

Ottawa Sun, October 4th, 2007

Residents hope city will downsize King Edward Ave.

**MEGAN GILLIS
and DEREK PUDDICOMBE**
Sun Media

After 20 years of lobbying, Lowertown residents and environmentalists are hoping King Edward Ave. will finally lose two lanes of smog-belching gridlock.

A city council committee yesterday approved a study to determine whether the interprovincial truck and bus artery could remain four lanes — it's usually six — after road work wraps up.

It still has to be approved by the full council.

"This is the perfect oppor-

tunity to see if it works," said Marc Aubin of the King Edward Task Force, which has been working to make Lowertown's air cleaner since 1986.

"Forty years later, they're using the same excuse: We can't do anything about King Edward until a bridge is built. We need some interim relief

before a bridge is built — if that ever happens."

Coun. Georges Bedard said it could be 10 years before the road is reduced, but he's eager to see the results of the feasibility study.

"It should be a residential collector but it's a residential highway," he said.

Coun. Clive Doucet wants King Edward to return to its former glory with more trees and fewer cars. Today, it's a "traffic sewer," he said.

Advocates hope to see more green space, bike lanes and a cross walk so people can get to a park.

King Edward traffic is a

health and environmental hazard, said Liz Bernstein of Ecology Ottawa.

A 2002 air quality assessment on King Edward found pollution levels were double acceptable levels at rush hour.

megan.gillis@sunmedia.ca