

**County of Essex AMO Submission: Roads to Prosperity  
AMO Conference, Aug. 19, 2024 - 11:05 a.m. to 11:20 a.m.  
Infrastructure Request - Ministry of Transportation**

**What we are requesting**

1. \$60 million to build a grade-separated interchange at the intersection of County Road 22 and County Road 19, where traffic lights can no longer handle increased traffic and where gridlock is frustrating commuters, creating unsafe conditions and threatening to impede economic development. There were 123 collisions at this intersection between 2014 and 2023, the highest number of any location on the Essex County road network.
2. \$60 million to build a partial interchange or flyover at the intersection of County Road 22 and Lesperance Road. There were 111 collisions at this signalized intersection between 2014 and 2023. It is part of the crucial artery linking Essex County and the economic nucleus of Windsor-Tecumseh to the Gordie Howe International Bridge and two other border crossings. It is situated between the intersection of County Road 22 and County Road 19 and the intersection of E.C. Row Expressway (County Road 22) and Banwell Road (County Road 43), where the Province is investing \$50 million in a City of Windsor project that will improve the flow of traffic.

An environmental assessment completed in partnership with the Province in 2008 recommended grade-separated interchanges on County Road 22 at both Lesperance Road and County Road 19.

The County's priority is the intersection of County Road 22 and County Road 19, since it is the most congested and dangerous intersection along this vital economic artery and because it has a direct linkage to Highway 401. But any improvements to this intersection – and the recently announced improvements to E.C. Row Expressway (County Road 22) and Banwell Road – will have limited positive impact unless the intersection between them – at County Road 22 and Lesperance Road– is similarly upgraded.

The County is prepared to invest \$45 million in each of these \$105-million projects. This is in line with the funding arrangement between the Province of Ontario and the City of Windsor for improvements to the intersection of E.C. Row Expressway (County Road 22) and Banwell Road. The County allocates tens of millions of dollars annually for capacity expansion and, given the pressing need for these projects, funding can be reallocated from other long-term projects.

The County of Essex could leverage provincial funding to begin design work and identify property acquisition requirements in 2025-2026 as well as continue working on a detailed design and construction plan for a stormwater management solution at the intersection of County Road 19 and 22. Property acquisitions and planning would continue in 2026-2027 and a staging plan would be developed for the construction in 2028 of two interchanges.

This timeline would ensure the completion of other key projects, particularly improvements to the County Road 42 corridor, which also runs east-west and could handle detour traffic without imperiling commerce and the flow of motorists and goods.

### Why we are making this request

- The province, the federal government, the County of Essex and the City of Windsor have come together to facilitate unprecedented economic development that will create tens of thousands of jobs in the region, inject hundreds of millions of dollars into government coffers, and ignite an unprecedented surge in residential, commercial and industrial growth. These transformational projects include:
  - The \$5-billion NextStar Energy electric vehicle battery plant.
  - The \$2-billion regional hospital.
  - The \$6.4-billion Gordie Howe International Bridge border crossing.
- The intersection of County Road 22 and County Road 19 and the intersection of County Road 22 and Lesperance are within three kilometres of the NextStar Energy plant. The corridor is already heavily congested with commuter traffic and traffic will increase dramatically with the opening of the plant. These intersections are along one of the main routes through Essex County to the new regional hospital site, the Gordie Howe International Bridge and two other border crossings.

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- The Town of Tecumseh and Municipality of Lakeshore are preparing for the creation of 13,000 more housing units along County Road 22 to the east of these intersections, which will increase the traffic travelling to and from Windsor. Essex County has been preparing for this growth, but the addition of the battery plant, the new border crossing and associated spinoff businesses have accelerated the timeline.
- More than 47,000 vehicles a day travel through the County Road 22/19 and County Road 22/Lesperance intersections, which are already failing during peak traffic times.

A daily average of 14,898 westbound vehicles travel on County Road 22 east of County Road 19, and an average of 18,981 vehicles travel westbound on County Road 22 east of Lesperance Road. These numbers are comparable to a daily average of 16,430 westbound vehicles on Highway 401 east of County Road 19, according to Streetlight Insight 2020 data.

Fixing these two intersections simultaneously would achieve cost and project efficiencies and minimize economic and traffic disruptions.

- Grade-separated interchanges at County Road 22 and County Road 19 and at County Road 22 and Lesperance Road will smooth the flow of traffic going toward and away from Windsor, maximizing the province's \$50-million investment in upgrading the Banwell Road (County Road 43) and E.C. Row Expressway (County Road 22) intersection.

### **What Essex County has done to move these projects forward**

- An environmental assessment completed in partnership with the province in 2008 recommended grade-separated interchanges at the County Road 22 intersections with Lesperance Road and County Road 19.
- The county is working closely with the Town of Tecumseh to advance stormwater management work in preparation for upgrading the County Road 22 and County 19 intersection.
- Essex County is in the midst of spending \$105 million to expand and enhance the County Road 42 corridor from just west of County Road 43 to just east of County Road 19. County Road 42 runs parallel to County Road 22 and provides access to the hospital and battery plant from the south.

- Essex County is committed to an ambitious program of road capacity improvements, spending over \$30 million per year. It is prepared to commit that annual spending to creating grade-separated interchanges on County Road 22 at Lesperance Road and at County Road 19, with preparatory work beginning in 2025-2026 and construction starting in 2028.

### **What will happen if the province does not fund these projects**

- The County of Essex does not have the financial resources to undertake these projects, complete the upgrade of County Road 42 and improve other critical links around Windsor in a timely way. Our comprehensive capacity-building program is funded for the long-term and did not contemplate the need to accommodate in the short term the explosive industrial, commercial and residential growth generated by historic investments like the battery plant.
- Traffic tie-ups at the County Road 22 intersections with Lesperance Road and County Road 19 will hurt business investment in the fast-growing area, frustrate residents and commuters, create roadblocks for farmers and jeopardize the construction of new housing.
- The province's \$50-million investment in upgrading the E.C. Row Expressway and Banwell Road intersection will have limited positive impact as traffic continues to be backed up at two intersections to the east on County Road 22, as well as on County Road 19 and Lesperance Road.

### **Who to Contact for More Information**

The Ontario government has consistently shown its support for Windsor-Essex and expressed its belief that the region can leverage its skilled workforce, history of manufacturing excellence and proximity to the border to become a powerhouse that drives the provincial economy.

The County of Essex is seeking continued support to maximize the positive impact of the generational opportunities before it.

We had excellent discussions with government officials at last year's AMO conference and, more recently, at the Ontario Goods Road Association conference, and look forward to more positive dialogue.

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