

Council sets eyes northward on Industrial Parkway revamp

By Brock Weir

Changes are set this year for Industrial Parkway South's intersection at Wellington Street with an eye to improve traffic congestion and now Council is setting their sights northward.

Council approved a motion last week calling on staff to review traffic congestion at the bottom of Industrial Parkway North between Scanlon Court and Wellington. Councillor Tom Mrakas, who put forward the motion, said asking for recommendations on how to improve the short stretch of the busy street will help avoid problems in the long run.

"I just think it is important that we be proactive and look at the north side to help alleviate the future traffic concerns in the intersection," he said. "We're looking to divert traffic from the Yonge and Wellington area and I think this is where it will end up going. This is a need for us to look at and get a better intersection [where the traffic flows] at a better rate."

The motion won the support of Council, including Councillor John Abel who said the area would benefit from a right-hand turn lane onto Wellington Street East. A right hand turn lane was also what Councillor Paul Pirri envisioned as "beneficial", but he was one of several Councillors who cautioned against looking at improving traffic on Aurora streets one at a time without an overall vision.

"I don't want us to continue to address the issues from an individual perspective," said Councillor Michael Thompson. "We need to give some thought to the overall flow of traffic and management of the issues because solving it in one area may create issues in other areas. There has to be some conversation around this table for an overall plan to address the traffic issues that are happening in Town and will happen as the Leslie Street lands come on board."

"Traffic is like water. You're not going to really reduce it. It will just flow in different places."

Councillor Sandra Humfries was on the same page, noting that Aurora needs to build on a study outlining anticipated traffic and road issues to include measures on planning to address these problems.

"Getting to that big picture, you have to start from an area of high density to low density, or you start from origin to your destination," said Councillor Harold Kim in agreement. "I would like to see a large scale plan where we have a sequence of accomplishments, some steps but we need to see that larger picture."