



City of
Peterborough

To: **Members of the General Committee**

From: **Michael Papadacos, Acting Commissioner of Infrastructure and Planning Services**

Meeting Date: **June 19, 2023**

Subject: **Charlotte Street (Aylmer Street to Park Street) Update, Report IPSACP23-018**

Purpose

A report to provide Council with an overview of the Charlotte Street West Project and a recommended approach for advancing the project towards completion.

Recommendations

That Council approve the recommendations outlined in Report IPSACP23-018, dated June 19, 2023 of the Acting Commissioner of Infrastructure and Planning Services as follows:

- a) That Council receive Report IPSACP23-018 for information;
- b) That staff prepare an updated conceptual design for the Charlotte Street - Aylmer Street to Park Street project based on updated national and provincial guidance on the design of transportation facilities and community consultation; and present this concept to Council by Q3 2024 for approval;
- c) That staff include a capital budget request for additional detailed design fees required in the 2024 Capital Budget, and capital construction funding starting in the 2025 Capital Budget.

Budget and Financial Implications

Current uncommitted funding within the approved project budget (2023 Capital Budget Reference #5.-10.02, p. 282 – 283) is sufficient to support the project planning measures described within Report IPSACP23-018.

Future capital budgets will include funding requests to implement the recommended solution, including detailed design and construction.

Background

During the 2023 Budget approval process City Council directed staff to report to Council on two items related to Charlotte Street – Aylmer Street to Park Street (2023 Capital Budget Project # 5-10.02) as follows:

- a. That staff report to Council with options to expedite the Charlotte Street-Aylmer Street to Park Street project (5-10.02) identified on page 101 of the Budget Highlights Book, and
- b. That the matter be deferred to the second quarter to allow staff to provide a report on the matter of cycling lanes on Charlotte St.

This report addresses both motions of City Council by providing a summary of past activities and Council directives related to the Charlotte Street – Aylmer Street-Park Street Project and a recommended path for advancing the Project.

Project Activities

During the early stages of the planning process for the Central Area Flood Mitigation Project (Bethune Street - Jackson Creek Flood Diversion Project), it was identified that installation of a new storm sewer along Charlotte Street from Park Street to Aylmer Street (also referred to as the Charlotte Street West Project) would be required to advance flood reduction measures for the Charlotte Street area west of Bethune Street.

At the same time, through RFP P-03-16, a conceptual design exercise for Charlotte Street, from Aylmer Street to east of George Street was started along with the detailed design for the Quaker Foods City Square (Urban Park), (referred to as the Charlotte Street East Project).

Report USDIR17-004

At the request of Council, staff brought forward Report USDIR17-004 Streetscape and Public Realm for Charlotte Street from Aylmer Street to Park Street, dated May 29, 2017. The report presented a recommended streetscape, public realm improvements, and outlined the considerations and activities that arrived at this recommendation.

Initial stakeholder consultation revealed the desire for improved pedestrian infrastructure and landscaping, enhanced transit access and amenities, implementation of dedicated cycling facilities, and optimization of parking and loading spaces, alongside other key streetscaping objectives.

The consultants identified that planning the streetscape to accommodate multiple transportation modes aligned with the City of Peterborough's Official Plan, which in Section 5.6 described objectives of "Incorporating appropriate design measures to improve conditions for accommodating non-motorized forms of travel", and "providing bikeways and support facilities, in accordance with Schedule B(a) of the Official Plan and the 2012 Comprehensive Transportation Plan". Schedule B(a), the Bikeway Network of the Official Plan identified Charlotte Street between Park Street and Bethune as an On-Road Bikeway (p. 9).

A detailed traffic analysis was not incorporated into the process, however through a review of relevant planning documents the consultant assessed that Charlotte Street is an important urban arterial street that acts as a "Gateway to the Downtown" and is the main east-west transportation route into and out of downtown Peterborough. In this function it carries high volumes of mixed traffic (i.e., pedestrians, cyclists, vehicles, transit buses, and heavy trucks) throughout the day. They also noted that this area, known as the "Charlotte Street West Business District", is an extension of the Commercial Core, and that pedestrian traffic was additionally maintained through convenient to access street-front businesses, on-street parking, and four transit stops.

The consultants completing the streetscape exercise developed three concepts and evaluated each against a set of streetscape characteristics. Two of the concepts incorporated dedicated cycling facilities, as recommended by City plans and industry best practice for streets with this volume and mix of traffic. Each concept scored well, though constraints were also identified for each. The report concluded that the concept without bike lanes best suited the Charlotte Street West Business District, with the reasoning that it would enhance pedestrian comfort and maximize on-street parking.

Since dedicated cycling facilities were not included in the recommended concept, the report suggested that a study be funded to advance the development of the King Street Cycling Lane Concept. Both Charlotte Street and King Street had been identified as cycling network connections in the 2012 Comprehensive Transportation Plan, with King Street serving as a recreational route between the Bethune Street Project and trails extending through Millennium Park, and Charlotte Street providing a direct route to access the businesses, services, and employment along Charlotte Street. Given the strong public interest in having dedicated cycling facilities along Charlotte Street, the consultants suggested that protected cycling infrastructure be incorporated into the King Street design.

At its meeting on June 4, 2017, Council approved the recommendations of Report USDIR17-004, "that the Enhanced Public Realm with Enhanced Commercial Features and Parking Streetscape (Concept No. 3) as shown in Report USDIR17-004 be

approved for Charlotte Street from Aylmer Street to Park Street”, and that “a King Street Cycling Lane Concept Design Study be included in the 2018 Capital Budget with a work plan to undertake public consultation and prepare a design for implementation as funding permits.”

Report IPSPD18-010

Report IPSPD18-010 Charlotte Street East and Downtown Gateway Project was approved by City Council on May 22, 2018. This report recommended a conceptual design and cost estimate for the Charlotte Street East Project (Charlotte Street, from Aylmer Street to past Water Street). At the same time, Report IPSPD18-010 transferred the Charlotte Street design assignment to the Bethune Street Project, leaving the Quaker Foods City Square (Urban Park) Project as an independent endeavour. The contract awarded under P-14-15 for the Detailed Design and Contract Administration for the Bethune Street Project to AECOM was amended to support the completion of detailed designs for the Charlotte Street East and the Downtown Gateway Projects.

The Charlotte Street East Concept Design proposed that Charlotte Street from Aylmer Street to Water Street be designed as a flexible street, with on-street parking removed seasonally for the installation of cafes, additional pedestrian amenities, and event space. The streetscape concept gave pedestrians priority, due to its location in the Downtown Core and connection to the future urban park. It recommended a shared space for vehicles and cyclists, with traffic calming features (e.g., pavement treatments and curb bump-outs) and reduced speeds.

2019 Budget Approval Process

At the Finance Committee Meeting of January 28, 2019, Council directed staff, “that the Charlotte Street project, include cycling lanes, potentially painted or dedicated, from Park Street to Aylmer Street, in the design of the corridor (Ref. 5-10.05 and 5-10.06) and, that staff report back to General Committee on any additional design costs and opportunities for public consultation (page 90).”

At that time, Staff resources were focused on delivering the Central Area Flood Mitigation Project (Bethune Street - Jackson Creek Flood Diversion Project) given the strict completion timelines attached to Federal funding, as well as other capital project priorities. To effectively manage limited staff resources, advancing the design of the Charlotte Street West Project was deferred. Consequently, development of the report on additional design costs and opportunities for public consultation was also scheduled to follow the work on the Central Area Flood Mitigation Project (Bethune Street - Jackson Creek Flood Diversion Project).

Current Planning Context

Since the Charlotte Street West Project was initiated, several planning documents significant to the decision-making process have been updated and/or created. Within the municipality, these documents include the City of Peterborough’s Official Plan,

Transportation Master Plan, Cycling Master Plan and Central Area Urban Design Guidelines. Furthermore, staff intend to initiate a Central Area Master/Secondary Plan and a Downtown Parking Management Study. National and provincial guidance on the design of transportation facilities have also received significant updates in recent years. These include revisions to the Transportation Association of Canada's Geometric Design Guide for Canadian Roads and the Ontario Traffic Manual's Book 18: Cycling Facilities. As such, the process must ensure that final project designs meet the vision, objectives, and requirements set out in these documents.

In keeping with the 2019 direction of Council to include cycling facilities – and guided by the comprehensive evaluation and consultation completed during the Transportation Master Plan Update and the development of the Cycling Master Plan – the updated City of Peterborough Transportation Master Plan networks incorporate Charlotte Street as a downtown corridor that supports multi-modal travel. The Cycling Master Plan proposes a variety of facility types along different segments of Charlotte Street, since the character and function of the street change as you travel from the Otonabee River to Hospital Drive. Specific cycling facility designs are yet to be determined as they require more detailed planning and community consultation.

The Cycling Master Plan project included the functional planning, design, and consultation for six sections of the proposed Ultimate Cycling Network. Charlotte Street from Park Street to Hospital Drive was one of the sections assessed due to the important role it plays in network connectivity, linking the planned facilities of the Charlotte Street West and East projects and the Bethune Street corridor, with the bike lanes on Monaghan Road and future network projects (i.e., Sherbrooke Street, Weller Street, Hospital Drive) that connect to west-end residences, businesses, and services.

While it was identified that the preferred design for Charlotte Street from Monaghan Road to Hospital Drive would require additional study and possible road reconstruction, the preferred design for Charlotte Street from Park Street to Monaghan Road was able to be installed at minimal costs in conjunction with a road resurfacing project scheduled for late 2020.

On September 28, 2020, Council approved the recommendations outlined in Report IPSTR20-025 which included direction “that cycling lanes be provided on Charlotte Street between Park Street and Monaghan Road, including a painted buffer with lane delineators.”

Recognizing that potential streetscape concepts need to consider parking along Charlotte Street, there is also a requirement to assess and update the available parking supply in the downtown area. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, staff have observed significant spare capacity in downtown parking facilities with 2023 average peak demand maxing out at 45% for the King Street garage and 30% for the Simcoe Street garage, both within short walking distance of Charlotte Street. This compares to approximately 70% for the King Street garage and 65% for the Simcoe Street garage pre-pandemic. At the same time, there is an increasing demand from developments in

the Central Area looking to increase the housing supply by reducing the amount of land dedicated to parking. Staff intend to propose a Parking Supply Study and Conceptual Planning exercise in the 2024 budget. Furthermore, as indicated in Report IPSPL23-021 – Housing Accelerator Fund, staff are proposing that a downtown parking strategy can be advanced as a key initiative under the Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporations Housing Accelerator Fund that helps increase the number of dwelling units in the Central Area created through the provision of centralized parking facilities.

This Parking Supply Study would assess short and long-term parking needs and propose solutions and opportunities to correct any parking shortages from the perspectives of the short-term retail and employment parking and the long-term residential parking requirements. The study would propose opportunities where additional parking capacity could be built in a manner that addresses forecast shortages in the parking supply. To ensure compatibility with other downtown initiatives, the Parking Supply study would be conducted in parallel with the Central Area Master Plan.

City staff are also in the midst of conducting a Parking (Zoning) By-law update and an update to the City's Cash-In-Lieu for Parking policy. This update is anticipated to be completed in the third quarter 2023 and will reflect the changing need to provide parking with every development. The results of the Parking (Zoning) By-law update will be a key factor in future development planning and parking supply/demand, in particular within the downtown area.

Advancing the Project

Staff resources have been focused on the Central Area Flood Mitigation Project (Bethune Street - Jackson Creek Flood Diversion Project) and Quaker Foods City Square (Urban Park) projects, amongst many other capital projects. As these projects have completed or are nearing completion, staff had intended to begin shifting resources to the Charlotte Street projects. This is inline with Council directives to bring forward a report in 2023 recommending a process for finalizing detailed designs for Charlotte Street from Aylmer Street to Park Street, that would outline any additional costs and opportunities for public consultation.

Recognizing the evolving planning context, it is appropriate that past design efforts be revisited in a holistic process, incorporating transportation needs, streetscape planning and community consultation. This section of street holds an important purpose in the City's downtown, plays an important role in moving people and goods through the core, and provides significant connections to locations throughout the west-end of the City. The process must also allow for assessment of how final designs will connect with and positively impact newly completed neighbouring projects.

It is acknowledged that this is a public space project that seeks to positively impact everyone who lives, works, shops, plays, and travels along Charlotte Street. There are a variety of needs, from the Charlotte Street West Business District, surrounding neighbourhoods, and people moving through the corridor that can be supported through

thoughtful corridor design. It is necessary that a range of public engagement and consultation opportunities are held throughout the planning and detailed design process.

To expedite the project, it is recommended that staff initiate an assessment of current conceptual designs against newly completed projects and new guidance documents. Following the initial review by staff, it is recommended the streetscape planning exercise be updated and a conceptual design be prepared, including a public consultation program utilizing the services of the previously retained consultant. A conceptual cost estimate for additional detailed design fees required will be incorporated in the 2024 Capital Budget, with the projected capital dollars required for construction being included in the 2025 Capital Budget. Staff will report to Council the results of the streetscape exercise and conceptual design in Q2/Q3 of 2024, with detailed design set to commence following Council approval of the recommended conceptual design. Construction would commence in 2025 subject to future budget approval.

Recognizing the capital budget constraints facing the City, the challenges of maintaining critical infrastructure in a State of Good Repair and the difficulty providing sufficient funding to invest in necessary new infrastructure, staff have identified the opportunity to seek Federal funding through the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund (DMAF) to support the Flood Reduction component of the project. If successful, the DMAF would provide funding up to 40% of the eligible works. Staff are in the process of preparing a funding application to Infrastructure Canada for the Flood Reduction component of the project.

Summary

Staff have provided Council with several reports detailing potential and recommended streetscape conceptual designs for Charlotte Street and Council has provided varying directives to staff regarding which streetscape should be planned in detail. Since the latest reporting and directives, the planning context has changed as a result of the City's new Official Plan, new Transportation Master Plan and various national and provincial guidelines related to provision and design of various facilities. It is recommended that staff assess potential streetscape plans against these new guiding document and utilizing consulting services complete a new design concept and streetscape planning exercise that incorporates public consultation with a wide variety of stakeholders. Future reporting to Council with regard to recommended options would be anticipated for Q2/Q3 2024 to ensure consideration for the Central Area Master Plan and the Parking Supply study.

Submitted by,

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