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File: OZ-8195
Planner: M. Johnson

TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
FROM:	JOHN M. FLEMING MANAGING DIRECTOR, PLANNING AND CITY PLANNER
SUBJECT:	APPLICATION BY: CITY OF LONDON VETERANS MEMORIAL PARKWAY SOUTH EXTENSION PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETING ON AUGUST 20, 2013

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Planning and City Planner, the following actions be taken with respect to the application of the City of London for amendments to the City’s Official Plan and Zoning By-law for the Veterans Memorial Parkway South Extension:

- (a) the proposed by-law attached hereto as Appendix "A" **BE INTRODUCED** at the Municipal Council meeting on August 27, 2013 to amend Schedule C, Transportation Corridors, of the Official Plan to add “Freeway” to an extension of the Veterans Memorial Parkway from Highway 401 to Wilton Grove Road to implement the recommendations of the Veterans Memorial Parkway Extension and Highway 401 Interchange Improvements Transportation Environmental Study Report (TESR); and
- (b) the proposed by-law attached hereto as Appendix "B" **BE INTRODUCED** at the Municipal Council meeting on August 27, 2013 to amend Section 4.21 (Road Allowance Requirements – Specific Roads) of Zoning By-law Z.-1, in conformity with the Official Plan as amended in part (a) above, to add Veterans Memorial Parkway as a “Freeway” with a 30 m limit of allowance (measured from the centerline) in Section 4.21 “Road Allowance Requirements – Specific Roads” of the Z.-1 Zoning By-law.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER

March 28, 2011	Built and Natural Environment Committee, “Veterans Memorial Parkway Extension to Wilton Grove Road.”
August 15, 2011	Built and Natural Environment Committee, “Class Environmental Assessment for Veterans Memorial Parkway South Extension - Appointment of Consulting Engineer.”
April 23, 2012	Civic Works Committee, “Veterans Memorial Parkway South Extension Environmental Assessment - Consultant Assignment Scope Change.”
February 4, 2013	Civic Works Committee, “Highway 401 Interchange Projects - Agreement with Ministry of Transportation.”
May 6, 2013	Civic Works Committee, “Veterans Memorial Parkway South Extension and Highway 401 Interchange Improvements Transportation Environmental Study Report.”

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to implement the recommendations of the Veterans Memorial Parkway Extension and Highway 401 Interchange Improvements Transportation Environmental Study Report (TESR). The Veterans Memorial Parkway Extension and Highway 401 Interchange Improvements TESR was accepted by Council on May 14, 2013. The TESR defines functional needs of the study area based on the future land use and economic growth

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opportunities along the Highway 401 corridor and provides a concept design that offers improved north-south transportation capacity to accommodate projected future travel demand. The Official Plan and Zoning By-law process was undertaken to formulate appropriate amendments, regulations, and policies to protect the corridor for long term improvements. The proposed Official Plan amendment will add an extension to the Veterans Memorial Parkway from Highway 401 to Wilton Grove Road. The proposed Zoning By-law amendment will identify the new road allowance requirements for the extension of Veterans Memorial Parkway from Highway 401 to Wilton Grove Road.

RATIONALE

1. The Veterans Memorial Parkway Extension and Highway 401 Interchange Improvements Transportation Environmental Study Report (TESR) was submitted and accepted by Council on May 14, 2013. The TESR examined the impacts and design issues related to the future needs Highway 401 corridor and nearby road networks. The accepted TESR and its recommendations identify the requirements to implement the future southerly extension of the Veterans Memorial Parkway and the Highway 401 Interchange improvements.
2. The proposed Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments implement the recommendations contained within the TESR, and are intended to implement the TESR by protecting and enhancing the VMP corridor to permit the corridor to be extended south to Wilton Grove Road and establish the right-of-way requirement for the extension.
3. The proposed Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments are consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement.
4. The proposed Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments conform to the Official Plan.

BACKGROUND

The Veterans Memorial Parkway (VMP) is a key corridor providing one of 5 accesses from the Provincial highway network (Highway 401 and Highway 402) to the City of London and providing the main access between Highway 401 and London International Airport. Veterans Memorial Parkway, formerly known as Airport Road, is located near the eastern boundary of the City of London and is aligned in a north-south direction between Highway 401 to the south and Huron Street to the north. Originally, in the early 1980's, the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) constructed this roadway from Highway 401 to Oxford Street, known as Highway 100. Currently, the VMP is a municipal 4-lane expressway with at-grade intersections.

In April of 2011, Council requested the commencement of an environmental assessment study for the extension of the VMP south to Wilton Grove Road in order to prepare for future development opportunities in that area. This study has been undertaken to meet the requirements of the Ministry of Transportation Group 'B' and Municipal Schedule 'C' Class EA processes.

Date Application Accepted: May 13, 2013	Agent: City of London
REQUESTED ACTION: Change Schedule C, Transportation Corridors, of the Official Plan and the limit allowance of a street within the Z-1 Zoning Bylaw to implement the recommendations of the Veterans Memorial Parkway Extension and Highway 401 Interchange Improvements Transportation Environmental Study Report (TESR).	

SIGNIFICANT DEPARTMENT/AGENCY COMMENTS

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA)
No objection to the application.

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
No comment.

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PUBLIC LIAISON:	On June 26, 2013, Notice of Application was sent to 25 property owners in the surrounding area. Notice of Application was also published in the <i>Public Notices and Bidding Opportunities</i> section of <i>The Londoner</i> on June 27, 2013.	No responses were received.
Nature of Liaison: The requested amendments to Schedule “C” – Transportation Corridors, of the Official Plan Section and Section 4.21 of the Z.-1 Zoning By-law are required to implement the recommendations of the Veterans Memorial Parkway Extension and Highway 401 Interchange Improvements Transportation Environmental Study Report (TESR). Schedule “C” – Transportation Corridors of the Official Plan will be amended to show an extension of the Veterans Memorial Parkway between Highway 401 and Wilton Grove Road as “Freeway” and Section 4.21, Road Allowance Requirements – Specific Roads of By-law Z.-1 will be amended to add a new “Freeway” to Veterans Memorial Parkway from Highway 401 to Wilton Grove Road.		
Responses: No responses were received.		

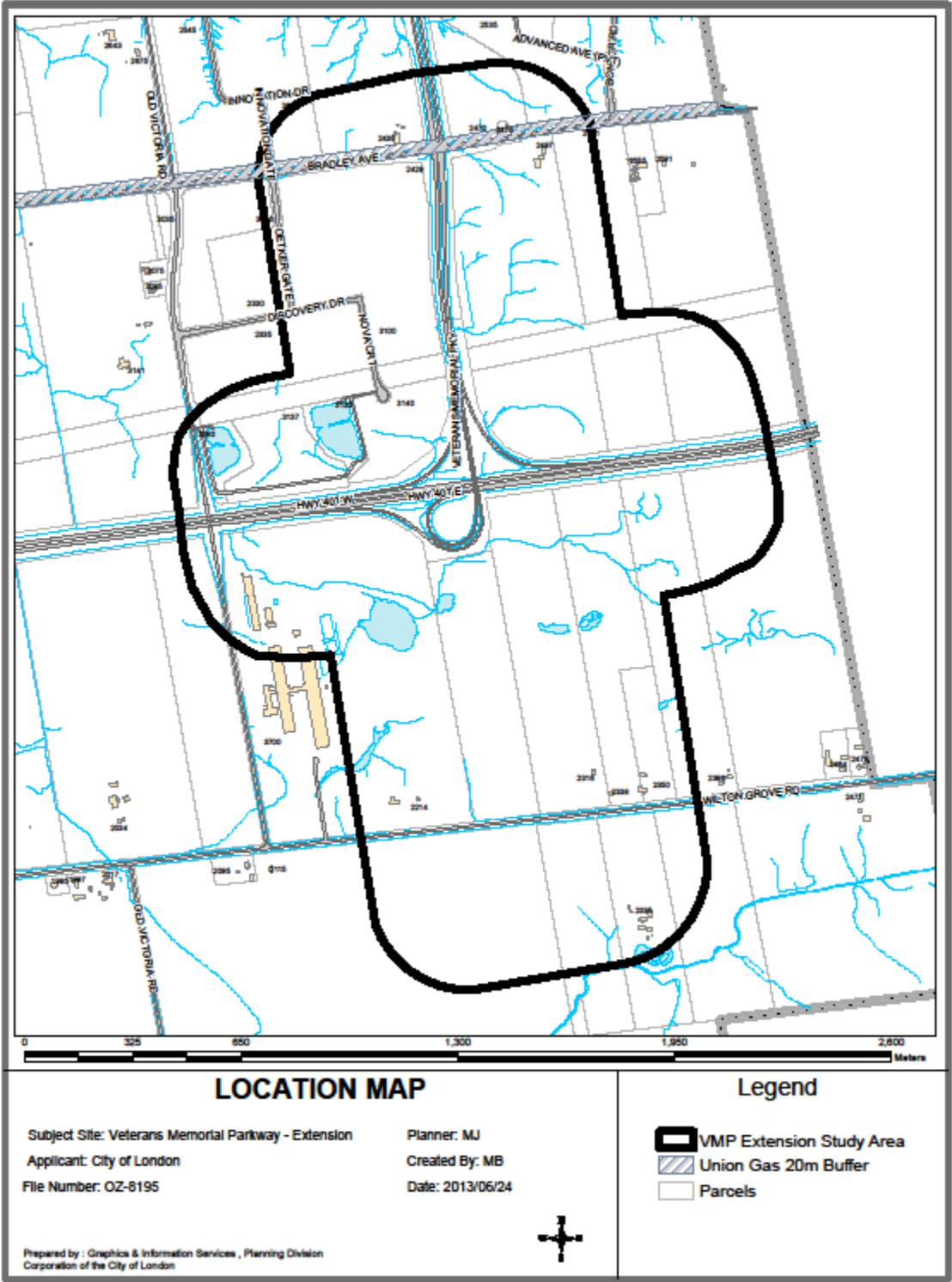
ANALYSIS

Study Area

The primary study area extends from the Veterans Memorial Parkway/Highway 401 Interchange south to Wilton Grove Road. However, the study area also includes a broader area, extending north to Bradley Avenue and east and west along Highway 401 to encompass the Veterans Memorial Parkway extension and the Highway 401 Interchange improvements. The accompanying map shows the extent of the study area.

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Justification for the Environmental Assessment

As identified in the TESR, the City of London’s economic opportunities and transportation needs formed the basis for the justification to undertake an Environmental Assessment for the Veterans Memorial Parkway Extension and Highway 401 Interchange Improvements. The following summarizes the economic opportunities and transportation needs assessment for the study area.

Economic Development Strategy (2009)

A key component of this initiative is improved access points at strategic locations, in particular, the extension of VMP south to Wilton Grove Road and the associated reconfiguration and expansion of the VMP Interchange at Highway 401.

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Industrial Lands Development Strategy (2011)

Among the matters that Council has directed City staff to consider are:

- Expansion of the Urban Growth Area in the 401/402 Corridor.
- Continue to pursue the extension of Veterans Memorial Parkway to Wilton Grove Road and add this link to Schedule “C” of the Official Plan.

2030 Transportation Master Plan (2012)

VMP Interchange improvements and an extension of the parkway south of Highway 401 to Wilton Grove Road is a key part of the 2030 TMP recommended road network improvements. The road network improvements will service the planned and future growth in this area.

ReThink London - Official Plan Review (in progress)

The review of the Official Plan will allow for new policies and approaches to address current challenges and emerging opportunities. Among the opportunities is the growing interest in providing employment opportunities along the Highway 401/402 corridor.

The lands that abut the proposed VMP extension to Wilton Grove Road are currently outside the Urban Growth Area. These lands have been identified by the London Economic Development Corporation and Municipal Council as a possible component of the plan to stimulate economic growth.

Transportation Needs

A south extension of VMP will relieve the traffic congestion on Highbury Avenue south of the Highway 401 Interchange and will provide an important part of a transportation network that supports future economic growth opportunities along the Highway 401 corridor. These improvements will also contribute to improved emergency access in the area.

Summary of the Environmental Assessment Process

The following summary has been extracted from the findings of the Transportation Environmental Study Report. It includes the highlights of the recommended solution, alternatives and evaluation criteria, property requirements and public consultation process.

Recommended Solution and Justification

The Recommended Plan is based on the following key components:

- Extension of Veterans Memorial Parkway as a 2-lane expressway with a rural cross section within a 60 m right-of-way (consistent with Official Plan designation);
- A new intersection at Wilton Grove Road and extended Veterans Memorial Parkway;
- Replacement of the existing VMP Bridge on its current alignment;
- Interchange improvements that include:
 - Reconfigured southbound to westbound ramp in the NW quadrant;
 - Slightly modified eastbound to northbound ramp, modified southbound to eastbound ramp incorporating a new northbound to eastbound move in the SW quadrant;
 - Reconfigured westbound to northbound ramp, new westbound to southbound ramp and new northbound to westbound ramp in the NE quadrant.
- Retaining wall, or other similar mitigation measure, in the SE quadrant to minimize encroachment into the Natural Heritage System;
- Realigned Crinklaw Drain to avoid a long enclosure under the VMP extension and ram terminals south of Highway 401; and
- Provision of wildlife passage opportunities at the Crinklaw Drain crossing.

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Alternatives and Evaluation

Extending VMP and upgrading the Highway 401 Interchange is selected as the preferred alternative planning solution because it is the only alternative that reasonably addresses the identified needs and opportunities by:

- Creating a transportation network that fully supports the future economic growth opportunities in southeast London, as identified in the Industrial Lands Development Strategy Update and supported by the Official Plan review;
- Implementing the recommendations of the Smart Moves by providing additional capacity and improving traffic operations; and ultimately,
- Supporting the realization of City Council’s economic growth objectives.

The assessment of design alternatives considered two aspects:

- Highway 401 Interchange.
- Veterans Memorial Parkway Bridge

Given the high number of constraints around the interchange, a long list of concept design alternatives was developed to explore how various constraints may be avoided or impacts minimized through design. The long-list of concept design alternatives was screened and two of the concepts (Parclo A3-Modified and Parclo AB) were set aside from further consideration due to poor safety and operations, property, and natural environmental impacts.

The four remaining concept design alternatives were assessed and evaluated in more detail.

- Alternative 1: Parclo A4
- Alternative 2: Parclo A4-Modified
- Alternative 3: Parclo A3
- Alternative 4: Diamond-Parclo A

The selection process included assessment (potential benefits and impacts of each alternative were assessed against a comprehensive set of criteria for socio-economic, cultural, natural environment) and evaluation (a comparative examination of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the alternatives).

Based on the assessment and evaluation, the preferred interchange concept design was identified as Alternative 3, the Parclo A3 for the following reasons:

- In Socio-Economic Environment, Alternative 3 is preferred because it avoids impacts to the high investment business currently in development in the NW quadrant, within Innovation Park.
- In Cultural Environment, Alternatives 3 and 4 are slightly preferred since Alternatives 1 and 2 are deemed to have slightly higher risk of archaeological finds since they result in greater footprint impacts (i.e., a larger area impacted).
- In Natural Environment, Alternative 4 is preferred over Alternative 3 because it has less impact to the undesignated NE forest patch. However, both Alternatives 3 and 4 avoid impacts to the designated Natural Heritage System (NHS) in the SE, considered a higher constraint. Alternatives 1 and 2 are least preferred because they impact the designated NHS.
- In Technical Considerations, Alternative 1 is preferred due to its performance in capacity, safety and operations. Alternative 4 is least preferred due to safety reasons; the merging of higher speed southbound to westbound traffic with slower moving northbound to westbound traffic, from the left, is considered highly undesirable. Alternatives 2 and 3 are equally slightly less preferred than Alternative 1 due to shorter weaving distance on Highway 401 (Alt 2) and a left turn at the north to east ramp terminal (Alt 3). In both cases, these aspects are considered acceptable given the low traffic volumes anticipated in the northbound direction.

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- In comparing Alternatives 3 and 4, the benefits of avoiding the undesignated forest patch in the NE quadrant, associated with Alternative 4, are far outweighed by safety considerations on the westbound on-ramp.

The evaluation of Bridge Alternatives was a 2-stage process: Stage 1 – Bridge Expansion Alternatives; and Stage 2 – Bridge Replacement Alternatives. The Stage 1 and 2 evaluations were carried out at a high level, comparing only key criteria.

Bridge replacement is the Preferred Bridge Expansion Alternative because it is fully compatible with geometric standards, has high flexibility for future Highway 401 expansion, and has a lower Life-Cycle Cost.

Three basic bridge replacement alternatives were developed first, based on the replacement of the existing bridge west of its current alignment (West 1), on its current alignment (Central) and east of its current alignment (East). The West 1 option resulted in substantial impacts to Innovation Park and as such, a second west option was developed (West 2) that still proposed a bridge replacement west of the existing bridge, but minimized impacts to Innovation Park. Based on the assessment, the Central Alternative is the Preferred Bridge Replacement Alternative because, it avoids impacts to Innovation Park, has minimal edge impacts to the Natural Heritage System and has straightforward construction staging, with the shortest construction duration and lowest estimated cost.

Property and Access

The Recommended Plan and proposed new right-of-way will impact five properties (approximately 7.2 ha) through encroachment. No residences or business will be directly impacted. Property requirements depicted are preliminary in nature and subject to further review during detailed design.

Public Consultation Process

Public consultation was a major component of the Environmental Assessment throughout its progress. The City of London sent notification of the study to property owners within or adjacent to the study area on October 25, 2011 which included a copy of the Notice of Study Commencement and a Response Form. The general public was notified of the commencement of this study through local newspapers. Two Public Information Centres were held on May 23, 2011 and December 12, 2012 with the purpose of providing the public with continuous updates on the study process and to promote and incorporate public feedback into the study to ensure success of the recommended solution.

The City of London Environmental and Ecological Planning Advisory Committee was provided with the draft Terrestrial and Aquatic Ecosystems Impact Assessment reports for review and comment in early April 2013. Their comments were received prior to the Civic Works Committee presentation on May 6, 2013 and covered a range of topics including the protection natural heritage system features and functions, mitigation, construction best practices, and technical details of the report (e.g., nomenclature etc.). EEPAC comments resulted in some minor changes to the terrestrial and aquatic reports, with changes carried into to the TESR, as appropriate.

Basis for Recommendation

Provincial Policy Statement

The recommended Official Plan Amendment supports the wise use and management of resources by:

- Minimizing impacts on natural heritage features and areas, surface water features.

The recommended Official Plan Amendment supports infrastructure and public service facilities by:

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- Integrating the planning for infrastructure facilities with planning for growth so that the transportation network can accommodate current and projected needs.
- Strategically locating infrastructure facilities to support the effective and efficient delivery of emergency management services.
- Designing transportation networks which are safe, energy efficient, facilitate the movement of people and goods, and which are appropriate to address projected needs.
- Enhancing connectivity with Provincial transportation networks.
- Integrating transportation and land use considerations throughout the planning process.
- Planning to protect corridors and rights-of-way for transportation facilities to meet current and projected needs.

Official Plan and Zoning By-law

The Official Plan of the City of London establishes the broader policy framework and guidance for future development and management of land use and growth in the City of London. Schedule "C" - Transportation Corridors of the Official Plan identifies existing and future major streets and their classifications. Section 4.21 of the Z.-1 Zoning By-law provides a description of these streets, their classification (i.e. arterial, primary collector, secondary collector) and the limit of the road allowances. The ultimate road allowance is important as it becomes the basis for determining building setbacks and road allowance requirements.

Proposed Official Plan Amendment

The VMP corridor will be extended south of its current limits at Highway 401 to intersect at Wilton Grove Road. The total additional property requirements including accommodating the southerly extension of the VMP with a planned 60 metre right-of-way width to Wilton Grove Road will be approximately 7.2 hectares. To accommodate the above, Schedule 'C' of the Official Plan is proposed to be amended by adding an extension to VMP corridor from Highway 401 south to Wilton Grove Road.

Proposed Zoning By-law Amendment

In order to ensure that sufficient land is protected to accommodate the required future south extension of the VMP corridor, City staff has identified that the extension of the VMP should be listed in Section 4.21 of the Z.-1 Zoning By-law based on new minimum right-of-way widths which have been recently approved in the Veterans Memorial Parkway Extension and Highway 401 Interchange Improvements Transportation Environmental Study Report (TESR). The following is a list of proposed the amendment to Section 4.21 of the Zoning By-law.

Section 4.21 of the Z.-1 Zoning By-law will be amended to add Veterans Memorial Parkway from Highway 401 to Wilton Grove Road as a "Freeway" with a 30 m road allowance measured from the centreline.

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CONCLUSION

Veterans Memorial Parkway functions as a critical element in the City of London's transportation network and as such the Official Plan needs to address long-term planning and enhancements that can meet the growth and traffic needs of London beyond the 20-year planning period and up to full build out of the Urban Growth Boundary. An Environmental Assessment has been carried out and a Transportation Environmental Study Report (TESR) has been submitted for acceptance examining the impacts and design issues related to the planned and future growth in this area.

The TESR and its recommendations have been accepted by the City and serve as the basis for the protection of the southern extension of the VMP corridor. The proposed Official Plan Amendment implement the recommendations contained within the TESR, and will protect and enhance the VMP corridor by adding an extension to VMP corridor from Highway 401 south to Wilton Grove Road. The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment address increased right-of-way needs along the southern extension of the VMP frim Highway 401 to Wilton Grove Road.

PREPARED BY:	SUBMITTED BY:
MARK JOHNSON PLANNER II POLICY PLANNING AND PROGRAMS	GREGG BARRETT, ACIP MANAGER, POLICY PLANNING AND PROGRAMS
RECOMMENDED BY:	
JOHN M. FLEMING, MCIP, RPP MANAGING DIRECTOR, PLANNING AND CITY PLANNER	

July 19, 2013
MJ/

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Appendix "A"

Bill No. (number to be inserted by Clerk's Office)
2013

By-law No. C.P.-1284-_____

A by-law to amend the Official Plan for the
City of London, 1989 relating to the
Veterans Memorial Parkway corridor.

The Municipal Council of The Corporation of the City of London enacts as follows:

1. Amendment No. (number to be inserted by Clerk's Office) to the Official Plan for the City of London Planning Area – 1989, as contained in the text attached hereto and forming part of this by-law, is adopted.
2. This by-law shall come into effect in accordance with subsection 17(38) of the *Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.P.13*.

PASSED in Open Council on August 27, 2013.

Joe Fontana
Mayor

Catharine Saunders
City Clerk

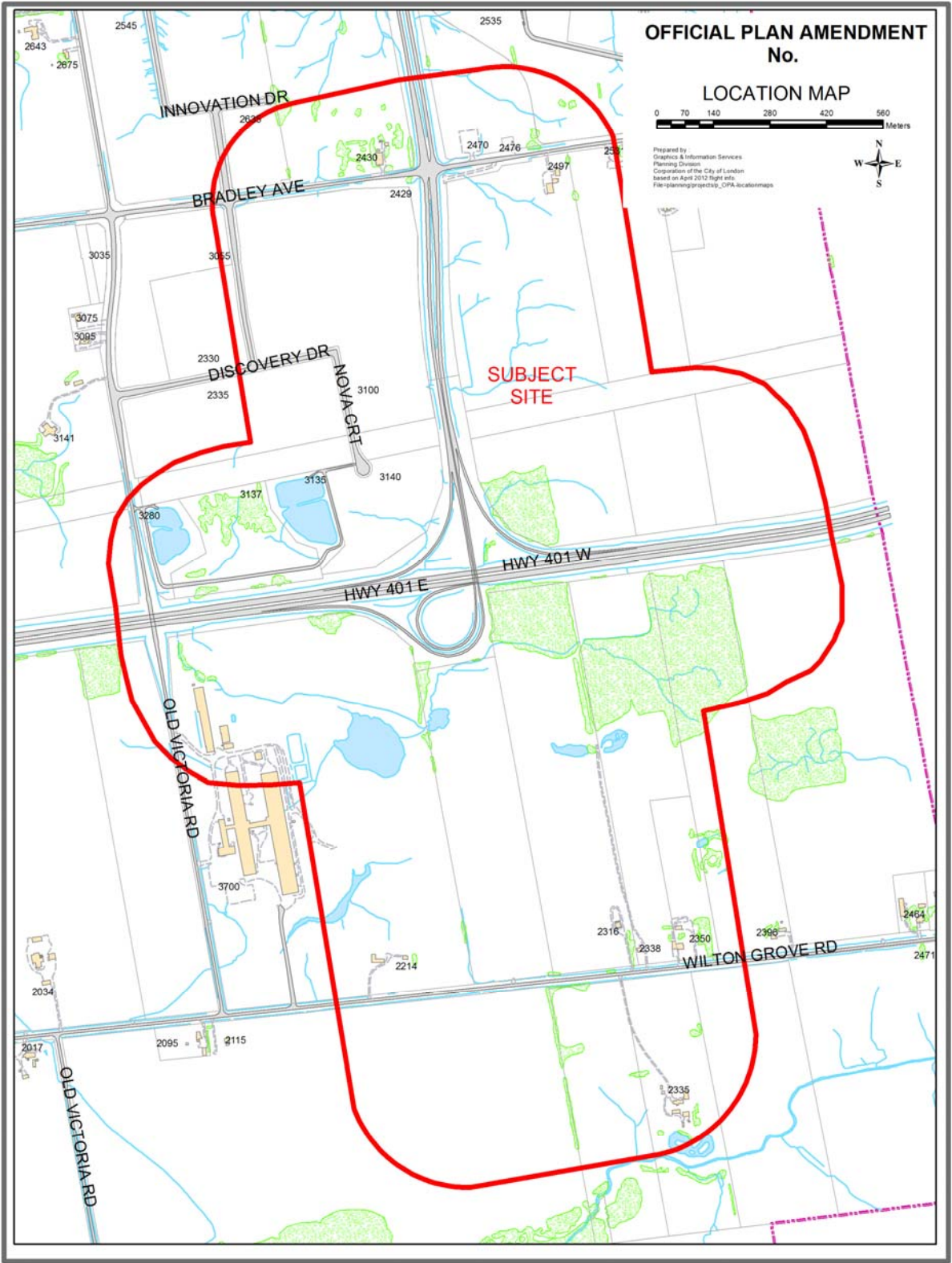
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Second Reading - August 27, 2013
Third Reading - August 27, 2013

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File: OZ-8195
Planner: M. Johnson

AMENDMENT NO.

to the

OFFICIAL PLAN FOR THE CITY OF LONDON

A. PURPOSE OF THIS AMENDMENT

The purpose of this Amendment is:

- 1. To amend Schedule “C”, Transportation Corridors, to the Official Plan for the City of London Planning Area by adding an extension to the Veterans Memorial Parkway from Highway 401 south to Wilton Grove Road, as indicated on Schedule ‘1’ attached hereto.

B. LOCATION OF THIS AMENDMENT

- 1. This Amendment applies to lands located within the Veteran Memorial Parkway corridor from Highway 401 south to Wilton Grove Road in the City of London.

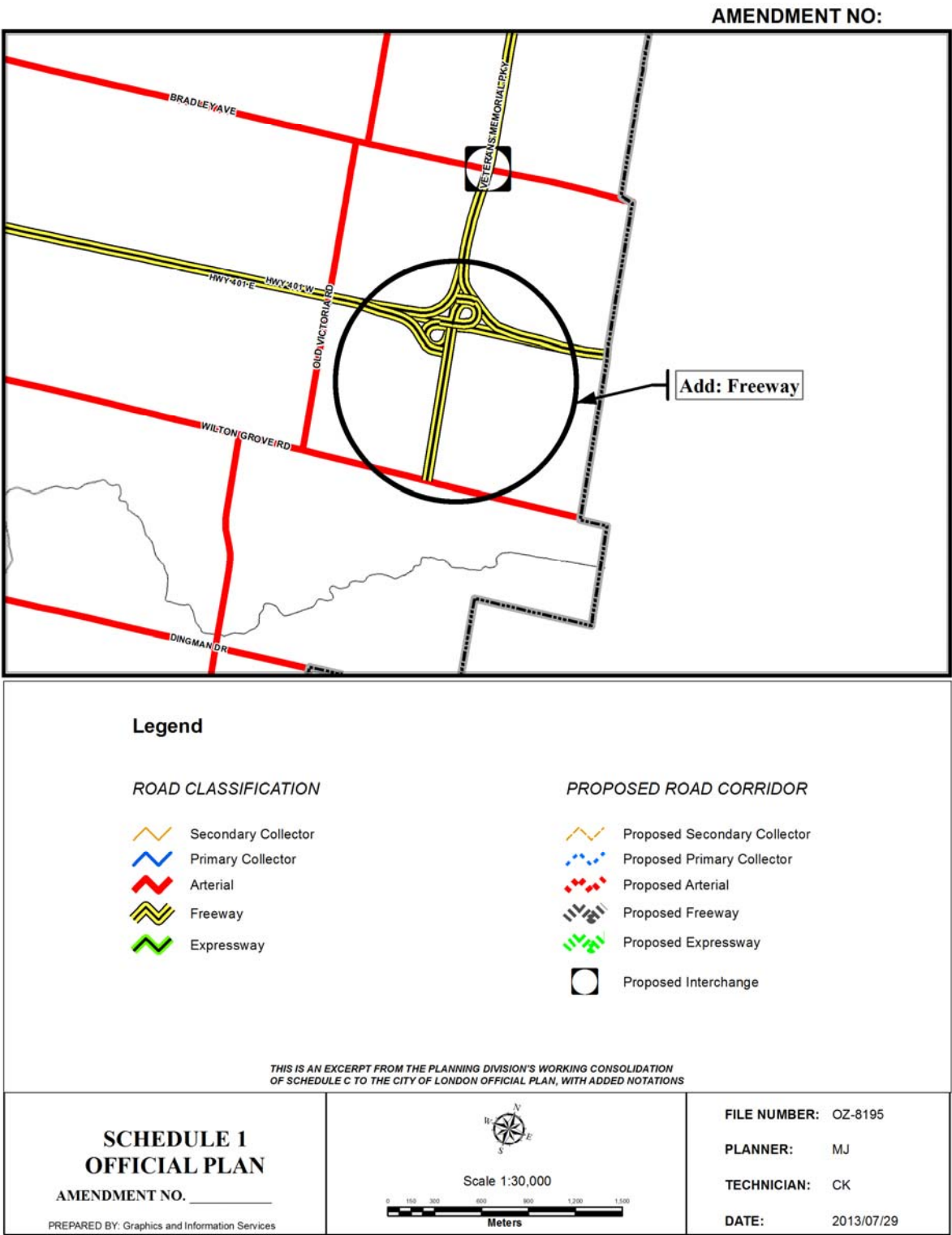
C. BASIS OF THE AMENDMENT

This amendment recognizes the function of Veterans Memorial Parkway as a critical element in the City of London’s transportation network. An Environmental Assessment has been carried out and a Transportation Environmental Study Report (TESR) has been accepted by the City to examine the impacts and design issues related to the future needs Highway 401 corridor and nearby road networks. The TESR and its recommendations serve as the basis for adding a south extension to the Veterans Memorial Parkway corridor. The proposed Official Plan Amendment implements the recommendations contained in the TESR to protect the VMP corridor and extend the VMP south to Wilton Grove Road.

D. THE AMENDMENT

The Official Plan for the City of London is hereby amended as follows:

- 1. Schedule “C”, Transportation Corridors, to the Official Plan for the City of London Planning Area is amended by adding an extension to VMP corridor from Highway 401 south to Wilton Grove Road, as indicated on “Schedule 1” attached hereto.



Appendix “B”

Bill No. (number to be inserted by Clerk’s Office)
2013

By-law No. Z.-1-13_____

A by-law to amend By-law No. Z.-1 Section 4.21 by adding the road allowance for south extension to Veterans Memorial Parkway.

WHEREAS City of London has applied to amend Section 4.21 by adding the road allowance for Veterans Memorial Parkway;

AND WHEREAS upon approval of Official Plan Amendment Number (number to be inserted by Clerk’s Office) this rezoning will conform to the Official Plan;

THEREFORE the Municipal Council of The Corporation of the City of London enacts as follows:

1) Section 4.21, Road Allowance Requirements – Specific Roads to By-law No. Z.-1 is amended by making the following changes:

i) adding new streets as follows:

Street	From	To	Street Classification	Limit of Allowance (Measured from Centreline)
Veterans Memorial Parkway	Highway 401	Wilton Grove Road	Freeway	30 m (98.4 ft)

The inclusion in this By-law of imperial measure along with metric measure is for the purpose of convenience only and the metric measure governs in case of any discrepancy between the two measures.

This By-law shall come into force and be deemed to come into force in accordance with Section 34 of the *Planning Act*, *R.S.O. 1990, c. P13*, either upon the date of the passage of this by-law or as otherwise provided by the said section.

PASSED in Open Council on August 27, 2013.

Joe Fontana
Mayor

Catharine Saunders
City Clerk

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Third Reading - August 27, 2013