

One-way traffic floated for some downtown streets

By Brock Weir

One-way traffic on streets surrounding Library Square is one balloon being floated at Council to transform the Downtown Core.

Council has given the green light to a public information session to gauge the interest of residents living in the vicinity of Aurora's historic southeast quadrant ? including the Town Park Area Ratepayers Association ? on turning Church Street, Victoria Street and Mosley Street into one-way roads with diagonal on-street parking.

A concept was proposed at the last Council meeting by Councillor Tom Mrakas which could see Church Street made one way for eastbound traffic, Victoria Street one way for drivers headed north, and Mosley devoted to one-way westward traffic in a bid to combat traffic infiltration from Yonge and Wellington Streets.

The motion calls for Town Staff to ?investigate the feasibility? of the concept plan and to engage residents in a public information session, the results of which will be presented to Council in a report for its review and potential approval.

?When we get a report back, we can take a look at this and see if this is something we can implement and the thoughts of residents in the surrounding area,? said Councillor Mrakas, noting one-way traffic with increased on-street parking was already proposed for Victoria Street within concept plans proposed for transforming the Town's Cultural Precinct by re-purposing existing buildings in the area, including the former homes of the Aurora Public Library and Aurora Seniors' Centre.

?I looked at this area and thought within the repurposing study there was one section on Victoria where they looked at one-way and adding the angled parking,? he continued. ?I thought, why not extend that all the way around and make the one-ways. You can add a bit of parking and I also believe it adds to the traffic management where it slows down the infiltration into the neighbourhood streets and it creates that centre hub, what we're all trying to do in that area.

?I think regardless of what we're doing as far as the Cultural Precinct and repurposing studies, I think this has merit on its own. No matter what we do in that block, I think if this is a good idea we can implement it regardless of what happens in that centre block area.?

While Council ultimately supported taking this idea to the public for their input, some around the table expressed reservations on how effective the proposal might be.

?I will support the motion, but I am curious as to why this is coming now when we still have the Cultural Precinct Plan outstanding and whatever happens there could change what we do here dramatically,? said Mayor Geoff Dawe. ?The bus goes down here too and that has to be a part of who we talk to with regards to this. That has to happen. Again, I think this has to be done in conjunction with an overall look. We are changing [traffic] substantially. We are changing things dramatically from what [our 2013] Transportation Plan was.?

Councillor Jeff Thom also pointed out what he saw as a difficulty.

?We are just looking for a report on the feasibility,? he said. ?Because Victoria Street turns into Gurnett Street, making it one way I don't know how that all works out, but getting a report will outline all that and if there are any issues we will certainly have our staff bring them out.?