



Administrative Report

Office of the Director of Infrastructure Services

To: Warden McNamara and Members of Essex County Council

From: Jane Mustac, P. Eng.
Director of Infrastructure Services/County Engineer

Date: Wednesday, June 16, 2021

Subject: County Road 22 Corridor Study Update

Report #: 2021-0616-ISD-R020-JM

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide County Council information pertaining to the County Road 22 Corridor Alternative Strategies Study.

Background

The County of Essex and the Municipality of Lakeshore have contracted WSP to conduct an Alternatives and Strategies Study for the County Road 22 corridor through the Municipality of Lakeshore. The study area is a 5.8 km section of County Road 22 from CR 25 (East Puce Road) to West Belle River Road.

The Study builds upon and tries to balance the work completed in the following:

- The 2006, Environmental Assessment on County Road 22 from East Puce Road to Belle River Road.
- The 2012 Town of Lakeshore Corridor Transformation Strategy – CR 22 Special Planning Area Design Guidelines.
- The 2012 County Wide Active Transportation Systems (CWATS) Master Plan.
- County and Local Official Plans

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The aim of this study is to revisit the preferred design solution outlined in the 2006 Class EA and subsequent active transportation recommendation made in the 2012 CWATS Master Plan. Road design options were assessed in order to recommend a solution that is informed by current best practices and standards related to roadway design and complete streets, and to incorporate future development plans for this corridor. The study also includes a review of the internal local road network to determine options 'off the corridor' that could improve the conditions on County Road 22.

Lakeshore Resolution 377-11-2020

At their meeting on November 6, 2020, the Council of the Municipality of Lakeshore passed the following resolution:

Request that the County of Essex include the following projects in the 2021 Budget:

- Addition of a left turn signal to the traffic light at the County Road 22 and Renaud Line intersection;
- Installation of a traffic light at the County Road 22 and Emery Drive intersection; and
- Installation of a traffic light at the County Road 22 and Rourke Line intersection.

The scope of the corridor study included a review of the above-mentioned intersections. The Municipality of Lakeshore Resolution 377-11-2020 is attached in **APPENDIX A**

Discussion

The County of Essex has jurisdiction over a formal road classification system that was developed during the Essex-Windsor Regional Transportation Master Plan and County Road 22 was identified as a major arterial road. Country Road 22 is an important inter-regional transportation corridor within the Municipality of Lakeshore linking the major urban areas of the Municipality, including the communities of Belle River, Emeryville, Puce, Maidstone, and the Municipalities major commercial and employment areas. Travel within, to and from the Municipality of Lakeshore is highly auto dominated and is explained by the long travel distances between communities, commuting patterns to and from Windsor and the lack of public transit service and active transportation facilities.

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The 2006 Class EA addressed capacity and operating deficiencies that were identified in the 2005 Essex-Windsor Regional Transportation Master Plan (EWRTMP). The EWRTMP identified that widening of sections of County Road 22 were required at that time to meet existing traffic demands and that predicted traffic growth would create additional operational concerns along the corridor. Several design concepts were reviewed as part of the 2006 Class EA to address operational concerns and identify solutions that could accommodate east-west capacity for the future. Within this segment of the corridor, the preferred design solution included a five-lane cross-section from CR 25 (E Puce Road) to I.C. Roy Drive (4 travel lanes plus a centre-two way left turn lane) and a three lane cross-section from I.C. Roy Drive to West Belle River Road (2 travel lanes plus one centre left turn lane).

In 2012, the County completed its first active transportation strategy – the CWATS Master Plan. The 2012 CWATS Master Plan was developed to link the seven local municipalities in the County with an approximately 800 kilometre long active transportation network that would provide infrastructure for sustainable transportation and promote healthy and active lifestyles. The preferred design concept identified in the 2012 CWATS Master Plan upgraded the sidewalk on the south to a Multi-Use Trail. The proposed MUT would provide an excellent “all ages and abilities” (AAA) shared facility that is an enhancement over a conventional sidewalk for pedestrians, families walking together, runners, dog walkers, cyclists of all ages, in line skaters, those using mobility assisted devices and provides a facility for recreational users.

The Corridor Transportation Study (approved by Lakeshore Council in 2012) identified this portion of County Road 22 as a ‘Special Planning Area’ and envisions County Road 22 as a mixed-use corridor that supports a range of commercial, employment, residential and community uses.

Since completion of the 2006 Class EA, the 2012 CWATS Master Plan and the 2012 Corridor Transformation Study, the planning and design of roadways has significantly evolved with a much greater focus on complete streets, accessibility, vision zero and providing separated pedestrian and cycling facilities from motor vehicle travel lanes, where feasible. The Study team identified an opportunity to create a corridor which accommodates the needs of pedestrians, transit users, cyclists and vehicles. Based on the technical work performed and the community feedback, a preferred alternative design for County Road 22 that improves service while also enhancing access for active mobility along the corridor was identified.

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As part of the new vision for County Road 22, the Study is proposing a high quality of urban design along the corridor which may include special boulevard treatments, streetscaping, plantings, signage controls and the provision of street furniture to accommodate the needs of pedestrians, transit users, cyclists, trail users, as well as the automobile.

The design of an enhanced County Road 22 incorporates the movement in urban planning and street design that embraces a more “Complete Street” in both new street design and street retrofits. It builds upon the new TAC Geometric Design Guide for Canadian Roads, Ontario Traffic Manual Book 18: Cycling Facilities, and the 2015 Provincial Built Environment Standards to support accessibility. The addition of cycle tracks along the corridor with a multi-use pathway provides both a recreation and commuter “dedicated” cycling facility specific for cyclists, including e-bike users and e-scooters (where permitted). Having a multi-use pathway in the same corridor also means that faster moving cyclists will typically use the designated bikeway and slower users can enjoy the multi-path.

At the upcoming virtual Public Information Centre (PIC), the study team will present the analysis that led to the preferred alternative for the corridor and will present the suggested design alternatives for the study area. Members of the public are invited to attend the PIC to understand how their feedback was incorporated into the project, with an open discussion forum to follow.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had some impact to the proposed consultation strategy, schedule and public open house format. An online survey was completed earlier this year to gain insight from the public. The recommendation now is to host the Public Information Centre virtually and to provide information on the project primarily through online resources such as the County of Essex and the Municipality of Lakeshore websites and social media pages. The public notice is provided in **APPENDIX B**.

The County of Essex has partnered with the Municipality of Lakeshore on this initiative and a presentation was made to the Municipality of Lakeshore on June 8, 2021. Next steps for this study include the following:

- Virtual Public Open House - **June 17, 2021**
- Receive comments on preferred alternative – open until July 29, 2021
- Review preferred alternative with CWATS Committee – July 28, 2021
- Finalize concepts and develop a final preferred alternative
- Preparation of a draft report – Late summer 2021
- Preparation of a final report – Fall 2021

Lakeshore Resolution 377-11-2020

The County of Essex recognizes the need to balance competing objectives and generally supports a balance of roadway capacity optimization and enhancement that provide for high connectivity and travel efficiency throughout the region in appropriate areas. Access management and corridor protection were reviewed as part of this study.

The preferred alternative identifies capacity deficiencies along the CR 22 corridor under existing and future conditions. Alternative solutions to improve the conditions include alternative strategies including, but not limited to, the following:

- Improve public transit and travel demand management;
- Intersection improvements;
- Access management – future development access to be consolidated to adjacent local roads; and
- Diversion of traffic to local roads

The study recommends the improvement of several intersections with the addition of dedicated auxiliary lanes to facilitate turn movements at certain locations. In response to the locations identified in the attached resolution, the following information is provided:

- The addition of an advanced left turn signal to the traffic light at the County Road 22 and Renaud Line is warranted and will be implemented in 2021.
- Installation of a traffic light at the County Road 22 and Emery Drive intersection is not warranted but accommodation is proposed in the study following the closure of adjacent access roads to satisfy safety and operational concerns.
- Installation of a traffic light at the County Road 22 and Rourke Line intersection is not being progressed until a time that the traffic volumes reach a level to warrant a signal. The study identifies this location as a development driven requirement.

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Financial Implications

Funds are included in the 2021 Infrastructure Services budget to complete the remainder of the County Road 22 Corridor Study. This study is cost shared 50/50 with the Municipality of Lakeshore.

Recommendation

That County Council receive report number 2021-0616-ISD-R020-JM, County Road 22 Corridor Study Update, as information

Respectfully Submitted

Jane Mustac

Jane Mustac, P.Eng, Director of Infrastructure Services/County Engineer

Concurred With,

Mike Galloway

Mike Galloway, Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix Number	Title
A	Lakeshore Resolution 377-11-2020
B	Public Notice – CR 22 Corridor Study