

# Town's Traffic Network Does the Job: Consultant

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With a few minor flaws, aurora's current road network is doing its job, a consulting firm has concluded. Aurora council recently retained iTRANS Consulting to assess the operations of traffic on a town-wide basis, both for now and in the future, and to identify sensitive areas of the road network that may require monitoring and/or further design considerations.

To ensure the town's roadway infrastructure is capable of handling the anticipated growth over the next 10 years, an assessment was undertaken for the years 2006 and 2011. The study found a few problems, made a few recommendations, but generally concluded that traffic moves pretty well in and through Aurora. In addition to an accurate projection of future traffic demands, a thorough understanding of current traffic and roadway conditions was necessary before road network changes could be identified.

Chris Philp, project coordinator for the study told committee members last week that several studies were undertaken including a comparison of traffic demands and road capacities, and an evaluation of the general operating safety of the town's intersections.

In addition, a review of the traffic signal timings and progression; an assessment of the current parking facilities in the downtown area and an evaluation of traffic operations around schools all took place. The traffic demand analysis indicates that Engelhard Drive between Edward Street and the Industrial Parkway south is currently close to becoming congested in the westbound direction and is expected to near congested levels in the eastbound direction by 2006.

However, finishing the reconstruction of Wellington Street may relieve the pressure.

The assessment of the safety of signalized intersections was initially based on collision records at each location. Five of the signalized intersections in town have the potential for safety improvements based on statistical analysis. They are: Yonge and Golf Links; Yonge and Aurora Heights; Yonge and Kennedy; Yonge and Mosley and Industrial Parkway and Engelhard Drive.

Recommendations for improvement were included for each of the intersections. The timings of the signalized intersections on Yonge Street were reviewed and set based on the posted speed limit and will favour drivers traveling at the designated speed limit.

There are 212 designated off-street parking spaces in the four lots in the downtown area with maximum utilization rates ranging from 78 to 95 per cent and average utilization rates from 60 to 90 per cent. The average duration ranges from 1.2 hours to 3.9 hours.

Based on the parking analysis, the report suggests the town may wish to consider expansion of some of the parking facilities in the downtown area.

At six of the 16 elementary and secondary schools in town, no changes are required. At nine schools minor changes are required such as additional signage.

It was also suggested the signage be improved at Wells Street Public School to indicate a road closure in front of the school.

Overall, the current road network is adequately handling the traffic demands, the report concluded. The construction programs that are planned at both the town and regional levels are generally able to accommodate the expected future traffic growth.

The report was received and forwarded to staff for review and report to council.