City of Sault Ste. Marie

Welcome

to the Public Information Centre for the

Downtown Traffic Study

IBI GROUP
City of Sault Ste. Marie
December 6th, 2017

Purpose of Study

Determine what changes could be made to one-way corridors downtown

Consideration of Two-Way Conversion

Two-way conversion can help change the character of a street from a mainly auto traffic-oriented arterial street to a pedestrian-supportive community street

Study Objectives

Primary Objectives:

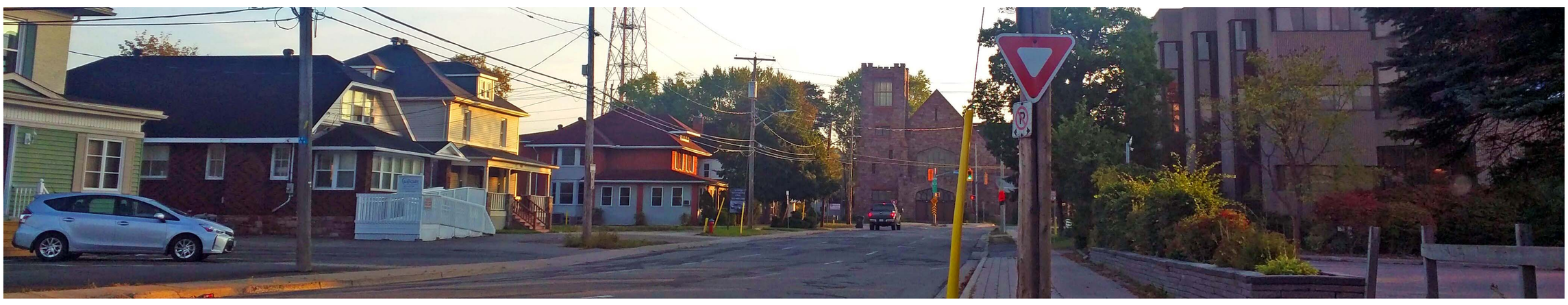
- Determine if benefits of one-way traffic routes are still relevant
- Revitalize downtown
- Improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists

Study aims to answer:

- How would conversion impact downtown traffic conditions, adjacent streets and other transportation services including transit, cycling, pedestrians, on-street parking, emergency response, loading/unloading and traffic management?
- How would conversion impact other features of downtown including retail and other land uses, tourism, heritage features, streetscapes/urban design, special events, sidewalks/walking, barrier free accessibility, air quality and road safety?
- How does the community feel about potential conversion?
- How has one-way pair conversion worked in other cities?
- How would one-way streets be physically converted to two-way operations?
- What would it cost to implement conversion options?
- What are Class Environmental Assessment requirements for potential conversion?

The collective answers to these questions will ultimately answer:

- Is conversion recommended for Sault Ste. Marie? If so, where?

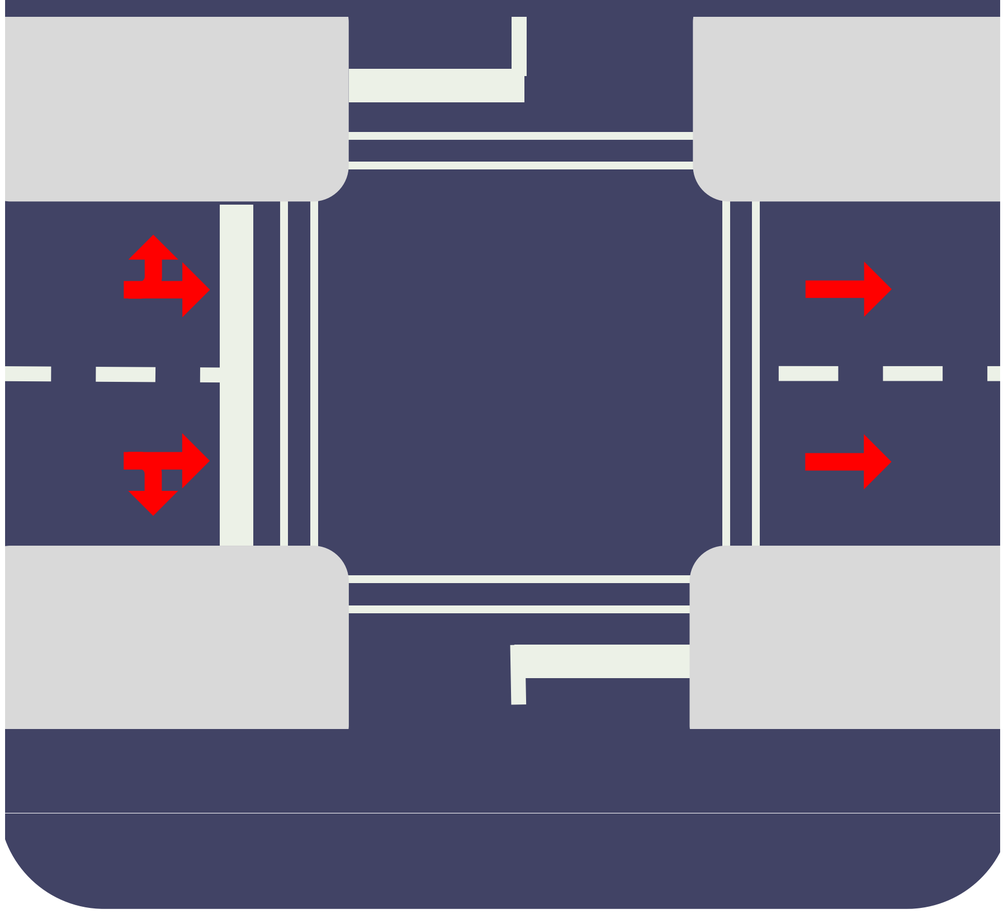


One-Way vs Two-Way Streets

Each offer different advantages to be considered for different conditions

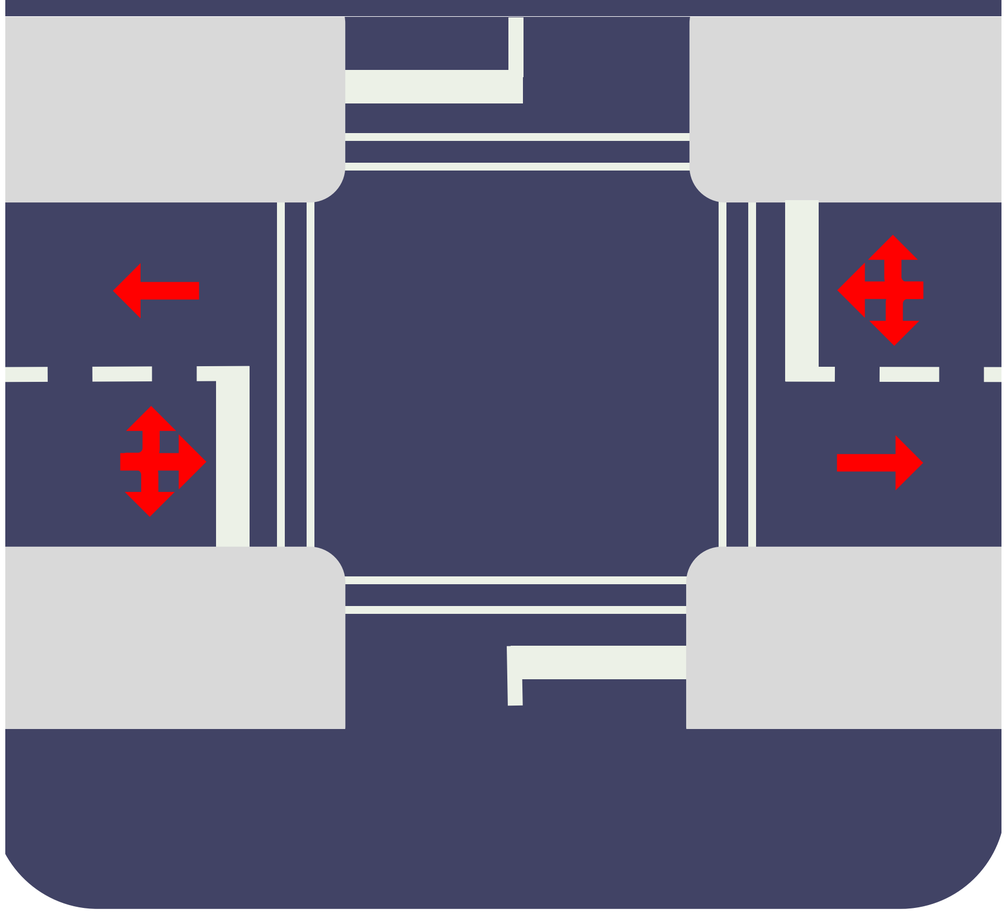
One-Way

- Improved traffic flow and reduced congestion
- Elimination of turns crossing on-coming traffic
- Additional lanes for slower moving vehicles, (e.g. waste collection, buses)



Two-Way

- Shorter and more direct trips
- Easier navigation for motorists
- More pedestrian friendly
- Increased exposure to local businesses



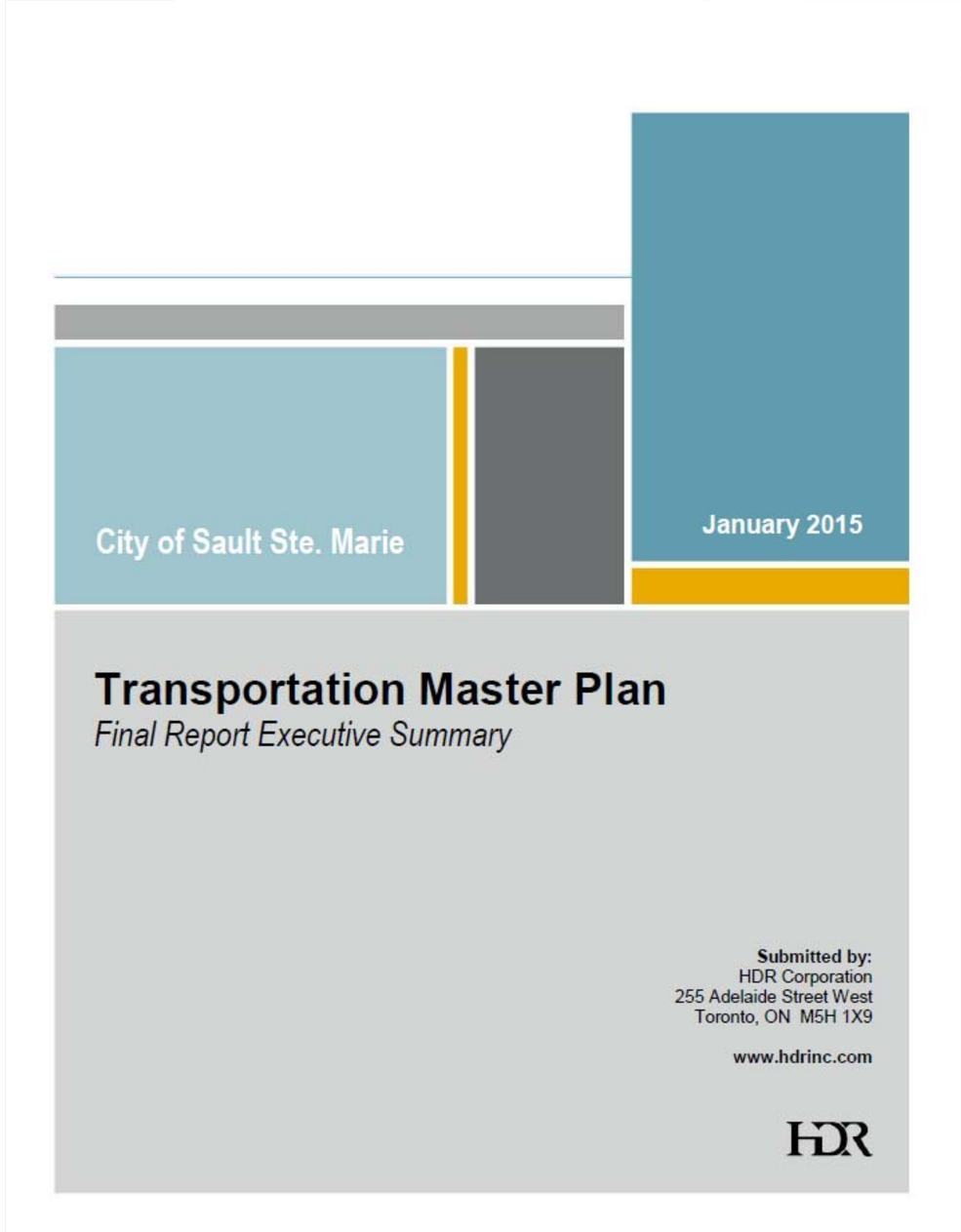
Background and Issues

Economic Feasibility and Downtown Improvement Study: Phase 1 Situational Report (2006)

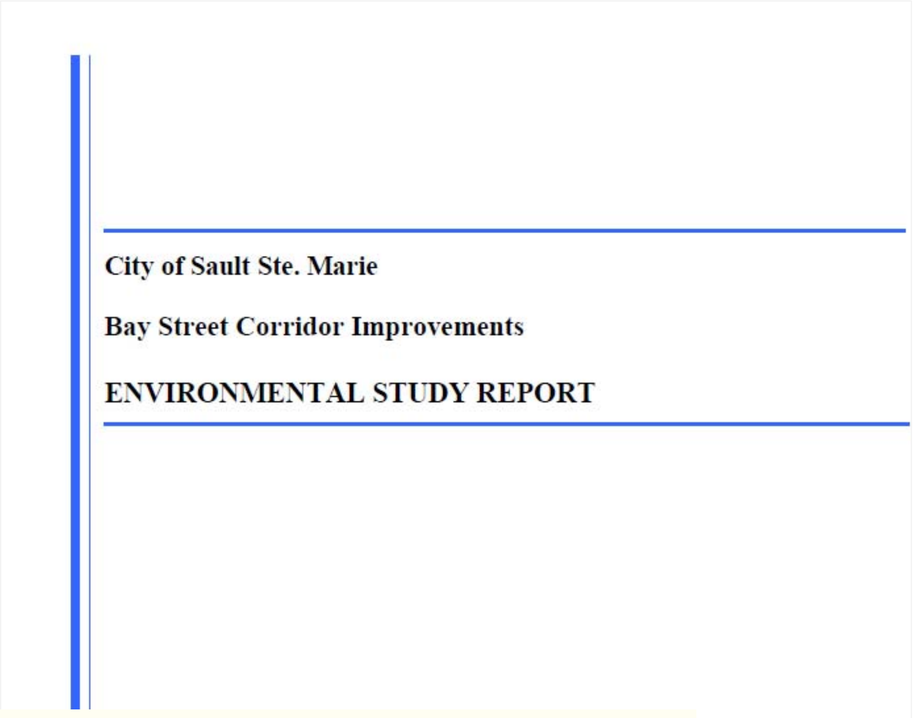
- Consideration of two-way conversion identified as potential public investment opportunity to enhance downtown
- Recognizes potential benefits of conversion to create better pedestrian-oriented environment
- Success of two-way conversion relies on well coordinated public realm changes (e.g. pedestrian amenity improvements, quality and quantity of parking and cost of parking) in addition to traffic management

Transportation Master Plan (2015)

- Recommended to study in further detail the potential of conversion to two-way streets in the downtown
- Carmen's Way (completed in 2006) has diverted provincial/international traffic to north of downtown
- Given shift, advantages of one-way streets no longer needed downtown
- Benefits of two-way streets could be advantageous to downtown
- Main disadvantage of conversion is cost

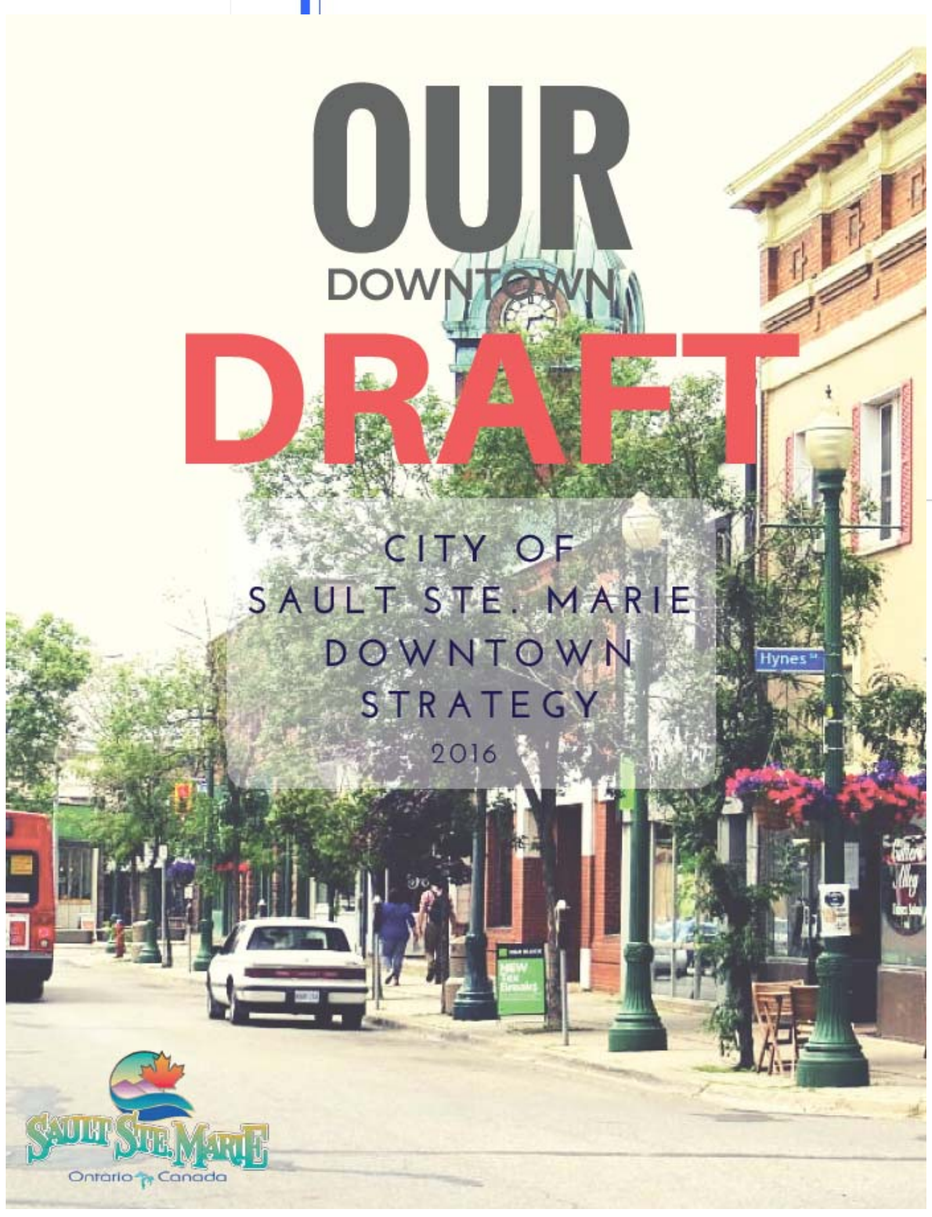


Background and Issues (continued)


City of Sault Ste. Marie

Bay Street Corridor Improvements

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY REPORT



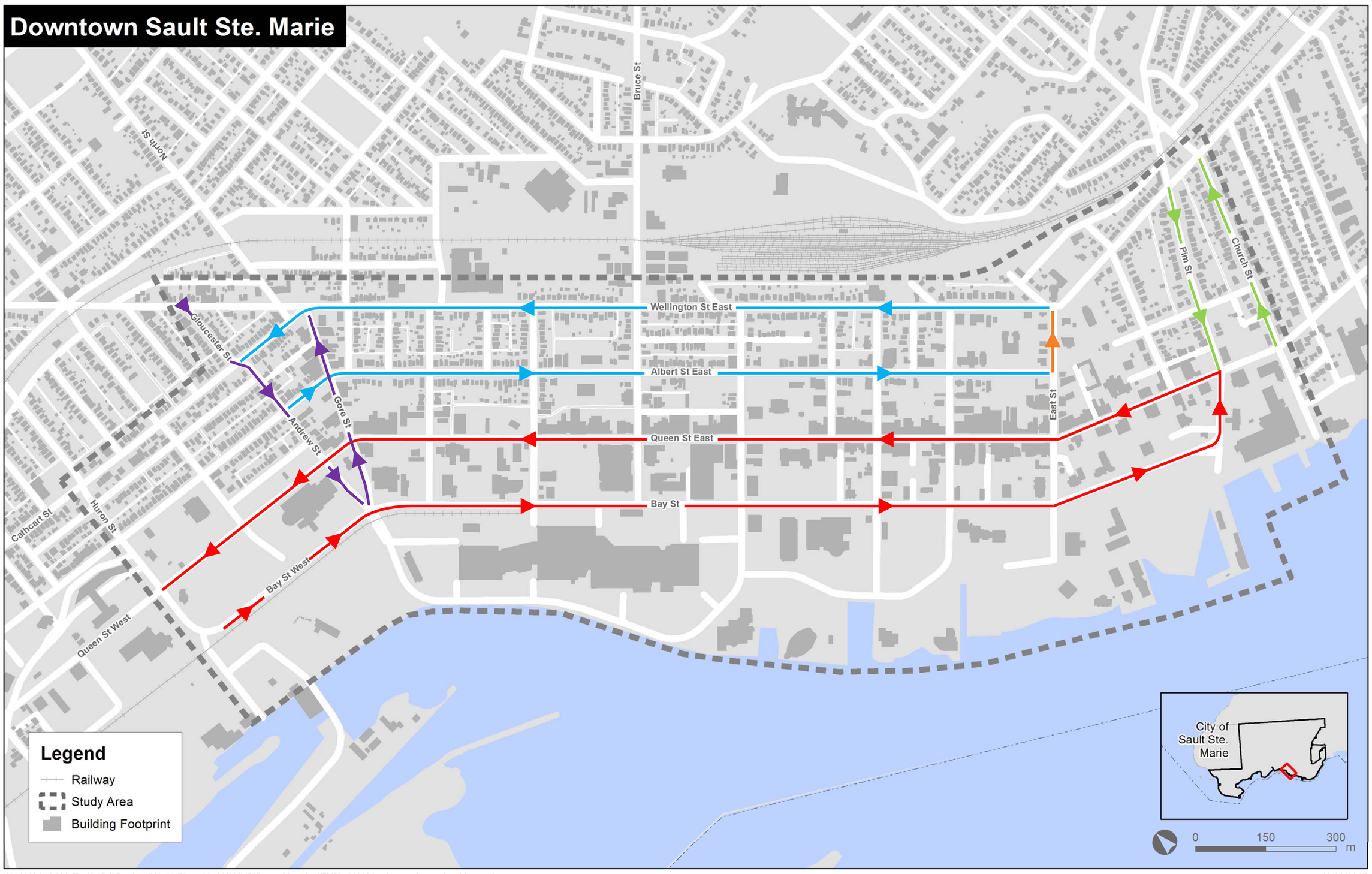
Bay Street Corridor Improvements Environmental Assessment (2015)

- Recognizes decrease in traffic through downtown due to Carmen's Way
- Sought to improve Bay Street Corridor between Andrew Street and Pim Street
- While report noted consideration of two-way conversion in Transportation Master Plan, it was not considered in alternative solutions
- Report focused on inclusion of active transportation improvements including lane reductions allowing for a multi-use path, bike lane or off-road bike path

Updated 2016 Downtown Strategy

- Strategy recommends prioritizing pedestrian and cycling mobility within the downtown
  - Complete Streets lens - treat streets as places rather than thoroughfares and consider safety and comfort of all road users, not just drivers
  - Downtown traffic management and planning should be based on surroundings
  - Continue to implement Cycling Master Plan and Transportation Master Plan
  - Ensure all downtown sidewalks accessible for wheelchair users

Study Area



Downtown Sault Ste. Marie one-way streets are:

- Bay Street / Queen Street
- Albert Street / Wellington Street/Cathcart Street
- Pim Street with Church Street
- Andrew Street/Gloucester Street with Gore Street
- East Street (from Albert Street to Wellington Street)

Similar Studies – Conversion Recommended

Hamilton: James Street and John Street

Before Conversion: One-Way	After Conversion: Two-Way
	
	

Elements included:

- Modifying curb radii for clearance in new turning directions
- Extending existing loading areas in place of lost loading permitted by one-way
- Replacing on-street parking in specific areas with turning lanes, while adding parking in other areas where possible
- Adding extensive signage to warn drivers of new directions of travel

Cost:

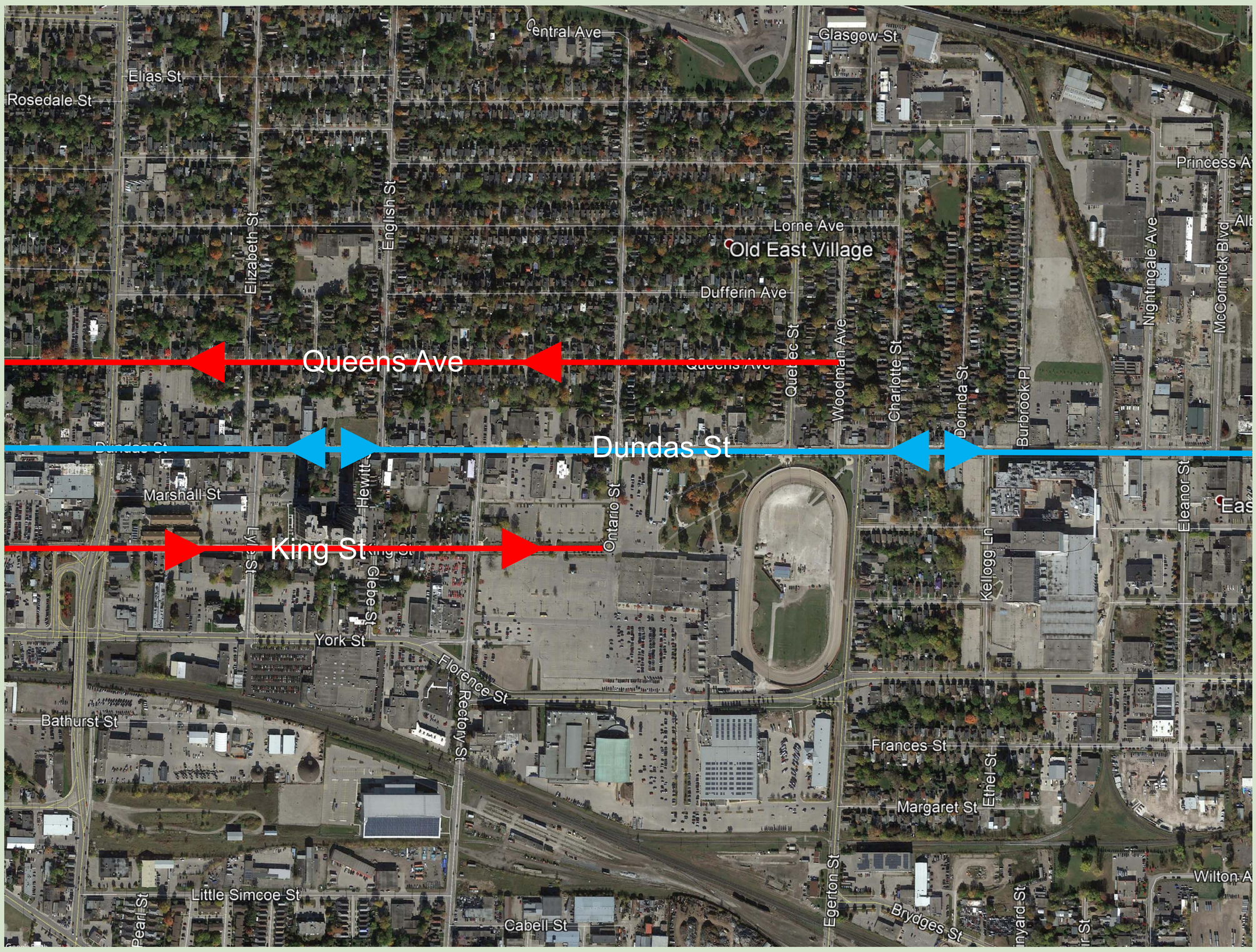
- Approx. $400,000 (2002)
- Including design, revised traffic signal systems, new parking meters, curb changes and revised signage.

Aftermath:

- Some public and a few business owners expressed very strong opposition to the proposed one-way to two-way conversions, saying their businesses would close if the conversion proceeded
- No citizens or business owners have contacted City Hall since conversion,
- Businesses have not been closed

Similar Studies – Conversion Not Recommended

London: King Street and Queen Street



Considerations:

- Area of study: Old East Village – east of downtown core
- Retail/commercial corridor along Dundas Street
- Queens Avenue and King Street primarily residential and institutional in this area
- Businesses on Dundas Street already accrue benefits of two-way traffic
- Conversion of Queens Avenue and King Street to two-way streets would unlikely alter volumes on Dundas Street by more than 10-15% (best case scenario)
- Study concluded risks and impacts of conversion appear to outweigh potential benefits to area businesses and residents
- Study recommended discussion with area businesses and resident be pursued by City of London regarding implementation of traffic management measures on Queens Avenue and King Street in combination with minor operational changes on Dundas Street.

Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Process (MCEA)

The Ontario Municipal Engineers Association (MEA) developed the MCEA as a parent Class EA to streamline the planning process for municipal infrastructure projects

MCEA Schedules

The MCEA defines the types of projects covered by the process and sorts them into four (4) schedules:

Schedule	Description
A	• Project with minimal adverse environmental impacts (i.e. emergency operational or maintenance activities) • Pre-approved – not required to follow MCEA process
A+	• Similar to Schedule A, but required to notify public prior to implementation • No ability for public to request Part II order (bump the project up to a full EA). Any comments should be directed to municipal council
B	• Projects with some potential for adverse environmental impacts (i.e. improvements or minor expansions to existing facilities)
C	• Projects with potential for significant environmental impacts (i.e. construction of new facilities and major expansion of existing facilities)

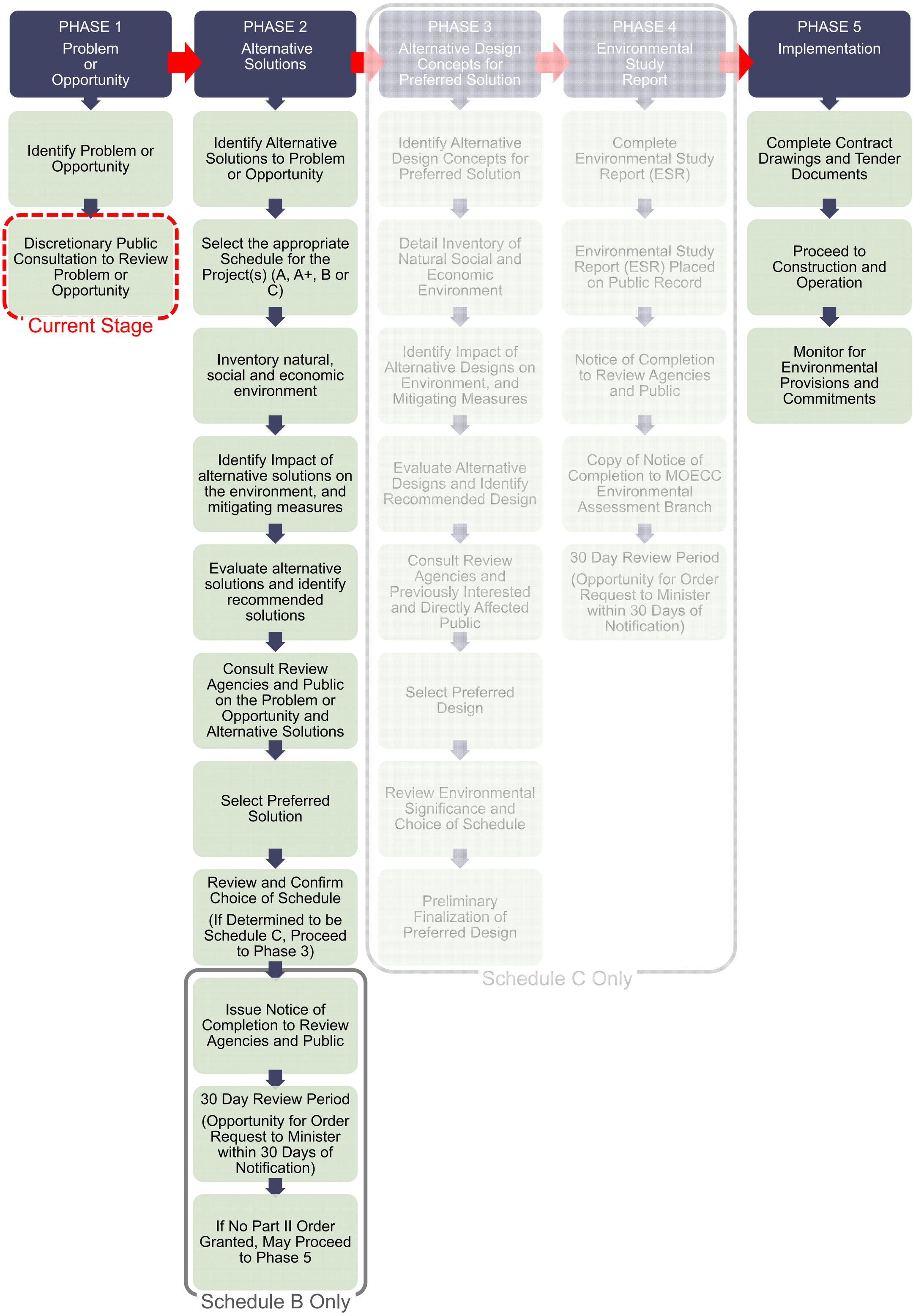
MCEA Phases

The MCEA process is broken into five (5) phases:

Phase	Schedule			
	A	**A+**	**B**	**C**
Phase 1: Problem or Opportunity	✓	✓	✓	✓
Phase 2: Alternative Solutions			✓	✓
Phase 3: Alternative Design Concepts for Preferred Solution				✓
Phase 4: Environmental Study Report				✓
Phase 5: Implementation	✓	✓	✓	✓

MCEA Process

The steps for each of the five (5) phases:



Evaluation Framework

- Under the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Schedule B several components are assessed, forming an evaluation framework to determine the most suitable alternative
- This study will use the following evaluation framework:

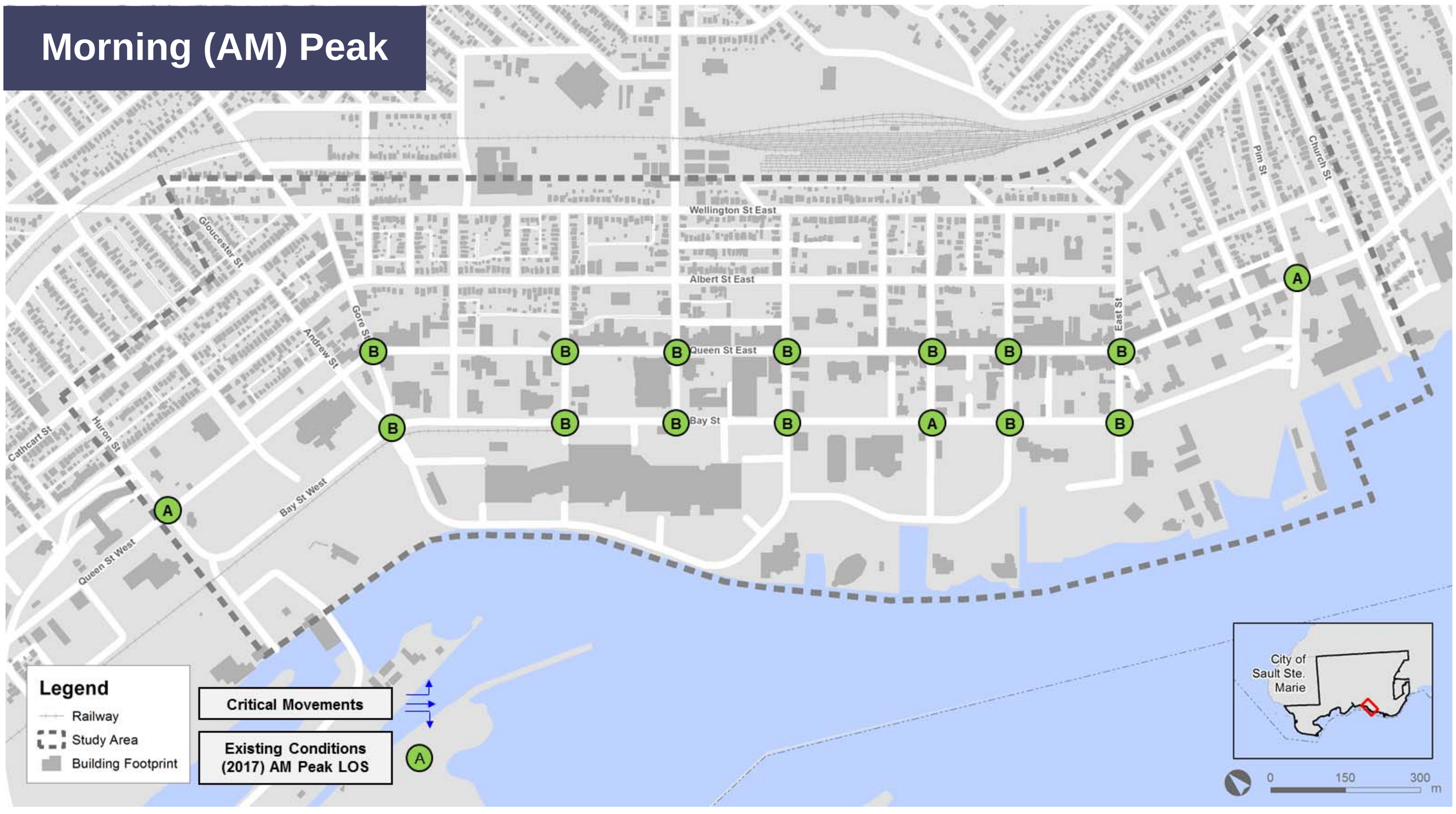
Transportation	• Traffic level-of-service • Traffic circulation, ease-of-routing • Cycling and walking network
Socioeconomic	• Accessibility to businesses • Business visibility and business environment • Noise and vibration
Natural	• Air Quality • Landscape / Vegetation
Cultural	• Access to tourism sites • Heritage buildings
Economic Development	• Cost • Physical intervention / construction impacts
Urban Design	• Character of Downtown • Walking / pedestrian realm • Accessibility / persons with disabilities • Connections to Waterfront

COMPONENTS OF ASSESSMENT

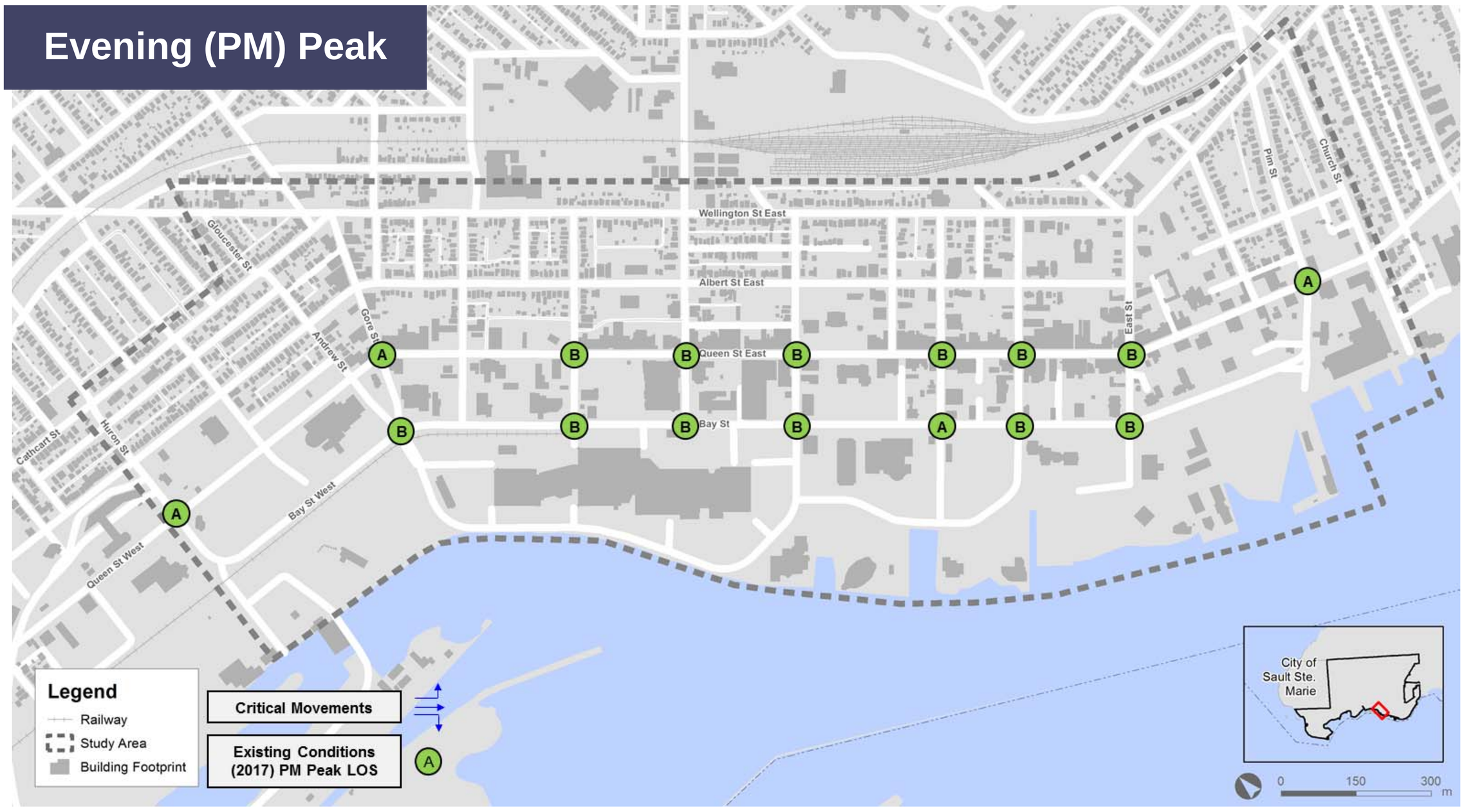
Existing Traffic Conditions

Currently there are no areas where slow downs occur under typical morning and evening peak conditions

Morning (AM) Peak



Evening (PM) Peak



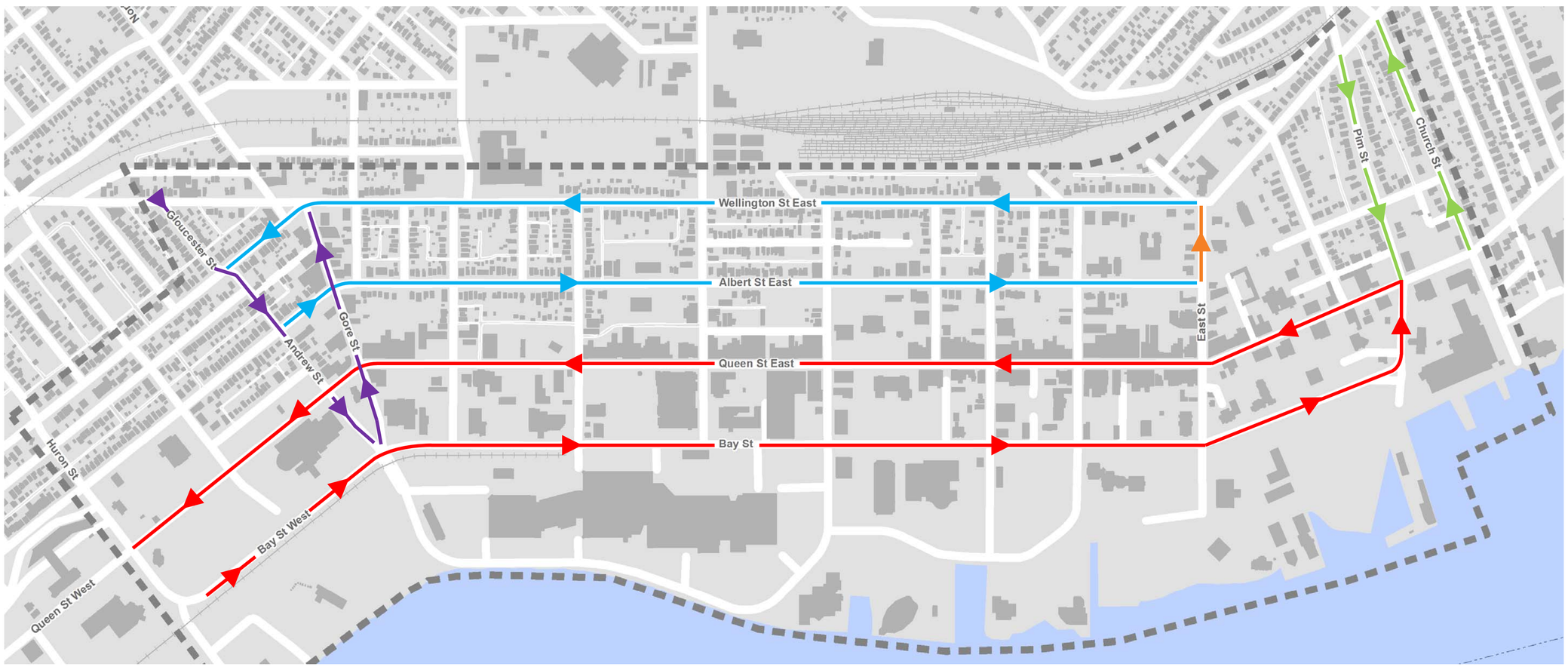
Legend

Level of Service	Average Delay	Recommended Improvement Criteria
A	≤10 sec/vehicle	Acceptable
B	10-20 sec/vehicle	Acceptable
C	20-35 sec/vehicle	Acceptable
D	35-55 sec/vehicle	Monitor
E	55-80 sec/vehicle	Monitor
F	≥80 sec/vehicle	Unacceptable

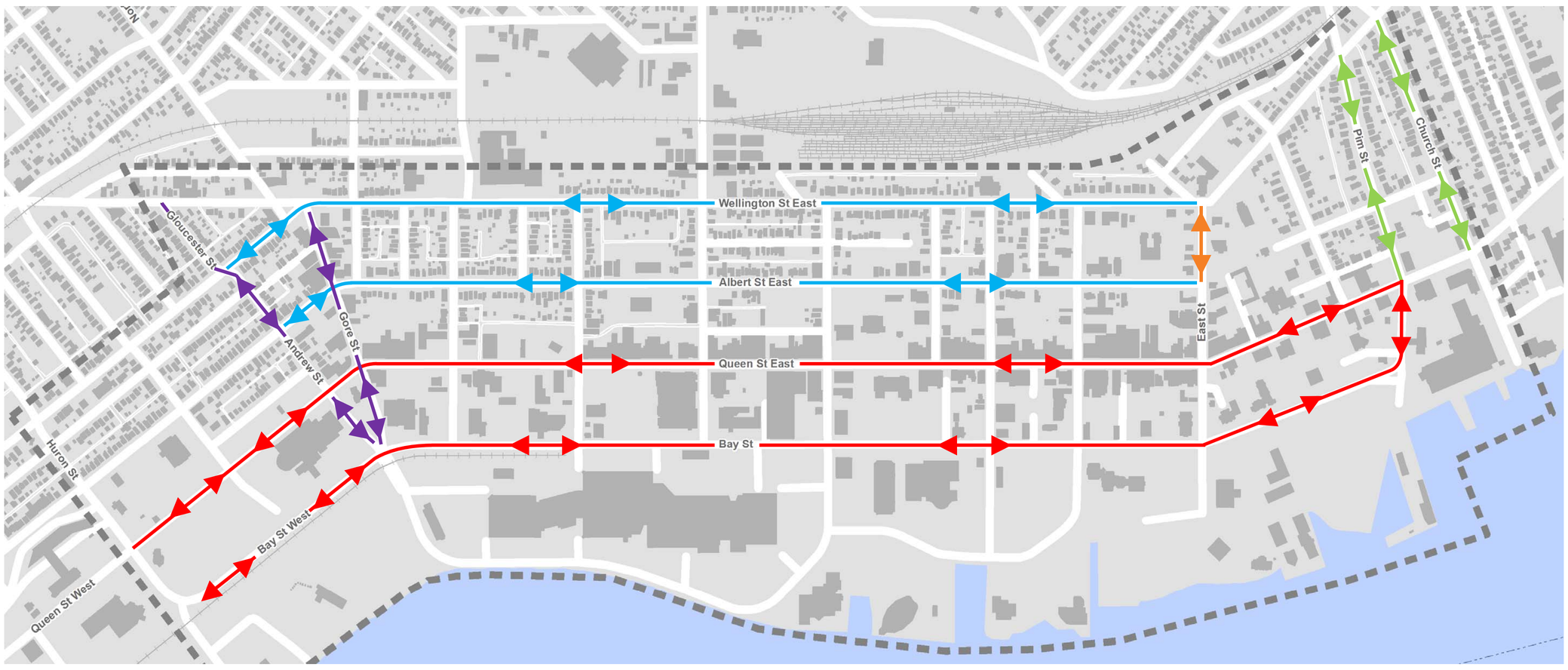
(Level of Service Criteria from Sault Ste. Marie Transportation Master Plan, 2015)

Preliminary Alternatives Proposed

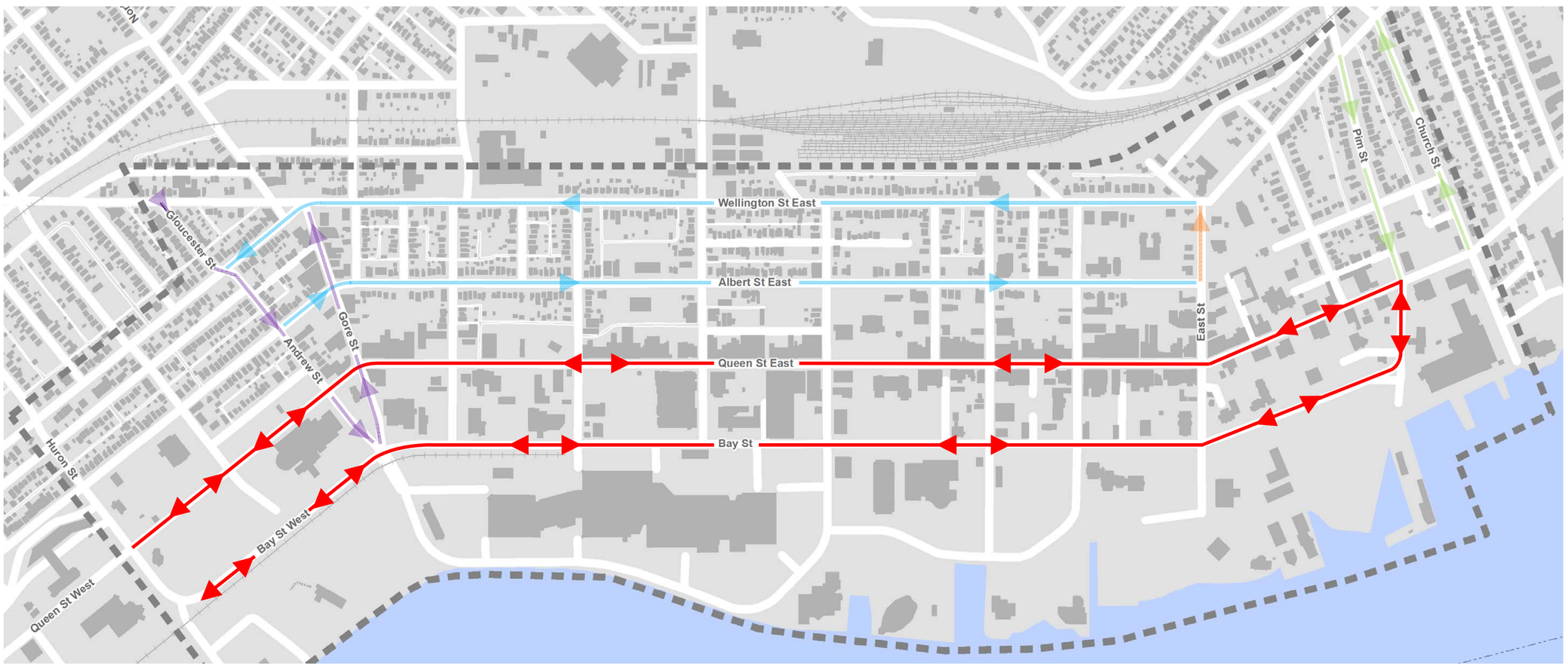
Alt 1 "Do Nothing" – Keep all roads considered in study as-is



Alt 2 Convert all roads considered in study to two-way operation

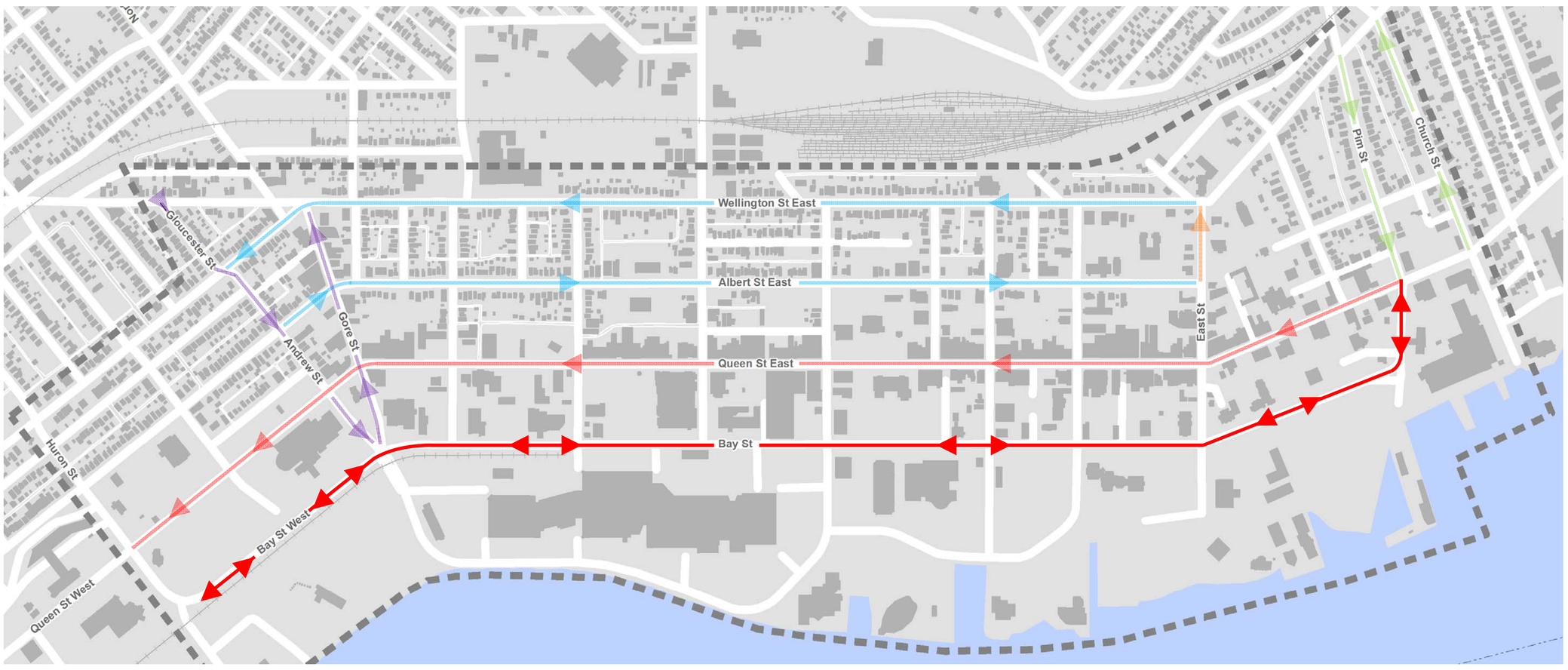


Alt 3 Convert Bay St, Queen St and Pim St (south of Queen St) to two-way operation



Preliminary Alternatives Proposed

Alt 4 Convert Bay St and Pim St (south of Queen St) to two-way operation



Alt 5 Convert Queen St to two-way operation

Alt 6 Active Transportation and Traffic Common Core Improvements

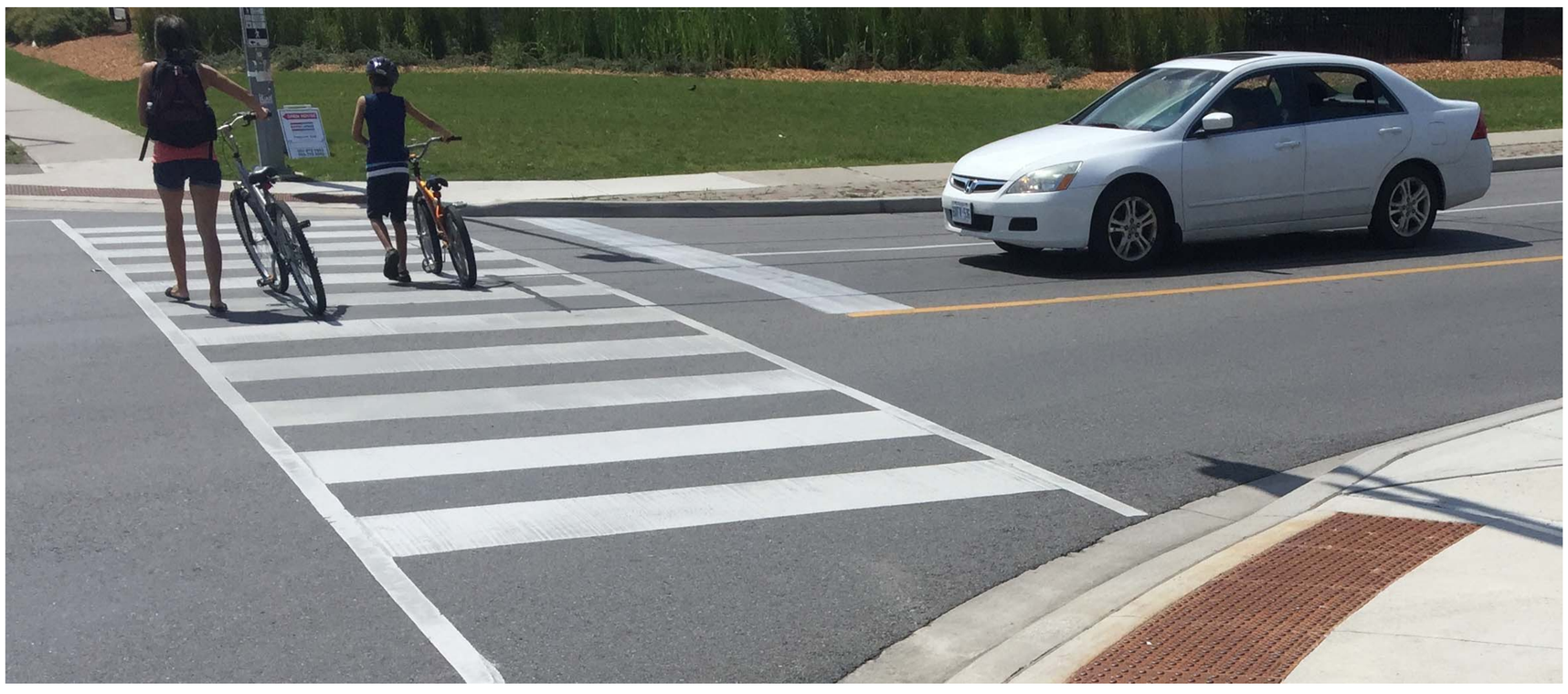
Engineering Considerations

Limited Road Space

- Queen Street most central street, but also most constrained
- Wellington Street and Albert Street have greater space, but still constrained
- Bay Street has more space, but City planning to convert one lane into multi-use path for pedestrians and cyclists

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

- Compliance required upon any modification or construction of improvements
- Includes:
  - Upgrades to signals (e.g. tactile arrow, vibration when activated, audible indicators for crossing)
  - Addition of walking surface indicators (e.g. embedded cast iron plates with tactile surface)
  - Ensuring curb depressions are separated on each corner for crossings

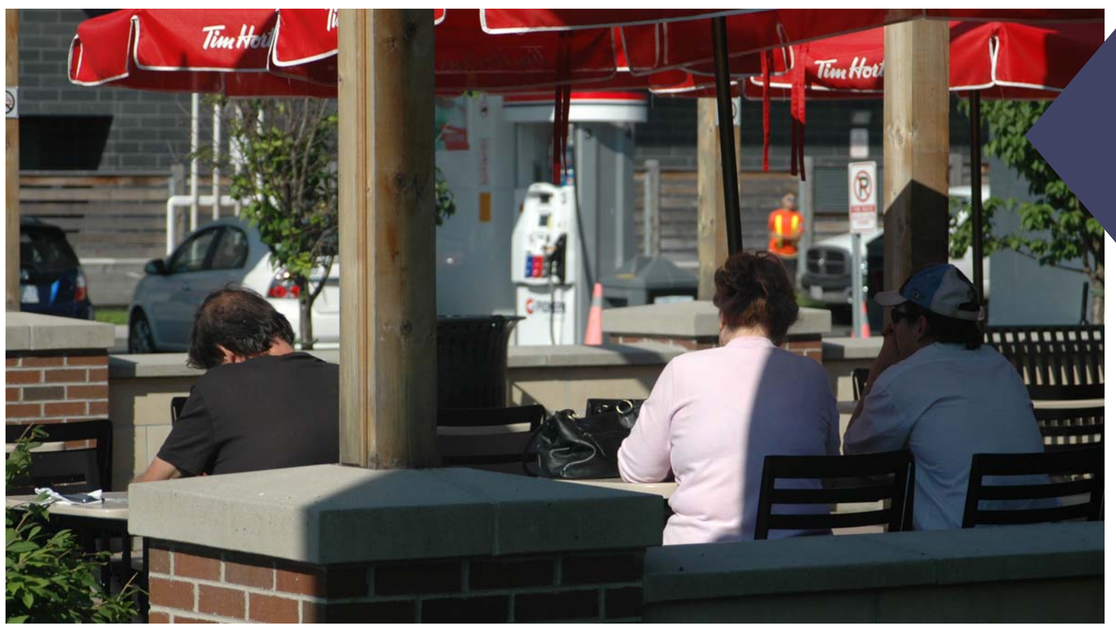


Potential Benefits of Conversion

Improve business visibility and accessibility, and improve the overall street comfort for all users

Help to **reduce vehicle speed** through the area, improving safety for pedestrians and cyclists

Encouraged physical activity through these enhancements, offering health benefits from a more active lifestyle

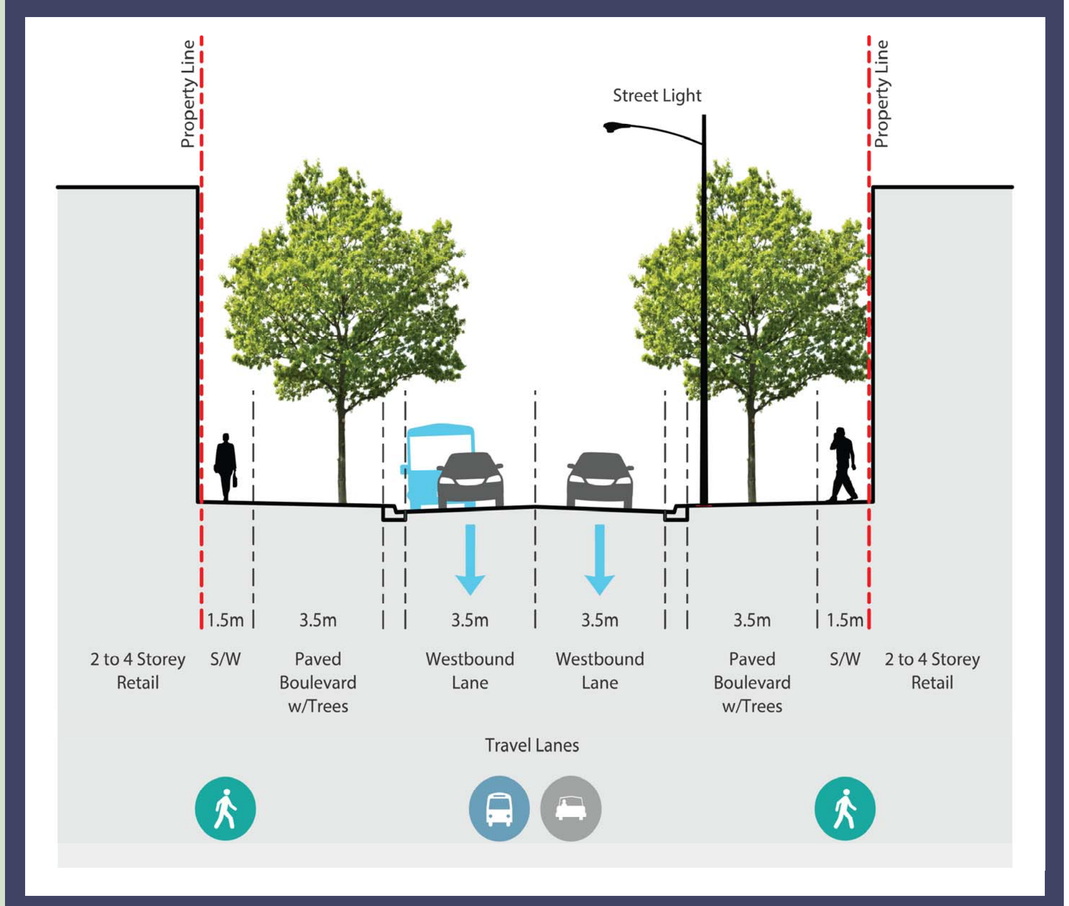


Help to **make the downtown area a more urbanized destination** for shopping, dinning and entertainment

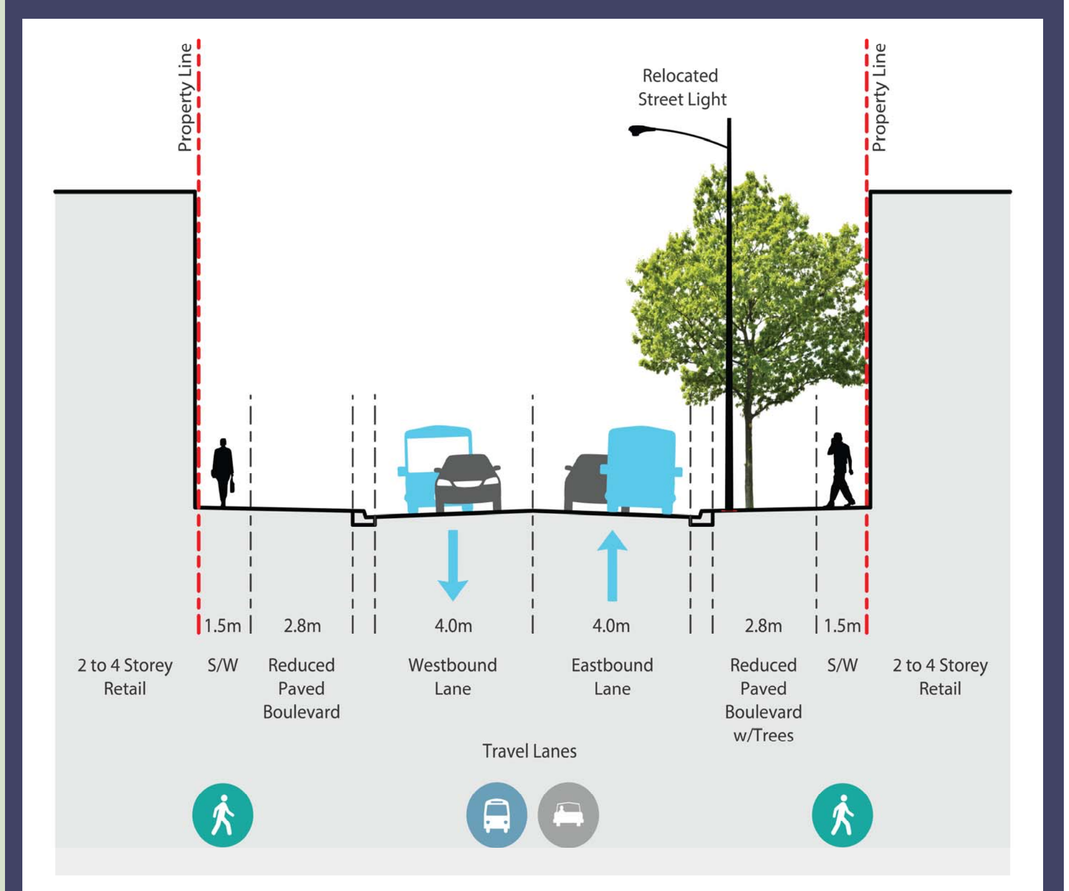
Before and After Conversion

Queen Street East (@ Elgin Street)

Existing One-Way Condition

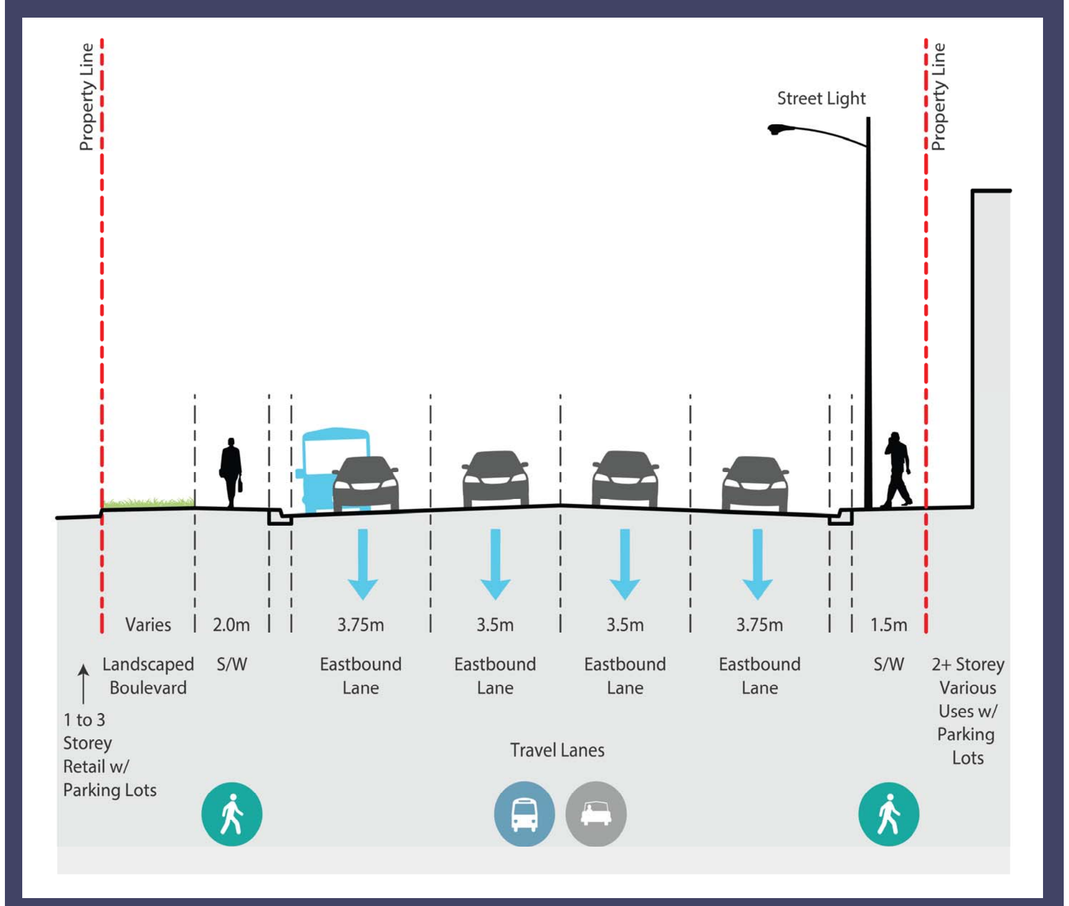


Converted Two-Way Condition

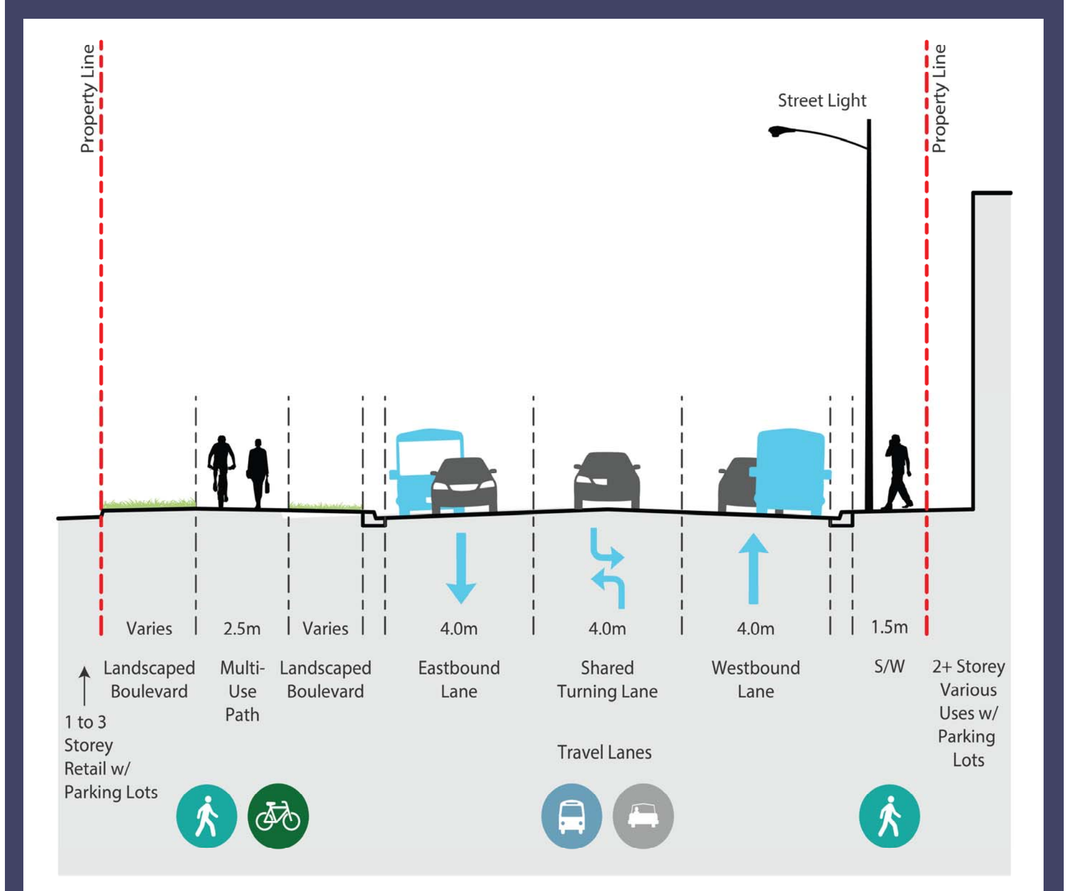


Bay Street (@ Dennis Street)

Existing One-Way Condition



Converted Two-Way Condition



Notes:
- Not to Scale
- Dimensions vary and are approximate

Questions and Comments

We would like you're your thoughts on the study!

Please submit questions and comments at **reception table today** **or** by **mail / e-mail** **to**:

Carl Rumiel
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Comments must be received **no later than January 12, 2018**

Thank You

for Your Interest and Input!