

Additional Traffic Study Will Not Drive Road Changes

To the relief of local residents, a new continuous north-south connection just east of Kerr Street will not be pursued in their quiet neighbourhood. The hotly contested proposal, an offshoot of the Kerr Street Area Traffic Study, would have significantly increased vehicular traffic.

The St. Augustine Sensitivity Analysis, conducted by UMA Engineering Ltd., was supplemental to the original work completed by Cansult. In an effort to relieve future traffic on Kerr St. (south of Speers Rd) and at the key intersection of Kerr and Speers, UMA recommended the removal of the jog between St. Augustine and Maurice Drives— providing a continuous north-south alternative to Kerr Street, further aided by a new traffic signal. This change would also allow Kerr St. (south of Speers) to remain a two lane collector road with on street parking to support retail uses.

In addition to the financial costs associated with the jog removal, this new connection would have required the Town to expropriate and demolish a number of existing houses in the 50 year old neighbourhood southwest of Kerr and Speers. The consultants also recommended extending Mary Street easterly to Herald Avenue as a means of reducing increased traffic flow on St. Augustine and Maurice Drives.

While Town Councillors did not approve specific road plans, their passed motion makes it clear that the removal of the jog will not be reconsidered nor will the extension of Mary Street. Says Cathy Duddeck, Councillor for Ward 2, “Future growth within the Study area cannot come at the expense of our firmly established neighbourhoods.”

The 2004 Kerr Street Revitalization Study had initially called for up to 5,000 new residential units within its boundaries. Due to the subsequent Traffic Study, however, potential growth has been scaled back considerably.