The Town’s Engineering & Capital Projects Department retained the consulting services of HDR/iTrans to assess: traffic related issues in and around Memorial Park; pedestrian opportunities; and, parking / circulation issues at the Leisure Centre/Library complex. This analysis was designed to provide background information to assist in evaluating options related to the update to the Memorial Park Master Plan.

Summarized below are three items assessed in the HDR/iTrans Memorial Park Traffic Impact Study, and, a proposed road re-alignment option which was identified by residents at the December 5th, 2011 Public Information Meeting convened on Memorial Park.

This memorandum has been prepared to assist in evaluating options related to vehicular traffic movements / opportunities in and around Memorial Park.

Extension of Church Street, South of Main Street, into Memorial Park

Staff have attended the site at the southern limits of Church Street adjacent the Entry Pillars into Memorial Park. The current gap between the two pillars at the end of the travelled road is approximately 5.63 metres wide. A minimum traveled route, when assessing a laneway condition, is 6 metres in width.

The Town over the past 18 month period within the adjacent area in Memorial Park has refurbished Ball Diamond #1; installed a lit walkway path system; and, enlarged and retrofitted the Stouffville Lawn Bowling rinks. The improvement to these recreational and leisure facilities were derived in part from the 2007 era Memorial Park Master Plan, and, were the subject of Reports to Town Council. It was a key objective in the 2007
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Memorial Park Traffic Impact Study
April 2nd, 2012

Memorial Park Master Plan that pedestrian connections southerly from the Entry Pillars into the Park would be promoted as a pedestrian area.

These recent improvements to the northern limits of Memorial Park adjacent Church Street have limited the ability to facilitate any extension of Church Street into the Park. The current Lawn Bowling rinks extend into the former road allowance by approximately 60% of the former width of Church Street. As a result there is insufficient space south of the Entry Pillars to accommodate a road extension with either a turning circle or hammer head without removing the recently constructed Lawn Bowling rinks.

From a perspective of “need”, the Memorial Park Traffic Impact Study, prepared by HDR/iTrans, dated December 2nd, 2011, identified that from a traffic flow / management perspective, there was no demonstrated requirement to extend Church Street southerly into Memorial Park. The traffic generated by activities on Church Street can be accommodated based upon the current configuration of the existing road network. The Report did, however, recommend that improvements in the enforcement of the Parking Permit Program would be appropriate, and, that to assist public service access (ie: garbage collection, snow ploughing, etc) options could be explored to facilitate turning movements thereby avoiding the need to back up onto Main Street.

The issue of Parking Enforcement is an operational item which can be reviewed with the Town’s By-law Enforcement Division. With respect to facilitating public service access and the associated turning movements, the Town has numerous examples of dead end roads that do not have turning circles or equivalent. While not an ideal situation, the limitations can be accounted for and is accepted.

Construction of a New Road Alignment through to Park Drive – Northern Edge of Leisure Centre / Library Parking Lot

At the December 5th, 2011 Public Information Meeting, members of the Public who were present requested that Town Staff assess the feasibility of extending a new road connection that would facilitate a connection between Burkholder Street and Park Drive. The proposed re-aligned roadway would follow the current Access Driveway to the Leisure Centre / Library from Burkholder Street southerly to a point adjacent the northern limits of the existing parking lot where the new road would then follow an east/west orientation to connect through to Park Drive.

Staff have assessed this proposed realignment and would offer the following observations:
1. The proposed realignment would intersect Park Drive at the curve in the roadway. Road visibility would be diminished because of obstructions associated with the bridge for southbound traffic. The approach to Park Drive would require extensive re-grading to accommodate the change in grade. This re-grading would in turn affect the design of the northern edge of the existing parking lot, and, the proximity to the Stouffville Creek and associated floodplain limits. The overall road geometry and intersection alignment is questionable in terms of achieving acceptable engineering design.

2. The proposed connection to Park Drive would also require the relocation of the recently constructed stormwater management pond/wetland area. As this area has been designed to drain to this pond, relocation would be impractical; it would have negative environmental impacts; and, it is questionable if the Conservation Authority would support the modification.

3. The Memorial Park Traffic Impact Study prepared by HDR/iTrans, dated December 2nd, 2011, identified that from a traffic flow / management perspective, that the existing link of Burkholder Street from the Library / Leisure Centre Access Driveway through to Park Drive was not required based upon a “need” perspective. The other existing area travelled routes (ie: Market Street, Main Street, Park Drive) and their associated intersections would continue to operate at acceptable levels if Burkholder Street were to be closed through Memorial Park and traffic was then by default having to re-route to the adjacent street network. In recognition of this traffic review, if the existing road network can operate satisfactorily with the closure of Burkholder Street through Memorial Park, why would there then be a need to construct a new east/west road link to the south which essentially replicates the existing road system?

The suggested road re-alignment as proposed by some members of the Public at the December 5th, 2011 Information Meeting is not possible due to significant restrictions on engineering design and road geometry shortcomings and the potential negative environmental impacts on the pond/wetland.

Closure of Burkholder Street, from the Access Driveway into the Leisure Centre/Library to Park Drive

The Memorial Park Traffic Impact Study, prepared by HDR/iTrans, dated December 2nd, 2011 assessed the implications of the closure of Burkholder Street through Memorial Park in the context of diverting traffic onto Market Street, Main Street and Park Drive
and the associated intersections. The Study concluded that based upon the current and Year 2031 projected traffic volumes, the diverted traffic can be accommodated on the adjacent road network and the road system would continue to operate at acceptable levels.

In this regard, the issue of the consideration of the potential to close Burkholder Street at this location is not a technical or transportation matter. The decision to close Burkholder Street through Memorial Park should then be considered in the context of does the road closure improve the "park function" as a continuous green space? The balancing act of the inconvenience of diverting local neighbourhood traffic onto Main Street versus increased park / pedestrian space?

The options available in this regard include:

1. Maintain the status quo. Burkholder Street would remain open from the Library/Leisure Centre Access Driveway through to Park Drive; or,

2. A partial closure of Burkholder Street. The roadway, through traffic control gates, could be closed during special events and on weekends through the summer period (ie: May to September) to vehicular traffic. The roadway would be open during the business week year round and on weekends through the winter period; or,

3. Closure of Burkholder Street. The roadway, between the Access Driveway to the Leisure Centre/Library and Park Drive, would be permanently closed to vehicles. In its place an east/west pedestrian/cycling pathway would be constructed. The roadway at this location would now form part of Memorial Park.

There is no right or wrong answer on the question to close Burkholder Street through Memorial Park. The decision should reflect what works best for the adjacent neighbourhood and the longer term opportunities for Memorial Park.

**Classification of the Existing Driveway Access to the Library/Leisure Centre from Burkholder Street as a Public Highway**

The existing Driveway Access to the Library/Leisure Centre was originally constructed to a Municipal road standard. In addition, service connections (water / sanitary sewer) were installed to facilitate the future development of two landlocked interior lots which are adjacent to the Access Driveway. With the classification of the Access Driveway as
a Public Highway, these two Lots could potentially be developed for single detached dwellings.

The Memorial Park Traffic Impact Study, prepared by HDR/iTrans, assessed the implications of reclassifying the Access Driveway as a Public Highway. The reclassification would not have any impact on the overall planned function of the Leisure Centre/Library parking lot or the adjacent road network.

The Study did make a commentary that connecting this roadway (if it were to be reclassified) to Rose Avenue to “loop” the road would be of assistance to public service vehicles, and, provide an alternate traveled route for area residents. The connection of the road to Rose Avenue would be nice to have to assist service vehicles, but is not a requirement or pre-condition to reclassifying the current Access Driveway to a Public Highway. The roadway could function adequately with or without the connection to Rose Avenue. At a minimum, the current pedestrian connection from Rose Avenue to the roadway would be continued.