

Design nearing completion on KPL garage project



Design of a new underground parking garage on the Kitchener Public Library site is nearing completion and construction is expected to start in October, subject to council approval.

The work, which is expected to finish in spring 2012, will cause temporary disruption to people who use the library's parking lot, as well as those using lots designated for the Region of Waterloo and the Centre in the Square.

"There's no doubt that there will be challenges to accommodate parking during construction. People will need to be patient and be prepared to walk a bit further than they may have had to in the past," said John McBride, the

city's director of transportation planning, adding, "but this is a short-term disruption that will ultimately benefit everyone once it's completed."

The garage, which will be fully automated, will have 412 spaces on three levels, all underground, with access from Queen Street and Margaret and Otto streets.

There will be a controlled pedestrian connection between this garage and the Region of Waterloo headquarters parking garage, but automobiles won't be able to cross over, McBride said.

"It will be designed to accommodate peak traffic times, such as when there are performances at Centre in the Square," said McBride. "It will be built

with expansion in mind, as future sites around the area are developed."

Existing monthly parkers in Lot 19 at

the Centre in the Square will be encouraged to switch to the Duke and Ontario parking garage while construction is underway.

A number of options to minimize the impacts will be put in place, including a minor expansion of the surface parking lot towards the Centre in the Square to add a dozen more spaces and help to define a future building site.

Other options include the possibility of a small surface lot at Scott and Weber streets for interim use to accommodate displaced parkers from surrounding buildings that are affected by the construction.

The garage will be built in two phases, McBride said, adding the first phase will be underneath the library from the gaol wall to Ahrens Street.

"Once this portion is completed in the fall of 2011, we will be able to get partial occupancy to minimize the loss of parking," he said.

The site above ground allows for development of a public square, the design of which is a separate project.

Public art funded through the city's Percent for Art program will also be commissioned for the garage.

Tenders for the work close at the end of August.

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