Downtown Cambridge Truck Diversion Study
Public Meeting
Information Package

What: The Region of Waterloo and the City of Cambridge are considering restricting trucks through Downtown Cambridge and allowing trucks only making local deliveries to the downtown area.

Where: The truck restriction would be on Water Street and Ainslie Street in downtown Cambridge. The alternative routes would include McQueen Shaver Boulevard, Franklin Boulevard, Dundas Street, Main Street and Concession Street.

Why: The diversion of trucks from the narrow streets in the heart of Cambridge would contribute to the revitalization of downtown by allowing the development of a more people-friendly street environment. A vibrant downtown is an essential component of a successful city.

When: 6 p.m. December 1, 2022

Who: Region of Waterloo Project Manager
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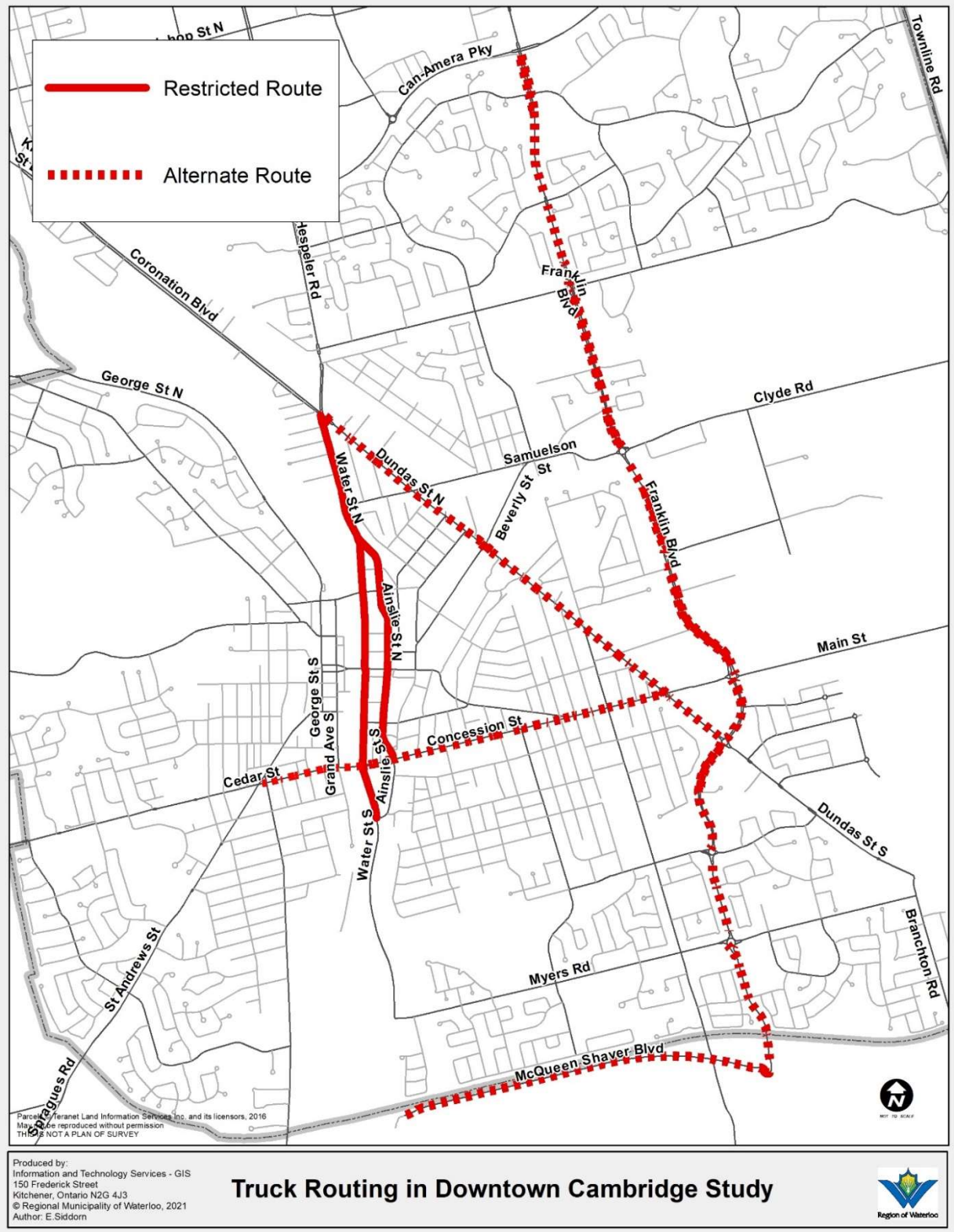
Key Plan


Restricted Route
Alternate Route
Can-Amera Pky
Townline Rd
Coronation Blvd
Franklin Blvd
George St N
Clyde Rd
Samuelson St
Dundas St N
Water St N
Beverly St
Ainslie St N
Main St
George St S
Grand Ave S
Concession St
Cedar St
Ainslie St S
Water St S
Dundas St S
St Andrews St
Myers Rd
Branchton Rd
McQueen Shaver Blvd
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Truck Routing in Downtown Cambridge Study
Region of Waterloo

Why is the Region considering this project?

In the fall of 2020 Cambridge City Council requested the Region investigate the possibility of restricting trucks in downtown Cambridge on Water Street and Ainslie Street.

The City of Cambridge Transportation Master Plan of 2020 developed a goods movement strategy that focuses on connectivity for truck routes and the impacts on sensitive areas. The plan included reducing truck traffic in sensitive areas such as core areas.

The plans to build Regional Roads around Cambridge were stated in many Regional studies, such as Cambridge Area Transportation Study (CATS in the early 90's), Regional Transportation Master Plan (RTMP in 1999) ,Cambridge Area Route Selection Study (CARSS in 2001), Detailed Transportation Network Review(DTNR in 2004), and in both the Region's and the City's Official Plan.

The 2010 Environmental Assessment for the McQueen Shaver Boulevard refers to the diversion of traffic including trucks from the Hespeler Road/Water Street (Highway 24) corridor to Franklin Boulevard and Dundas Street (Highway 8).

The diversion of trucks from the narrow streets in the heart of downtown Cambridge would contribute to the revitalisation of downtown by allowing the development of a more people-friendly street environment. A vibrant downtown is an essential component of a successful city.

Who is directing this project?

This project is being directed by staff from the Region of Waterloo and staff from the City of Cambridge. The consulting engineering firm Paradigm Transportation Solutions Limited was retained by the Region of Waterloo to conduct the Origin–Destination Truck study in downtown Cambridge.

What is the purpose of this public engagement?

The diversion of trucks from downtown Cambridge would impact residents and business owners along the downtown streets and alternate route corridors, as well as truck drivers/companies.

The objective of the public engagement is to listen and identify all potential challenges, opportunities and impacts to help finalize a recommendation before presenting to Regional Council for a decision on a possible truck diversion.

Why is the truck diversion being considered at this time?

The section of McQueen Shaver Boulevard, from Highway 24 to Franklin Road, has been completed, and the rest of the potential bypass route, if approved, would be built

in the coming years. The completed section provides an alternative route for truck traffic that is not destined to downtown Cambridge.

In the fall of 2020 Cambridge City Council requested the Region to investigate the potential of heavy truck restrictions in Downtown Cambridge.

What alternatives have been considered so far?

Two distinct alternatives have been considered:

A. No diversion of trucks: trucks would continue to use Water Street and Ainslie Street to travel through downtown.
B. Diversion of trucks: through trucks would be restricted from using Water Street and Ainslie Street.

What are some of the impacts of the diversion?

The Region carried out a truck origin-destination survey in the spring of 2021 to identify truck travel patterns. The impacts of the pandemic were also factored into the data analysis. Some of the impacts of the diversion include:

Diversion to new roadways
The truck origin-destination study indicates that from the approximately 1,600 trucks per day on Water Street and Ainslie Street in Downtown Cambridge, over 62 per cent (1000-1150) could be diverted to other routes such as McQueen Shaver Boulevard, Franklin Boulevard, Dundas Street, and Concession/Main Street.

Noise Attenuation Measures
A new noise assessment on McQueen Shaver Boulevards concluded that the additional trucks, that would be diverted as a result of a truck restriction in downtown Cambridge, would trigger the need for a noise wall for some portions of McQueen Shaver Boulevard. The installation of noise walls will follow the Regional Council's Noise Policy.

Air quality impacts
The diversion of through trucks from downtown streets to alternate routes would not have a significant impact on the total number of trucks, however, it would re-distribute them on the transportation network.
The total distance of travel by trucks without the diversion is somewhat shorter, but travel is often in stop and go conditions due to the numerous signals, narrow corridors, and interactions with other street users. Emissions in these circumstances are higher than for vehicles travelling with fewer stops. As a result, the overall air pollution is estimated to be the same.

However, exposure to pollution is different. Downtown streets are typically narrower, buildings are closer to the road and the sources of pollution compared to the most impacted diversion routes (MSB and Franklin Blvd).

Some trucks will continue to travel through downtown
Trucks performing local deliveries will continue to use downtown streets. It is estimated that with the proposed diversion, up to 38 per cent of trucks (450-600), would continue to do deliveries in the core area or would travel along routes other than McQueen Shaver Boulevard (e.g. Concession/Cedar Street).

Increase travel time for trucks
While the diversion of trucks to the alternate routes will increase the distance of travel, trucks travelling through Water Street and Ainslie Street are exposed to stop-and-go traffic conditions due to the downtown street environment and traffic lights.

The impact of the alternative route on truck travel time will differ based on the destination of trucks. Travel time would remain the same for approximately 22 per cent of the trucks; it would increase by up to five minutes for 67 per cent, and up to 10 minutes for 11 per cent.

What are the next steps?

The project team will host two virtual public meetings: November 29, 2022 with members of the Cambridge BIA, and on December 1, 2022 with residents. The project team will also reach out to known trucking companies using the corridor. The comments received will be reviewed and taken into consideration before making a recommendation to Regional Council in early 2023.

How will I receive further notification regarding this project?

Downtown Cambridge BIA members will receive an email from the BIA board with meeting details.

Residents and non-BIA businesses abutting the project areas, were mailed a letter on Tuesday November 22 with details of the public meeting.

Stakeholders including neighbourhood associations such as: Kinbridge, Alison, Blair Road and Greenway-Chaplain, Ontarian Trucking Association, and Ministry of Transportation, and other residents who requested to be on the mailing list, were notified by emails on November 22, 2022

Residents will also be invited through the meeting letter, and social media posts, to register to the meeting through the EngageWR project page to receive emails of project updates and any future engagement opportunities.

How Can I provide my comments?

We want to hear from you! Visit

www.engagewr.ca/downtown-cambridge-truck-diversion-study and complete the survey to share your comments. You can also mail, or email your comments to the project manager.

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