

## Report to Civic Works Committee

**To:** Chair and Members  
Civic Works Committee

**From:** Kelly Scherr, P. Eng., MBA, FEC  
Deputy City Manager, Environment & Infrastructure

**Subject:** Hamilton Road and Gore Road Intersection Improvements  
Environmental Assessment Project File Report

**Date:** February 21, 2024

## Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Deputy City Manager, Environment & Infrastructure, the following actions **BE TAKEN** with respect to the Hamilton Road and Gore Road Intersection Improvements Environmental Assessment:

- a) The Hamilton Road and Gore Road Intersection Improvements Environmental Assessment Study Project File Report **BE ACCEPTED**;
- b) A Notice of Study Completion for the Project **BE FILED** with the Municipal Clerk; and,
- c) The Project File Report **BE PLACED** on the public record for a 30-day review period.

## Executive Summary

### Purpose

This report provides an overview of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) process for the Hamilton Road and Gore Road intersection improvements and seeks approval to finalize the study and post it for the necessary 30-day public review period. The study identifies geometric, safety, operational and capacity improvements to the Hamilton Road and Gore Road intersection.

### Context

The City of London continues to develop and grow and to accommodate this growth, infrastructure improvements are required that accommodate the planned growth.

The initial technical review of the Hamilton Road and Gore Road intersection completed in 2011, identified the need to reconfigure the intersection based on the history of collisions and geometric, operational and delay deficiencies.

The Hamilton Road and Gore Road intersection is a three-leg stop-controlled skewed intersection located on the east side of the city. Hamilton Road and Gore Road are classified as Civic Boulevards in the London Plan. Gore Road carries approximately 14,000 vehicles per day and Hamilton Road carries approximately 15,000 and 6,000 vehicles per day west and east of the intersection respectively. There are also a small number of pedestrians and cyclists that currently use this intersection. Citizen concerns are frequently received related to the skew of the intersection and its influence on sight lines and stop compliance. The intersection is subject to a higher frequency of related collision types.

The need for the intersection improvements was confirmed in the Transportation Master Plan and in the 2019 Development Charges Background Study.

An environmental assessment (EA) study for the intersection work was initiated in accordance with the Ontario's Environmental Assessment Act. The improvements identified in this EA study will create an opportunity to enhance and improve the features of this intersection and to accommodate existing and future traffic demands including active transportation improvements. The improvements will also enhance the overall transportation network and provide better connectivity to adjacent communities by following the City's Complete Streets Design Manual approach. The implementation of complete streets improvements is important to create equitable access across the area.

The EA study area limits extend approximately 200 m in each direction from the intersection as shown on Figure 1. The subject intersection is abutted by residential and commercial properties and the entrance to the Pottersburg Pollution Control Plant. A major Hydro One Networks Inc. transmission corridor traverses the site parallel to Gore Road.

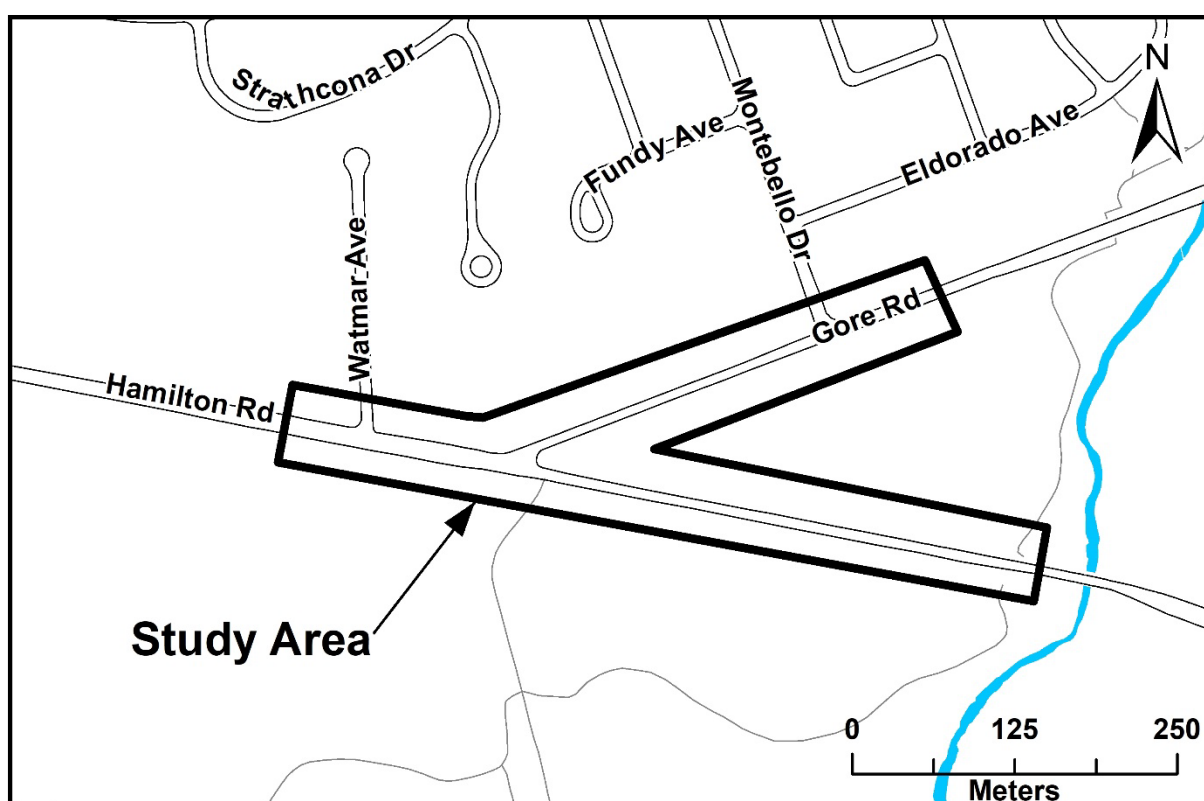


Figure 1: EA Study Area Map

## Linkage to the Corporate Strategic Plan

Municipal Council's new Strategic Plan identifies "Mobility and Transportation" as a strategic area of focus. This report supports the Strategic Plan by identifying the building of infrastructure that provides safe, integrated, connected, reliable and efficient transportation choices.

## Analysis

### 1.0 Background Information

#### 1.1 Previous Reports Related to this Matter

- Built and Natural Environment Committee – October 31, 2011- Hamilton Road and Gore Road Intersection

- Civic Works Committee - June 19, 2012- London 2030 Transportation Master Plan
- Civic Works Committee - September 7, 2016 - London ON Bikes Cycling Master Plan
- Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee – May 6, 2019 – Approval of 2019 Development Charges By-Law and DC Background Study
- Civic Works Committee – September 22, 2020 – Hamilton Road & Gore Road Intersection Improvements Environmental Assessment Study Appointment of Consulting Engineer
- Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee – October 20, 2020 – 2021 Development Charges Update Covering Report and Proposed By-Law.

## **2.0 Discussion and Considerations**

### **2.1 Study Description**

The Hamilton Road and Gore Road intersection EA was carried out in accordance with Schedule 'B' of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) requirements. The Class EA process is approved under the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act and outlines the process whereby municipalities can comply with the requirements of the Act.

The Class EA study has satisfied the requirements of the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act by providing a comprehensive, environmentally sound planning process with public participation. The Project File Report (PFR) documents the process followed to determine the recommended alternative and the environmentally significant aspects of the planning, design, and construction of the proposed improvements. It describes the problem being addressed, the existing social, natural, and cultural environmental considerations, planning and design alternatives that were considered, and a description of the recommended alternative. The PFR also identifies environmental effects and proposed mitigation measures, commitments to further work, and consultation associated with the implementation of the project. A copy of the draft PFR is available on the project web page: <https://getinvolved.london.ca/gorehamilton>.

### **2.2 Problem and Opportunity Statement**

Phase I of the Municipal Class EA (MCEA) process involved the identification of the problem and opportunity statement. Based on the review of existing conditions, servicing studies, planning documents, development proposals, preliminary traffic studies and collision data, the following summarizes the problems and opportunities within the study area:

*Hamilton Road and Gore Road are Civic Boulevards in the eastern side of the City of London. Gore Road intersects Hamilton Road at a three-legged stop-controlled intersection at a challenging skew angle. The intersection has seen an increase in traffic volumes, leading to a greater number of incidents and necessitating a review of the current intersection. Through the EA process, a review of design alternatives will be conducted to determine a preferred alternative for an improved intersection arrangement and controls, while maintaining the objectives of: improving safety to drivers, cyclists and pedestrians, protection of the environment, minimal disruption to residents and surrounding areas, engaging a broad range of stakeholders, optimizing costs, and documenting the study process in compliance with the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Schedule "B" process.*

## **2.3 Alternative Solutions**

Phase II of the MCEA process includes an inventory of the existing socio-economic, cultural and natural environments to identify alternative solutions to address the problem/opportunity statement. Alternative solutions are identified and evaluated based on their ability to reduce impacts to the socio-economic and natural environment, archaeology, cultural heritage, climate change to provide a cost-effective transportation engineering design. Input from the public, Indigenous Communities, and review agencies was carefully considered during the evaluation process. Alternative solutions considered for the study area included:

Alternative 1 - Roundabout concept:

A three-leg design with single lane entries on the north and east legs and a dual lane entry on the west leg.

Alternative 2 - Signalized Intersection Concept #1

The intersection would shift to the east and Hamilton Road would be realigned so that it would “tee” into Gore Road.

Alternative 3 - Signalized Intersection Concept #2

Minor Realignment of Gore Road, so that it lines up with the existing entrance to the wastewater treatment plant.

Do Nothing

No improvements – do not continue any further with project.

Hydro One Networks Inc. have an interest and approval authority over any proposed improvements as the occupier of a major transmission corridor owned by Infrastructure Ontario and passing through the intersection. The project team completed the initial evaluation based on an initial constraint imposed by Hydro One to minimize impact to the utility corridor and transmission structures. As a result, Alternative 2 – Signalized Intersection was initially recommended as the preferred alternative during the first public information center (PIC).

Following a lengthy review process by Hydro One, which included multiple detailed design revisions of alternatives, Hydro One provided support of the roundabout alternative, allowing a second review to be completed. The second evaluation also included a more in depth look at each of the screening criteria. The second evaluation resulted in Alternative 1 – Roundabout as the new preferred alternative.

A detailed description of both evaluation processes and the sketches of all alternatives are available in the Draft Project File Report posted on the project web page.

## **2.4 Recommended Alternative**

Alternative 1, a three-leg roundabout design with an accessible side street to nearby residential properties was selected as the recommended alternative for the improvement of the intersection.

The recommended alternative provides transportation facilities for all road users (pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers) as per the City’s Complete Streets requirements and considers traffic capacity and operations, safety, the social and natural environment, climate, existing utilities, and costs. The recommended alternative was selected, developed, and refined through consultation with Indigenous Communities, agencies, advisory committees, interested parties, and the public. The recommended alternative was determined to be Alternative 1 – Roundabout which is shown in Figure 2 below.

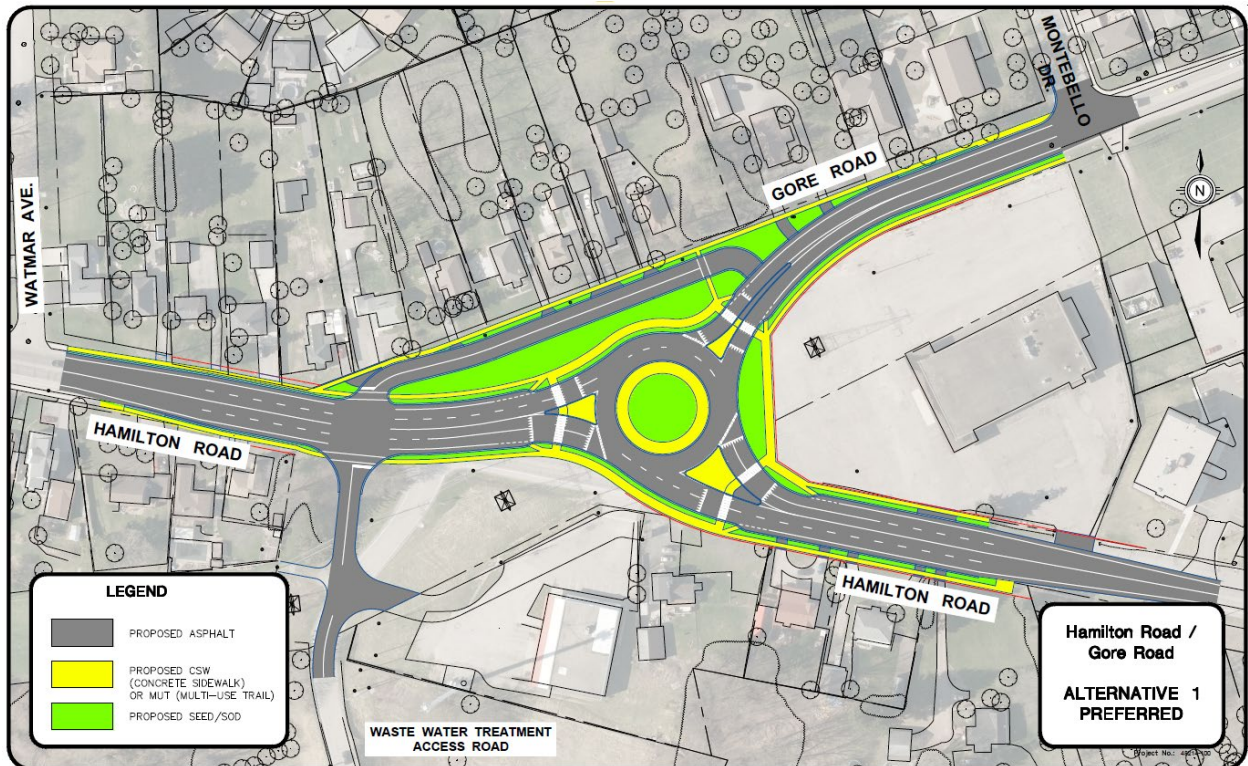


Figure 2: Alternative 1 - Roundabout

The recommended alternative includes the following design considerations:

- Provides the highest consideration for the safety of all road users by discouraging speeding and reducing angle conflicts through the intersection which reduces the likelihood of severe collisions.
- Provides the shortest crossing distances for pedestrians and cyclists compared to the other alternatives.
- Accommodates active transportation connections between nearby pedestrian crossings and recreational multiuse pathways. Wide multi-use paths outside of the roundabout will provide cyclists an option if they decide not to ride through the roundabout.
- Provides good level of service for current and future vehicular traffic flow and with the introduction of new pedestrian and cycling facilities, improved safety and connectivity is provided for these modes of travel.
- Reduces the number of driveways located within the intersection.
- New streetlighting.
- Considers climate change by applying the Climate Emergency Screening Tool criteria, including improving active transportation facilities and resiliency of the stormwater management system.
- Reduces vehicle stopping and idling time which results in less vehicle emissions.

The roundabout design is predicted to function well and accommodate growth for the foreseeable future. The recommended alternative also provides flexibility to accommodate potential future Hamilton Road corridor improvements with minimal impacts.

### 3.0 Financial Impact/Considerations

#### 3.1 Preliminary Cost Estimates

A preliminary cost estimate for the improvements identified through the study has been prepared, including engineering, utility relocations, roadway construction, sanitary servicing, stormwater management, street lighting, landscaping, and construction staging. The total preliminary cost estimate developed during the environmental assessment is \$8,702,000 including contingency, engineering fees, and land acquisition. This cost estimate is based on the current (2024) costs of similar projects and reflects recent inflationary increases in construction material prices, and labour market conditions. The project cost estimate is close to the current budget after allocation of underground servicing costs to appropriate accounts. The transportation project is included in the Development Charges Background Study which identifies that the majority of the project cost is attributable to city growth and will be funded through development charges. The breakdown of the cost estimate is shown below.

Table 1: Environmental Assessment Cost Estimate for Hamilton Road and Gore Road Intersection Improvements (2024 dollars)

Item	Total
Site Preparation & Removals	\$449,000
Roadworks	\$1,469,000
Storm Sewers	\$500,000
Sanitary Sewers	\$456,000
Watermain	\$485,000
Utility Relocation	\$270,000
Street Lighting	\$400,000
Miscellaneous/Provisional Items	\$759,000
Engineering and Construction Administration (20%)	\$957,000
Contingency (20%)	\$957,000
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>\$6,702,000</b>
Property Acquisition	\$2,000,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$8,702,000</b>

### 4.0 Key Issues and Considerations

#### 4.1 Property Impacts

The avoidance of property requirements was an important consideration in the identification and evaluation of the alternatives by the project team.

To accommodate the alternatives presented, property acquisition will be required to varying degrees. The preferred alternative will require acquisition of residential property, as well as property from Infrastructure Ontario for the Hydro One corridor. The property needs associated with residential properties will be identified more thoroughly during the detailed design phase and will be coordinated with the City's Realty Services team. Preliminary discussions have been held with Infrastructure Ontario, and they are aware of the proposed improvements and impacts to their property. The property needs are shown in Appendix H Figures of the Draft PFR that can be found on the project web page: <https://getinvolved.london.ca/gorehamilton>.

## 4.2 Public, Agency and Indigenous Communities Consultation

Consultation was a key component of this Class EA study to provide an opportunity for interested groups, the public and Indigenous Communities to gain an understanding of the study process and provide feedback. The key interested groups included residents, public, advisory committee, agencies, and those who may be affected by the project. Eight Indigenous Communities were sent notifications about this project including Aamjiwnaang First Nation, Bkejwanong Territory (Walpole Island), Caldwell First Nation, Kettle and Stony Point First Nation, Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Munsee-Delaware Nation, Delaware Nation at Moraviantown and Oneida Nation of the Thames.

A Notice of Study Commencement was issued in September 2020. The study team received correspondence from the public and agencies indicating their interest in the study and requesting to be kept informed.

The first public information centre (PIC) was held on June 25, 2021, and was hosted online to conform with COVID-19 restrictions in effect at the time. The public was able to access the [getinvolved.london.ca](http://getinvolved.london.ca) webpage where a recorded video presentation was available in addition to general information regarding the project. A hyperlink to [getinvolved.london.ca](http://getinvolved.london.ca) was also provided on the City of London's Environmental Assessment webpage. The presentation featured members of the project team explaining the purpose, problem statement, planning and design process, evaluation criteria, identified alternatives, evaluation results, and the preferred solution for the intersection and next steps. Visitors to the webpage were prompted to provide comments through the website, via email or through a downloadable form which could be scanned, faxed or mailed to the City of London.

The second PIC was hosted in-person at the Bob Hayward Branch of the YMCA on Hamilton Road on October 2, 2023. In addition, a pre-recorded video of the PIC material was uploaded to the City of London's website. The presentation featured a recap of PIC#1 as well as updating the public on the progress of the project since PIC#1. Visitors to the PIC were prompted to provide comments through the website, via email or through a physical form.

Drawings detailing the various alternatives were included in the presentation and the project team presented the alternative design concepts with an explanation of the advantages and disadvantages of each design. A prompt requesting comments was included in the [getinvolved.london.ca](http://getinvolved.london.ca) webpage to solicit information and to determine preferences. Written responses and emails received from residents are included in the PFR report. Significant support, including support from adjacent property owners, for the roundabout option was received during the consultation phase.

Project information was also presented to the Integrated Transportation Community Advisory Committee (ITCAC) for feedback on June 21, 2023. There were mixed comments regarding the roundabout option with some concerns expressed regarding the pedestrian crossings. The project team will review and confirm the type of pedestrian crossings consistent with City and Provincial standards during the detailed design phase.

During the upcoming 30-day public review, the Project File Report (PFR) will be made available on the City of London website, at the City Hall, and at the closest public library to the study area. As per the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks' (MECP) request, the draft PFR has been submitted for their technical review and is also available on the City's web page: [getinvolved.london.ca/gorehamilton](http://getinvolved.london.ca/gorehamilton).

There will be an opportunity to request a higher level of study (i.e., requiring an individual EA or imposing conditions on the project) through a Section 16 order request to the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks on the grounds that the order may prevent, mitigate or remedy potentially adverse impacts on constitutionally

protected Aboriginal and treaty rights. Requests that are not made on these grounds will not be considered by the Minister.

### **4.3 Implementation**

It is estimated that the construction of the project could begin in 2026 subject to all approvals and property acquisition and could be undertaken in one construction season. Coordination with adjacent projects, property owners, and regulatory agencies is planned early in the design process. A traffic management and communications plan will be developed during detailed design to inform road users, outline detours during potential closures, and instruct local traffic movement. Access to properties will be maintained during construction.

## **Conclusion**

Improvements to the Hamilton Road and Gore Road intersection are necessary to improve safety and accommodate an increasingly busy thoroughfare in the east side of the city. A Schedule B Municipal Class EA was undertaken to confirm the preferred long-term solution for the intersection. The Project File Report (PFR) has been completed and will be reviewed by the MECP prior to posting for the final public review.

Alternative solutions were developed to address the problems and opportunities at this unique intersection. The recommended alternative for the Hamilton Road and Gore Road intersection is to create a new roundabout with accommodation for pedestrians and cyclists, increased capacity for drivers, safe access points to future developments, full illumination and landscaping opportunities. Roundabouts have proven to be effective at improving safety at intersections, particularly skewed intersections such as this one.

Consultation was a key component of this study. The Class EA was prepared with input from Indigenous Communities, advisory committees, agencies, utilities, emergency service providers and property owners in proximity to the study.

Pending Council approval, a Notice of Study Completion will be filed, and the PFR will be placed on public record for a 30-day review period. Interested parties and the public are encouraged to provide input and comments regarding the study during this time. Accommodation will be made for those requiring a hard copy review. Requests for a higher level of study or conditions may be submitted to the MECP based on potential impacts to constitutionally protected Aboriginal and treaty rights.

**Prepared by:** Garfield Dales, P. Eng., Division Manager,  
Transportation Planning and Design

**Submitted by:** Doug MacRae, P. Eng., MPA, Director, Transportation  
and Mobility

**Recommended by:** Kelly Scherr, P. Eng., MBA, FEC, Deputy City Manager,  
Environment and Infrastructure

c: Vince Pugliese, MTE Consultants Inc.  
Paul Yanchuk, City of London  
John Bos, City of London