create a trail crossing for the Downtown Trail – cyclists would be tempted to cross directly from trail to trail as opposed to cycling uphill to access the protected intersection at Woolwich Street.

What we are doing based on the feedback

Throughout the process, we heard that improving the segment of Eramosa Road between Woolwich Street and Arthur Street is important as a key cycling and pedestrian link in the city to provide east-west connectivity.

The conceptual design for the segment of Eramosa Road between Woolwich Street and Arthur Street will be refined, taking into consideration the feedback we received during the Public Open House and online engagement. Design considerations such as turning radii will be considered and adjusted where required. Input on specific design elements will be considered in the future detailed design phase.

What we are not doing

Due to design constraints, we decided not to proceed with a protected bike lane for the remainder of the Eramosa Road study corridor. The design for these facilities requires that Eramosa Road be reduced to two lanes in several sections. Emergency Services has indicated a minimum three lane cross-section on Eramosa Road is required to facilitate timely access to the Guelph General Hospital. The City will continue to explore the technical feasibility of this option; however, it has not been identified as feasible at this time.

The only design concept that contemplated keeping a three-lane cross-section throughout the corridor is a multi-use pathway on one side of the road. However, this option is not ideal in terms of accessibility, connectivity, or safety, and concerns were raised by a number of respondents regarding these issues. Mixed pedestrian and cyclist traffic could be an issue from a rider comfort and safety perspective, particularly along steep segments of the corridor. Furthermore, having a cycling facility on only one side of the road provides limited access to destinations. Given the importance of creating safe and accessible cycling facilities, as highlighted in community feedback to date, the remainder of the Eramosa Road study corridor will not proceed as part of this study but will be reassessed in the future.

Next steps for the Eramosa Road corridor

The segment of Eramosa Road from Woolwich Street to Arthur Street can proceed to detailed design and construction, subject to funding and approvals. The remainder of the Eramosa Road study corridor requires further study and will not be proceeding at this time.

College Avenue

What we heard about the current conditions

Overall, participants noted that College Avenue needed enhanced safety measures to create a better environment for active transportation. Concerns centred around a need for wider sidewalks and safer intersections with protective measures. Other comments related to the corridor are summarized below.

Accessibility Issues:

- Winter maintenance is required
- Facilities need to be wide enough to allow a variety of wheeled users to operate and pass each other
- Facilities where cyclists and pedestrians share the same spaces are concerning, particularly on hills where users of manual wheel chairs can have issues with stopping
- Facilities where cyclists and pedestrians share the same space can be concerning for people with sight issues

Connections and Destinations:

- Victoria Road
- Hanlon Road
- Paisley Street (suggestion to add an alternative north-south connection as opposed to Gordon Street).

Safety Concerns:

- Narrow sidewalks
- Speeding cars.

Design Ideas and Other Suggestions:

- Winter maintenance needs to be considered
- Protected intersections
- Protected bike lanes
- Provide crossings to connect existing trails across the road.

What we heard about the preferred design option

The preliminary preferred design for College Avenue improves accessibility by creating raised crossings at transit stops to make the bus more accessible to patrons and encourage cyclists to yield to pedestrians. When compared to existing conditions, the raised crossings also avoid impacts to cyclists from buses stopping within the cycling facility. The recommended design also adds pedestrian crossings at trail crossings and the University of Guelph, which improves accessibility, connectivity, and access to key destinations. Overall, safety on this corridor is enhanced by separating cyclists from both vehicular traffic and pedestrians.

During the Public Open House and associated online engagement, we heard the following input about the preliminary preferred conceptual design for College Avenue:

- Add cyclist / pedestrian lights to advance ahead of traffic
- Ensure the designs are clear and easy to understand and use
- Consider interactions with school buses
- Bus stop with no pull-over could impede traffic during peak hours
- Ensure turning radius is appropriate for delivery trucks at access points to University of Guelph campus at the McDonald parking lot
- Consider design impacts on the entrance feature to campus at College/Gordon.

Overall, participants liked the following aspects of the preferred conceptual design for College Avenue:

- Protected intersections
- Bike traffic lights
- Safety improvements to the area overall
- Protected bike lanes
- Connections to trails.

Participants expressed concerns about how to exit the protected bike lane to make a left turn, and connections to roads that currently do not have protected bike lanes.

What we are doing based on the feedback

The conceptual design for College Avenue will be further refined, taking into consideration the feedback we received during the Public Open House and online engagement. Design considerations such as turning radii and connections to other roads will be considered and adjusted where required. Input on specific design elements will be considered in the future detailed design phase.

Next steps for the College Avenue corridor

The City will be proceeding with detailed design and construction of the recommended College Avenue protected cycling facilities, subject to funding and approvals.

Gordon Street

What we heard about the current conditions

Overall, participants noted that Gordon Street provides connectivity to key destinations like the University of Guelph, the farmers market, and parks, but safety concerns are present. Line of sight issues and turning cars make cyclists feel unsafe. Recommendations for traffic calming measures and a desire for protected bike lanes emerged. Other comments related to the corridor are summarized below.

Accessibility Issues:

- Hills
- Traffic backing up blocking bike path and sidewalk
- Want better access to streets and parks
- Simple design to help bike users navigate easier
- Uneven and uncut curbs impact accessibility
- Connections do not align well with crosswalk
- Disappearing bike lanes, cyclists pushed to sidewalk
- Facilities need to be wide enough to allow a variety of wheeled users to operate and pass each other
- Facilities where cyclists and pedestrians share the same spaces are concerning, particularly on hills where users of manual wheel chairs can have issues with stopping
- Facilities where cyclists and pedestrians share the same space can be concerning for people with sight issues

Connections and Destinations:

- University of Guelph
- Farmers Market
- Parks
- Restaurants and shops.

Safety Concerns:

- Cars block sidewalks or bike lanes
- Cyclists feel unsafe at intersections
- Cars making right turns cut off cyclists
- Line of sight issues coming off of Surrey Street
- Dangerous left turns
- Speeding traffic
- Desire for more protection and separation from traffic at intersections

Design Ideas or Other Suggestions:

- Connect to trails
- Consistent design
- Protected intersections
- Wayfinding
- Cycle track or protected bike lanes
- Traffic calming
- Make it beautiful and attractive.

What we heard about the preferred design option

During the Public Open House and associated online engagement, we heard the following input about the preliminary preferred conceptual design for Gordon Street:

- Consider cross-rides for intersections
- Consider protected bike lanes at every intersection
- Improve transition to side streets when turning left or right off Gordon
- Add cyclist / pedestrian lights to advance ahead of traffic
- Further reduce vehicular lanes on Gordon

- Consider the potential for collisions between cyclists and pedestrians at intersections in the designs
- Ensure there is adequate separations between cars and bikes
- Consider adding additional traffic calming, as cars travel at high speeds on Gordon Street
- Consider traffic calming for cyclists travelling downhill at high speeds
- Prohibit right turns on red lights for vehicles
- Ensure the designs are clear and easy to understand and use
- Expand the cycling network to include protected bike lanes across the city
- College Avenue at Gordon Street is an entrance to University of Guelph so design is important
- Concept shows suggested trail connection to Alumni Walk (red brick, desire line). Consider aligning it with the existing Alumni Walk. This can be further refined through detailed design.
- Fully protected intersection proposed for Stone Road at Gordon Street.

Overall, participants liked the following aspects of the preferred conceptual design:

- Protected intersections
- Protected bike lanes
- Wider sidewalks
- Avoiding buses at bus stops.

Participants expressed a desire for more protected intersections along Gordon Street, and expressed concerns about the placement of bikes next to cars when cars are turning right.

What we are doing based on the feedback

On Gordon Street, pedestrian crossings were added to the design at key locations along the corridor to address the accessibility and connectivity concerns we heard throughout the engagement process. Safety is also enhanced by separating cyclists from both vehicular traffic and pedestrians with the highest quality AAA cycling facility, cycle tracks, throughout the length of this busy corridor.

The conceptual design for Gordon Street will be further refined, taking into consideration the feedback we received during the Public Open House and online engagement. Design considerations such as turning radii, and transitions to side streets will be

considered and adjusted where required. Input on specific design elements will be considered in the future detailed design phase.

Next steps for the Gordon Street corridor

The City will be proceeding with detailed design and construction of the recommended Gordon Street protected cycling facilities, subject to funding and approvals.