



CITY OF BRANTFORD

THREE GRAND RIVER CROSSINGS

MUNICIPAL CLASS EA

VIRTUAL PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE (PIC) 1

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ) DOCUMENT

FIRST POSTED ON JULY 15, 2020

1. INTRODUCTION

The City of Brantford has initiated a Schedule 'B' Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) for the three bridges over the Grand River, including the Lorne Bridge, Brant's Crossing Bridge and the TH&B Crossing Bridge. As shown in **Figure 1**, the Study Area encompasses an area approximately 175 metres wide starting 200 metres north of Lorne Bridge to 200 metres south of the TH&B Crossing Bridge along the Grand River. Lorne Bridge currently carries traffic on Colborne Street West across the Grand River with a 30 tonne load limit in the winter. Brant's Crossing Bridge was closed in February 2018 following a flooding and ice jam event; the bridge formerly carried pedestrian and cyclist traffic over the Grand River and would require structural repairs in order to be re-opened. The TH&B Crossing Bridge currently carries pedestrian and cyclist traffic over the Grand River and has been identified as requiring structural repairs to maintain the existing crossing.

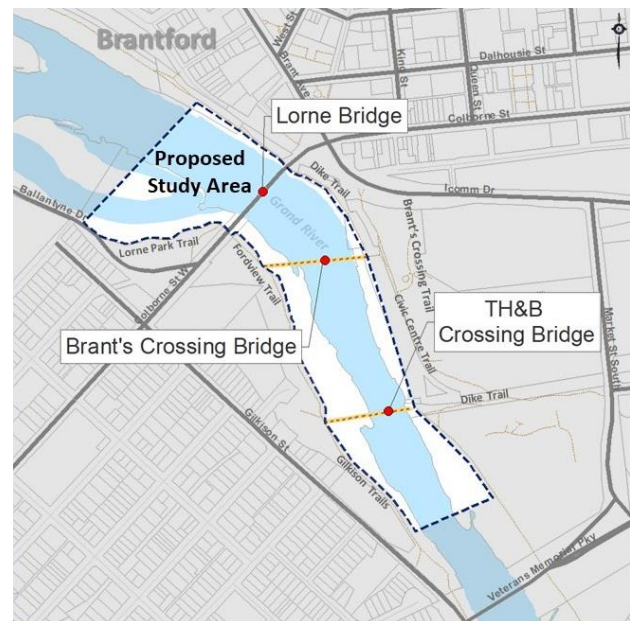


Figure 1 - Study Area

The study is intended to identify the short and long-term plans for the three Grand River bridge crossings. The study will include determining the feasibility of removing the winter load limit on Lorne Bridge and the need for one or both of the TH&B Crossing Bridge and Brant's Crossing Bridge based on an assessment of the technical, social and environmental factors, including impacts to the active transportation network and the risks of future flooding events of the Grand River.

This document provides a consolidated question and answer list for comments submitted to the Project Team throughout Virtual Public Information Centre 1. The Public Information Centre (PIC) process to-date has included a presentation video, posted to the project webpage on May 27th, 2020, and a Question and Answer (Q&A) video, posted to the project webpage on June 17th, 2020.

The PIC presentation and Q&A videos can be viewed on the project webpage at:

www.brantford.ca/ThreeGrandRiverCrossings

To understand the background of the Three Grand River Crossings Municipal Class Environmental Assessment, it is suggested that you review the material presented in the PIC presentation and Q&A videos prior to reviewing this document.

As a recap, the PIC presentation video covered the following topics:

- Project Overview and Background;
- Alternative Solutions that will be considered;
- The Evaluation Framework and the sequence in which alternative solutions will be considered;
- Evaluation Criteria for how the alternative solutions will be evaluated; and,
- An overview of the process for PIC 1.

2. SURVEY RESULTS

In addition to the PIC video that was posted on May 27th, a survey regarding the Three Grand River Crossings was posted to the project webpage on Friday, June 5th.

As of July 8th there were a total of 162 responses. The survey will remain live up to July 15th at 4:30pm. The following sections summarize the results from the survey.

2.1 How frequently do you use the Three Grand River Crossings?

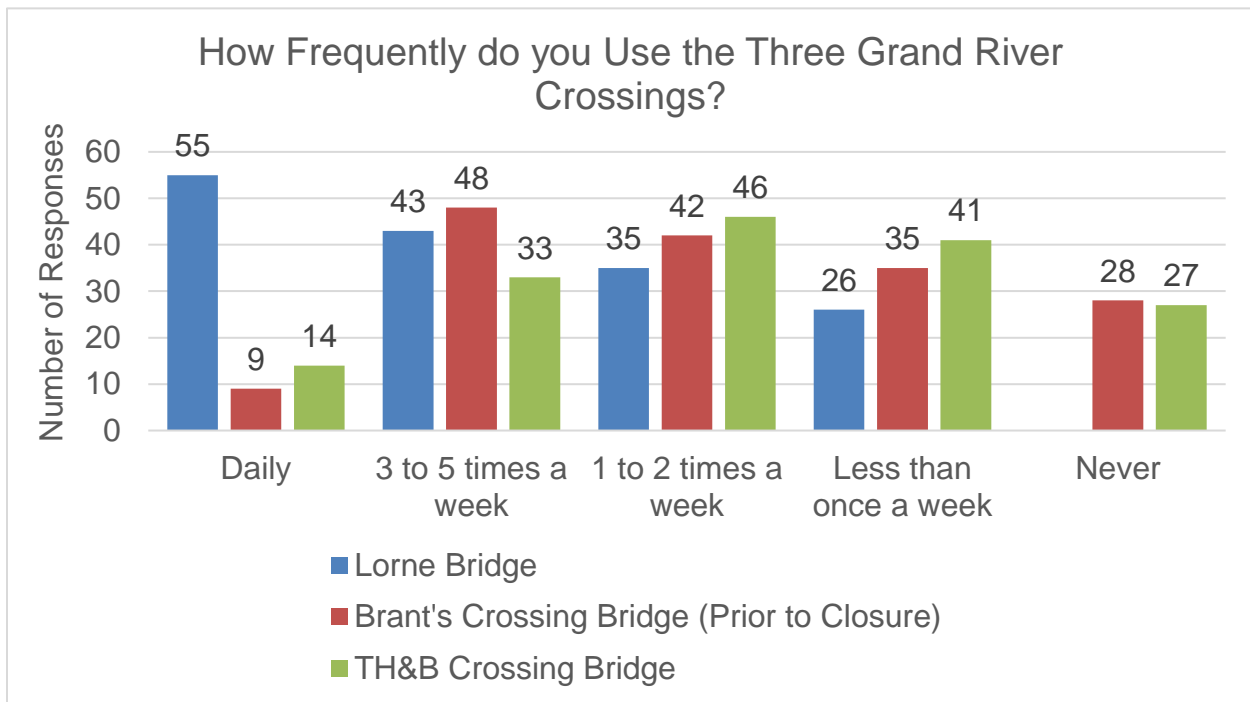


Figure 2 Frequency of Use for Three Bridges

Figure 2 above depicts the responses to the survey question “How frequently do you use the Three Grand River Crossings?” The blue bars represent responses for Lorne Bridge which include: 55 responses for daily use, 43 responses for three to five times a week, 35 responses for one to two times per week and 26 responses for less than once a week.

The red bars represent responses for Brant’s Crossing Bridge which include: 9 responses for daily use, 48 responses for three to five times a week, 42 responses for one to two times a week, 35 responses for less than once a week and 28 responses indicating they have never used the bridge.

The green bars represent responses for TH&B Crossing Bridge which include: 14 responses for daily use, 33 responses for three to five times a week, 46 responses for one to two times a week, 41 responses for less than once a week and 27 responses indicating they have never used the bridge.

2.2 What do you normally use the Brant and TH&B Crossings for?

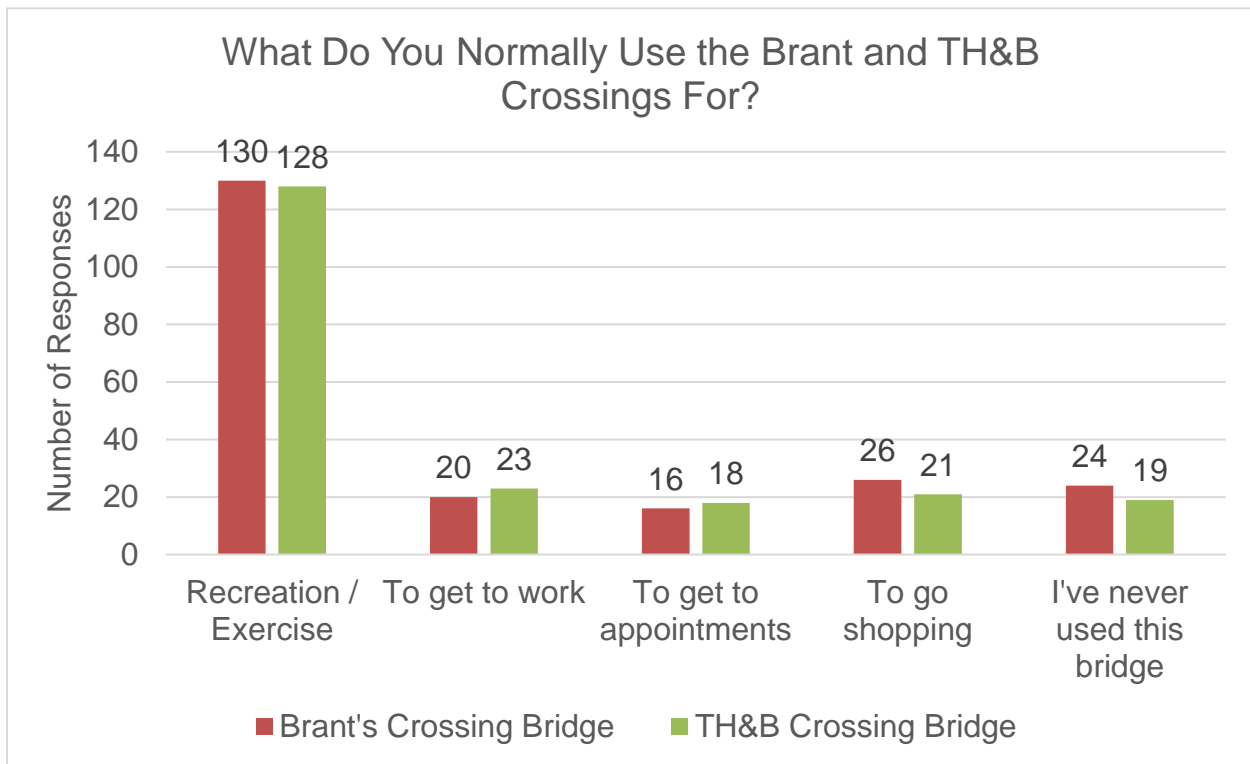


Figure 3 How Brant and TH&B Crossings are Utilized

Figure 3 above depicts the results to the survey question “What do you normally use the Brant and TH&B Crossings for?” Respondents could provide multiple answers for uses of each bridge.

The red bars represent responses for Brant’s Crossing Bridge. There were 130 responses for recreation or exercise, 20 responses for getting to work, 16 responses for getting to appointments, 26 responses for going shopping and 24 responses for never using the bridge.

The green bars represent responses for TH&B Crossing Bridge. There were 128 responses for recreation or exercise, 23 responses for getting to work, 18 responses for getting to appointments, 21 responses for going shopping and 19 responses for never using the bridge.

It should be noted that the number of respondents that indicated that they never use Brant’s Crossing Bridge or TH&B Crossing Bridge decreased from Question 2.1. This could be due to respondents missing or skipping this question while they were taking the survey.

2.3 What kind of transportation do you normally use on Lorne Bridge?

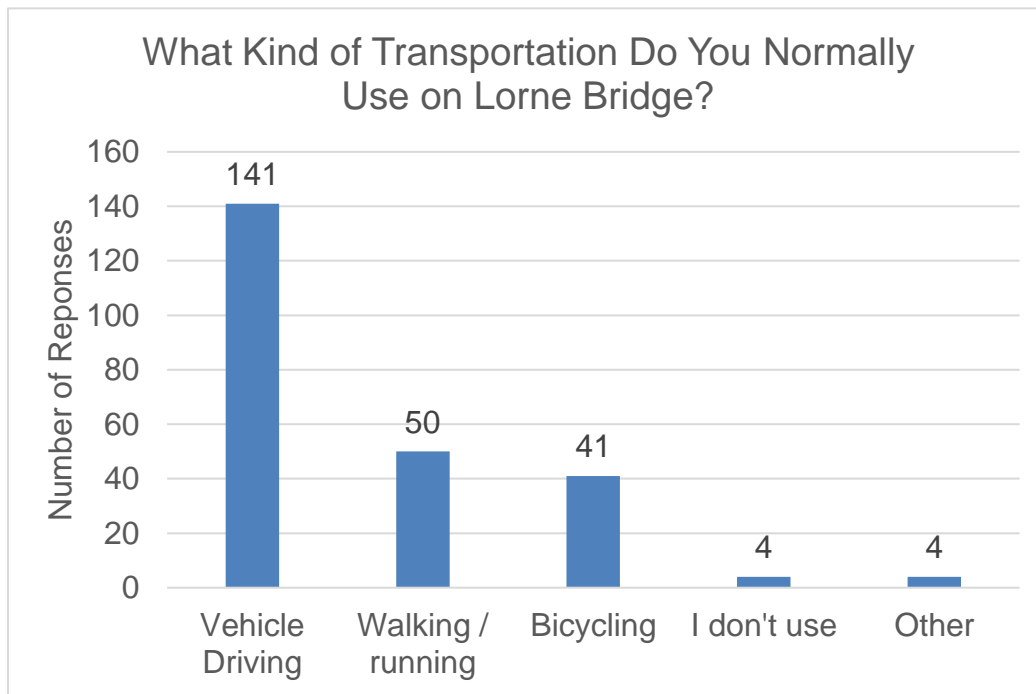


Figure 4 Kind of Transportation Used on Lorne Bridge

The last survey question that we will note in this document asked what methods of transportation were used over Lorne Bridge. Similar to Question 2.2, respondents could provide multiple methods of transportation for this question.

There were 141 responses for crossing the bridge in a vehicle, 50 responses for walking or running, 41 responses for bicycling, 4 responses indicating they did not use the bridge and 4 responses for other (2 indicating mobile scooter and 2 indicating public transit).



3. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Numerous questions and comments have been submitted to the Project Team throughout the first Virtual Public Information Centre process. The questions and comments received up to July 8th, 2020 have been responded to and grouped into various themes in the section below.

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3.1 Timing

3.1.1 What is the timeline for implementing the selected Recommended Crossing Strategy and what would be the duration of construction?

This Environmental Assessment is scheduled to be completed in spring 2021. Implementation of the Recommended Crossing Strategy would be subject to City budgets and council approval and are unknown at this time.

The high-level estimated construction duration will be considered during the evaluation of each alternative solution and will be discussed at the Fall Public Information Centre.

3.2 Costing and Life Expectancy

3.2.1 What is the total cost and life expectancy for the alternative solutions?

As part of the Environmental Assessment, preliminary costing of the recommended alternative solutions will be estimated, including lifecycle costing.

A higher-level cost of the other alternatives will be completed to permit evaluation of the economic criteria.

These calculations have not yet been completed but will be discussed at the Fall Public Information Centre.

3.3 Alternative Solutions

3.3.1 What is the evaluation framework for developing, screening, evaluating and ultimately identifying the recommended solution?

Please refer to Slides 17 through 20 of the PIC presentation slide set.

The alternatives for each individual structure will be screened against the screening criteria (refer to Slides 19 and 20 of the PIC presentation slide set). The alternatives must be technically and economically viable and meet the needs of the Problem and Opportunity Statement. Once the alternatives have been screened, the feasible short-listed alternative solutions for each crossing will be identified.

Feasible combinations of the short-listed alternatives will then be identified to create a list of Overall Crossing Strategy Alternatives for the study that encompass all three structures and a potential new crossing. A detailed evaluation will take place to evaluate each Overall Crossing Strategy Alternative, ultimately leading to the selection of a recommended Overall Crossing Strategy for the Three Grand River Crossings.

The combinations of Overall Crossing Strategies (examples are depicted on Slide 18 of the PIC presentation slide set) will vary depending the outcome of the screening. The examples shown on Slide 18 are not meant to prejudice the Environmental Assessment Process. The combinations of the various individual structure alternatives will be evaluated at a later date and will be presented at the Fall Public Information Centre.

3.3.2 Will closing Lorne Bridge be one of the alternative solutions that is considered?

A “Closure” alternative for the Lorne Bridge is being considered for completeness of the Environmental Assessment; however, it is not expected to be the recommended option for Lorne Bridge when evaluated against the social, natural, technical and economic criteria.

We note that Colborne Street West, the roadway over Lorne Bridge, is identified as an arterial road and a critical transportation link in the City.

3.3.3 Will another vehicular crossing in addition to the Lorne Bridge be one of the alternative solutions that is considered?

Constructing a new bridge in the same location as the Lorne Bridge is one of the alternatives being considered.

A new vehicular crossing, at a new location, within the Study Area will not be considered. Additional vehicular crossings outside of the Study Area are beyond the scope of this Environmental Assessment.

3.4 Active Transportation Network

3.4.1 How can the active transportation network be maintained and/or improved in the study area?

As part of this Environmental Assessment, only the active transportation network over each structure, as well as the trail networks connectivity at the approaches of each structure, will be evaluated. Improvements to signage or pavement markings on existing trails are not included within the scope of this project.

Additionally, a Traffic Impact, Safety and Active Transportation study is being conducted to evaluate pedestrian and cycling movements within the Study Area. The study will include, but is not limited to, consultation with the public and City staff, identifying operational deficiencies and evaluating the benefits of cycling lanes.

3.4.2 How would each of the crossings be modified to improve the active transportation network?

Only the active transportation network over each of the bridges and the connectivity to the trail network at the approaches of each structure will be evaluated.

3.4.3 Several comments noted concerns with the existing cycling facilities on Lorne Bridge.

The evaluation of Lorne Bridge will consider whether improvements can be made to the active transportation network over the structure. Improvements that will be evaluated during this Environmental Assessment could include providing expanded or delineated active transportation facilities over Lorne Bridge.

3.4.4 Several comments noted concerns with the existing shared-use trail under Lorne Bridge, on the east river bank.

The City is in the process of formalizing an additional shared-use trail along the rail trail corridor. The existing shared-use trail under Lorne Bridge would be decommissioned for use by cyclists and would function for pedestrian use only. This shift in trail functions is anticipated to improve safety and accessibility of the trails for both cyclists and pedestrians. This work is being completed by the City Parks Department and is independent of this Environmental Assessment.

3.4.5 How will the active transportation network over Brant's Crossing Bridge be improved?

The ability to improve cyclist and pedestrian access over Brant's Crossing Bridge will be evaluated.

3.4.6 How will the active transportation network over TH&B Crossing Bridge be improved, specifically the condition of the existing wood deck?

The evaluation could determine that improvements to the deck over the TH&B Crossing Bridge are warranted to improve overall safety.

Additionally, the project will explore and evaluate raising the bridge deck to provide users improved views of the Grand River and surrounding landscape.

3.4.7 How will wayfinding within the Study Area be improved?

As part of this Environmental Assessment, a Wayfinding Strategy Report will be prepared to detail the location and inventory of existing regulatory signs, informational signs, electronic signs and static signs. The report will include recommendations for improved wayfinding signage specific to the areas around each bridge.

3.5 Flooding Events

3.5.1 What are the impacts of flooding events on each of the crossings?

As part of the Environmental Assessment, a Hydraulic Impact Study is being conducted to review the flood behaviour of the Grand River in the vicinity of the three bridges.

The study will analyze whether the existing bridges are at risk of future flooding events and whether preventative action should be considered. Preventative action could involve raising the bridges to accommodate a flooding event.

The study is not yet complete. The results will be included in the evaluation of the alternative solutions and will be discussed at the Fall Public Information Centre.

3.6 Cultural / Heritage Resources

3.6.1 Does the Study Area contain resources that have archaeological potential, and if so, how will the resource be considered in this Environmental Assessment?

As part of the Environmental Assessment, an Archaeological Assessment study is being conducted to identify areas within the Study Area that exhibit archaeological potential.

The purpose of the report is to identify the areas with archeological potential and make recommendations on whether further investigations would be required if these areas are disturbed.

The study is not yet complete. The results and recommendations of the study will be included in the evaluation of the alternative solutions and will be discussed at the Fall Public Information Centre.

3.6.2 Does the Study Area contain resources that have cultural or heritage significance, and if so, how will the resource be considered in this Environmental Assessment?

As part of the Environmental Assessment, a Built Heritage Resources and Cultural Heritage Landscape Resources study is being conducted to formally identify the cultural and/or heritage resources.

The study will identify the significance of the resource as well as provide recommendations for mitigation measures if any of the alternative solutions will impact that resource. Mitigation measures could include, but are not limited to, rehabilitation that is sympathetic to the original design, reconstruction that is sympathetic to the original design, installation of plaques and documentation of the resource.

The study is not yet complete. The results of the study, including appropriate mitigation measures, will be included in the evaluation of the alternative solutions and will be discussed at the Fall Public Information Centre.

3.7 Natural Environment

3.7.1 Will the alternative solutions impact the existing natural environment, and if so, how will it be considered in this Environmental Assessment?

As part of the Environmental Assessment, a Natural Environment Assessment Report is being conducted to formally characterize the existing natural environment conditions.

Based on the results of field surveys and background investigations, potential permits, monitoring requirements and mitigation measures will be identified for each alternative.

The results of the Natural Environment Report, including appropriate mitigation measures, will be used to evaluate the alternative solutions, which will be discussed at the Fall Public Information Centre.

3.7.2 Will safe wildlife passage be included in the evaluation of alternatives?

The Grand River itself is an existing natural barrier. Typically, construction of wildlife crossings is considered for artificial impediments such as roadways through wildlife habitats. The Project Team does not anticipate wildlife crossing as a criterion for evaluation.

3.8 Technical Environment

3.8.1 Can Lorne Bridge accommodate expanded cycling lanes without reducing vehicle capacity?

As part of the Environmental Assessment, a Structural Evaluation study and a Traffic Impact, Safety and Active Transportation study are being conducted to evaluate the existing structural conditions and traffic movements over the bridge. The studies will determine if expansion of the deck is realistic and if the existing deck top can be modified to maintain the same vehicle capacity while providing additional active transportation opportunities.

3.8.2 Can Lorne Girder Bridge be finished the same as the Lorne Pedestrian Underpass?

As part of the Environmental Assessment, a Structure Evaluation study is being conducted. As part of this study, the benefits of replacing the Lorne Girder Bridge with a concrete box culvert (similar to the Lorne Pedestrian Underpass) will be considered.

3.8.3 What measures will be introduced to extend the service life of the structures?

A review of the maintenance program for each bridge will occur, and if applicable, changes to these programs will be recommended. Recommendations could include de-icing that does not involve salt, as salt will accelerate the deterioration of steel structures.

Additionally, measures such as galvanic cathodic protection, which utilizes sacrificial additional elements added to structures to slow down corrosion of the main structural load carrying members, may be explored.

3.8.4 Are there any issues with non-municipal owned properties within the Study Area?

A review of property ownership within the Study Area will be completed as part of the Environmental Assessment. Additionally, construction works in and around the Grand River will need to be permitted by the Grand River Conservation Authority, Department of Fisheries and Oceans and other regulatory authorities. The Project Team has been in contact with regulatory authorities and will consult them throughout the study process. The required permitting and any required property acquisitions will be incorporated into the evaluation of alternatives which will be presented at the Fall Public Information Centre.

3.8.5 Brant's Crossing Bridge and TH&B Crossing Bridge formerly carried rail traffic. Will either of these structures be converted back to railway crossings, potentially with a pedestrian pathway?

The existing geometry of the Brant's Crossing Bridge and TH&B Crossing Bridges will not allow for simultaneous railway and pedestrian traffic. The Structural Evaluation of the TH&B and Brant Crossing Bridges is not considering railway traffic loading. Furthermore, the re-implementation of railway traffic through the Study Area is not within the scope of this Environmental Assessment.