

--	--

TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS CIVIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING ON OCTOBER 6, 2014
FROM:	JOHN BRAAM, P.ENG. MANAGING DIRECTOR, ENVIRONMENTAL & ENGINEERING SERVICES AND CITY ENGINEER
SUBJECT:	WHARNCLIFFE ROAD SOUTH ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT STUDY APPOINTMENT OF CONSULTING ENGINEER

RECOMMENDATION

That on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Environmental & Engineering Services and City Engineer, the following actions **BE TAKEN** with respect to the appointment of a consultant for the Wharnccliffe Road South Environmental Assessment from Becher Street to Commissioners Road:

- a) MMM Group Limited, **BE APPOINTED** Consulting Engineers to complete the Environmental Assessment Study for Wharnccliffe Road South, in the amount of \$546,700 excluding HST, in accordance with Section 15.2 (e) of the Procurement of Goods and Services Policy;
- b) the financing for this project **BE APPROVED** as set out in the Sources of Financing Report attached hereto as Appendix 'A';
- c) the Civic Administration **BE AUTHORIZED** to undertake all the administrative acts that are necessary in connection with this project;
- d) the approvals given herein **BE CONDITIONAL** upon the Corporation entering into a formal contract with the consultant for the work; and
- e) the Mayor and City Clerk **BE AUTHORIZED** to execute any contract or other documents, if required, to give effect to these recommendations.

BACKGROUND

Purpose

This report seeks the approval of the Council to retain an engineering consultant to undertake the Wharnccliffe Road South Environmental Assessment (EA) study from Becher Street to Commissioners Road.

Context

This EA is required to proceed with the implementation strategy of the transportation infrastructure needs for the Wharnccliffe Road South corridor. The need and justification for the study was identified as part of the City of London's 2030 Smart Moves TMP.

The purpose of this EA is to satisfy the requirements of the Environmental Assessment Act by providing a comprehensive, environmentally sound planning process with public participation, and to facilitate dialogue between parties with a number of competing interests.

--	--

The Wharncliffe/Western Road corridor is a major north/south corridor in the City. The corridor comprises four through lanes throughout except in the area of the two rail bridge “bottlenecks”. A separate EA is underway to address the CPR crossing restriction north of Oxford Street. This current EA assignment will address the Canadian National Railway (CNR) crossing.

The study portion of Wharncliffe Road South is an arterial road that accommodates approximately 31,500 vehicles per day and provides a key transportation corridor between the Southwest Area Plan (SWAP) lands and Western University, Downtown London and other destinations. It is planned to widen the north portion of Wharncliffe Road from Becher Street to Springbank Drive from 3 to 4 lanes with turn lanes as well as widening the CNR Subway. It is anticipated that a temporary rail diversion may need to be constructed to facilitate the road widening project.

It is planned to optimize the southerly portion of the Wharncliffe Road from Horton Street to Commissioners Road. This may include but is not limited to, turn lanes, access management, bus bays, etc. This is a significant transit corridor accommodating the Southcrest, Wharncliffe and Jalna Boulevard LTC routes. The project will improve transit performance.

Widening and corridor optimization of the subject section of Wharncliffe Road South is anticipated to begin in 2019 with utilities being relocated in 2018. Establishment of the land requirements for this project is a key outcome in order to meet suggested timelines.

DISCUSSION

Project Description

The study area for this EA in the Wharncliffe Road corridor extends from Becher Street to Commissioners Road. The corridor study area extends from both sides of the road right-of-way into the adjacent Wharncliffe Road properties which includes residential and commercial land use designations. The study will evaluate all the options with respect to the road cross sections. Land uses, access opportunities and the property impacts will be significant factors in the evaluation of the options. The preferred design concept will be both functional and attractive in its appearance.

The subject section is envisioned to be developed with a unique road cross section that will serve as an arterial roadway designed to accommodate the pedestrian traffic, vehicle through traffic, transit and commercial traffic in a safe and efficient manner. A map of the study area and corridor limits is shown below in Figure 1.

The primary deliverables from this environmental assessment include:

- The determination of the appropriate right-of-way and property requirements to accommodate the future widening of Wharncliffe Road as per the London 2030 TMP;
- Recommendations for the appropriate geometric design concept and future improvements for intersections associated with the widening and optimization of Wharncliffe Road South to mitigate future deficiencies, accommodate increased traffic demand, and improve safety;
- Analysis of the major intersections to accommodate the increased traffic demand and improve safety;
- Development of a functional and visually attractive urban design concept for vehicular travel lanes, bike lanes, pathways, and sidewalks to appropriately accommodate the speed and safety of travel for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians;
- Collaboration with the CNR to develop a rail crossing solution that is feasible to implement and agreeable to all stakeholders.
- A storm/drainage and stormwater assessment of the impacts associated with the proposed project; and
- Formal documentation and presentations that present in a clear and transparent manner the process undertaken.

--	--

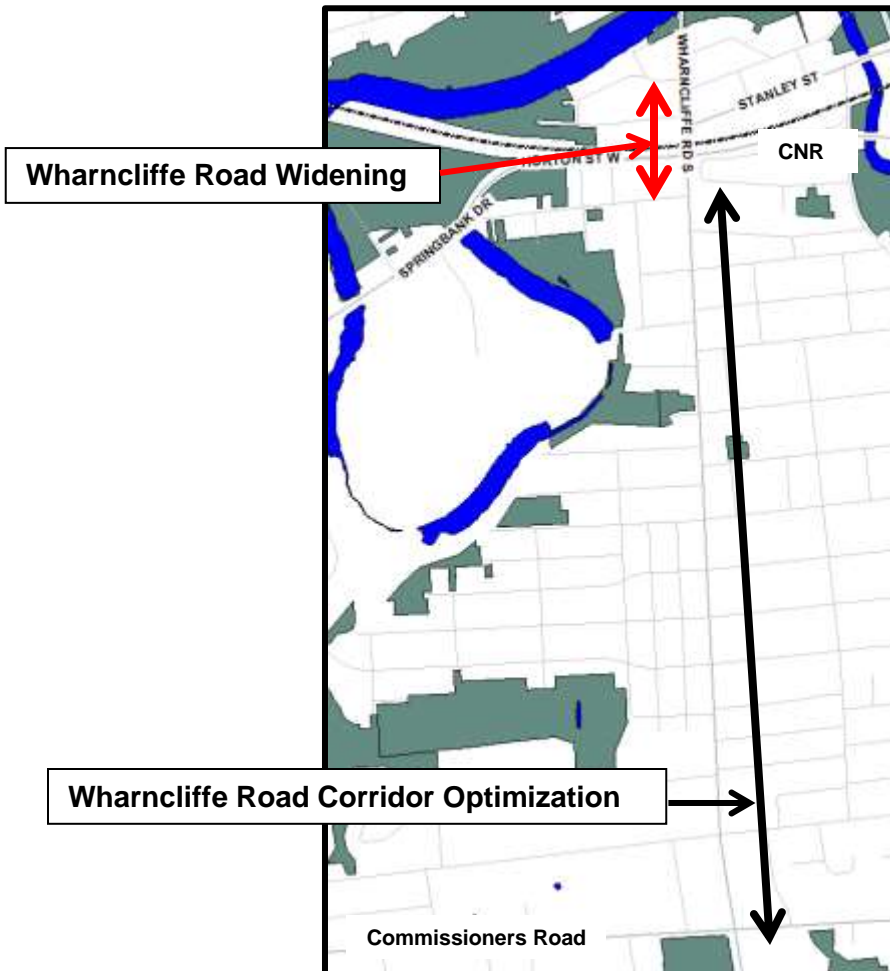


Figure 1. EA Corridor Limits

Issues of Special Interest

Canadian National Railway (CNR) Subway

The CNR line, known as the Strathroy Subdivision, is a critical rail link with two tracks that connects to CNR’s international border crossing and serves as many as 29 trains daily. This represents a significant rail traffic volume and limits options available for design and construction. The existing rail bridge constrains the road right-of-way so it is likely that the grade separation will require full reconstruction. The EA will assess different construction and staging methods and evaluate based on cost, social impacts such as property acquisition and road closures, and other factors. It is anticipated that a temporary rail diversion may be constructed to facilitate the reconstruction of the crossing for the road widening project.

The CNR grade separation, technically known as a subway, is a defining feature of the neighbourhood and creates a strong boundary to the North. The tracks cross Wharncliffe Road South near the northern portion of the study area. The existing rail bridge accommodates only three vehicles lanes and sidewalks on both sides. The EA will explore a new structure with enhancements such as improved pedestrian facilities.

Wharncliffe Road Urban Design

In The London Plan, Wharncliffe Road is proposed as an Urban Corridor. The public right-of-way along Wharncliffe Road will be designed to create a pedestrian-oriented environment that is supportive of mid-rise residential and mixed-use development. Streetscape improvements will be coordinated implementing a high standard of built environment.

--	--

EA Scope

Under the most recent update of the City of London’s Development Charges Background Study and the 2030 Smart Moves TMP, two strategic projects were identified along the Wharnccliffe Road South corridor. These two projects are Wharnccliffe Road South Widening from Springbank Drive through Becher Street, and Wharnccliffe Road South Optimization from Commissioners Road West through Horton Street. Each project segment has been generally evaluated for the impacts of municipal infrastructure and suitably budgeted given their relative complexities.

Recognizing that the projects are physically adjoining and the outcome of one project’s planning process is reliant on the other, there is an opportunity to combine these two assignments and coordinate this work under one larger Environmental Assessment to reduce the potential delays and costs that maybe associated with the Municipal Class EA process. Also, the formation of a larger project will eliminate the potential for piece mealing a larger project into smaller components or segments, with each segment being less onerous to address. The Environmental Assessment Act prohibits piece mealing and proponents are not allowed to break down projects into segments that are less rigorous to complete. Having weighed the above considerations and to avoid the risk of piece mealing, staff recommend the projects be combined for assessment purposes pursuant to the Municipal Class EA.

Consultant Selection

The consultant acquisition process used a two-stage process beginning with an open advertised request for qualifications. A shortlist of three consulting firms was created based on the received submissions and the firms were invited to submit proposals for the project. The shortlisted firms responded with written proposals including a summary of the project tasks, schedule, and costs. An evaluation committee with representation from all key project areas including Transportation, Wastewater and Drainage, Stormwater Management, and Planning and Development reviewed the consultant submissions for the project.

Based on the evaluation criteria and selection process identified in the Request for Proposals, the evaluation committee concluded that the proposal from MMM Group provides the best value to the City.

MMM Group has an experienced project team that had a clear understanding of the project scope and requirements. Their past proven experience on similar projects of this nature combined with a project proposal that demonstrated a thorough understanding of the goals and objectives demonstrated their suitability for the undertaking. The consultant project team combines out-of-town specialists for some high-complexity portions of the project with local staff that are familiar with City staff and procedures through recent work on other multi-disciplinary City assignments.

In accordance with Section 15.2 (e) of the Procurement of Goods and Services Policy, Civic Administration is recommending MMM Group be appointed as the consulting engineer for the Environmental Assessment. The submission from MMM Group includes a fee submission that indicates that the EA study can be completed within the funds available in the project accounts, TS1355-1 and TS1355-2.

--	--

CONCLUSION

The need for this Environmental Assessment has been identified as a result of current traffic capacity deficiencies. The study will begin the process to address a long-standing major traffic constraint at the rail crossing and provide balanced improvements to the corridor southerly. Combining the two adjacent projects is a cost-effective approach and will produce a more defensible, comprehensive EA. The study recommendations will set the needs and balance the requirements of the full range of potential users within a community including users of all ages and abilities, pedestrians, cyclists, rail, transit vehicles and motorists.

Based on the technical evaluation of the proposals, it is recommended MMM Group be awarded the consulting assignment for the Wharncliffe Road South Environmental Assessment study at an upset amount of \$546,700 excluding HST.

Acknowledgements

This report was prepared with the assistance of Ted Koza, P.Eng., Transportation Design Engineer and Josh Ackworth, C.E.T., Technologist II of the Transportation Planning & Design Division.

SUBMITTED BY:	REVIEWED & CONCURRED BY:
DOUG MACRAE, P.ENG. DIVISION MANAGER, TRANSPORTATION PLANNING & DESIGN	EDWARD SOLDI, P.ENG. DIRECTOR, ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION
RECOMMENDED BY:	
JOHN BRAAM, P.ENG. MANAGING DIRECTOR, ENVIRONMENTAL & ENGINEERING SERVICES AND CITY ENGINEER	

Attach: Appendix "A" – Sources of Financing

- c. Michel Chiu, MMM Group Limited, 2655 North Sheridan Way, Suite 300, Mississauga, ON, L5K 2P8
 Stefan Linder, Canadian National Railway, 4 Welding Way off Administration Road, Concord, ON, L4K 1B9
 Pat Shack