

July 22, 2014

RE: Downey Road neighbourhood visit June 18

Thank you again for joining us on June 18 to share your concerns about traffic in the Kortright Hills neighbourhood, including Downey Road.

We collected more than 60 comments and questions from everyone who participated in our neighbourhood tour. A complete list is attached to this letter, and most comments and questions focussed on concerns about:

- the speed and volume of traffic on Downey Road
- heavy trucks and cars using Downey Road as a through street
- the safety of pedestrians and cyclists traveling in the area
- parking near Mollison Park
- neighbourhood residents' ability to access driveways and mail boxes

City Engineering and Traffic staff reviewed the comments and questions with Guelph Police Services to determine what actions could be taken.

#### **What is being done?**

As you witnessed during our neighbourhood tour, Guelph Police will continue enforcing traffic laws to discourage speeding and heavy trucks from using Downey Road as a through route. Guelph Police Services recognizes the area is a trouble spot, and enforcement is ongoing.

The City is reminding tenants in the Hanlon Creek Business Park to use designated truck routes rather than Downey Road. Trucks are permitted to use Downey Road to make local deliveries, but please report any through truck traffic to Traffic Services at 519-822-1260 x 2044.

#### **What else can the City do?**

The City is also considering a series of pedestrian refuge islands - raised medians where pedestrians can stop half way across the road. The islands can make it easier and safer for people to cross the street, and can reduce traffic speeds. To implement this plan, the City would need to estimate the cost of design and construction, and ask City Council to approve funding as part of the City's capital budget. The City will promote opportunities for people to participate as City Council considers the proposed capital budget for 2015.

#### **What's next for Downey Road?**

The Ministry of Transportation Ontario (MTO) is also considering ways to reduce through traffic on Downey Road as part of its plan for Highway 6. MTO plans to eliminate the connection between Downey/Kortright and the northern section of the Hanlon Expressway, but has not announced when it plans to begin construction. Please contact Robert Bakalarczyk, Senior Project Engineer, MTO West Region at 519-873-4602 [robert.bakalarczyk@ontario.ca](mailto:robert.bakalarczyk@ontario.ca) for information about MTO plans for Provincial Highway 6.

**City Hall**  
1 Carden St  
Guelph, ON  
Canada  
N1H 3A1

T 519-822-1260  
TTY 519-826-9771



July 21, 2014

RE: Downey Road neighbourhood visit June 18

Page 2 of 3

### **What about parking?**

Roads without on-street parking allow drivers to stop, briefly, in a bike lane. People cannot park a car for hours at a time, but they can stop to pick up mail, etc. Also, given the concerns raised by area residents, the City can ask Canada Post to relocate mailboxes to a more convenient location on Downey Road.

Downey Road is just one way to access Mollison Park. We believe park users will be able to adjust to parking at the nearby school and side streets. This arrangement works well in other neighbourhoods, and the City can consider new/different signs if needed.

### **What about cycling?**

Cycling helps reduce traffic congestion, reduces local greenhouse gas emissions, and improves people's health and well-being; that's why Guelph is working to make it safer and more convenient for people to travel by bike.

In researching Guelph's Cycling Master Plan, the City observed cycling traffic on Downey Road and throughout the community. We found that, even without dedicated bike lanes, cycling counts have increased over the past five years – just like other kinds of traffic.

As we make progress implementing the plan, our network of bike lanes becomes more connected. Guelph's experience shows that adding bike lanes increases the number of cyclists using the road and, when drivers see cyclists, they slow down.

Even with bike lanes, children are permitted to ride their bikes on the sidewalk and should be accompanied by an adult on any busy road.

### **What about through traffic?**

Guelph's transportation network doesn't stop at the city limits—it's connected to regional and provincial transportation systems, and they all have to work together.

Downey Road is an essential link between Guelph and other communities. For Guelph's transportation system to work, Downey must function like other arterial roads in residential areas including Edinburgh Road, College Avenue, Kortright Road West, Stevenson Street, Waterloo Avenue, etc.

The City conducts regular traffic counts throughout the community, and we recognize traffic volumes are increasing on many roads, including Downey, as the city grows. A review of traffic volumes on Downey Road shows a steady increase over the years. This increase was expected and is reflected in Guelph's network transportation planning. We know Guelph will experience continued population growth, and we are preparing for increased traffic in this and other neighbourhoods.

July 21, 2014

RE: Downey Road neighbourhood visit June 18

Page 3 of 3

As mentioned earlier in this letter, MTO does plan to reduce through traffic by eliminating the connection between Downey Road and the northern section of the Hanlon Expressway. The City does not control the schedule of that work, and inquiries should be directed to the MTO.

**What are the next steps?**

City Council will discuss plans for Downey Road during a meeting on Monday, July 28 at 7 p.m. Anyone wishing to address Council during the meeting is invited to register with the City's Clerk's Office by 9 a.m. on Friday, July 25. Written comments are also welcome and can be addressed to:

City Clerk, City of Guelph  
clerks@guelph.ca  
1 Carden Street Guelph, ON N1H 3A1  
519-837-5603

Your continued input is welcome, and the City will notify area residents of any proposed changes.

The City will continue working with area residents and Guelph Police Services to encourage safe and efficient travel for people walking, cycling and driving on Downey Road and in the Kortright Hills neighbourhood.

Sincerely,



**Don Kudo**  
Deputy City Engineer  
City of Guelph  
519-822-1260 x 2490  
don.kudo@guelph.ca





# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



Version: July 22, 2014

Comments, questions and responses regarding traffic concerns on Downey Road

Documented by representatives of Guelph Police Service, and the City's traffic and engineering teams during a neighbourhood tour June 18, 2014

Comments/questions	Response
<p>Laird Road is too out of the way and doesn't encourage people to use it, so they continue to use Downey Road</p>	<p>In addition to recent upgrades to the Laird Road interchange, The Ministry of Transportation Ontario (MTO) will continue upgrading other parts of Provincial Highway 6, and the Hanlon Expressway.</p> <p>As part of MTO's Environmental Assessment Study, the Ministry plans to eliminate the connection between Downey/Kortright and the northern section of the Hanlon Expressway to encourage greater use of the Laird interchange and reduce cut-through traffic on Downey Road.</p> <p>Timing of this work is not known, and is outside the control of the City of Guelph.</p>
<p>Elderly, those with mobility challenges, have difficulty crossing the street – insufficient gaps in traffic, speeds too high. There are not enough safe crossing locations Difficult for residents to cross the street to get their mail (boxes located on West side of Downey only)</p> <p>The trails are supposed to cross at Hazelwood Drive and at Quail Creek, but there is no safe place to cross; can we have trail crossings like they have in Clairfields? (E.g. trail crossing near Gordon and Clairfields)</p> <p>School children also cross at Hazelwood and it is not safe</p>	<p>The City is considering a series of pedestrian refuge islands - raised medians where pedestrians can stop half way across the road.</p> <p>Preliminary observations during a speed profile study in Elmira show reduced vehicle operating speeds after installing a series of pedestrian refuge islands. The islands can make it easier and safer for people to cross the street, and can reduce traffic speeds.</p> <p>The Guelph Trail Master Plan (GTMP) provides guidelines and recommendations for trail crossings at major roads (see pgs. 56-58; fig 5-16 and 5-17). A "potential mid-block pedestrian signal" is identified for the trail crossing at Hazelwood Drive and Downey Road.</p> <p>The signalized crossing at the intersection of Downey at Ptarmigan provides safer opportunities for pedestrians to cross.</p> <p>To implement plans for new/different pedestrian crossings, the City must estimate the cost of design and construction, and ask City Council to approve funding as part of the capital budget. The City will promote opportunities for people to participate as City Council considers the proposed capital budget for 2015.</p>



# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Comments/questions	Response
<p>Why is Downey considered an arterial road and can it be changed (downgraded)? How does the Right-of-Way width compare with other arterial roads in Guelph? Since when has Downey been classified as an arterial?</p> <p>Most traffic seems to be going out of the City of Guelph</p> <p>Would like to see the City make it unattractive to through traffic to use Downey Road</p> <p>Would like to see traffic diverted except for local traffic.</p> <p>Why can't the City close the road at Teal?</p> <p>Cut-through traffic uses Pheasant Run to avoid lights at Ptarmigan/Downey</p>	<p>Guelph's transportation network has to work with regional and provincial transportation systems – Guelph roads don't stop at the city limits.</p> <p>Downey Road was classified as an arterial road in 1988. At 30 metres, the right-of-way the same as other arterial roads in the City.</p> <p>One of the primary functions of arterial roads is to provide movement of through traffic. Downey Road is identified in Guelph's Official Plan and the City's Transportation Master Plan as a key linkage for inter-regional trips.</p> <p>Attempting to view any one road in isolation (e.g. close the road to through traffic) can create problems in other parts of the city's transportation network.</p> <p>For Guelph's transportation system to work, Downey must function like other arterial roads in residential areas including Edinburgh Road, College Avenue, Kortright Road West, Stevenson Street, Victoria Road, Waterloo Avenue, etc.</p>
<p>How much is local traffic versus thru-traffic?</p>	<p>An origin destination study could determine the amount of local vs. through traffic. The study would cost about \$11,000.</p>
<p>Opening Stone Road extension will help problems here.</p>	<p>MTO's plan for the Hanlon Expressway and the Stone Road interchange was updated to reflect changes in the area's highway network, and environmental and community impacts.</p> <p>As a result, the updated plan for the Hanlon, and the City's Official Plan no longer include an extension of Stone Road West.</p>
<p>A resident who has lived on Downey since 1988 remarked that traffic is at an all-time high and wanted to know if it will continue to increase. Wants to see less traffic.</p>	<p>Guelph's population is growing, and we're preparing for increased traffic in neighbourhoods across the city.</p> <p>A review of traffic volumes on Downey Road shows a steady increase over the years. The increase in traffic volume was expected and is reflected in Guelph's network transportation planning. In the future, traffic volumes are expected to increase similar to other arterial roads in the City's transportation network.</p>



# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Comments/questions	Response
Turning movements at new developments (146 Downey Road) have created problems; no traffic calming was made for the development.	A traffic impact study was included in the development application for 146 Downey Road. Traffic calming measures were not recommended in the study as the traffic generated by the development represents a small fraction of the total traffic on Downey Road.
Very hard to back out of driveways	This is a common concern among residents with properties fronting on to busy roads in residential areas. Residents must exercise caution and patience during busy times of the day.
Left turns in or out of driveways is very challenging	The existing two-way centre left turn lane provides a refuge area for left turning vehicles.
<p>Cars are always speeding, doing 60 or 70 kmph</p> <p>Speeding makes it unsafe for children</p> <p>Why can't we have flashing 30 km/hr signs on Downey?</p> <p>Cars noticeably pick up speed heading south near Quail Creek/ 142 Downey Road</p> <p>Cars come into residential area very fast heading north</p> <p>The grade change between Niska and Hazelwood Drive encourage speeding (both directions)</p> <p>Rolling stops from Teal onto Downey frequently observed</p> <p>See too many trucks, many from Granite Works</p> <p>During site visit, several smaller utility trucks, as well as two 18-wheel trucks were observed</p> <p>Teal Drive motorists will use centre lane to overtake Downey resident pulling out of driveway</p>	<p>Guelph Police will continue enforcing traffic laws to discourage speeding and heavy trucks from using Downey Road as a through route. Guelph Police Services recognize the area has trouble spots, and enforcement is ongoing.</p> <p>The posted limit of 50 km/hr is appropriate given Downey's role in Guelph transportation network. Flashing 30 km/hr signs were recently installed in certain areas meeting specific criteria with respect to elementary school zones.</p> <p>The City is reminding tenants in the Hanlon Creek Business Park to use designated truck routes rather than Downey Road.</p> <p>Trucks are permitted to use Downey Road to make local deliveries, but please report any through truck traffic to Traffic Services at 519-822-1260 x 2044</p> <p>Guelph Police Services' "speed sign" showing drivers how fast they are going has been deployed in the area at least twice, and future deployments may be considered.</p>

# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Comments/questions	Response
<p>Placement of mailboxes/assignment of residences to mailbox locations based on available on-street parking (according to Canada Post Ombudsman)</p> <p>Is stopping permitted in the bike lane, e.g. to load/unload trailer or vehicle? To pick up mail at mailbox?</p> <p>People use private driveways to stop and pick up the mail from community mailboxes</p>	<p>Even without on-street parking, vehicles are permitted to stop to pick up or drop off mail.</p>
<p>Require on-street parking for Mollison Park: closest access to flat area where most events are staged and where ice rink is placed in winter (water access)</p> <p>Concerned people will not attend park events if there is no parking</p> <p>Why don't we put a parking lot at the empty area here?</p>	<p>Downey Road is just one way to access Mollison Park. Parking is available at the nearby school and side streets. Similar arrangements work well in other neighbourhoods, and the City can consider new/different signs if needed.</p> <p>To reconsider parking facilities at Mollison Park, a request could be made through the Community and Social Services Committee. However, a revised a parking plan is unlikely to receive the necessary financial support in light of other competing priorities for Guelph parks.</p>
<p>For townhouse residents, we don't have enough parking spaces and no parking spaces for visitors.</p> <p>Need on-street parking for family, visitors</p>	<p>The townhouse development meets requirements for parking for residents and visitors as set out in Guelph's Zoning By-law.</p> <p>The City reviewed the use of parking on Downey Road and found an average of two to four cars parked among the 140 available spaces. On-street parking is available on several nearby side streets.</p>
<p>What are the parking exemptions permitted if there are bike lanes and no parking at any time?</p>	<p>Parking exemptions are not permitted in areas posted "No Parking Anytime"</p>



# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Comments/questions	Response
<p>Don't see many cyclists</p> <p>Bike lanes do not connect to anything else</p> <p>People who currently cycle on Downey Road are experienced and do not need bike lanes</p> <p>Kids ride on sidewalk because it isn't safe on the road</p> <p>Who is responsible if a cyclist is hit (due to poor design)?</p>	<p>The Cycling Master Plan aims to reduce traffic congestion, reduce local greenhouse gas emissions and improve people's health and well-being by making it safer, more comfortable and more convenient to travel by bike.</p> <p>Guelph's Cycling Master Plan includes a connected network of bike lanes, trails and routes. Downey Road is an important north-south connection on the west side of the Hanlon, and will connect with a signed route along Woodland Glen Drive, to the bike lanes south of Teal, and to the multi-use trail system in the Hanlon Creek Business Park. In future, Kortright Road will also have bike lanes.</p> <p>Traffic counts over the past five years show an increasing trend in cycling, even without dedicated lanes. Experience in Guelph also shows that adding bike lanes increases the number of cyclists.</p> <p>Children using bicycles with wheels smaller than 24" are permitted to ride on sidewalks. It is expected and safer for parents to supervise children cycling on the street.</p> <p>The city constructs bike lanes according to accepted provincial standards such as the Ontario Traffic Manual and the Transportation Association of Canada's Bikeway Design Guidelines. If a collision occurs, Guelph Police Services would investigate to determine liability.</p>
<p>Why was Downey Road paved when other roads are in worse condition? What criteria are used to choose roads for repaving?</p>	<p>Each year, the City reviews pavement condition across the entire road network and chooses roads for rehabilitation and resurfacing. The program targets streets where the pavement is in fair condition to prevent the road from reaching poor condition.</p> <p>Streets in poor condition typically require full reconstruction; the City replaces the entire road and underground infrastructure including water, wastewater and other utilities.</p> <p>Other factors used to select streets for re-paving include the road classification, transit routes, truck routes and condition of underground infrastructure.</p> <p>This approach to pavement management is consistent with industry best practices and tends to extend the life cycle of the overall road structure.</p>
<p>Can we mark crosswalks for each side-street?</p>	<p>Ontario's Highway Traffic Act sets out the responsibilities of drivers and pedestrians at intersections controlled by stop signs, and marking these crosswalks is no longer the norm.</p> <p>Crossings are painted at all signalized locations.</p>



# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



Comments/questions	Response
Sight lines are poor at Mollison Park/Hazelwood due to curve in the road and grading. Makes it unsafe to cross.	The road curvature and grading were designed to the standards for a road with a posted speed of 50 km/h.
Tree at Ptarmigan and Downey obstructs view of oncoming cars for pedestrians (kids) at the corner.	This will be investigated by City staff and action will be taken if required.
Sight lines are poor for 123 Downey Road due to fencing put up by the plaza – it extends too far down the property and obstructs view of oncoming traffic	City staff will investigate and take action if necessary.
Winter snowbanks made it even harder to see, pull out of driveways.	<p>In the interest of community safety, property owners are asked to reduce snow banks as much as possible.</p> <p>After a snow event the City inspects arterial and collector roads intersections to ensure they are wide enough for emergency vehicle access and there are no sight line issues.</p>
Why are there only sidewalks on one side of the street ?	<p>A development application for the property across from the YMCA on south side of Downey Road has been on hold for a number of years. Sidewalks would be included in the development application.</p> <p>Also, MTO requires some of the property to implement its plan for a partial interchange at this location on the Hanlon Expressway.</p>
There are no stop signs and crosswalks, so everyone has to drive. Compared to Harvard at Rickson, there is an all-way stop – why not here?	City staff performs regular traffic counts throughout the community, and can investigate a specific intersection upon request. If an intersection meets the provincially-approved criteria for a four-way stop, the City would take the appropriate action.
What will happen next after today's meeting? What can the residents do?	Council will be meeting on July 28, 2014 to discuss plans for Downey Road. Residents can participate in the meeting, and to address Council please contact the City Clerk's Office by 9 a.m. on July 25.
Pylons make it dangerous and confusing for drivers right now	Pylons removed after painting the centre lane