

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 19, 2013

Item 2, Report No. 51, of the Committee of the Whole (Working Session), which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on November 19, 2013.

2

**NORTH MAPLE COMMUNITY BRIDGE
CLASS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT STUDY
NOTICE OF STUDY COMPLETION
WARDS 1 AND 3
VICINITY - NORTH OF MAJOR MACKENZIE DR. BETWEEN WESTON RD. AND JANE ST.**

The Committee of the Whole (Working Session) recommends:

- 1) That the recommendation contained in the following report of the Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works and the Director of Development / Transportation Engineering, dated November 12, 2013, be approved, subject to the following;

That Recommendation 1 be amended to read as follows:

1. THAT staff issue a Notice of Study Completion for the North Maple Community Bridge Class Environmental Assessment Study, file the Environmental Study Report with the Ministry of the Environment, and allow for a minimum of one month of public review in 2014, following the upcoming holiday season; and
- 2) That Communication C2, presentation material entitled, "*North Maple Community Bridge Class Environmental Assessment Study*", be received.

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works and the Director of Development / Transportation Engineering recommend:

1. THAT staff issue a Notice of Study Completion for the North Maple Community Bridge Class Environmental Assessment Study and immediately file the Environmental Study Report

Contribution to Sustainability

In considering the objectives of the City's Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan (Green Directions Vaughan), the North Maple Community Bridge will assist in:

- Providing a porous road network to support all modes of transportation
- Establishing a network of sidewalks, paths and trails to support all non-vehicular modes of transportation
- Developing a network of primary roads that support efficient and accessible public and private transit
- Reducing single occupant vehicle trips by supporting active transportation, carpooling and public transit
- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions
- Achieving sustainable growth and development

Economic Impact

The Class Environmental Assessment Study has been completed for a total approved Capital Budget cost of \$330,000.

CITY OF VAUGHAN

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Communications Plan

In order to obtain input from all affected stakeholders, an enhanced public consultation program was undertaken as part of the Class Environmental Assessment Study. Given the anticipated high level of stakeholder interest in the Study, a Citizen Liaison Committee (CLC) was formed to provide a comprehensive and inclusive public consultation process throughout the course of the Study. The main components of the consultation program included:

- a Notice of Study Commencement
- two Public Information Forums
- three Citizen Liaison Committee Meetings
- a Notice of Study Completion (pending)

A project specific website was established at the outset of the Study and has been maintained by the Study consulting team. All notification related to the Study was directly mailed to affected stakeholders on the project mailing list, advertised in local newspapers and posted on the City's website.

In addition, the bridge was identified as a key project in the City's recently completed Transportation Master Plan (TMP). An extensive public consultation program (independent of the consultation program noted above) was completed as part of the TMP study process.

A future public consultation program will be undertaken in conjunction with the detailed design and construction phases of this project allowing local residents further opportunity to provide input on the project.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to highlight the findings and recommendations of the North Maple Community Bridge Class Environmental Assessment Study so the Notice of Study Completion can be issued in accordance with the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process.

Background - Analysis and Options

The proposed North Maple Community Bridge is located within Block 33, which is bounded by Major Mackenzie Drive to the south, Weston Road to the west, Teston Road to the north, and Jane Street to the east. Highway 400 divides the Block into an east and west half as shown on Attachment No. 1.

Development in Block 33 has been identified in the City's Official Plan since the early 1990s. Development in the east half of the Block is for the most part complete. Development in the west half is nearing completion.

Block 33 development is predominantly residential with a prestige employment corridor adjacent to Highway 400 on the west side. The future Healthcare Campus (Mackenzie Vaughan Hospital) encompasses a large portion of Block 33 East at its south limit. The proposed bridge will connect Canada Drive to America Avenue thereby completing the approved east-west primary road network for the Block as shown on Attachment No. 1.

The Class EA Study for the bridge was commenced in 2009 concurrently with development of the west side of Block 33 when the final land use and local road layout had been established. The engineering consulting firm of AECOM Canada was retained by the City to complete the Study.

The Study was substantially completed by late 2010 but not finalized pending completion of the City's Official Plan review and related Transportation Master Plan (TMP). The TMP was completed in late 2012 and reaffirmed the need for the bridge.

CITY OF VAUGHAN

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Given the time lapse in the Class EA Study process, an update report on the status of the Study was prepared for Council in January of 2013. Based on the information presented in this report, Council adopted the following recommendation:

“THAT staff complete the North Maple Community Bridge Class Environmental Assessment Study and report back to a future Committee of the Whole Working Session on the study findings and recommendations”

An extract (containing the above noted recommendation and related background report) from the Council meeting minutes of January 29, 2013 is included as Attachment No. 2.

The North Maple Community Bridge is an important future component of the City's primary road network

The proposed bridge will connect the planned multi-modal transportation system network across Highway 400. This is necessary in order to:

- provide east-west road connectivity
- promote a greater sense of community by bridging the neighbourhoods
- facilitate access to community services
- improve efficiency of transit services through concession blocks
- increase connectivity and efficiency of the pedestrian and cycling networks
- decrease overall response times for emergency services
- minimize the need for local traffic to use the arterial network

Highway 400 represents a significant impediment to pedestrian and cycling movement between communities east and west of the highway throughout the City. The transportation network within the residential communities both east and west of Block 33 have been planned and constructed with consideration for east-west connectivity and porosity. Current network users must rely on Major Mackenzie Drive or Teston Road to cross Highway 400 as illustrated on Attachment No. 1. The presence of Highway 400 entry and exit ramps along these arterial road corridors creates discontinuities in the pedestrian and cycling networks as well as potential safety concerns. Construction of the bridge will provide the only east-west local pedestrian and cycling link crossing Highway 400 throughout this area.

The Class EA Study has established a preferred preliminary design for the bridge

The preliminary bridge design will accommodate two general purpose travel lanes, dedicated on-street bicycle lanes and sidewalks on both sides. A typical cross section of the proposed bridge is included as Attachment No. 3.

A preliminary landscape plan has been prepared illustrating how the embankment slopes along each approach (east and west side of the bridge) may be aesthetically enhanced and used to create a visual buffer for neighbouring land uses as shown on Attachment No. 4.

Recently completed traffic counts have validated the Study's original traffic estimates

Updated traffic counts were recently completed to validate the Study's original traffic estimates prepared in early 2010. This validation exercise was deemed necessary due to the potential changes in traffic volumes and patterns resulting from the Teston Road / Highway 400 interchange.

The updated Traffic Assessment Study confirms the need for the bridge. The traffic assessment results and the preferred preliminary design of the bridge were presented to the Citizen's Liaison Committee at a final meeting held on October 3, 2013.

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 19, 2013

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Various public agencies and the Ahmadiyya Community have expressed support for the bridge

During the course of the Study, support for the bridge was expressed by various public agencies including York Regional Police, Emergency Medical Services, York Region Transit and both York Region school boards. A representative of the Ahmadiyya Community (and CLC member) also voiced support for the bridge on behalf of approximately 1,000 families living within Block 33.

Concerns expressed by existing residents have been documented in the Study Report and will be further addressed during the detailed design stage of the project

Existing residents (primarily on the east side along America Avenue) expressed concerns with the estimated increase in traffic volumes thereby compromising pedestrian and neighbourhood safety; and increasing noise and pollution.

Based on the traffic estimates, the bridge is expected to carry moderate traffic volumes. The estimated traffic volumes are well within the limits of a livable residential street / neighbourhood.

Once the bridge is constructed, the connecting primary road network; Canada Drive and America Avenue, will be similar in scale and function to other existing minor collector roads throughout the City such as:

- Chancellor Drive between Pine Valley Drive and Weston Road
- Davos Road between Pine Valley Drive and Weston Road
- Autumn Hill Boulevard between Dufferin Street and Bathurst Street
- Marc Santi Boulevard between Dufferin Street and Bathurst Street

Safety concerns associated with increased traffic through the community can be mitigated with appropriate traffic calming / design elements. These elements can be incorporated into the detailed design of the bridge and be introduced on the connecting roads as necessary in consultation with local residents. Further, a traffic safety audit of the area could be undertaken to assess traffic conditions in conjunction with the bridge design and/or once the bridge has been constructed.

Other concerns raised by members of the CLC and local residents include:

- the potential for increased truck traffic through the community generated from the prestige employment area on the west side
- vehicular and pedestrian safety during adverse weather conditions due to proposed roadway approach slopes
- esthetics of the bridge and potential for depreciating property values in the area

The preliminary engineering design prepared in support of the Class EA Study meets all applicable safety standards for roadways and bridges. Urban design elements and landscaping features that esthetically enhance the overall structure and surrounding area will be further specified during the detailed design stage.

The Class EA Study Report will be available for public review before the end of November 2013

The Environmental Study Report (ESR) will be finalized to reflect the results of the updated Traffic Study and to document the outcome of the final CLC meeting held on October 3, 2013.

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 19, 2013

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Issuance of a Notice of Study Completion is the final point of contact (for the Class EA process) with the public, stakeholders and approval agencies. In accordance with the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment requirements, a minimum 30-day public review period shall be provided for review and comment on the final ESR. Once the 30-day public review period is complete, and no significant issues or concerns are raised, the EA Study would be deemed approved by the Ministry of the Environment.

The construction of the bridge will be programed when there is a local demand

Staff will continue to monitor the operation of the local transportation system in the usual manner, and would make appropriate recommendations for Council consideration regarding programming the detailed design and construction of the bridge, when there is a transportation and local demand for it.

Regional Implications

The North Maple Community Bridge is identified in the Region's Official Plan and Transportation Master Plan as a key component of the overall transportation network for the City. York Region's latest Transportation Master Plan update was completed in 2009. It is anticipated the Region will be commencing a TMP update process in 2014.

Regional staff has been involved throughout the duration of the Class EA Study and are supportive of the project.

The North Maple Community Bridge is estimated to cost approximately \$9 million (inclusive of the Class Environmental Assessment Study, detailed design and construction). Implementation of the bridge will complete the planned primary local road network for the area and will provide local traffic with alternate routes to the adjacent arterial road grid. In accordance with Regional policy, it is anticipated the Region will fund 33% of the cost of the construction of the North Maple Community Bridge.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020 / Strategic Plan

In consideration of the strategic priorities related to Vaughan Vision 2020, the recommendation of this report will assist in:

- The pursuit of excellence in service delivery
- Enhancing and ensuring community safety, health and wellness
- Leading and promoting environmental and financial sustainability
- Planning and managing growth, and economic vitality

The recommendations of this report will assist in advancing the City's Strategic Plan initiative to integrate sustainable transportation measures with land use planning. This report is therefore consistent with the priorities previously set by Council.

Conclusion

The proposed North Maple Community Bridge is an important component of the City's multi-modal primary road network. The necessary Class Environmental Assessment Study for the bridge is now complete. The Environmental Study Report (ESR) has established a preferred preliminary design for the bridge and addressed all concerns raised by local residents and members of the Citizen's Liaison Committee.

CITY OF VAUGHAN

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The final step in the Class EA process requires the issuance of a Notice of Study Completion. Upon issuance of this notice, the ESR will be kept on file for a mandatory 30-day public review period. During this period, the public may further review the ESR and submit comments and/or concerns to the City and the Ministry of the Environment. Comments received during this period will be addressed by staff and/or the Study consulting team. Should any member of the public not be satisfied with the response, a Part II Order request may be submitted directly to the Minister of the Environment thereby initiating an independent Ministry review process.

Accordingly, staff recommends that the Notice of Study Completion be issued immediately for the North Maple Community Bridge Class EA Study to begin the public review period.

Attachments

1. Location Plan / Primary Road Network
2. Extract From Council Meeting Minutes of January 29, 2013
3. Preferred Typical Section
4. Landscape Plan

Report prepared by:

Michael Frieri, Manager of Engineering Planning & Studies, Ext. 8729
Selma Hubjer, Manager of Transportation Engineering, Ext. 8674
Tony Artuso, Senior Engineering Assistant, Ext. 8396

(A copy of the attachments referred to in the foregoing have been forwarded to each Member of Council and a copy thereof is also on file in the office of the City Clerk.)

C2 - CW (WS) November 12/13
Item 2



North Maple Community Bridge Class Environmental Assessment Study

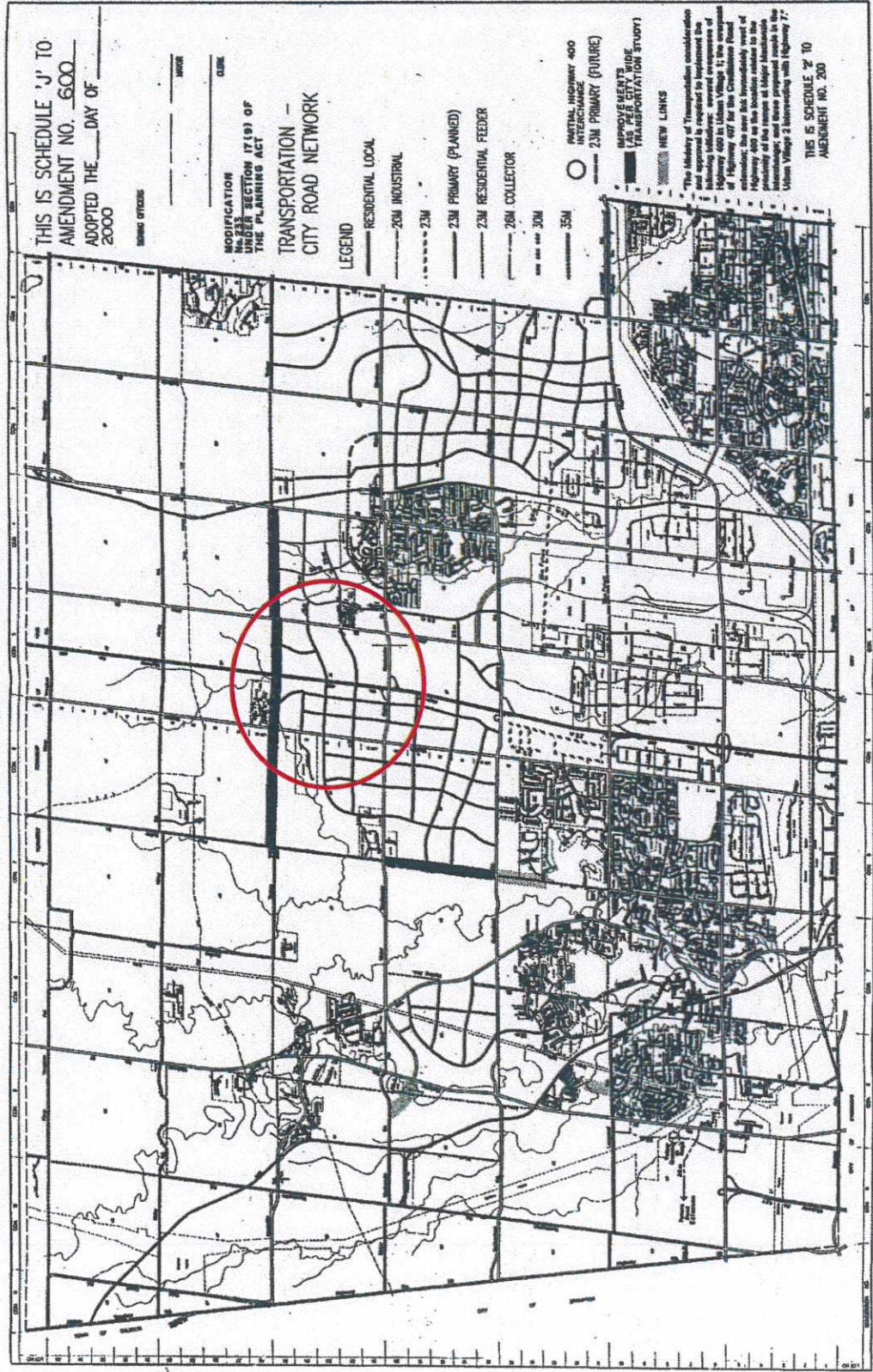
Committee of the Whole (Working Session)
November 12, 2013



North Maple Community Bridge Presentation Overview

- Context and Background
- Class EA Study Process and Findings
- Next Steps and Questions

OPA 400/600 Transportation Network



Block 33

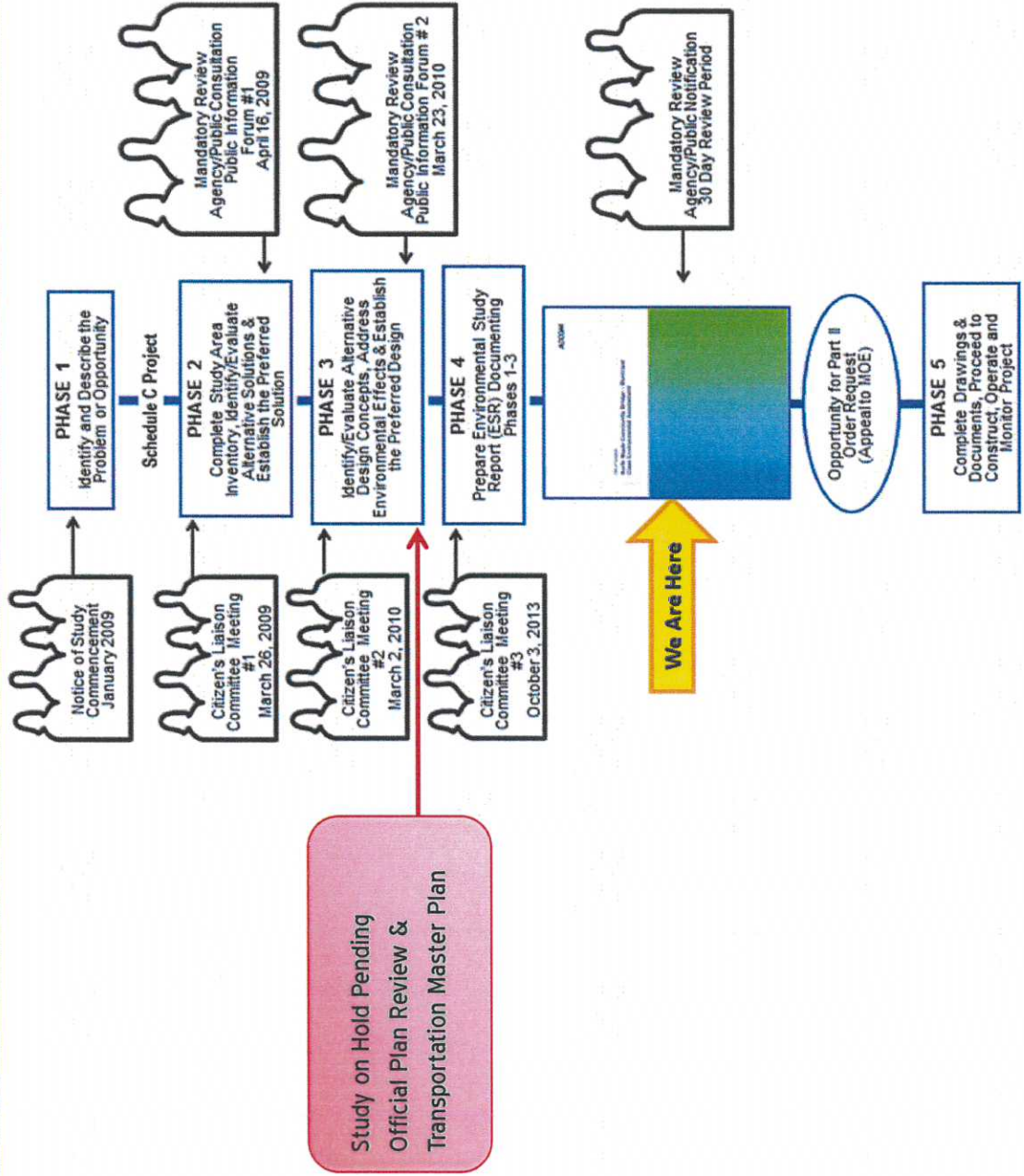


2011 AIR PHOTO

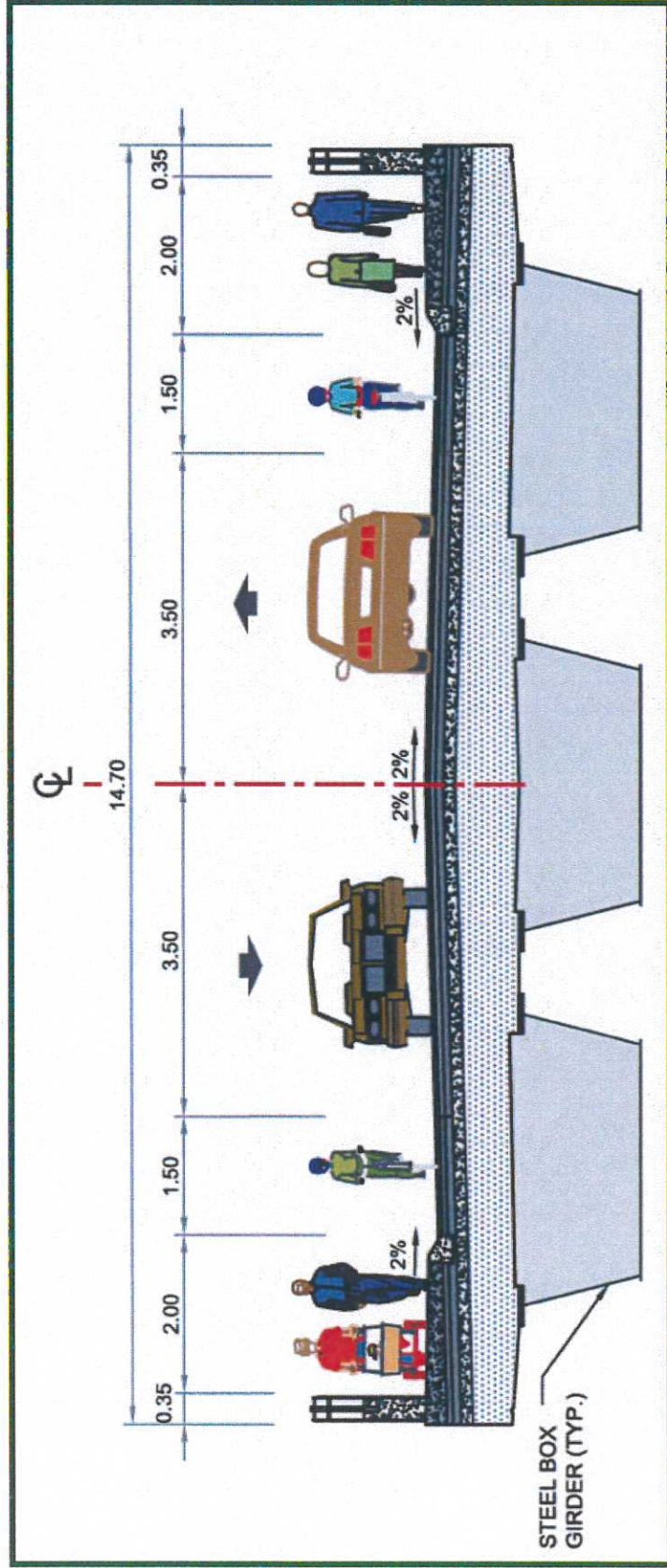
The proposed bridge is intended to:

- Provide east-west road connectivity between communities
- Minimize travel distance and time, provide route options and reduce reliance on arterial network
- Increase connectivity and efficiency of pedestrian / cycling networks
- Improve efficiency of transit services through concession blocks
- Decrease overall response times for emergency services
- Facilitate access to community services
- Promote greater sense of community

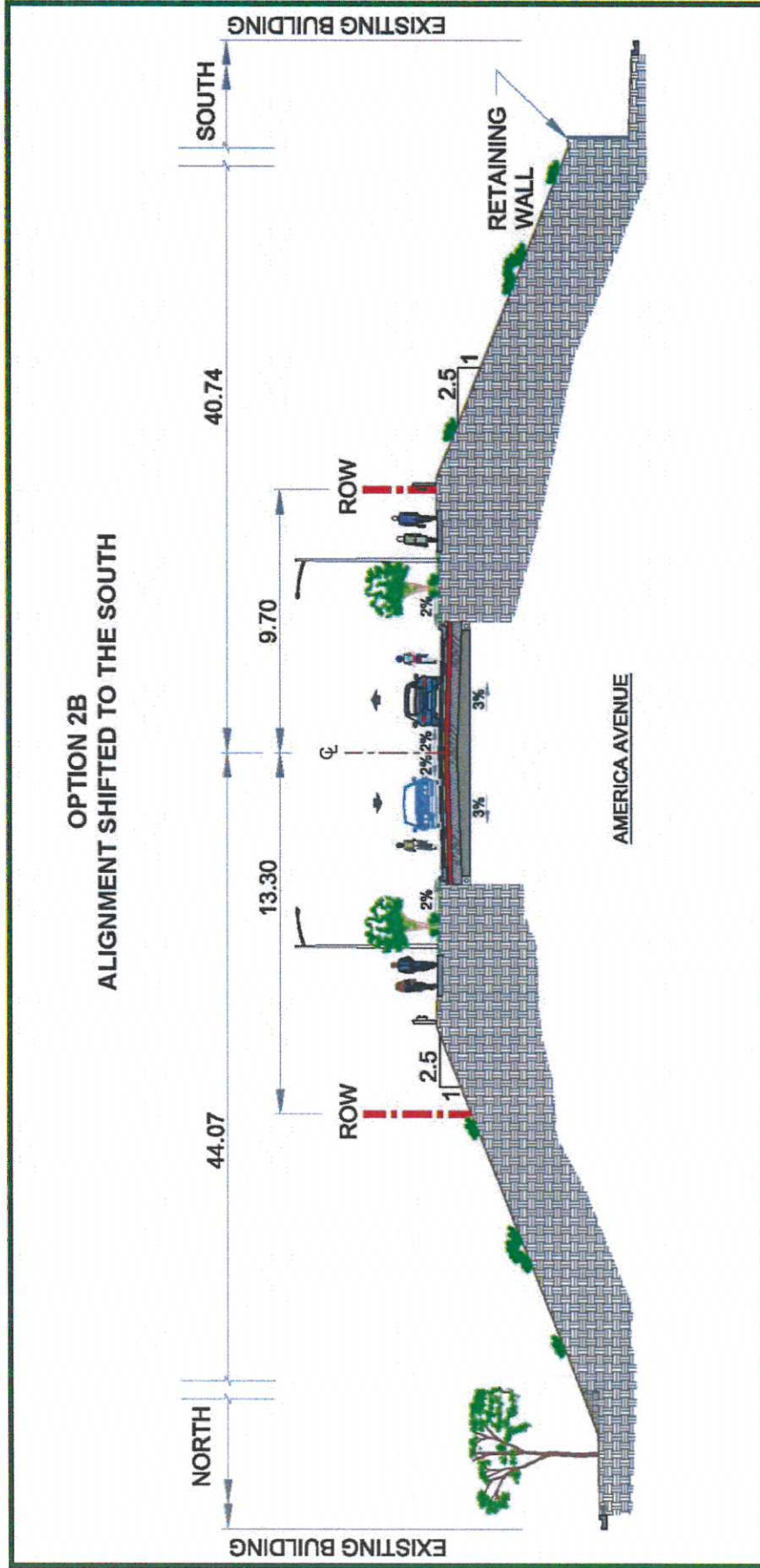
Class EA Study Process



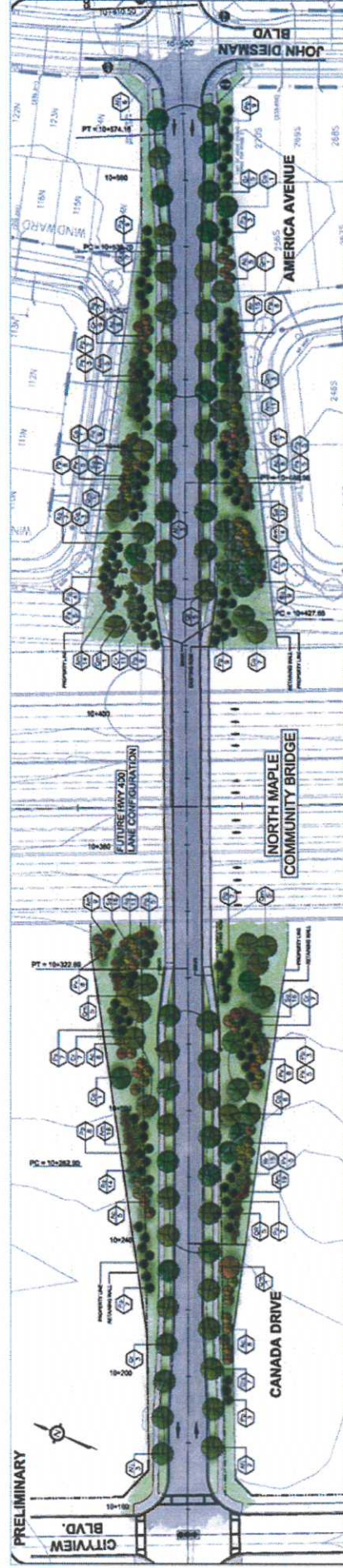
Preferred Preliminary Design



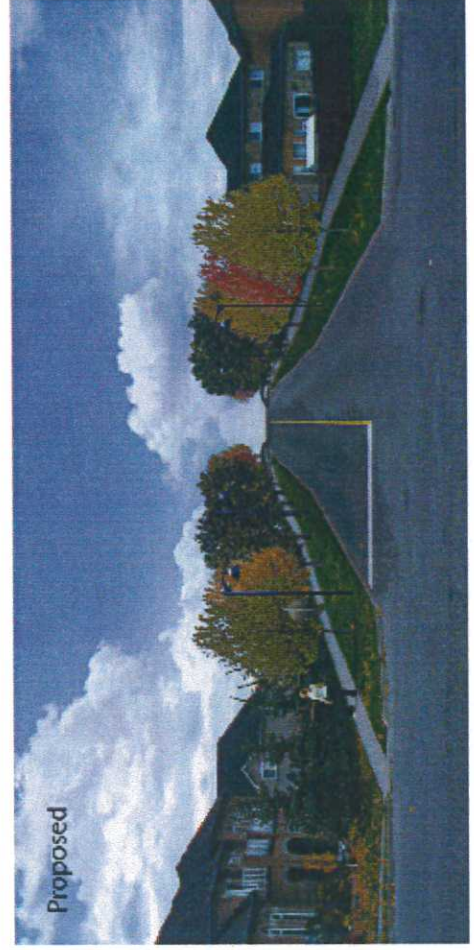
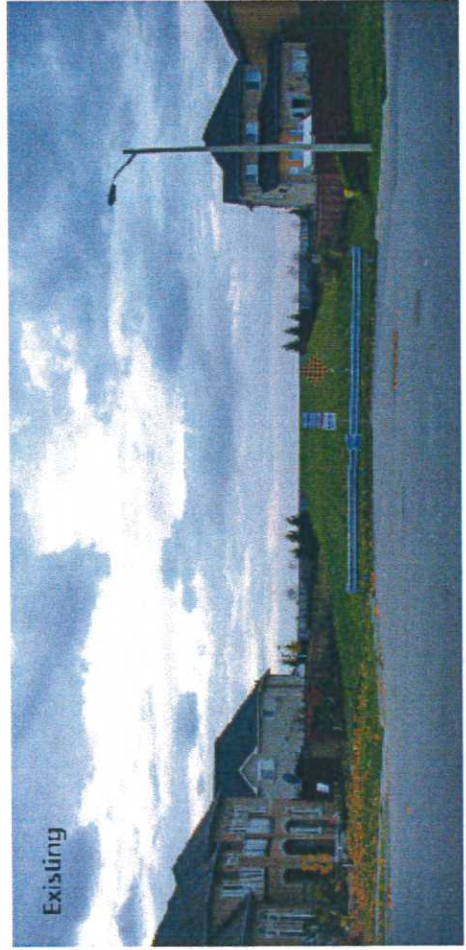
America Avenue Cross Section



Landscape Concept



Block 33 East - Approach



Concerns Raised by Local Residents

- Increase in traffic volumes, noise and pollution
- Pedestrian and neighbourhood safety
- Infiltration of truck traffic from prestige employment area in Block 33W
- Roadway approach slopes
- Esthetics of bridge
- Potential for depreciating property values in the area

Mitigation Measures

- Preliminary design meets all applicable safety standards for roadways and bridges
- Moderate traffic volumes projected, within limits of a livable residential neighbourhood
- Incorporate appropriate traffic calming / design elements at detailed design stage
- Incorporate urban design / landscaping elements to esthetically enhance structure and surrounding area at detailed design stage
- Traffic safety audit pre and/or post construction

Next Steps in the Class EA Process

- Environmental Study Report (ESR) is now finalized
- Issue Notice of Study Completion
- Place ESR on Public Record for 30 day public review period
- During 30 day review period public will have the opportunity to comment directly to the Project Team
- Any individual may submit a request to the Minister of the Environment for a Part II Order under the Environmental Assessment Act

Future Implementation

- Monitor operation of the local transportation system
- Make appropriate recommendations for Council consideration regarding programming of detailed design and construction phases
- Implementation would occur when there is a transportation and local demand
- Undertake further public consultation with local stakeholders during detailed design and construction phases



Questions ?



Similar East-West Collector Roads

- Chancellor Drive – Block 37
- Davos Road – Block 39
- Autumn Hill Boulevard – Block 10

Chancellor Drive – Block 37



Davos Road – Block 39



Autumn Hill Boulevard – Block 10



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (WORKING SESSION) – NOVEMBER 12, 2013

NORTH MAPLE COMMUNITY BRIDGE CLASS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT STUDY NOTICE OF STUDY COMPLETION WARDS 1 AND 3 VICINITY - NORTH OF MAJOR MACKENZIE DR. BETWEEN WESTON RD. AND JANE ST.

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works and the Director of Development / Transportation Engineering recommend:

1. THAT staff issue a Notice of Study Completion for the North Maple Community Bridge Class Environmental Assessment Study and immediately file the Environmental Study Report with the Ministry of the Environment.

Contribution to Sustainability

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The Class EA Study Report will be available for public review before the end of November 2013

The Environmental Study Report (ESR) will be finalized to reflect the results of the updated Traffic Study and to document the outcome of the final CLC meeting held on October 3, 2013.

Issuance of a Notice of Study Completion is the final point of contact (for the Class EA process) with the public, stakeholders and approval agencies. In accordance with the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment requirements, a minimum 30-day public review period shall be provided for review and comment on the final ESR. Once the 30-day public review period is complete, and no significant issues or concerns are raised, the EA Study would be deemed approved by the Ministry of the Environment.

The construction of the bridge will be programed when there is a local demand

Staff will continue to monitor the operation of the local transportation system in the usual manner, and would make appropriate recommendations for Council consideration regarding programming the detailed design and construction of the bridge, when there is a transportation and local demand for it.

Regional Implications

The North Maple Community Bridge is identified in the Region's Official Plan and Transportation Master Plan as a key component of the overall transportation network for the City. York Region's latest Transportation Master Plan update was completed in 2009. It is anticipated the Region will be commencing a TMP update process in 2014.

Regional staff has been involved throughout the duration of the Class EA Study and are supportive of the project.

The North Maple Community Bridge is estimated to cost approximately \$9 million (inclusive of the Class Environmental Assessment Study, detailed design and construction). Implementation of the bridge will complete the planned primary local road network for the area and will provide local traffic with alternate routes to the adjacent arterial road grid. In accordance with Regional policy, it is anticipated the Region will fund 33% of the cost of the construction of the North Maple Community Bridge.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020 / Strategic Plan

In consideration of the strategic priorities related to Vaughan Vision 2020, the recommendation of this report will assist in:

- The pursuit of excellence in service delivery
- Enhancing and ensuring community safety, health and wellness
- Leading and promoting environmental and financial sustainability
- Planning and managing growth, and economic vitality

The recommendations of this report will assist in advancing the City's Strategic Plan initiative to integrate sustainable transportation measures with land use planning. This report is therefore consistent with the priorities previously set by Council.

Conclusion

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The final step in the Class EA process requires the issuance of a Notice of Study Completion. Upon issuance of this notice, the ESR will be kept on file for a mandatory 30-day public review period. During this period, the public may further review the ESR and submit comments and/or concerns to the City and the Ministry of the Environment. Comments received during this period will be addressed by staff and/or the Study consulting team. Should any member of the public not be satisfied with the response, a Part II Order request may be submitted directly to the Minister of the Environment thereby initiating an independent Ministry review process.

Accordingly, staff recommends that the Notice of Study Completion be issued immediately for the North Maple Community Bridge Class EA Study to begin the public review period.

Attachments

1. Location Plan / Primary Road Network
2. Extract From Council Meeting Minutes of January 29, 2013
3. Preferred Typical Section
4. Landscape Plan

Report prepared by:

Michael Frieri, Manager of Engineering Planning & Studies, Ext. 8729
Selma Hubjer, Manager of Transportation Engineering, Ext. 8674
Tony Artuso, Senior Engineering Assistant, Ext. 8396

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Jankowski
Commissioner of Engineering
And Public Works

Andrew Pearce
Director of Development /
Transportation Engineering

ATTACHMENT NO. 1



LEGEND

- PROPOSED OVERPASS
- PRIMARY ROAD NETWORK

NORTH MAPLE COMMUNITY BRIDGE LOCATION PLAN / PRIMARY ROAD NETWORK



ATTACHMENT NO. 2

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 29, 2013

Item 18, Report No. 1, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on January 29, 2013.

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**NORTH MAPLE COMMUNITY BRIDGE
CLASS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT STUDY UPDATE
WARDS 1 AND 3**

VICINITY - NORTH OF MAJOR MACKENZIE DR. BETWEEN WESTON RD. AND JANE ST.

The Committee of the Whole recommends:

- 1) That the recommendation contained in the following report of the Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works, dated January 15, 2013, be approved; and
- 2) That staff not proceed with an RFP for detailed design work under Project #EN-1963-13 until such time as a report comes back to Council detailing the final results after the Class Environmental Assessment clears the regulatory process.

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works recommends:

1. THAT staff complete the North Maple Community Bridge Class Environmental Assessment Study and report back to a future Committee of the Whole Working Session on the study findings and recommendations.

Contribution to Sustainability

In considering the objectives of the City's Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan (Green Directions Vaughan), constructing the North Maple Community Bridge will assist in:

- Developing a City with sustainable built form
- Establishing a network of sidewalks, paths and trails that support all modes of non-vehicular transportation
- Developing a network of primary roads that support efficient and accessible public and private transit
- Reducing single occupant vehicle trips by supporting active transportation, carpooling and public transit
- Achieving sustainable growth and development

Economic Impact

The North Maple Community Bridge is currently estimated to cost approximately \$8.5 million (inclusive of the Class Environmental Assessment Study, detailed design and construction). It is anticipated that York Region will contribute 33% to the capital costs of the bridge given the associated operational benefits to the adjacent arterial road network. Accordingly, the net cost of the bridge to the City will be approximately \$6.6 million with funding from City-Wide Development Charges.

The Class Environmental Assessment Study, detailed design, and construction costs are included in the current City-Wide Development Charges By-law. It is expected these costs will be carried forward to the City's latest update of the Development Charges By-Law and associated Background Study currently underway.

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 29, 2013

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Additional funding in the amount of \$38,110 is required to complete the North Maple Bridge Class Environmental Assessment Study. An additional funding request to this effect has been included in the draft 2013 Capital Budget submission for Council's consideration.

Once constructed, the North Maple Community Bridge will incur normal expenses associated with annual operating, maintenance and life cycle costs.

Communications Plan

In order to obtain input from all affected stakeholders, an enhanced public consultation program was undertaken as part of the Class Environmental Assessment Study. Given the anticipated high level of stakeholder interest in the Study, a Citizen Liaison Committee (CLC) was formed to provide a comprehensive and inclusive public consultation process throughout the course of the Study. The main components of the consultation program include:

- Notice of Study Commencement
- Two Public Information Forums
- Two Citizen Liaison Committee Meetings
- Final Citizen Liaison Committee Meeting (Pending)
- Notice of Study Completion (Pending)

A project specific website was also established at the outset of the Study, which has been maintained by the Study consulting team.

In addition, all notification related to the Study was directly mailed to affected stakeholders on the project mailing list, advertised in local newspapers and posted on the City's website.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the status of the North Maple Community Bridge Class Environmental Assessment (EA) Study, and to seek Council's endorsement to complete the Study.

Background - Analysis and Options

The proposed North Maple Community Bridge is located within Block 33, which is bounded by Major Mackenzie Drive to the south, Weston Road to the west, Teston Road to the north, and Jane Street to the east. Highway 400 divides the Block into an east and west half as shown on Attachment No. 1.

Residential development in Block 33 was originally identified in the City's Official Plan Amendments (OPA) 400 and 600 as a component of Vellore Urban Village 1. Development in the eastern half of the block began in 2001 and is now for the most part complete. Development in the western half commenced around 2008 and is now nearing completion. The development in Block 33 is predominantly residential with a prestige employment corridor adjacent to Highway 400 in Block 33 West. The future Vaughan Healthcare Campus encompasses a large portion of Block 33 East at its south limit.

The proposed overpass connects Canada Drive to America Avenue and is a key component of the Block's multi-modal transportation system serving vehicles, cyclists, pedestrians, transit, community connectivity, emergency services, and other public services. The proposed road link will complete the east-west primary road system within the Block as shown on Attachment No. 1.

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The North Maple Community Bridge is an important component of the City's primary road network

The connection of the City's primary road grid over Highway 400 is necessary to provide east-west connectivity in the road network. These connections are intended to:

- promote a greater sense of community by bridging the neighbourhoods east and west of the highway
- facilitate access to community services
- improve efficiency of primary road transit services through concession blocks
- increase connectivity and efficiency of the pedestrian and cycling network
- decrease overall response times for emergency services within the neighbouring areas

In addition, a continuous grid of primary roads through concession blocks minimizes the need for local traffic to use the arterial network.

Both the City and Regional Official Plans and Transportation Master Plans continue to support the need for Highway 400 mid-block collector road crossings

The need for a primary road crossing of Highway 400 within Block 33 was originally established at the planning level through numerous policies and studies, mainly:

- Official Plan Amendment 400 and supporting Transportation Study
- Block 33 (East) Planning Basis Report and supporting Transportation Study
- Official Plan Amendment 600 and supporting Transportation Study
- Block 33 (West) Planning Basis Report and supporting Transportation Study
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan
- Vaughan OP 2010 and Transportation Master Plan
- York Region Official Plan
- York Region Transportation Master Plan

Background transportation studies completed in support of both OPA 400 and 600 identified the overpass as a critical component of the overall transportation network for the area. The deletion of the proposed overpass within Block 32 further increases the importance of the Block 33 overpass to meet ultimate traffic demands crossing Highway 400 and to alleviate traffic pressures associated with the adjacent Regional arterial roads (Major Mackenzie Drive and Teston Road).

Recently, the City's new Official Plan Amendment (September 2010) and Transportation Master Plan (TMP) reaffirmed the need for the bridge and reinforced the notion that road links across 400 series highways are important in the overall primary road network, especially for the surrounding residential areas on both sides of the highway. Travel demand forecasting models completed as part of the City's Transportation Master Plan indicate a deficiency in east-west capacity and connectivity throughout the City. Accordingly, the City's TMP recommends the North Maple Community Bridge be constructed. This road link is also identified in the City's new Official Plan 2010.

America Avenue and Canada Drive are designated primary roads in the City's Official Plan. According to the City's functional classification of roads, primary roads and collector roads are intended to afford organization for the local street system within residential areas and provide the main connecting points to the arterial system. They are designed to be continuous and are expected to carry moderate traffic volumes. A greater number of primary roads within each concession block would enable each primary road to carry lower volumes of traffic than a traditional mid-block collector.

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The North Maple Community Bridge Class EA Study was initiated in 2009 concurrently with the development of Block 33 West

It is current practice to obtain the necessary environmental approvals for new infrastructure that support growth, including road bridges, concurrently with the initial phase of development. A recent example of this approach is the road crossings of the valley system in Blocks 11 and 12. This approach could not be followed in Block 33 due to the time interval between development on the east and west sides of Highway 400. The Class EA study for the bridge could not be initiated when development on the east side commenced primarily because the planning and road layout on the west side of Highway 400 had not yet been established. As such, the Class EA Study was initiated later in 2009 in conjunction with the start of development activity on the west side of Highway 400.

There is both support and opposition to the bridge

During the course of the EA Study, support for the bridge was expressed by various public agencies including York Region Police / EMS, York Region Transit, and the school boards. The representative on the CLC from the Ahmadiyya Community in Block 33 East had also voiced support for the bridge.

However, many existing residents (primarily on the east side along America Avenue) immediately adjacent to the proposed North Maple Community Bridge expressed concerns with respect to the expected increase in traffic volumes on America Drive resulting from the road connection, noise and community impacts, potential depreciation in property values and the esthetics of the structure.

The Class EA Study has identified a preferred design for the North Maple Community Bridge

The work completed to date on the Class EA Study identified a preliminary design for the bridge, which includes two general purpose travel lanes, dedicated on-street bike lanes and sidewalks on both sides of the structure. A typical cross section of the proposed bridge is included as Attachment No. 2 to this report. A preliminary landscape plan has also been prepared illustrating how the slopped embankments along each approach (east and west side of the bridge) may be aesthetically enhanced and used to create a visual buffer for the neighbouring land-uses as shown on Attachment No. 3.

The Class EA Study was put on hold pending the completion of the City-Wide Official Plan review and related Transportation Master Plan Study

The Class EA Study was put on hold in 2010 in order to allow for the completion of the City-Wide Official Plan review and related Transportation Master Plan Study. Upon completion of these studies, the need for the bridge was reaffirmed.

An update to the traffic study and another Citizen's Liaison Committee meeting is required to complete the Class EA Study

In order to complete the original work plan for the Class EA Study, an update to the traffic study and another Citizen's Liaison Committee meeting is required. The original Traffic Study was completed by AECOM in early 2010. At that time, estimated traffic volumes from the Teston Road Class EA were used in the traffic analysis. Given that the Teston Road/Highway 400 Interchange is now open, it is appropriate to conduct additional traffic counts to verify the accuracy of the original traffic estimates. Once this additional traffic assessment has been completed, a final CLC meeting can be held to provide an overview of the conclusions of the Class EA Study.

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A final Environmental Study Report (ESR) will need to be prepared that reflects the findings of the updated Traffic Study and all final public consultation documentation. Staff will report back to a future Committee of the Whole Working Session to provide a more detailed overview of the Class EA Study findings and conclusions prior to issuing the Notice of Study Completion. Issuance of the Notice of Study Completion is the final point of contact with the public and approval agencies. In accordance with the Municipal Class EA requirements, a minimum 30-day public review period shall be provided for review and comment on the final ESR.

The above noted work could be completed by summer 2013. This would allow for a Notice of Study Completion to be issued in late 2013. Additional funds are required to complete the Class EA Study, which have been requested through the 2013 Capital Budget submission process.

As the minimum Class EA requirements for the North Maple Community Bridge Study have been satisfied, a Notice of Study Completion could be issued after finalizing the Environmental Study Report

The work completed on the North Maple Community Bridge Class EA Study to date is sufficient to satisfy the minimum requirements of a Schedule C project as prescribed by the Municipal Class EA process. Accordingly, the EA Study could be filed with the MOE and for public review at this time without holding another CLC meeting. Any concerns arising from the public review of the ESR could be addressed through the MOE review process.

The North Maple Bridge EA Study could be stopped and re-started at some point in the future when there is more local support for the road connection

Council could consider stopping the North Maple Bridge EA Study now and restarting it in the future when there is more local support for the project as traffic congestion increases on the adjacent arterial roads in the coming years. Much of the information collected through the Class EA work, such as geotechnical and topographical data, design drawings, documentation and engineering plans, would likely still be relevant in the future.

Regional Implications

Regional staff has been involved throughout the duration of the Study and are supportive of the project. Regional comments have been received on the draft ESR document and will be addressed prior to finalizing the Study Report.

In accordance with Regional policy, it is anticipated that the Region will fund 33 percent of the cost of the design and construction of the North Maple Community Bridge.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020 / Strategic Plan

In consideration of the strategic priorities related to Vaughan Vision 2020, the recommendation of this report will assist in:

- The pursuit of excellence in service delivery
- Enhancing and ensuring community safety, health and wellness
- Leading and promoting environmental and financial sustainability
- Planning and managing growth, and economic vitality

The recommendations of this report will assist in advancing the City's Strategic Plan initiative to integrate sustainable transportation measures with land use planning. This report is therefore consistent with the priorities previously set by Council.

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Conclusion

The North Maple Community Bridge Class Environmental Assessment Study can be finalized after additional traffic assessment has been completed and another Citizen Liaison Committee meeting has been convened. Additional funding in the amount of approximately \$38,000 is required to complete the Class Environmental Assessment for the bridge, which is included in the draft 2013 Capital Budget submission for Council's consideration. Staff is recommending that the North Maple Community Bridge Class EA Study be completed as originally planned, subject to Capital Budget approval for the necessary additional funds.

Attachments

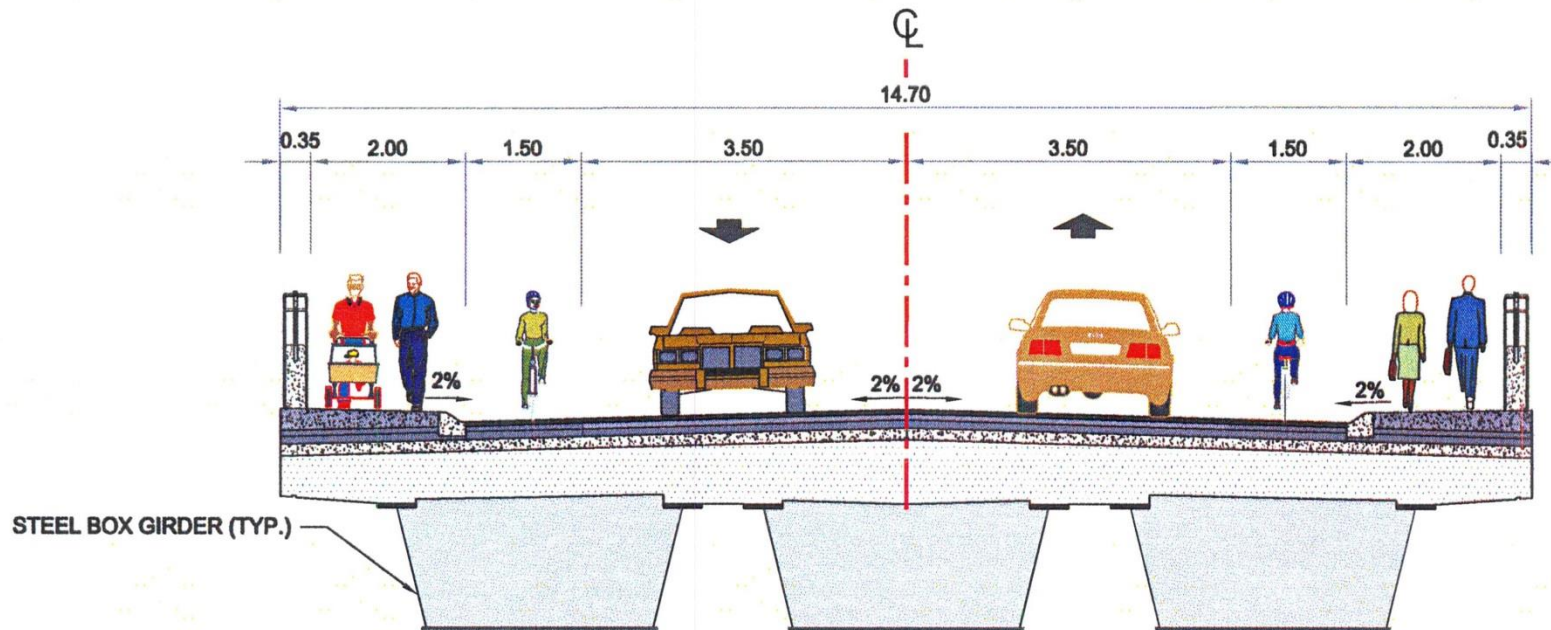
1. North Maple Community Bridge – Location Plan
2. North Maple Community Bridge – Preferred Typical Section
3. North Maple Community Bridge – Landscape Base

Report prepared by:

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(A copy of the attachments referred to in the foregoing have been forwarded to each Member of Council and a copy thereof is also on file in the office of the City Clerk.)

NORTH MAPLE COMMUNITY BRIDGE CLASS EA HIGHWAY 400 OVERPASS



NORTH MAPLE COMMUNITY BRIDGE

BRIDGE WITH SIDEWALKS 2.00m, 1.50m BIKE LANES AND 3.50m VEHICLE LANES
(OPTION 3A)

NORTH MAPLE COMMUNITY BRIDGE – PREFERRED TYPICAL SECTION

