

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF JUNE 27, 2017

Item 37, Report No. 26, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on June 27, 2017.

**37 CLASS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT STUDY FOR HUNTINGTON ROAD
FROM LANGSTAFF ROAD TO NASHVILLE ROAD
NOTICE OF STUDY COMPLETION
PART OF THE WEST VAUGHAN EMPLOYMENT AREA SECONDARY PLAN
WARDS 1 AND 2**

The Committee of the Whole recommends approval of the recommendation contained in the following report of the Deputy City Manager of Planning and Growth Management and the Director of Development Engineering and Infrastructure Planning, dated June 20, 2017:

Recommendation

The Deputy City Manager of Planning and Growth Management and the Director of Development Engineering and Infrastructure Planning, in consultation with the Deputy City Manager of Public Works and the Director of Transportation Services and Parks & Forestry Operations, recommend:

1. THAT this report be received for information purposes.

Contribution to Sustainability

Consistent with the Goals and Objectives of the City's Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan (Green Directions Vaughan), the Environmental Assessment Study advances and completes the planning and design process for Huntington Road, the project will contribute to:

- Providing a porous road network to support all modes of transportation
- 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 design and reconstruction of Huntington Road is included as a growth-related project in the current Development Charge Background Study.

The cost to undertake the Huntington Road Class Environmental Assessment Study was expensed to Capital Project DT-7025-09, with funding from City-Wide Development Charges.

The total cost of the road works that are recommended in the Huntington Road Class EA is estimated at \$33.2 million including allowances for pre-construction expenses (detailed design and utility relocations) but excluding any property acquisition. The revised project cost estimate will be carried forward into the next Development Charge By-law update which is currently being prepared.

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Communications Plan

Public and stakeholder consultation is a key component of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) process. The main components of the consultation process for the Huntington Road EA included:

- Notice of Study Commencement, issued concurrently with the Notice of Public Information Centre (PIC) #1 on November 11, 2014
- Two PICs, held on November 25, 2014 and June 29, 2016, respectively
- Notice of Study Completion (pending completion of the review process)
- Web page containing project specific information and notices

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.

As the Huntington Road EA's study area overlaps with the Highway 427 Extension corridor, regular meetings with the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario (MTO), York Region and City of Vaughan staff took place during the study to coordinate the points of interface between the two projects.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the findings and recommendations of the Municipal Class EA Study for the necessary widening and improvements to Huntington Road between Langstaff Road and Nashville Road in advance of the filing of the Notice of Study Completion.

Background – Analysis and Options

The City of Vaughan Transportation Master Plan identified Huntington Road widening as a strategic improvement and key element in support of the West Vaughan Employment Area and adjacent residential communities

The City of Vaughan's Official Plan (2010) designates approximately 1,120 ha of lands west of Regional Road 27, generally between Nashville Road to the north and Steeles Avenue to the south as employment lands. The lands south of Langstaff Road are known as the Vaughan Enterprise Zone (VEZ) and have been under development since 2002. The lands north of Langstaff Road are referred to as the West Vaughan Employment Area (WVEA). The WVEA Secondary Plan identifies a network of arterial and collector roads that are needed to support the planned employment growth, and to provide connectivity in the City's transportation system.

The City's Transportation Master Plan (TMP) and WVEA Secondary Plan identify Huntington Road between Langstaff Road and Nashville Road as a major collector road requiring improvement to adequately support the planned employment growth and adjacent residential communities.

In November 2014, the City of Vaughan initiated a Class Environmental Assessment (EA) study for the required Huntington Road improvements to address the planning and design phases (Phases 3 and 4) in accordance with the Municipal Class EA process.

The study area consists of two separate sections: Part A from Langstaff Road to McGillivray Road and Part B from Major Mackenzie Drive to Nashville Road

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The MTO's Highway 427 Transportation Corridor Environmental Assessment (approved on October 21, 2010) identified the need to close a section of Huntington Road from approximately McGillivray Road to just north of Major Mackenzie Drive to accommodate the planned Highway 427 terminus interchange at Major Mackenzie Drive. Huntington Road will as a result become discontinuous at Major Mackenzie Drive in the near future. Accordingly, the study area for the Huntington Road EA was divided into two separate and distinct sections; "Part A" from Langstaff Road to McGillivray Road and "Part B" from the future realigned Major Mackenzie Drive to Nashville Road as shown on Attachment 1.

Part A from Langstaff Road to McGillivray Road is currently a two-lane rural road

Part A, between Langstaff Road and McGillivray Road (3.8km), is currently a two-lane rural road extending from Langstaff Road to McGillivray Road. The right-of-way through this section of Huntington Road is approximately 20m with an asphalt surface, with the section from Rutherford Road to McGillivray Road (and further north to Major Mackenzie Drive) currently surfaced by gravel. Part A was identified in the TMP as a Major Collector requiring four (4) lanes and a 26m right-of-way. In this section, Huntington Road will mainly service employment lands, as planned in the WVEA SP. Part A itself can be split into two distinct subsections:

- South subsection from Langstaff Road to Rutherford Road, where development is underway on both sides of Huntington Road (Block 64 on the west and Block 59 on the east), with industrial uses such as warehouses and distribution centres (FedEx, Costco, Home Depot). Additional development is scheduled in Block 59.
- North subsection from Rutherford Road to McGillivray Road, which is adjacent to the CP Intermodal Facility on the west side (Block 65), and to agricultural lands with several properties on the east side (Block 60 West). The lands on the east side of Huntington Road, west of the CP rail, are planned for future employment uses as part of the WVEA SP. Improvements in this section of Huntington Road are planned to occur in conjunction with the prospective development of Block 60 West. At this time, no block plan has been initiated by the landowners.

Part B from Major Mackenzie Drive to Nashville is currently a two-lane rural road

Part B, between Major Mackenzie Drive and Nashville Road is a 1.8km stretch currently built to a two-lane rural cross section (one lane in each direction). The right-of-way through this section of Huntington Road is approximately 20m. Residential development is occurring on the east side of this section of Huntington Road in Block 61 West.

A Draft Environmental Study Report has been prepared and circulated to the technical review agencies for review

The Huntington Road Class EA is now completed and a Draft Environmental Study Report (ESR) has been prepared documenting the planning and design process. The Draft ESR has been circulated to the technical agencies for review and comment. An Executive Summary of the Draft ESR is included as Attachment 2 to this report. The findings of the Huntington Road Class EA are overviewed below.

A four-lane urban cross-section is recommended for Huntington Road between Langstaff Road and McGillivray Road (Part A)

Through an evaluation of the planning alternatives based on a set of criteria that broadly represents the specific environments within the study area (technical, transportation, natural

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environment, socio-economic environment, costs, etc.), it was determined that the preferred design alternative for Part A should be as follows:

- Between Langstaff Road and Rutherford Road: a four-lane urban roadway with boulevard and multi-use trail on the east side, and boulevard and sidewalk on the west side. This alternative is able to meet the growing traffic demand and development along Huntington Road, including providing operational and safety improvements for an increase of freight traffic. Having pedestrian/cycling facilities to the west and the east will support development on both sides of the roadway.
- Between Rutherford Road and McGillivray Road: a four-lane urban roadway with boulevard and multi-use trail on the west side only, and a 6m boulevard on the west side. This alternative is able to meet the growing traffic demand along the corridor and also provides adequate facilities for other road users, such as pedestrians and cyclists to the east, where development is planned to occur. A sidewalk on the west side was deemed unnecessary along this portion of Part A as there would be no development adjacent to the existing CP lands. At the northern end of this section and due to the removal of Huntington Road north of McGillivray Road, Huntington Road will merge into McGillivray Road and the current three-way intersection of Huntington Road and McGillivray Road will be replaced by a continuous curved roadway.

In addition, the study confirmed that signalization of the Huntington Road and Rutherford Road intersection is warranted under existing conditions with current traffic volumes and levels of service. Staff understands that the Region of York is proceeding with the installation of these traffic signals in 2018.

The cost to design and reconstruct Part A of Huntington Road in accordance with the recommendations of the Class EA is estimated at approximately \$25.2 million including pre-construction work including design, and utility relocations but excluding property acquisition.

A two-lane urban cross-section is recommended for Huntington Road between Major Mackenzie Drive and Nashville Road (Part B)

The evaluation of the planning alternatives determined that the recommended preferred design for Part B is a two-lane urban roadway with boulevard and multi-use trail on the east side, and a planting strip on the west side. Part B will see lower traffic demand than Part A, thus a widening to four lanes was not warranted. Similarly, a multi-use trail on the east side was deemed sufficient to meet pedestrian and cycling needs for the corridor. Any pedestrian/cycling facilities on the west side of Huntington Road will be revisited in the future as lands are currently not in the urban boundary.

The cost to design and reconstruct Part B of Huntington Road in accordance with the recommendations of the Class EA is estimated at approximately \$8.0 million, including pre-construction work including design, and utility relocations but excluding property acquisition.

Huntington Road may connect to Major Mackenzie Drive opposite the Highway 427 northbound off ramp in the future

The EA study considered that the section of Huntington Road in Part B will not intersect with the realigned Major Mackenzie Drive and will be terminated in a cul-de-sac. However, as part of the Block 61 West development (Nashville Heights development), proposals were put forward for a future southerly extension of Huntington Road that would intersect with Major Mackenzie Drive opposite the planned Highway 427 northbound off-ramp. This connecting link was illustrated on the City approved Block 61 West Community Plan.

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The Block 61 West Landowners submitted preliminary plans of the Huntington Road Connecting Link together with supporting transportation assessments to MTO for consideration in conjunction with the Highway 427 EA. The connecting link could not be carried forward in the Highway 427 EA because it did not warrant operational requirements, however, MTO agreed to reconsider the connecting link through a future submission to MTO's Corridor Management.

The traffic assessment that was completed as part of the Huntington Road EA's examined the implications of the connecting link and concluded that the anticipated traffic volumes resulting from its implementation would not impact the capacity of the proposed two-lane urban cross-section in Part B. Findings from this EA study will therefore not preclude the future feasibility of this link. This connecting link will be further explored during the detailed design stage of Part B of the Huntington Road improvements and as part of the detailed design of the Highway 427 Extension, which is currently underway. Staff will work with the Block 61 West Landowners and MTO to pursue the implementation of the connecting link.

Filing the Environmental Study Report for agency and public review is the next step in the study process

The next steps in the study are as follows:

- Finalize the ESR and Technical Reports based on comments from reviewers, regulatory agencies, and stakeholders.
- Issue a Notice of Study Completion and place the ESR for the minimum 30-day public review period. During this period, the public may further review and submit comments and/or concerns to the City and the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MOECC). Staff will address these comments and should any member of the public not be satisfied with the responses, a Part II Order request may be submitted directly to the Minister of the Environment thereby initiating an independent Ministry review process.

Detailed design and construction of the Huntington Road improvements will be programmed in coordination with ongoing development and major roadway improvements in the area

Following the filing of the Notice of Completion of the EA study, the next step will be to prioritize the detailed design and construction of the various segments of Huntington Road improvements with consideration for the timing of development, traffic operations and the construction of the Highway 427 Extension and Major Mackenzie Drive projects.

Improvements between Major Mackenzie Drive and Nashville will occur in conjunction with the Block 61 West development and will be coordinated with the Highway 427 extension works

The section of Huntington Road between the future realigned Major Mackenzie Drive and Nashville Road (Part B) is planned to be urbanized in conjunction with the development of Block 61 West (Nashville Heights). Detailed design could commence as soon as 2018 followed by any necessary utility relocation in 2019. Construction would be programmed in step with the completion of the Highway 427 and Major Mackenzie Drive works to minimize traffic impacts on the area's residents. In the interim, the existing two-lane rural road was deemed adequate to accommodate traffic in the area.

MTO will close the section of Huntington Road between McGillivray and Major Mackenzie Drive no earlier than April 1, 2018 to facilitate the construction of Highway 427

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The section of Huntington Road north of McGillivray Road and south of the future realigned Major Mackenzie Drive West will be permanently closed and removed to provide for the construction of the future Highway 427 terminus interchange at Major Mackenzie Drive. MTO will be taking possession of this section of Huntington Road as early as April 1, 2018 and then immediately closing the section of road to facilitate the construction of the Highway 427 Expansion. Once this happens, the Huntington Road corridor will be discontinuous north and south of Major Mackenzie Drive, which will result in a significant reduction of traffic volumes in the section of Huntington Road between Rutherford Road and McGillivray Road. Given the low traffic volumes on the road, maintaining the existing gravel surface is cost-effective for the foreseeable future. Staff will continue to monitor the road condition in the interim.

The EA study recommends that the section of Huntington Road north of Rutherford Road and south of McGillivray Road be ultimately widened to a four-lane urban roadway. Reconstruction of this section of Huntington Road is being programmed to occur in conjunction with the planned development of Block 60 West. At this time, no block plan has been initiated by the landowners.

Pre-construction work will be advanced for the section of Huntington Road between Langstaff Road and Rutherford Road starting in 2018/19

The necessary detailed design exercise, property acquisition and utility relocation will be advanced in 2018/19 for the section of Huntington Road between Langstaff Road and Rutherford Road in conjunction with development in adjacent blocks.

Relationship to Term of Council Service Excellence Strategy Map (2014-2018)

In consideration of the strategic priorities related to the Term of Council Service Excellence Strategy Map, the recommendation of this report will assist in:

- Improving municipal road network
- Continuing to develop transit, cycling and pedestrian options to get around the City
- Investing, renewing and managing infrastructure assets
- Attracting investment and creating jobs

In addition, the progress on the project has been reported to Council as part of the Term of Council Service Excellence which includes this EA project as a priority initiative.

Regional implications

As a key stakeholder, York Region has been involved throughout the duration of the study. As such, York Region staff has attended both Public Information Centres and provided input on the proposed planning alternatives and design concepts for this EA study. In addition, Regional staff has participated in the regular Highway 427 Extension Coordination Meetings.

York Region will be realigning Major Mackenzie Drive to the north to accommodate the future Highway 427 terminus interchange at Major Mackenzie Drive and widening Major Mackenzie Drive from two to six lanes in anticipation of planned growth in the area. Completion of the construction is scheduled for 2021.

Conclusions

The widening and urbanization of Huntington Road is an important component of the WVEA SP road network. The necessary Class Environmental Assessment Study for the roadway is now complete and the Draft ESR submitted to the technical agencies for their final review and

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comments. Staff will continue to work with all its partners to complete the review process as promptly as possible.

Upon completion of the review process, staff will finalize the Environmental Study Report and issue the Notice of Completion. Issuing the Notice of Completion will place the Environmental Study Report on public record for the minimum 30-day review period in accordance with the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process.

The City may proceed with the detailed design and construction works after the Class EA study has received final approval.

Attachments

1. Huntington Road EA Study Area
2. Municipal Class Environmental Assessment for Huntington Road from Langstaff Road to McGillivray Road (Part A) and Major Mackenzie Drive to Nashville Road (Part B) - Environmental Study Report – Draft Executive Summary

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.)