



**ECONOMIC AND CREATIVE
DEVELOPMENT
MEMORANDUM**

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TO: MAYOR, J. LEHMAN AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

FROM: S. SCHLICHTER, DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

NOTED: B. ARANIYASUNDARAN, P. ENG, PMP, GENERAL MANAGER OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT

RE: DOWNTOWN PERMANENT GATE TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT AND FUNDING APPLICATION NEXT STEPS

DATE: JUNE 27, 2022

The purpose of this Memorandum is to inform members of Council that on April 11, 2022, Council approved motion 22-G-071, as a result of a request from the Downtown Business Improvement Area (BIA), that the City match funding for a project to install permanent gate fixtures at roadways in the downtown area to facilitate temporary road closures in support of Open Air Dunlop and other special events. On April 11th, Council gave direction in response to a request from the BIA as follows:

- “1. That the request from the Barrie Downtown Business Improvement Area (BIA) to support its application to the Community Revitalization Fund for a permanent road closure infrastructure project to facilitate the Open Air Dunlop Programming be supported in principle and the City of Barrie earmark funds to match the BIA’s financial commitment of \$35,135 to be funded from the Reinvestment Reserve, subject to the following:
 - a) That staff in the Infrastructure Department in consultation with other City Departments complete a technical and operational assessment of the proposal and associated scope of work to ensure it considers all of the elements associated with this type of project, including additional budgetary requirements and operational considerations associated with installing permanent infrastructure on a municipal right-of-way; and
 - b) That staff in the Infrastructure Department in consultation with other City Departments work with the BIA to review appropriate design concepts, project timing, project management, and procurement for the project.
2. That staff in the Economic and Creative Development Department, in consultation with other City departments, report back to General Committee on feasibility, additional costs to the City for the project and implementation prior to the release of any matching project funds. (Item for Discussion 8.2, April 11, 2022)”

Following this direction from Council, City departments were consulted on the technical and operational feasibility of the proposal. Economic and Creative Development received feedback, concerns and recommendations from staff. Barrie Fire and Emergency Services outlined key safety concerns with a need to access the corridor as part of first response, in addition to emergency infrastructure (hydrants and connections) located on the Dunlop Street side of the corridor. Personnel would be required to monitor the gates at all closure points to ensure that emergency vehicles can proceed through the roadway.

From an operational perspective, in order to install the gates, there would need to be significant modifications to the recently completed, and award winning, streetscape work on Dunlop Street to provide the underground infrastructure necessary to adequately support the aboveground structures/gates. Additionally, the adequacy of the proposed budget to fund this work would have to be confirmed.



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Further assessment through a technical design evaluation process would need to ensure that vehicular site lines, sidewalk standards, accessibility, snow removal, existing infrastructure, and patios are unaffected. Based on the current proposal and concerns raised in relation to construction, operations and maintenance of the proposed gates, this solution is not feasible from a technical or economic perspective. Staff remain open to other solutions, as there is not support for this proposal in its current form.

With this outcome, the BIA has an opportunity to resubmit an application for consideration. Given the focus of the funding for the Community Revitalization Fund is to build or improve community infrastructure to encourage Canadians to re-engage and explore their communities and regions, staff will continue to support the resubmission of an application to the Community Revitalization Fund through FedDev Ontario with the earmarked commitment from the City of \$35,135, unless directed otherwise by Council.

Staff support for any amended application would continue to be on the premise of a City agreement that the project is technically and economically feasible within the timeline and budgets provided, as part of the funding program, and in-line with the City's strategic goals for downtown. Examples of projects that could be considered include minor capital improvements to Meridian Place that would enhance the visitor experience, as both the City and BIA look to increase activities at Meridian Place, such as sun shades and/or additional seating.