Council Report

Report Number:	**ENG2026-016**
Meeting Date:	April 21, 2026
Title:	**City Hall Campus Parking Impact Review**
Description:	Transportation impact review and public consultation for traffic measures related to the Olde Gaol and City Hall Campus Parking and Landscaping Improvement Project.
Author and Title:	Joseph Kelly, Traffic Management Supervisor

Recommendation(s):

That Report ENG2026-016, **City Hall Campus Parking Impact Review,** be received;

That Alternative 2, generally described as reversing internal traffic flow within the City Hall parking area, converting the Cambridge Street North driveway to an entrance, converting the Francis Street driveway to an exit, and restricting Cambridge Street North to northbound-only traffic between Francis Street and Colborne Street West, as shown in the preliminary design in Appendix A to Report ENG2026-016 be endorsed by Council as the preferred traffic measures to be incorporated into the Olde Gaol and City Hall Campus Parking and Landscaping Improvement Project.

Department Head: _____

Financial/Legal/HR/Other:_____

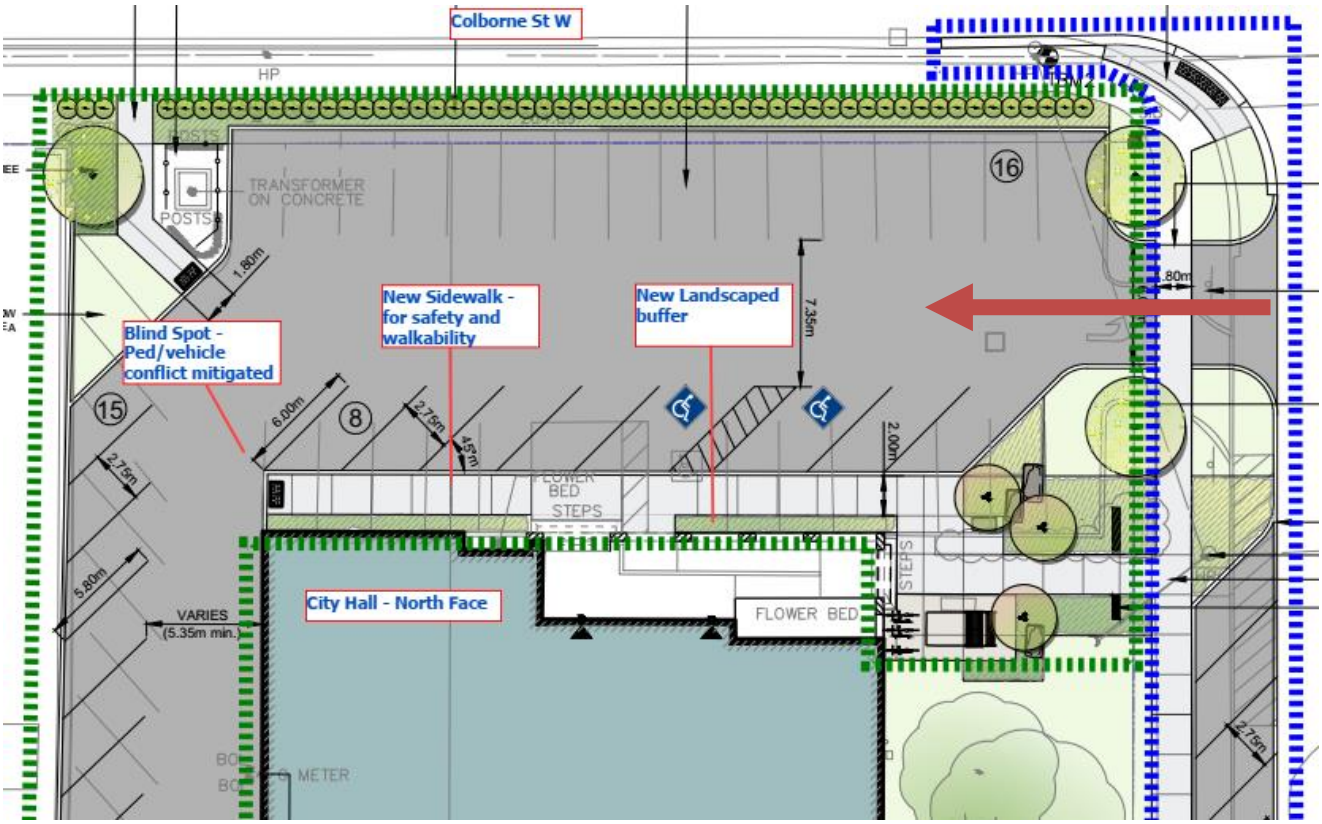
Chief Administrative Officer:_____

Background:

As part of the Olde Gaol and City Hall Campus Parking and Landscaping Improvement Project, changes to site circulation and parking supply around the City Hall campus were identified for review. In addition to increasing parking supply, a key component of the broader project is the proposed reversal of internal traffic flow within the City Hall parking area, with vehicular access proposed from Cambridge Street North and exit proposed to Francis Street.

Reversing the internal traffic flow creates an opportunity to increase safety and walkability by reducing the drive aisle widths, allowing for the addition of a sidewalk and landscaping along the front of the City Hall building (Figure 1). It also mitigates the safety issue of a blind spot, where pedestrians walking along the north side and drivers traveling along the west side may not see each other.

Figure 1: Illustration of Design Features Requiring Reversed Internal Flow



Given the potential for traffic regulation changes, a transportation review was undertaken to assess traffic and safety impacts.

Although the proposed works are exempt from the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) process, staff undertook a modified review process that included consideration of alternatives and public consultation.

CIMA+ was retained to prepare a Transportation Impact Study (TIS) for the City Hall Campus. The study reviewed two alternatives.

Alternative 1 would reverse internal traffic flow while maintaining Cambridge Street North as a two-way roadway (Figure 2).

Alternative 2 would also reverse internal traffic flow, but would restrict Cambridge Street North to northbound-only traffic between Francis Street and Colborne Street West (Figure 3).

Appendix A illustrates the preliminary design of each alternative. The complete TIS is in Appendix B.

Figure 2: Excerpt of Preliminary Design for Alternative 1

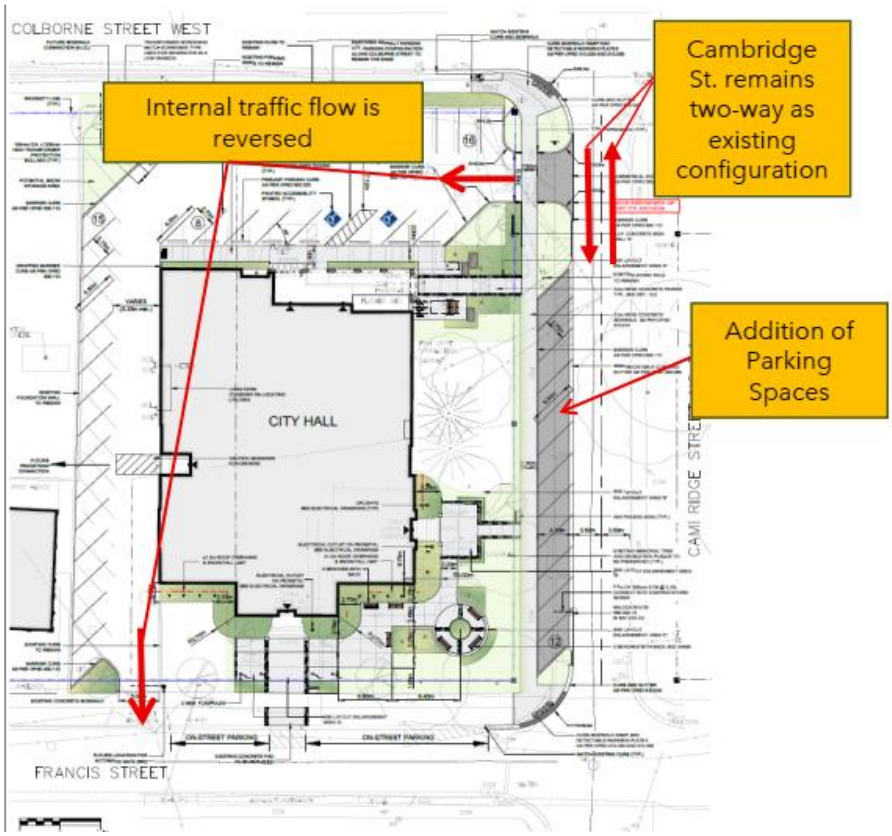
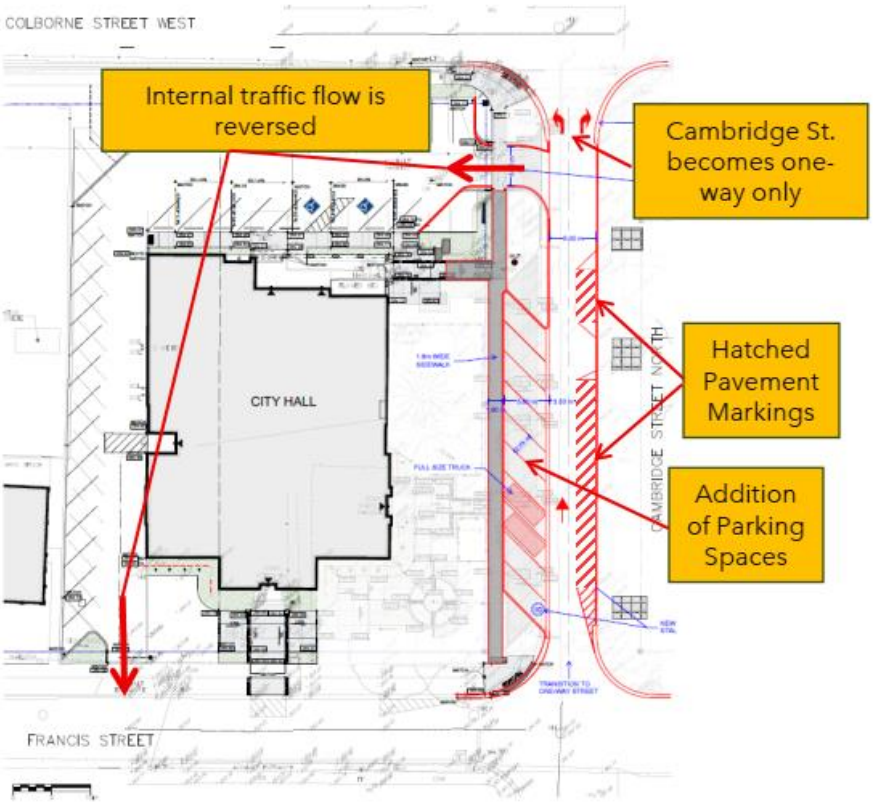


Figure 3: Excerpt of Preliminary Design for Alternative 2



The TIS concluded that both alternatives are operationally acceptable and would operate below critical thresholds. However, Alternative 2 was identified as the preferred option from a transportation safety perspective, while Alternative 1 was noted as supportable if selected for non-transportation safety reasons.

A Public Information Centre (PIC) was held on March 18, 2026 at City Hall to present the project, summarize the alternative traffic options, and receive comments from the public. Notice of the PIC was hand delivered to nearby properties and published in the local newspaper in advance of the meeting. Public input generally focused on sidewalk layout, heritage constraints, winter maintenance, parking supply, truck access, internal circulation, and alternative parking/site design ideas. A summary of questions and answered from comments received in response to the PIC is in Appendix C.

Rationale:

The purpose of this report is to summarize the transportation review and public consultation completed for the City Hall campus and to seek Council endorsement of the preferred traffic measures to support the broader parking and landscaping improvement project.

The Transportation Impact Study identified existing site safety and circulation concerns, including limited sight distance at the Cambridge Street North driveway, observed wrong-way vehicle movements at the current exit-only driveway, and a blind corner at

the northwest corner of the City Hall building that creates conflict potential between vehicles and pedestrians Both alternatives would improve the current site arrangement by reversing internal traffic flow and relocating conflict points away from the existing blind corner.

From a traffic operations standpoint, the TIS found that both alternatives are expected to function acceptably, with all reviewed movements operating well within capacity and with no anticipated storage concerns. As a result, the decision between alternatives is less about intersection capacity and more about comparative safety, circulation, streetscape, and implementation considerations.

Alternative 2 is recommended because it provides the strongest transportation safety outcome. The consultant identified a potential concern with Alternative 1 related to the short throat length of the Cambridge Street North entrance and its close proximity to Colborne Street West, which could create a risk of queue spillback and unexpected stopped vehicles immediately south of the intersection. Alternative 2 reduces this concern and was therefore identified as the preferred option from a transportation safety perspective.

Although the road network has capacity of both alternatives, an additional benefit of restricting southbound traffic on this section of Cambridge Street North would be the diversion of southbound traffic from Colborne Street West to Victoria Avenue. Victoria Avenue is an arterial road, better suited for the flow of through traffic.

Public comments raised concerns regarding whether the proposed changes generate a meaningful net increase in parking, how winter maintenance would function, how delivery vehicles would access the site, and how heritage constraints affect sidewalk placement and boulevard opportunities. The PIC response material addresses most concerns.

In addition to the TIS findings, the PIC response material sets out several benefits associated with reversing internal traffic flow, including the ability to upgrade parking to current standards, better accommodate barrier-free parking requirements, introduce a sidewalk and narrow landscaped buffer along the City Hall frontage, improve pedestrian safety by removing the blind-corner conflict, reinforce proper circulation with physical controls, and improve winter maintenance and larger vehicle circulation.

For these reasons**, staff recommend Alternative 2 as the preferred traffic option to support detailed design and implementation of the broader campus project.**

Other Alternatives Considered:

Due to the proposed changes to the regulation of traffic, the only alternative that requires Council endorsement is the recommended alternative. Should Council reject the recommended alternative, Council would only need to receive this report.

Status Quo (Do-Nothing)

A status quo approach would require the removal of design considerations in the broader plan to increase safety, walkability, and compatible urban design that depend on the reversal of internal flow.

The current flow direction does not allow for angled parking along the front of City Hall. Adding the proposed sidewalk and landscape buffer along the front wall of City Hall pushes out the parking. The resulting reduction in aisle width would be deficient. Reversing the flow allows for angled parking, taking back the lost aisle width.

Alternative 1

Alternative 1 was considered. This option would reverse internal traffic flow while maintaining Cambridge Street North as a two-way roadway. The TIS found this option to be operationally acceptable and supportable. However, it was not identified as the preferred option due to the potential safety concern associated with queue spillback and limited throat length at the Cambridge Street North entrance in proximity to Colborne Street West. This alternative also introduces the possibility of parked trucks encroaching in the travelled lane.

PIC Input Concepts

Additional concepts raised through the PIC included revised pavement marking configurations, alternate one-way arrangements, street closure, use of other areas within the campus block for parking, and relocation of other civic functions. These concepts were reviewed at a high level through the consultation process but were not advanced, generally due to heritage considerations, operational constraints, cost, or broader site planning considerations.

Alignment to Strategic Priorities

Following a modified EA process for the potential traffic regulation allows for the transparent evaluation of alternatives with public input. This aligns with the Strategic Priority of Good Government.

Financial/Operation Impacts:

The cost for works on Cambridge Street North associated with Alternative 1 or 2 is estimated to be between $100,000 and $150,000.

At the time of budget approval for the broader project, outlined in the below table, it was anticipated that work would be required on Cambridge Steet to increase parking capacity. The costs associated with Alternative 1 or 2 are estimated within the existing project budget. Actual construction costs will be confirmed through the detailed design process.

Budget Items for broader project:

Project Number	Project Name	Approved Budget	Budget Year
953230101	Olde Gaol Museum Courtyard	$450,000	2023
953250102	City Hall, Human Resources, and Olde Gaol Block	$510,000	2025

Consultations:

Director of Engineering and Corporate Assets, CKL

Director of Community Services, CKL

Manager of Building and Property, CKL

Facility Project Delivery Coordinator, CKL

CIMA+
Public Information Centre attendees and written respondents

Attachments:

Appendix A –Alternative Options

Adobe Acrobat Document

Appendix B – Transportation Impact Study

Adobe Acrobat Document

Appendix C – PIC Comments and Response Summary

Adobe Acrobat Document

Department Head email: jrojas@kawarthalakes.ca

Department Head: Juan Rojas, Director of Engineering & Corporate Assets

Department File: Engineering and Corporate Assets