

**Location**

Menesetung Room

10:00 am

**Attendees**

|                 |                  |                                                          |
|-----------------|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Trevor Bazinet  | Janice Hallahan  | Vicky Culbert - BIA Appointment                          |
| Allison Segeren | Sean Thomas      | Colin Carmichael - Huron Chamber of Commerce Appointment |
|                 | Andrea Fisher    | Christopher Spaleta – Citizen Appointment                |
| Dennis Elliott  | Mark Zuzinjak    |                                                          |
| Matt Pearson    | Jennifer Hachler |                                                          |
| Dale Erb        |                  |                                                          |

**Minutes**

1. Mayor Bazinet opens the meeting.
2. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Vicky Culbert  
Seconded by: Councillor Segeren

That the May 7, 2024 agenda be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

3. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by: Councillor Segeren  
Seconded by: Chris Spaleta

That the February 20, 2024 minutes be approved as printed.

CARRIED

4. It is noted that Colin Carmichael is the new Huron Chamber of Commerce member appointment to the Task Force, replacing Tabatha Fisher. Colin is the Executive Director of the Huron Chamber of Commerce.

5. BMROSS (Dale) provided a summary of the previous Council presentations and reports that were within the April 8<sup>th</sup> and April 29<sup>th</sup> Council meetings:
  - April 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting
    - GSP and BMROSS presented the Goderich Downtown Streetscape report (February 2024) along with a summary of the anticipated costs.
    - Motion to receive report and bring back financial strategy was passed.
  - April 29<sup>th</sup> Meeting
    - Funding scenarios presented to Council by staff
    - Motion to have GSP / BMROSS refine concept with consideration for dining space, retail space, reduced maintenance, and reduced capital costs – with updated concept(s) to be presented to the Task Force on May 7<sup>th</sup>.
6. GSP (Mark and Jennifer) present a summary of two refined concept options that consider reduced landscaping, increased dining space, and retail space alternatives. Refer to attachment for visuals presented.

The group contributes to a question/answer/statement period including items related to the following:

- Financial implications including contribution sources from reserves, BIA, and potential borrowed amounts.
- Potential costs savings.
- Potential for donations or fund-raising opportunities.
- Off-site parking potential.
- Seasonal maintenance.
- Considerations for retail space.
- Driving lanes – 1 vs. 2 vs. 3.
- Tree canopy.
- Dining patios and application process.
- Work that could be installed as part of construction for future use (e.g., soil cells).

Following discussion;

Move by: Councillor Segeren

Seconded by: Chris Spaleta

That BMROSS work with GSP to provide a revised enhanced design and cost estimate that considers, as much as possible, future operational and capital costs through refinements to sidewalk space, tree and landscape areas, and concrete planter quantities, for the Rebuilding Downtown Infrastructure Project;

And that the revised enhanced design be presented to Goderich Town Council for direction on proceeding to the preliminary design stage.

CARRIED

7. The following correspondence was received for information as attached:

- Gerry O'Brien – April 7, 2024
- Con Melady – April 22, 2024
- Julie Sawchuk – April 22, 2024
- DC Scott – April 25, 2024
- Councillor Thompson – Talking Points from April 29<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting
- Gerry O'Brien – May 6, 2024

8. BMROSS reported on findings for basement servicing investigation including the following:

- Approximately 90% of the buildings are serviced by rear-alley sanitary piping. This is to be reviewed further. A recommendation related to preferred servicing method will be provided at a later date.
- It was noted that the majority of water services are from the Square side of the building.
- Enbridge is currently located under the sidewalk of the Square fronting the buildings. At one time Enbridge gas had planned to replace their system utilizing the rear-alleys. They no longer feel it is necessary to complete upgrades and will leave their system as it is.

9. Next steps were discussed including the following:

- Prepare Council Report related to concept updates and associated costs
- Advance to Preliminary Design Stage
  - Council direction required
- Develop Communication Plan related to Public Consultation
  - Design
  - Construction

10. Date for next meeting to be determined through a poll. BMROSS will circulate possible dates.

11. The following members of the public spoke to the Task Force:

- Tom Fincher
  - Communication important
  - Parking during construction
- Glenn Scheels
  - Cautioned against too many plan refinements (i.e., tree quantity, planting, etc.)
  - Costs seem appropriate
  - Legacy project, important public space
  - Communication
- Con Melady
  - Spoke to his plan related to interior angle parking with elimination of outside (business side parking)
- Laurie Moore
  - Pedestrian crossings are important
  - Increased signage related to traffic flow
  - Sell the project to the Public – social media, etc.

- Gerry O'Brien
  - Trees and sidewalks are important components of the proposal

12. Adjournment

Moved by: Colin Carmichael

Seconded by: Councillor Segeren

That the Rebuilding Downtown Infrastructure Task Force does now adjourn at 11:47 am.

CARRIED

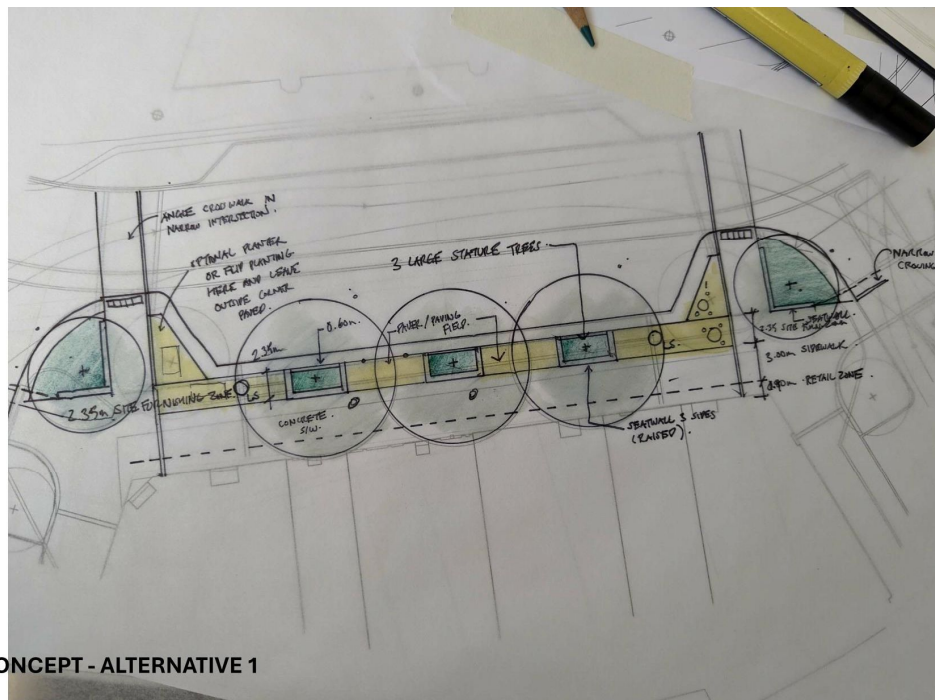
Meeting Minutes prepared by D. Erb

Circulation to all invited Attendees

**INFORMATION PRESENTED BY GSP AT TASK FORCE MEETING**  
**May 7, 2024**



**CURRENT CONCEPT**



**BLOCK CONCEPT - ALTERNATIVE 1**





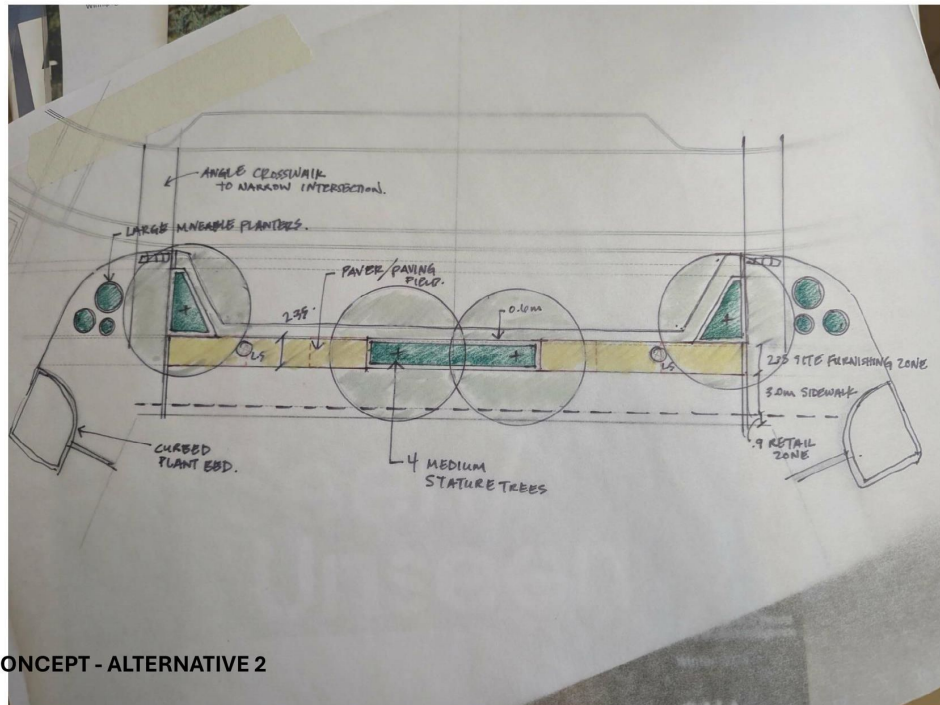


**BLOCK CONCEPT - ALTERNATIVE 1 – VIEW 3**



**BLOCK CONCEPT - ALTERNATIVE 1 – VIEW 4**

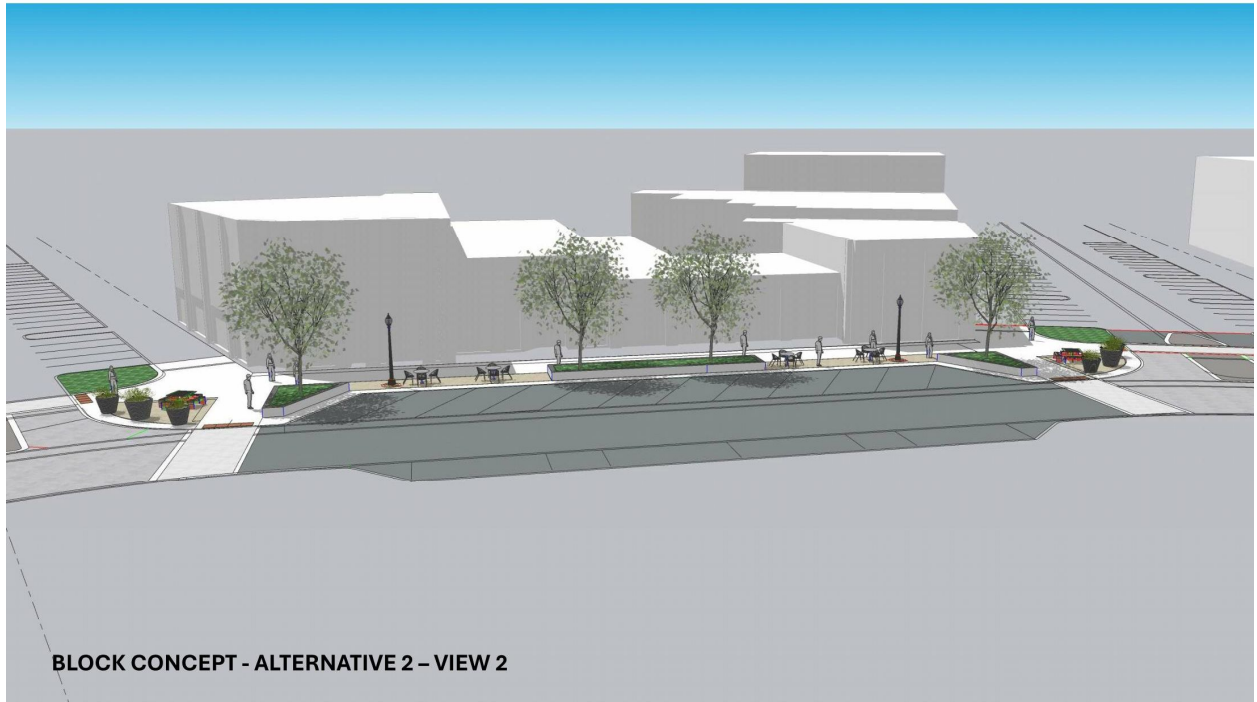




**BLOCK CONCEPT - ALTERNATIVE 2**



**BLOCK CONCEPT - ALTERNATIVE 2 – VIEW 1**



**BLOCK CONCEPT - ALTERNATIVE 2 – VIEW 2**



**BLOCK CONCEPT - ALTERNATIVE 2 – VIEW 3**



#### DESIGN COMPARISON (per block)

#### Concept

#### Alternative 1

#### Alternative 2

#### A - Planting Items

|                                              |            |            |               |
|----------------------------------------------|------------|------------|---------------|
| Length of Planter Along Curb (mid-block)     | 20.00m (2) | 13.20m (3) | 13.20 (1)     |
| Planter Width                                | 2.85m      | 2.30m      | 2.30m         |
| Wall Length Demonstrated (N/I intersections) | 118m       | 57.8m      | 62m           |
| Planting Area (adjacent square only)         | 91 sq. m   | 70 sq. m   | 37sq. m (+56) |
| Tree Quantity                                | 8 trees    | 5 trees    | 4 trees       |
| Soil Cells Required                          | 150 sq. m  | 55 sq. m   | 35 sq. m      |

#### B – Pavement Items

|                                                   |       |       |       |
|---------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Width of Furnishing Zone                          | 3.70m | 3.15m | 3.15m |
| Width of Sidewalk (from property line to planter) | 3.15m | 3.70m | 3.70m |

**INFORMATION RECEIVED**  
Gerry O'Brien – April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Downtown Revitalization Task Force and Council,

Thank You for the excellent work that has been done to date on the Downtown Revitalization design concept.

Unfortunately I will not be able to attend the council meeting of April 8 to join in the discussions.

I would like to add these comments to be considered at the meeting:

I have located the presentation in the Agenda and can see that there are two different intersections proposed; one "standard" and one for large WB vehicles.

I have always believed that the square should be designed as a pedestrian space where cars are "allowed".

Based on the "Woonerf Concept", I believe that more pedestrian crossings ( what the designers call "conflict points" but actually serve to make drivers pay attention and slow down) are better in this case and all intersections should be as per the large WB vehicle design.

Would it be possible to delineate the whole triangle formed by the three cross walks in the large WB vehicle intersection as one large pedestrian "Crossover". This would legally give the pedestrians the right of way, and increase accessibility, as it should be.

The added benefits are that the large WB intersections should be cheaper to build, cheaper to maintain and create fewer problems for street cleaning and snow plowing.

Thanks for your time.

Gerry O'Brien  
47 Bruce Street W  
Goderich  
403-606-4737

**INFORMATION RECEIVED**

Con Melady – April 22<sup>nd</sup>



I want to commend the Committee and GSP for implementing Council's direction for community consultation on the Downtown Streetscape Design, Feb. 2024 presented most recently to Council on Apr 8, 2024. The conceptual design that is offered captures many of the aspirational goals of the community. The streetscape design will be the face and feel of the Square. It will account for a fraction of the infrastructure replacement cost, yet it is likely to be the most contentious aspect of the plan. Making the Square a welcoming, appealing and functional public space will be critical to ensure that the Square continues to be "... a vital **cultural, social, and economic** hub."

The recent ( since 1950?) configuration of traffic flow and parking on the Square has proven to be successful in the context of the era. However, as we look forward for another 50 years of service from a re imagined street, we must ask ourselves if the new design risks repeating shortcomings of an old design and misses opportunities for improvement. Let us look for opportunities to put structures in place that will give future generations hope for better environmentally conscious outcomes.

I am offering an amendment to the design that has zero cost associated and has multiple benefits for business and mobility accommodation. It is my hope that these accommodations will lead to a mode shift away from large single occupant motor vehicles and toward non polluting micro- mobility alternatives including active transportation.

## Streetscape Design

The selection of the Pedestrian as the dominant design vehicle to be accommodated is foundational for this design: *"All other vehicles will be accommodated in a manner that supports the safety and comfort of pedestrians within the street environment."*<sup>4.1</sup> Downtown Streetscape Design, Feb. 2024 I am aware of no criticism of this concept from any of my conversations or meeting attendance/review.

The statement that *"Intersections are designed to provide refuge, meet*

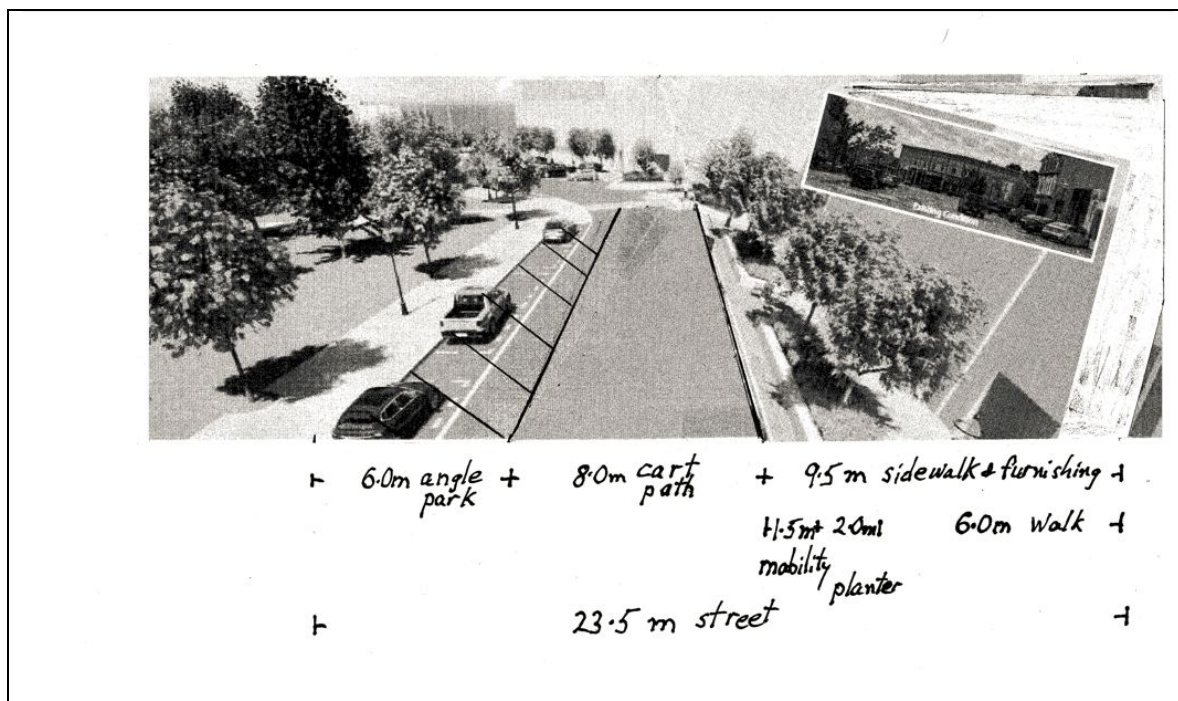
*AODA requirements"* supports the pedestrian focused design but **falls short** of taking into account the **mobility needs** of many citizens. (See Appendix 1)

**"8-80 communities- if everything we do in our cities is great for an 8 year old and an 80 year old, then it will be better for all people"** <https://www.880cities.org/>

## Proposed Streetscape- GSP



## Alternate Proposed Streetscape- Con Melady



# **Additional Considerations in Weighing the Risks and Benefits of Inside Angle Parking**

## **The Square is confusing!**

Some residents say that the lack of lane designations makes drivers unsure of where they should be on the road.

This system is intentional and an integral part of traffic calming necessary to promote pedestrian dominance. My survey of the traffic flow on the Square shows little confusion regarding lane selection- the substantial majority of drivers choose the outside lane. We could mark lanes but the design supports open lanes and there is no confusion , people choose the outer lane.

The Square is often described as “difficult to navigate”.

The natural configuration of the eight radial streets intersecting the Square is a significant contributor to traffic calming needed to maintain safe speeds of travel by motor vehicles. It could also be called “confusing”.

Choose one- It's difficult exiting the Square because:

- a) Sidewalk users are hidden by parked cars.
- b) Cars exiting parking are distracting.
- c) I can't read the street names on the signs.
- d) I'm stuck in a line of traffic and don't have time to decide what to do!
- e) all of the above

## **Inside Angle Parking Encourages Business**

Choose one-If the car was located beside Courthouse Park choose between:

- a) visiting another store
- b) getting a sandwich or coffee for the park
- c) play with the kids in the park
- d) all of the above

## Outside Angle Parking Discourages “Hang Time”

One can understand the logic when a shopper is planning their time on The Square, such as: I don’t want to walk any further than necessary. Choosing between walking to the car and walking to another store or amenity, Which is shorter?

If I was a business owner on the Square, I would want people to linger long and enjoy, not only **my** store but those of my neighbours. The amenities of the Square including our Courthouse Park have been developed and are maintained for that purpose. People who are a little lost and aren’t worried about it are more likely to spend money. This is a well documented strategy used by mall designers and retailers like IKEA to keep you on site and be less discriminating in your purchasing decisions.

## Appendix 1

### Beyond AODA compliance-

Raised road beds confer priority access for the designated user. The “continuous sidewalk” does this for pedestrians and designated mobility users. <https://www.tac-atc.ca/sites/default/files/site/doc/publications/2023/epb-csbp-e.pdf> Because of the necessity of drainage services there is no better time to implement a continuous mobility path than during the current infrastructure project.

The provision of an unobstructed mobility path between the sidewalk and cart path is not required by AODA but it is prudent in that it will ensure safe accessible infrastructure for the young, the elderly, the infirm and the less confident of our community.

### Application of Current Design Standards

Failure to consult current design standards can result in increased risk exposure for design, engineering and administrative professionals. These professionals are required to provide accommodation where there is a demonstrated foreseeable need regardless of standards of the day.

**INFORMATION RECEIVED**

Julie Sawchuk – April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024



Date: April 21, 2024

To: The Town of Goderich; Mayor, Trevor Bazinet, CAO Janice Hallahan and Town Council

From: Julie Sawchuk

Re: True accessibility is absent from the Downtown reconstruction concept drawings and report

In the spring of 2022, the Province of Ontario's Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility asked me to Chair the committee tasked to review and update Part IV of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) — The Design of Public Spaces (DOPS) Standards and Regulations. These guidelines were created in 2005, revised in 2012 and have not been updated in 12 years. In that time we, as a society, have learned that we can "do accessibility" *better*.

Today I am writing to you as the Chair of the AODA DOPS review committee and as a resident of Huron county. I am NOT wearing my hat as an accessibility professional as I perceive that as a conflict of interest.

Over the past two years my committee, composed of people from across the province from a variety of professional disciplines and representing many aspects of lived experience of people with disabilities, have generated more than 140 different recommendations to improve the DOPS legislation. These recommendations, when enacted, will "level-up" the accessibility of the design, construction and maintenance of all public outdoor spaces. The recommendations include improvements to many features specific to the Goderich Downtown reconstruction project, including accessible parking, sidewalk & curbs construction, rest areas, public use eating areas, pedestrian signals and signage.

The 12 year old AODA DOPS standards are sub par; for example, the following represents the guidelines for on-street parking under the AODA:

On-street parking spaces

80.39 (1) When constructing or redeveloping existing on-street parking spaces, designated public sector organizations shall consult on the need, location and design of accessible on-street parking spaces and shall do so in the following manner:



1. Designated public sector organizations must consult with the public and persons with disabilities.
2. Municipalities must also consult with their municipal accessibility advisory committees, where one has been established in accordance with subsection 29 (1) or (2) of the Act.

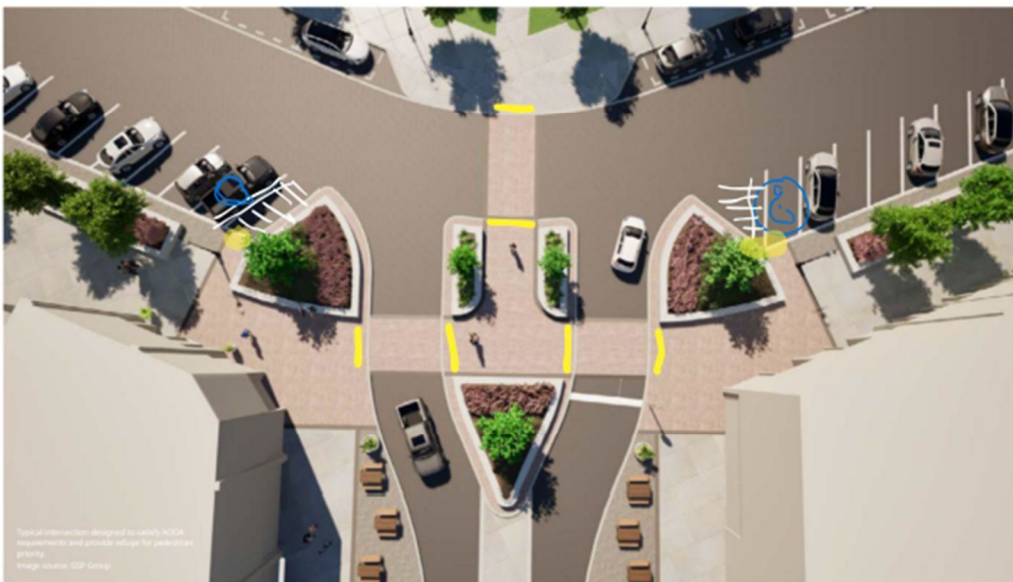
That's it! All of the accessibility regulations for accessible on-street parking are what you see written above. We can and must do better. It will take another full year (at least) before these 140 recommendations are vetted by the public review process and (hopefully) passed into legislation. We cannot wait for the rules to change because, for this project (and many others), it will be too late. We already know how to do better; therefore, we can and we must.

More than 25% of the Canadian population (ages 18-80) identify as having a disability — and those numbers do not include youth or those over 80. Why would we make plans, design and construct spaces that might exclude one quarter of the population?

As an accessibility professional, I have worked on projects for major organizations (such as Humber College and the City of Vaughan) and I am repeatedly asked by large, Canadian-based architectural firms to be a part of their team. In my professional experience, I have witnessed time and again the impact that comes from making accessibility a part of the entire design process. As a person with a disability, I experience, every day, what happens when it's not. When accessibility is an add-on, band-aid solutions are required, which always involve increased costs and decreased usefulness (and often aesthetics) of a space.

It is obvious to me that the teams tasked with the Goderich Downtown project have not started with accessibility in mind. If this were the case, then disability and accessibility would be represented *even at the concept drawing stages*. To elaborate: parking, outdoor eating, shade, traffic calming, and active transportation are all concepts that were brought to the attention of the project team during the charette. All of these concepts are represented in the drawings. Accessibility is also a concept that was discussed during the public meetings; however, accessibility is not represented, anywhere, on the concept drawings.

The following images are from the report: image one is an overhead view of the intersection "concept"; image two shows rudimentary markings that I have added to show how accessibility as a concept would be represented. In blue and white ink, accessible parking is shown at each side of the intersection, and tactile warning indicator surfaces are shown in yellow ink.



This second set of images shows the public eating area concept (1) and (2) the same, but with disability and accessibility represented. Yellow ink is used to show tactile warning indicator surfaces at the crosswalks and I've added an



image of a person using a wheelchair seated at a picnic table with an extension on the end that makes it accessible.



Pedestrian priority intersections provide many opportunities for seasonal changes in plantings and furnishings in a dynamic streetscape.  
Image source: GSP Group



Pedestrian priority intersections provide many opportunities for seasonal changes in plantings and furnishings in a dynamic streetscape.  
Image source: GSP Group

Accessibility is not specific to a special interest group like cycling, businesses or maintenance personnel. Accessibility applies to every space *and* every person benefits from it.

If The Town is truly committed to allowing people with disabilities to participate with safety, independence and dignity in all that is offered by the community on, and around, The Square, then I ask that this commitment be demonstrated through action now, not as an afterthought.

I am aware that the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee will be asked to review future plans; as you know, this is a legal requirement. A project of this magnitude should be aiming to go beyond the minimum legal obligations of the organizations involved. The report states: "design is to be universally accessible where possible" (page 30). Who is deciding what "where possible" means? On the following page: "AODA built environment compliant" appears as another goal. We can do better.

I am requesting that Council make a motion to require accessibility best practices be added to the terms of reference given to BMRoss and GSP for the Goderich Downtown reconstruction project and that it be done by:

1. Involving an accessibility professional from this point forward until the completion of the project.
2. Design and construct beyond the current AODA standards, applying best practices for accessibility to the entire project.

There are several accessibility professionals certified and working in the area, and there are Canadian standards such as the CSA B651:23 *Accessible Design for the Built Environment* that, with their use, will result in a project where accessibility is not an add-on nor an additional expense. The Town has hired a team consisting of highly qualified engineers, landscape architects, land-use planners, urban designers and project managers to complete this project, yet are asking a group of (although dedicated) volunteers to comment on plans after they are developed.

Baking accessibility into the process from the beginning will save time, money and result in a streetscape that supports everyone, now and well into the future.

Sincerely,  
Julie Sawchuk

**INFORMATION RECEIVED**  
DC Scott – April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024

## To Mayor and Council Members

I do not support the idea of extra cost being incurred for the 'enhancement' portion of this project.

The Mayor's facebook video (Apr 23, 2024) was well done and appreciated, and hopefully many will get to view it, but unfortunately not all in the Town are aware.

Unfortunately I feel not enough residents and tax payers will get this message. I also feel that a decision of this magnitude should not be left to seven people to decide. Perhaps there is a way to get feedback from the whole Town. Could a letter be sent to each household to explain the proposal for those that do not read facebook, or media publications, and/ or a survey with some way to respond?

My concern is that no additional funds or tax dollars should be spent on any so-called 'enhancements' to the Square while we have to drive on roads in the Town that are literally falling apart.

The additional \$2,000,000 - \$3,000,000 (Millions) for 'enhancements' plus ongoing maintenance costs spent on the Square should be unthinkable when other infrastructure is in such disrepair.

I hope the Mayor and Council have already thought over the ramification of the enhancement project, but I would like to pass on my comments. As mentioned, I do not support the idea of extra cost being incurred for the 'enhancement' portion of this project.

Some feedback that I have, which is also shared by others, is that most residents do not understand the enhancement portion of the project or the impact that it would have on the Square.

-the driving area will be reduced to two lanes, one of which will be constantly stopped waiting for vehicles parking.

-the suggestion is to require vehicles to park by backing into an angled space, in the opposite direction to the current layout. Most say they would avoid the Square if this proposal were to happen.

- that delivery trucks on the Square already either block one lane of traffic by stopping in the lane, or extend into the drive lane by angle parking. I believe this delivery issue to stores will be a potential problem to businesses and traffic flow.

-Merchants already have to deal with an accumulation of leaves in their storefront from existing trees and plants. The addition of more will further aggravate their situation. What is the position of the BIA or individual shop owners?

-the driving lane reduction and reverse parking will not appeal to most drivers, even younger drivers let alone the many seniors that now try to drive to the Square.

-visitors and tourists to the Town mostly head to the beach and boardwalk, it is rare to see a crowded sidewalk except for special events, where the Town wisely closes off a section of the Square to accommodate any congestion

-I believe that several years ago a group of mostly walkers wanted to say there was a need for wider sidewalks at the expense of a narrower driving area. Sidewalk traffic has not seemed to increase, but it appears vehicle traffic has

-I do not agree with a 'big city' contractor coming in to try to change or destroy the existing small-town charm of the area.



-We do not need another Grand Bend style mainstreet with congestion and near mirror clipping driving experiences. Bayfield seems to have been able to keep the essence of their downtown and Goderich should also.

-We do not need another surprise to many residents as was done with the current shipwreck / eggshell / structure that replaced the previous gazebo stage in the Square.

This project is a major step for the Town and should be up to the whole Town, not just a few council members getting information from the few who had the time to actually attend the meetings and presentations. Those who want to make quick visits to the Square or visit merchants, restaurants and banks without undo stress of more congested traffic and the possibility of damage to their or other's vehicles in trying to back in to an angled parking space should also have their say, and a Town survey may be a way to do this with information better pointing out the proposed changes that will affect them.

If you have not already considered the points above, please do so, and consider how you can better communicate to the whole town to get adequate input before any votes are taken,

Sincerely

DC Scott

Goderich

[dcscott@cabletv.on.ca](mailto:dcscott@cabletv.on.ca)

**INFORMATION RECEIVED**

Councillor John Thompson – Talking Points from April 29, 2024 Council Meeting

## Talking points

In their memo, Deanna and Sean make reference to “preserving the spirit of the conceptual design”. I think this is a good thing to focus on in my remarks.

What is the spirit of the conceptual design?

The conceptual design gives priority of the needs of pedestrians. And what is that the pedestrians need?

In his keynote speech at Good Roads, Jeff Speck mentioned three things that help the pedestrian chose to walk.

1. Having a destination. (the Square provides that already)
2. Having a route that is safe.
3. Having a route that is interesting. (this is what we should focus on)

I’m going to boil that down to three values. Pedestrian safety, comfort, and enjoyment. If we agree that this is the spirit of the original design, I’d like to talk about how I think the maintenance concerns that have been raised can be address while maintaining our concern for pedestrian safety, comfort, and enjoyment.

In the current design, there are three important features that serve the needs of pedestrians which I’d like to see us keep.

1. the pedestrian intersection designs, especially the shorter walk across the roadway.
2. the wider sidewalks and deeper angle parking bays (with drive in angle parking)
3. the road design features that are intended to slow traffic down. I assume this means keeping the reduction of the roadway to a two lanes of vehicle traffic and not painting lines.

Now let’s think about what could be adjusted to address some of the concerns raised.

1. I think we can and in fact should give up the large planter boxes, and not just for maintenance reasons. I think there is value in keeping the sidewalk space open so that other uses can emerge. We don’t know what use a current or future retailer might find for that extra space, and we won’t be able to if we fill up the space with these large planters. Leaving the space open leaves room for variety of uses which would make the pedestrian experience more enjoyable and less monotonous.
2. One plus for the planter boxes was that they offered seating for pedestrians. I think there is a need for pedestrian seating, but there are other ways to provide that. Surely the Town (and some retailers) could put out some kind of seating each spring and take it back into storage for the winter. This would add to pedestrian comfort. So I’d like to see that in a new design.
3. I think we’d all agree that the presence of shade trees would add to the pedestrian comfort, especially in summer months. So I’d like to see shade trees retained. But how many? And when? I think there is value is starting small. Maybe three trees per segment is fine, rather than 6 or 7. This is especially so if we realize that we don’t know yet how to protect the trees from salt. So maybe it’s better to begin with a few, but leave room for more if future Council decide that’s a good idea.

4. But if we are going to have trees to provide comfort to pedestrians, I think we have to be prepared to provide comfort to the trees. Obviously that means dealing with salt. We need to protect them as best we can. But it also means giving them a chance to thrive underground. Therefore, I think it would be important to install the soil cells under the surface where the trees roots would grow and nourish the trees. I also think we should install more soil cell capacity that we would need at first. We don't know how many trees the future might want on the Square. If the climate keeps warming as experience now suggests it will, I would expect more trees, and more shade, will be wanted – by pedestrians and store owners alike. Therefore, I think it makes sense to install more tree sustaining capacity that is needed right now. This is no different that installing oversized sewer and water infrastructure that is not needed right now, but may be needed in the future.`

I think those sorts of adjustments would allow us to keep the spirit of the originally preferred design while at the same time addressing some of the concerns that have been raised by staff and members of our community.

Hopefully these ideas, and others my colleagues will present, will provide staff and the designers with enough direction to develop another iteration of the design.

**INFORMATION RECEIVED**  
Gerry O'Brien – May 6, 2024



May 6, 2024

To Councillors and members of the Downtown Infrastructure Task Force

Re: Proposed revisions to the downtown infrastructure plan

I am impressed by your sensitive response to resident's concerns about costs as well as your recognition of the value of good design. I hope that we can find the right balance that will move the project ahead without compromising the potential of this one-time opportunity.

In regards to the number of trees and planters, I am assuming that you have heard from residents about costs, and BIA members about the visibility of their stores. Both are legitimate concerns that you must respond to as councillors but I hope that a strong leadership role can convince people of the potential negative impact of watering down the design too much.

There is no doubt that simply reducing the traffic lanes and adding more sidewalks is a major improvement to the current situation.

However, I am concerned about being penny wise and pound foolish. Trees are important for so many reasons already stated by the designers but I would like to add some insights that I have come across recently.

As a local resident pointed out regarding trees blocking storefronts;  
"We know where all the stores are located and tourists will be encouraged to explore more if it is a pleasant environment."

From the University of Washington,

- A study found 7% higher rental rates for commercial offices having high quality landscapes.
- Shoppers claim that they will spend 9% to 12% more for goods and services in central business districts having high quality tree canopy.
- Shoppers indicate that they will travel greater distance and a longer time to visit a district having high quality trees, and spend more time there once they arrive.

It is my hope that the final design at least maintains the planters at the intersections, to anchor the block and provide articulation, if the mid block planters are eliminated. With that revision, and an arborist's advice on reducing salt damage to the trees at grade, could costs be reduced and the integrity of the design maintained.

According to the towns Asset Management Plan, the total value of all road, sanity, storm and water infrastructure in town is about \$446M. The added \$2M in the enhanced design represents less than half of one percent of increase to our infrastructure capital. I would argue that it represents much more than half a percent in value.

Thank You

Gerry O'Brien