

## Memorandum

**PWC-C 4-2024**

**Subject:** Memorandum respecting correspondence from Mountainview Niagara Escarpment Community Association

**Date:** May 7, 2024

**To:** Public Works Committee

**From:** Frank Tassone, Director, Transportation Services

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In 2023 staff began a Comprehensive Environmental Assessment (CEA – formally known as an Individual Environmental Assessment) to review options for a north south escarpment crossing in west Niagara as identified in the Region’s Transportation Master Plan (2017).

The purpose of the project is to address the need for an alternate escarpment crossing to assist with goods movement. This will move commercial traffic away from downtown areas in Lincoln and Grimsby and provide a vital link to West Lincoln and ultimately the Region Road 20 corridor.

The project underwent a significant scoping exercise over the past few years after which it was determined that a CEA was the best path to move the project forward. Staff came to this conclusion after a rigorous pre-consultation process with major approval authorities such as the Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks (MECP) and the Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC).

The project is currently in the initial Terms of Reference (TOR) stage, once complete the TOR will guide the overall study. Unlike a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment, the CEA TOR will set out a framework for the overall study to follow. The TOR must be approved by the MECP and establish the due diligence activities that will be used to evaluate and select the most responsible alternative for an escarpment crossing. A project outcome cannot be pre-selected but must be proven as the best alternative through a series of evidence-based studies to secure approval from the major authorities noted above.

The Notice of Commencement (NOC) of the TOR creation was filled on June 27, 2023.

On November 21, 2023, Region Staff received a letter from the Mountainview Niagara Escarpment Community Association (MNECA) (Agenda item 7.4, PWC-C 6-2024).

MNECA is a registered non-profit corporation incorporated in 2012 to advocate on behalf of the businesses and residents of the community surrounding, adjacent and directly located on Mountainview Road in Beamsville, Ontario.

As a follow up to the correspondence received, Region staff have or will be undertaking the following tasks:

- Review the letter forwarded to the Region and the contents within (complete).
- Convene a meeting with the CAO's of directly affected municipalities including Lincoln, Grimsby, West Lincoln to further explain the CEA process, project status and to solicit feedback (complete).
- Provide a project update to Region Public Works Committee (May 7, 2024).
- Delegate to the local municipal Councils noted above to provide project updates and hear feedback (throughout May 2024).
- Conduct a Public Information Centre in late May 2024.
- Meet with individual stakeholder groups, by request, in late May 2024 (including MNECA)

Upon completion of the above noted tasks and if said tasks result in changes or adjustments to the current approved plan; staff will communicate those changes back through Public Works Committee.

For further information related to the CEA, please visit the [Project Web Page](https://niagararegion.ca/projects/niagara-escarpment-crossing/) (<https://niagararegion.ca/projects/niagara-escarpment-crossing/>).

Respectfully submitted and signed by

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Frank Tassone, C.E.T.  
Director, Transportation Services