
MEMORANDUM

PWC-C 15-2020

Subject: Livingston Avenue Extension Environmental Assessment
Date: June 16, 2020
To: Public Works Committee
From: Jack Thompson

Purpose of Memorandum

To provide a status update on the Livingston Avenue Extension Municipal Class Environmental Assessment technical and approval process that was initiated to address the need for additional east-west network capacity in the west portion of the Town of Grimsby.

Background

The need for additional east-west network capacity along the Livingston Avenue corridor, in the west portion of the Town of Grimsby, has been identified in transportation studies since the early 1970's:

- 1971 - Town of Grimsby Traffic Study - Recommended Street Plan
- 1995 - Town of Grimsby Transportation Study
- 2017 - Niagara Region Transportation Master Plan

The Town of Grimsby Official Plan (2012) - Section 5.4.7 - Future Road Connections noted in Section 5.4.7.1 that the following road connection is planned:

- Connect Livingston Avenue east of Casablanca Boulevard, to Regional Road No. 81. The proposed intersection configuration would encourage the use of Livingston Avenue and discourage the use of Main Street West. An Environmental Assessment is required for the future Livingston Avenue road extension.

The Grimsby GO Station Draft Secondary Plan (2017) which was approved by Regional Council and Town of Grimsby Council (2018) noted the following discussion on Livingston Avenue (Section 4.3.4 - Planned Road Improvements and Connections):

- Depending on the evolution of traffic patterns in the area, there may be a need to extend Livingston Avenue west of Casablanca Boulevard. The Region has maintained this as an opportunity for improving east-west connectivity and providing relief to the congested South Service Road. The Region should protect for this opportunity in the secondary plan in the event that it is required over the long term. The Region may also need to consider protecting the option for a second access point off of Livingston Avenue. Given the sensitive environment in this area, the road extension would undergo an Environmental Assessment and will be ecologically-designed to minimize impact on the woodlot and its habitat and hydrology.

Environmental Assessment Process (May 2018 – April 2020)

The Casablanca Boulevard and GO Station Access Environmental Assessment (EA) Study was initiated in 2018 to assess the transportation infrastructure requirements to support projected population and employment growth in West Grimsby and to support the planned Grimsby GO Station. The EA was approved in March 2018 without a Part II Order request to the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP). The approved EA identified transportation infrastructure improvements to the following facilities with construction to start in late 2020/early 2021:

- Casablanca Boulevard (Main Street (RR81) to North Service Road)
- QEW interchange ramp terminals and MUP (Multi-Use Path)
- South Service Road (Industrial Drive to east of Casablanca Boulevard)
- Livingston Avenue (Casablanca Boulevard to west of Emily Street))

Following the approval of the Casablanca Boulevard and GO Station Access Environmental Assessment (EA), the Region continued with undertaking the EA Study for Livingston Avenue from west of Emily Street to Oakes Road North/Main Street West. This EA study represents Phase 2 of the EA approval process to assess the need for additional east-west transportation system capacity in the west portion of the Town of Grimsby to year 2041 and address future congestion on South Service east of Industrial Drive.

The Environmental Assessment Process included:

- Notice of Commencement – Newspaper ads May 31 and June 14, 2018
- Public Information Centre #1 – June 20, 2018
 - Assessment of existing traffic conditions, potential alternative solutions and defining the “Problem Statement”
- Public Information Centre #2 – May 28, 2019
 - Presented the results of traffic, natural heritage, cultural heritage, archaeological heritage, and socio-economic assessments and featured a workshop to discuss the alternative solutions for improving east-west travel capacity and evaluation criteria to evaluate alternative solutions.
- Public Information Centre #3 – January 27, 2020
 - Presented Information on Transportation Issues being addressed; Natural/Cultural/Socio-Economic Impacts; Evaluation of Alternative Solutions; Study Recommendation to Extend Livingston Avenue to Oakes Road/Main Street West and associated alternative design options.
- On-Line Survey - Alternative Design Options - February - March 2020
 - Rural and Urban Road cross-section alternatives
- Environmental Study Report (ESR) Submission to Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) on April 3, 2020 for 30-day review period

Environmental Assessment Process – Next Steps (May 2020 – July 2020)

The MECP comments on the submitted Livingston Avenue Extension ESR were received on May 14, 2020.

The MECP comments focused on Species at Risk (SARS) directions prior to initiating design and construction activities. The MECP comments are included in ESR – May 2020, Table 9-6 Commitments to Future Work.

Niagara Region filed the ESR for a 45-day public review / comment on May 21, 2020. The EA filing process includes the following steps:

- Notice of Completion Advertisements - 2 circulations (May 21 and May 28, 2020) with Niagara This Week and Niagara News Now
- Notice of Completion posted on Livingston Avenue Extension EA project website

- Livingston Avenue Extension ESR posted on Region's project website
- E-Bulletin to Stakeholders and Agencies regarding ESR 45-day public review / comment period
- Letters to Indigenous Communities regarding Notice of Completion and ESR 45-day public review / comment period

If a Part II Order is received within the 45-day public review period, MECP will be notified and undertake a review of Part II Order issues. At the request of MECP, Regional staff will work with MECP in responding to the Part II Order issues.

If no Part II Order is received by MECP, the project as presented is approved and MECP notified.

Respectfully submitted and signed by

Jack Thompson
Transportation Strategic Projects Lead
Transportation Services