



**Highway 3, Windsor to Leamington – Phase 3, Contract 2**  
GWP 3021-18-00  
Presentation to Essex County Council  
Presentation of the Technically Preferred Plan  
October 21, 2020



# Presentation

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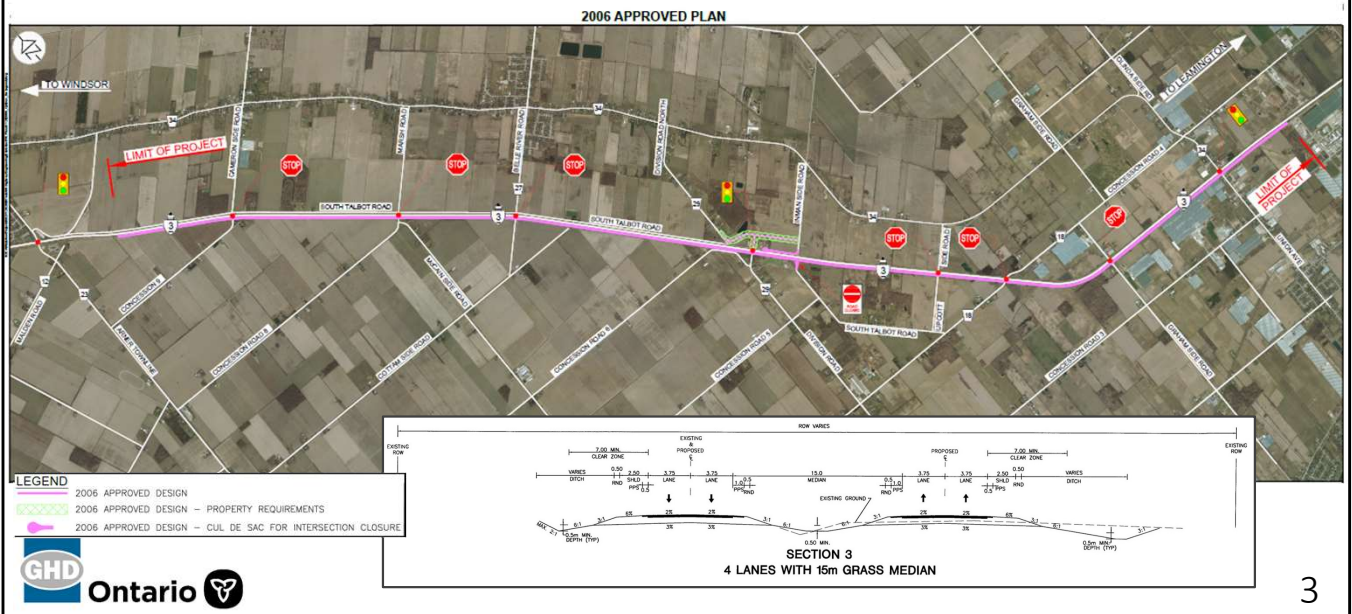


Thank you for the opportunity to present the review of the 2006 Approved Transportation Environmental Study Report (TESR) for the widening of Highway 3 from Windsor to Leamington. This project is the last piece of the puzzle and provides for the widening of Highway 3 from east of Arner Townline to east of Union Avenue. The distance is about 15 km.

Presently, those portions of a project not constructed within 5 years of a TESR Notice of Submission require a review before construction may begin. This “Highway 3 Widening and Safety Enhancements” study completes this review, and any significant changes requires the Ministry to issue an Addendum to the originally approved TESR.

This presentation highlights the results of the review and the corresponding changes to the approved plan. A TESR Addendum will be issued for the changes; hopefully later this fall.

# 2006 Approved Plan



The Ministry is in the process of awarding the design and construction for the widening of Highway 3 from west of Ellis Side Road in Essex to east of Arner Townline. Our study is for the continuation of the widening from those limits to east of Union Avenue (Essex Road 34).

The 2006 Approved plan provides for the widening of Highway 3 from 2 lanes to 4 lanes divided with a 15m grass median. Traffic signals were identified at Division Road and Union Avenue. South Talbot Road for most of the project runs parallel and adjacent to Highway 3. The approved plan provided for the realignment of Division Road to the north of Highway 3 to provide the required intersection spacing. Along with these modifications, Inman Sideroad was to be closed at Highway 3. The remainder of the intersecting sideroads were to remain open with traffic controlled through stop conditions on the sideroad.

## Results of Study Review

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- Environmental Review: No notable condition changes
- Transportation Review:
  - Traffic Signals Required at Belle River and either Essex Road 18 or Graham Side Road
  - Collisions a concern at Graham Side Road
  - Traffic volumes on the remaining sideroads are low

In 2006 at the time of the original study approval, traffic signals were only warranted at Division Road and Union Avenue; even with the twenty-year traffic projections completed.

With traffic signals warranted at Belle River and either Essex Road 18 or Graham Side Road, there was an opportunity to install the traffic signals to provide controlled access to the highway and possibly close the low volume intersections to eliminate conflict locations and enhance safety.

# Technically Preferred Plan: Online PIC Presentation



For the Public Information Centre, the following changes were presented to the public as part of the technically preferred plan.

The 4-lane widening occurs with the 15m grass median. Division Road is realigned as approved in 2006.

Traffic signals are included at Belle River Road, Division Road, Essex Road 18 and Union Avenue. At Belle River Road, South Talbot Road is realigned to separate the intersections.

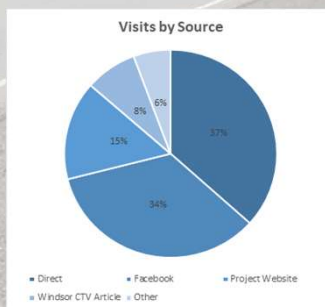
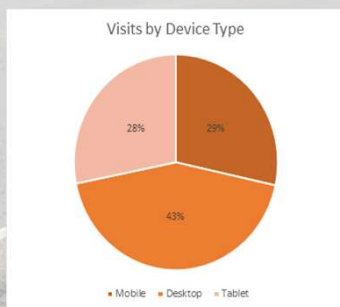
From a network view, with the provision of traffic signals at Arner Townline, Belle River Road, Division Road, Essex Road 18 and Union Avenue, reasonable and controlled access is provided to the community through the local road network if the remaining low volume sideroads are closed at Highway 3. Therefore safety within the higher speed Highway 3 corridor is enhanced.

For Cameron Side Road, Marsh Road, Inman Road, Upcott Side Road and Graham Side Road, closures would occur to the north and south of Highway 3 through connections to either South Talbot Road or through cul-d-sacs.

Therefore, the changes to the 2006 Approved Plan includes the installation of traffic signals at Belle River Road and Essex Road 18 along with the closures of Cameron Side Road, Marsh Road, Upcott Side Road and Graham Side Road.

# PIC Statistics

- Online PIC was live for comments from June 18 to July 6
- 1,718+ unique visitors
- 213 comments/phone calls received



Location	Number of Online PIC Visitors
Windsor	378
Cottam	214
Kingsville	146
Toronto	142
Leamington	93
Essex	53
Other	115



With the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, the project team revised the format for public engagement from a community Public Information Centre to an Online Public Information Centre. While the comment period ended July 6<sup>th</sup>, the Online Public Information Centre materials are still available on our project website for viewing.

In addition to the web site visits, we received about 13 phone calls. Most of the people calling had not yet had the opportunity to visit the website.

1,718 unique visitors is an outstanding turn-out and provides an understanding of the interest of the project to the local and greater community. 213 comments/phone calls is incredible. In my experience, for a project such as this one, comments received usually would be from 25 to 40.

To help us understand the nature of the comments received and to address the larger concerns, we separated the comments into different categories.

# Comments Received

Comment Category	Number of Comments
Support for project	87
Concern for sideroad closures	114
Concern about more traffic signals/Do not support traffic signals	38
Concerns about impacts to the farming community (not farmers)	23
Comments from the farming community	8
Other comments	79

- 87 of the 213 comments received were in support of the project but may have had a concern(s) with the technically preferred plan
- Support was generally strong for the widening.
- There was a sense of urgency from several comments.
- Specific comments related to support for traffic signals at Belle River
  
- 114 of the 213 comments received were concerned about one or more of the sideroad closures
- The next slide provides a better overview of the comments received in this regard.
  
- The other area of concern/support is related to the addition of traffic signals. Most of the comments received can be addressed with responses given that the traffic signals are warranted and the imbalance of traffic volumes for the implementation of roundabouts.
- Other negative comments related to the traffic signals are mainly related to Highway 3 progression delays.
- None of the comments received raised issues that would cause a review of the technically preferred plan.
  
- Impacts to Farmers from the closures was recognized by the Project Team during



the development of the Technically Preferred Plan. Highway 3 essentially severs farm property and as identified, the closure of Cameron and Marsh will require out of way travel as they will need to double back to highway 3 to gain access to their lands.

- We have spoken to most of the Farmers on the phone. Once we explained why we were closing the intersection, and the at-grade crossing of 4 lanes they understood the collision concerns. They are impacted.
- Other comments were related to the areas outside of the study area, cyclists concerns and property acquisition.

## Comments Received – Sideroad Closures

Comment Category		Number of Comments
B	Concern for side roads closures	114
B1	Do not support sideroad closure: Cameron	45
B2	Support sideroad closure: Cameron	2
B3	Do not support sideroad closure: Marsh	14
B4	Support sideroad closure: Marsh	5
B5	Do not support sideroad closure: Inman	4
B6	Do not support sideroad closure: Upcott	2
B7	Do not support sideroad closure: Graham	29
B8	Support sideroad closure: Graham	3

- 114 of the 213 comments received were concerned about one or more road closures
- The highest number of comments were associated with closing Cameron Sideroad; related to businesses, farming and residents travelling to nearby towns. There was a petition against this closure organized by a local business.
- The next highest number of comments were associated with Graham Sideroad; related to residents travelling to nearby towns, out of way travel and trucking on sideroads to access Highway 3.
- The other closure with comments were associated with Marsh; from residents and farmers
- Not many comments collected for Inman and Upcott
- It can be noted that some expressed support for the closure of Cameron, Marsh and Graham specifically



## Cameron Sideroad Closure Petition

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*“Stop the closure of intersection #3 highway and  
Cameron Sideroad”*

*“Please keep Access Roads Open to Keep Family  
Business Alive!!”*

Signed by 286 people

Supported by 1340 signatures on Facebook

Article in Blackburn News on July 2

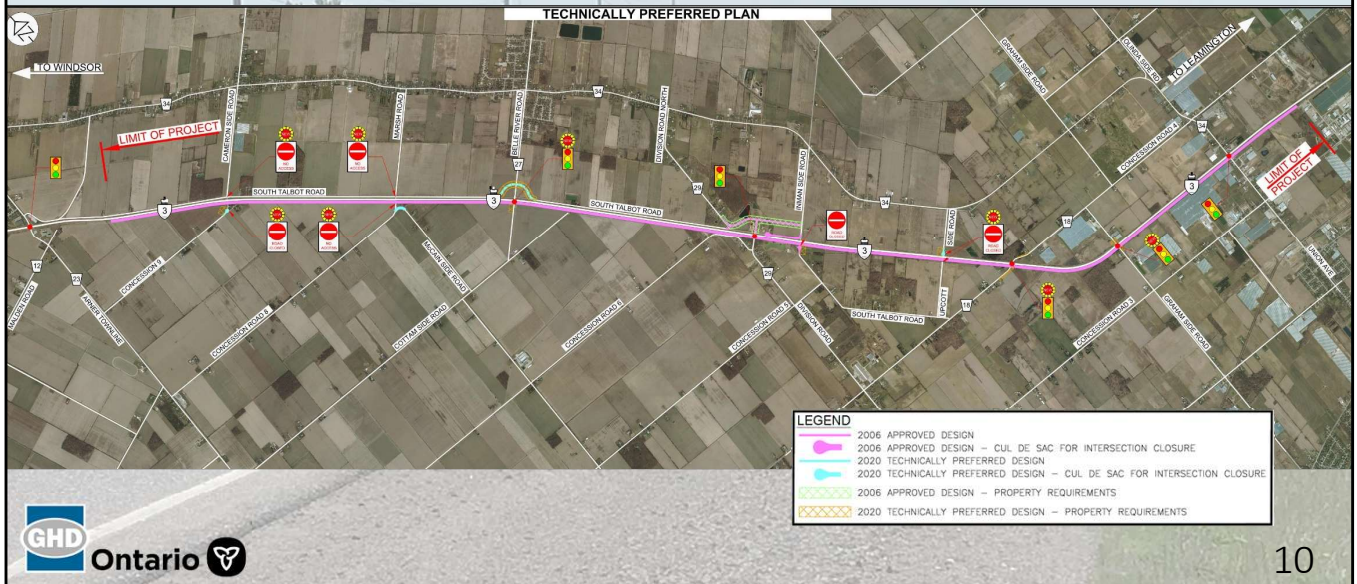
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As indicated, we did receive a petition to not close Cameron Sideroad due to the impacts to this business. Note that the petition was up over a two-week period and given the peak hour traffic volumes at the intersection, it appears that everyone was supportive and responsive in providing support through the petition.

The statements at the top are the actual petition that was signed. The Facebook petition had a link to a BlackburnNews article.

The closure of Cameron Sideroad and Graham Sideroad were the significant issues resulting from the PIC as identified by the Project Team.

# Technically Preferred Plan



Following the PIC and since the closing of the comment period, our project team has reviewed the PIC technically preferred plan with respect to the comments received and information obtained. We have met with staff from the Town and County and their local knowledge has been advantageous to this follow up review.

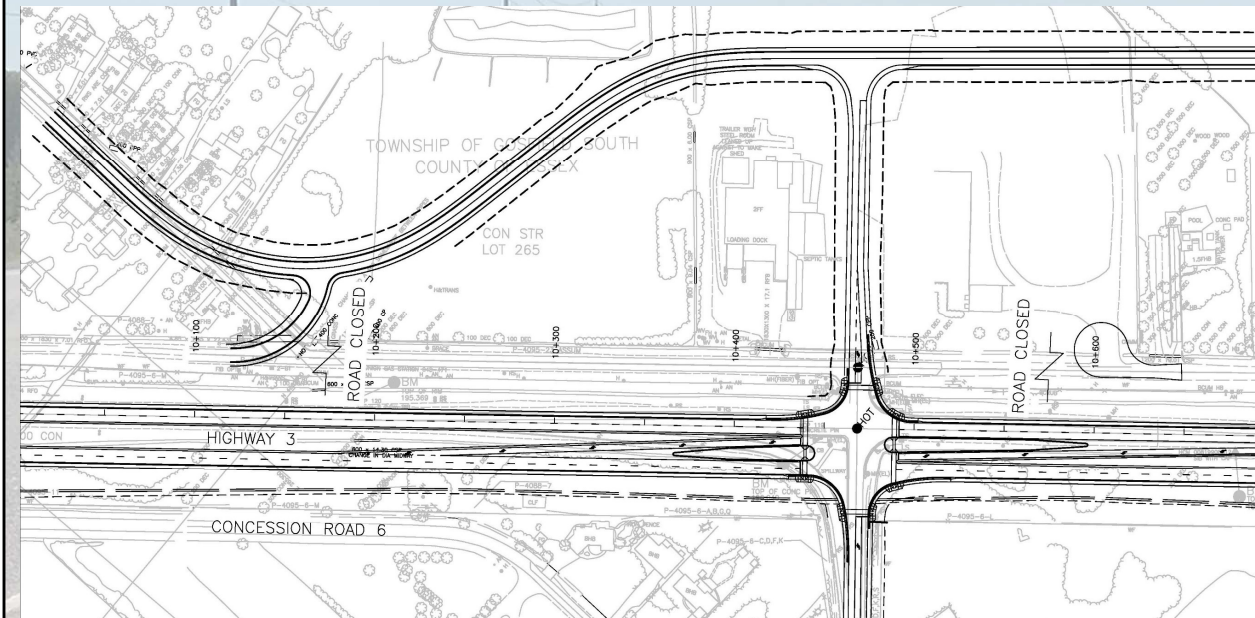
From the comments received, two issues were identified for additional consideration. The first issue was Cameron Side Road and “Did it make sense to keep it open, partially opened or closed?” The result of this review was the decision to keep Cameron Side Road closed due to the low traffic volumes, the impacts of adding unwarranted traffic signals, and the need to realign South Talbot Road similar to the realignment at Belle River Road.

The second issue was Graham Side Road. Graham Side Road has low to moderate traffic volumes, but the greater issue here is the Essex Road 18 and Graham Side Road do not compliment each other to the south of Highway 3. Graham Side Road is important for emergency services. With this thinking, Graham Side Road will remain open and will be signalized at Highway 3 along with Essex Road 18.

As an overview, the Technically Preferred Plan includes the following changes to the 2006 Approved Plan:

- Traffic Signals will be installed at Belle River Road, Essex Road 18 and Graham Side Road
- Cameron Side Road, Marsh Road and Upcott Side Road will be closed at Highway 3.

## Impacts to Essex County Roads



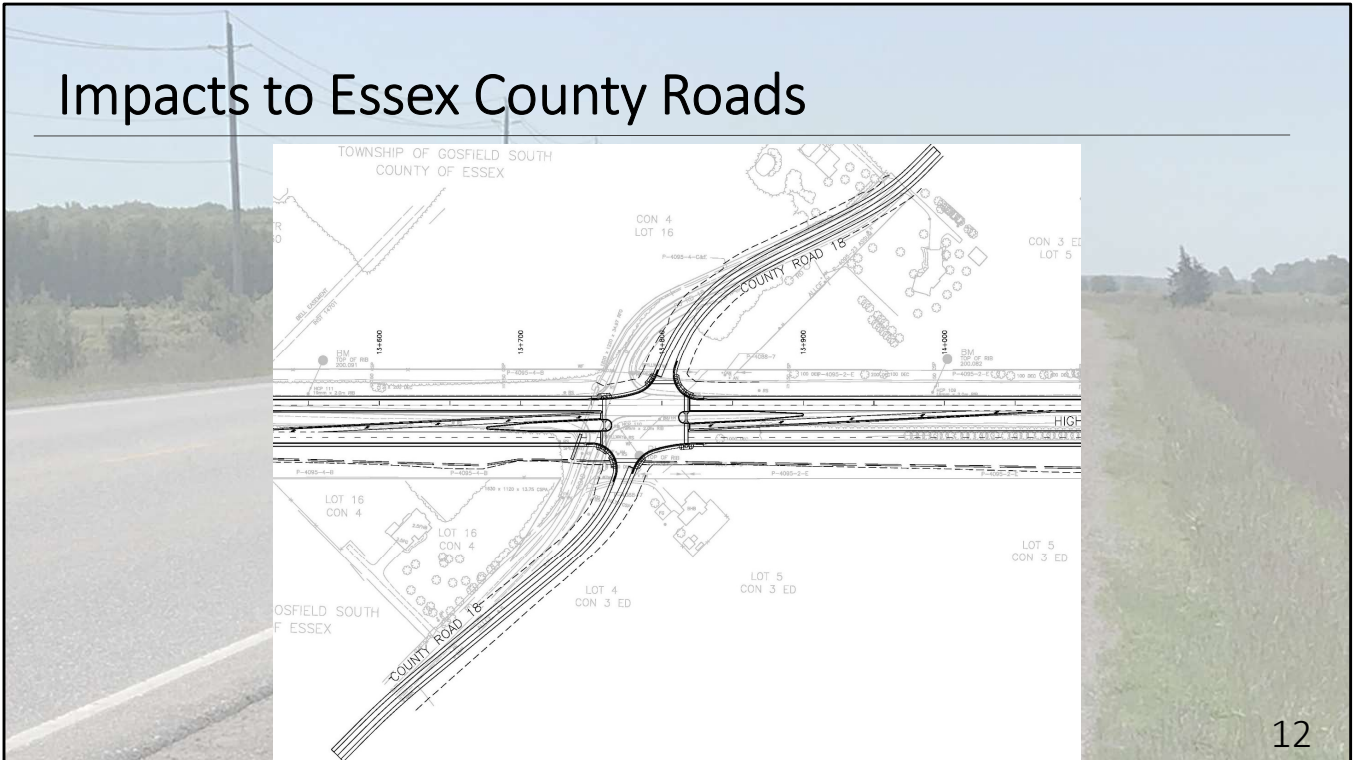
County staff asked us to present some of the changes that are proposed to occur to Essex County Roads as part of the technically preferred plan. In addition to the traffic signals, alignment adjustments are proposed.

This is the relocation of Division Road at Highway 3 to permit the separation of the intersection of South Talbot Road and Division Road from the Highway 3 and Division Road intersection.

It is our understanding that the posted or regulatory speed for Division Road to the north of Highway 3 is 80 km/hr. To accommodate the separation and minimize impacts, the design speed for Division Road was selected at 60 km/hr. In the future, MTO will return to propose to the County that the regulatory speed be reduced for the north approach to Highway 3 on Division Road. In addition, our project team received a number of comments from residents to the north of the project area along Division Road asking for a speed reduction.

This realignment is a part of the 2006 Approved Plan and is not to review through the Addendum.

# Impacts to Essex County Roads



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At Essex Road 18, with the proposed installation of the traffic signals, the alignment of Essex Road 18 needs to be modified to provide a smoother transition through the intersection. The current alignment provides for a design speed of about 40 km/hr. Similar to Division Road, the design speed with the improvement is 60 km/hr and MTO will return to propose to the County that the regulatory speed be reduced for this section of Essex Road 18.

## Next Steps

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- Completing the TESR Addendum
- Issue the Notice of Addendum
- Returning to Council for the Road Closures
- Preparing a Design Build Ready Report

Following today's presentation, an outline of the next steps for our project team include the following.





- Graydon and I would be pleased to respond to any comments/questions from council.