

# **Attachment-1 Streetscaping Options and Background**

## **What is Streetscaping?**

Streetscaping is the appearance of the design of the streets in a town or city. In practice, streetscaping refers to what surface treatments and infrastructure are implemented to create the visual impact that is desired for the street. The idea of streetscaping can be metaphorically connected to how one decorates a room in their house: the infrastructure work involves the studs, drywall, electrical and water components that form the base of the room, whereas the streetscape would refer to the flooring, paint, furniture, light fixtures, house plants and décor.

In the context of a downtown street, the streetscaping refers to the level of finish on various components. For example, a pedestrian clearway will be built as part of the cross-section, however this clearway could be built from several different materials, including asphalt, concrete, pavers, tiles or rubber. The different options for finishing material offer different visual impacts and come at different capital and operating cost points.

Some streetscape components include functional aspects beyond aesthetic impacts. Barrier curbs are a standard feature in roadway design, however they may not be desired within a complex downtown environment where the goal is to enable pedestrian ease and accessibility. Structural bollards would take the place of barrier curbs to create a physical impediment between motor vehicle traffic and pedestrians.

Trees are also an important aspect of streetscaping as trees have been demonstrated to increase the value and enjoyment of downtown areas. Trees are a major aesthetic feature, however they also include supplemental benefits such as stormwater retention, temperature moderation, and relief from the sun.

## **Placemaking**

Placemaking is a multi-faceted approach to planning, designing, and managing public spaces, with a focus on creating individual identities for different spaces. Placemaking focuses on creating locations that have significance to people. Examples can be seen in Guelph in established places such as Market Square or Douglas Street, or in other cities such as Times Square in New York City, or Nathan Phillips Square in Toronto.

Streetscaping and placemaking are not interchangeable. Streetscaping is an aspect of placemaking, which provides visual interest as a base to make a space unique. However, other inputs are required to support placemaking, including but not limited to established businesses, public art, facilities (e.g., public washrooms), and events to draw people to the place.

## Downtown Streetscaping Options

In response to Council's 2019 motion directing staff to identify 'good, better and best' streetscape options for Downtown Guelph, the project team has developed four options with differing levels of service for Council's information:

1. Good
2. Better 1
3. Better 2
4. Best

The options are outlined below and further explained in this [recorded presentation](#).

### Good



The proposed "Good" level of streetscaping is similar to what exists Downtown today with the addition of cycle tracks to implement the Council-approved Wyndham Street North cross-section and includes:

- Street trees in tree pits (low soil volume, smaller trees)
- Traditional curb and gutter layout (concrete)
- Asphalt paving
- Limited furnishings

The "Good" level of streetscaping does not facilitate a flexible streetscape design to easily accommodate seasonal or event modifications. A flexible streetscape design eliminates physical barriers between the road and pedestrian realm to enable fluid movement between these areas. The use of a barrier curb along the edge of the road physically separates these two areas and creates an accessibility issue in the case of events utilizing the whole road corridor.

The adopted 2024-2027 Multi-Year Capital Budget includes sufficient budget to accommodate the "Good" level of streetscaping. There is no appreciable increase in operating and life cycle costing over the current level of service.

## Better 1



The proposed “Better 1” level of streetscaping implements the approved cross-section, including cycle tracks and includes:

- Street trees in open planters (higher soil volume, less reliance on soil cells, larger trees)
- Traditional curb and gutter layout (concrete)
- Enhanced/special paving features with a greater aesthetic value than regular grey sidewalk concrete (such as paving stones, coloured concrete, or stamped concrete) may be considered in some locations including parts of the marketing zone, furnishing zone or the on-street parking areas. The use of special paving could also be considered only on some streets, such as Wyndham Street North and Macdonell Street, but not Cork Street
- Bollards may be considered along parking lanes or cycle tracks. They are necessary where a traditional curb is not being implemented to assist with separation between vehicular movement and pedestrian movement
- Furnishings

The “Better 1” level of streetscaping does not facilitate a flexible streetscape design which accommodates seasonal or event modifications.

The “Better 1” level of streetscaping represents an additional \$5 million capital investment above the currently approved funding for the DTIRP Phase 1 – Wyndham Street North Reconstruction project.

## Better 2



The proposed “Better 2” level of streetscaping implements the approved cross-section, including cycle tracks and includes:

- Street trees in tree trenches (low soil volume, smaller trees)
- Traditional curb and gutter layout with rollover curb between travel lane and parking lane
- Enhanced/special paving, which offers a greater aesthetic value than regular grey sidewalk concrete (such as paving stones, coloured concrete, or stamped concrete) is considered in the marketing zone, furnishing zone or the on-street parking areas. The use of special paving could also be considered only on some streets, such as Wyndham Street North and Macdonell Street, but not Cork Street
- Bollards may be considered along parking lanes or cycle tracks. They are necessary where a traditional curb is not being implemented to assist with separation between vehicular movement and pedestrian movement
- Furnishings

The “Better 2” level of streetscaping represents a flexible streetscape design to easily accommodate seasonal or event modifications.

The “Better 2” level of streetscaping represents an additional \$10 million capital investment above the currently approved funding for the DTIRP Phase 1 – Wyndham Street North Reconstruction project.

## Best



The "Best" level of streetscaping represents the 2014 Streetscape Manual and includes a high-level of streetscape finish:

- Street trees soil cells (greatest amount of soil volume, larger trees)
- Enhanced/special paving with a greater aesthetic value than regular grey sidewalk concrete (such as paving stones, coloured concrete, or stamped concrete) is included in the marketing zone, furnishing zone and the on-street parking areas; the use of special paving should be consistent through all Downtown streets
- Bollards are included where rolled curbs are being implemented to assist with separation between vehicular movement and pedestrian movement
- Public art is incorporated into the streetscape

The "Best" level of streetscaping facilitates a flexible streetscape design to accommodate seasonal or event modifications.

The "Best" level of streetscaping represents an additional \$15 million capital investment above the currently approved funding for the DTIRP Phase 1 – Wyndham Street North Reconstruction project.