Slide 1 – Title Page

Welcome to the Virtual Public Information Centre #1 for the Oak Park Road Extension Environmental Assessment Study.

Slide 2 - Overview

The city is undertaking a municipal class environmental assessment to study an extension of Oak Park Road between the Kramer's Way / Hardy Road intersection and Colbourne St West.

The study will consider population and employment growth and overall transportation needs in the west side of the City of Brantford.

Studies which support this environmental assessment include the 1981 Brantford Corridor Study, 2014 and 2020 Transportation Master Plan Updates and 2019 Oak Park Road Feasibility Study.

The environmental assessment study will assess and confirm the need and justification for an extension of Oak Park Road, identify and evaluate alternative solutions and design concepts and develop a preliminary design and mitigation measures for future stages of design work.

Slide 3 - Project Study Area

The study area for this environmental assessment includes the Oak Park Road corridor from the Kramer's Way / Hardy Road intersection in the North and Colborne Street West in the South.

The study area includes the existing protected corridor established from the 1981 Brantford Corridor Study.

The transportation analysis will review traffic operations on Oak Park Road at key locations including to and from Highway 403, Hardy Road, Oak Hill Drive and Colborne Street West.

Slide 4 - Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Process

The Municipal class environmental assessment is a mandatory process to be completed for major infrastructure projects such as road work and is an approved process under the *Environmental Assessment Act.*

This project will be completing phases 1 to 4 of the municipal class environmental assessment.

The project team has developed the problem and opportunity statement and has completed the preliminary evaluation of alternative solutions, which will be discussed during this video.

It is expected the Environmental Study Report will be completed in summer 2021.

Although a series of preliminary options have been proposed in previous studies, it is important to note that no plans or budgets for this project will be finalized until the Environmental Assessment is completed and recommendations approved by City Council.

Slide 5 - Consultation

The city will be hosting a total of four Public Information Centres during the environmental assessment to provide an opportunity for the public to review and comment during project milestones.

This first public Information Centre, which is this video you are watching now, is being held to discuss the environmental assessment study process, project background, existing conditions and preliminary evaluation of alternative solutions.

The city will be working collaboratively with indigenous communities during this environmental assessment in order to assess and understand existing aboriginal and treaty rights.

The city of Brantford will meet regularly with indigenous communities, share reports and information, and seek to incorporate input and perspectives into the evaluation alternatives, development of environmental mitigation measures and design concepts.

Slide 6 - Feedback Received

The City of Brantford continues to receive public comments regarding the environmental assessment and will consider input through all phases of the project.

Most of the comments we have heard are about potential impacts to traffic, existing residents, natural environment and wildlife.

Slide 7 - Policy Overview (Official Plan, PPS)

A number of policies are applicable to the long-term growth and development within the city.

These include the city's Official Plan, 2020 Provincial Policy Statement and 2019 Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

The City’s official plan requires the City to maintain an appropriate road network to accommodate commercial, industrial and private vehicular traffic and provisions for alternative modes of transportation.

Slide 8 - Policy Overview (Official Plan, PPS)

The City’s Official Plan, 2020 Provincial Policy Statement and 2019 Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe provide direction for managing growth in the City and will be reviewed throughout the Environmental Assessment.

Slide 9 - 1981 Brantford Corridor Study

The 1981 Brantford Corridor Study was completed to recommend a preferred alignment for a future roadway connection in the west end of the City of Brantford.

The Report determined there was need for a future extension.

Ten potential alignment alternatives for the corridor were identified.

Based on the evaluation outlined in the 1981 report, it was determined that alternative extension “E3” was the preferred alternative. Following the recommendation, the City of Brantford began to designate lands along the preferred alignment for long-term corridor protection.

Slide 10 - City of Brantford Transportation Master Plan

The 2014 Transportation Master plan identifies an extension of Oak Park Road from the existing Kramer's Way / Hardy Road intersection to Colborne Street West as an alternative to accommodate long term population and employment growth within the north-west and south-west quadrants of the City.

The draft 2020 Transportation Master Plan update identifies the Oak Park Road extension to be needed in the medium term between 2026 and 2031.

Nevertheless, no plans or budgets for this project will be finalized until the Environmental Assessment is completed and recommendations are approved by City Council.

Slide 11 - 2019 Oak Park Road Feasibility Study

Parsons completed a Feasibility Study in 2019 to determine cross-section requirements, preliminary alternatives and key constraints and challenges associated with an extension of Oak Park Road.

The study determined that the new structure over the Grand River should be designed to minimize the environmental impact to the surrounding lands, the use of engineered slopes and/or retaining walls should be considered to mitigate impacts to adjacent residential properties, and the proposed alignment should match the existing design work already completed to the north of the Grand River.

Other recommendations from the 2019 Feasibility Study will be considered during this Environmental Assessment.

Slide 12 - Existing Traffic Conditions

This map provides an overview of existing traffic conditions around the study area.

Yellow areas are congested or approaching capacity and green areas are operating within capacity.

Slide 13 - Future Traffic Conditions

This map provides an overview of future traffic conditions around the study area in the year 2041 without the Oak Park Road extension in place.

Without the extension in place, areas shown in red are forecast to operate at or over capacity.

Areas in yellow are approaching capacity and areas in green are operating within capacity.

Slide 14 - Existing Transit Infrastructure

The study area is in proximity to bus routes 8, 11 and 5. Transit users travelling between the north-west and south-west areas of Brantford are required to traverse through the City's downtown area.

Slide 15 – Active Transportation Infrastructure

The study area includes several shared use trails which offer connectivity to the north and south sides of the study area. Key routes include the S.C. Johnson Trail and Oakhill Trail, including the Gordon Glaves pedestrian bridge over the Grand River.

Slide 16 - Cultural Heritage Resources

There are two previously identified features of cultural heritage value within the Oak Park road extension study area, namely the Grand River and the Oakhill Cemetery.

Slide 17 - Archaeological Potential

The area is known to include very high archaeological potential which is subject to ongoing investigations throughout the environmental assessment.

This map shows the preliminary archaeological potential identified through the Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment. A stage 1 investigation is a preliminary archeological investigation based on background information and a field visit.

Several areas along the corridor shown in green will be subject to Stage 2 Archaeological investigation which will include test pit surveys at regular intervals to confirm archaeological potential.

Other areas along the corridor shown in orange have previously been assessed which do not require further archaeological assessment.

The project team will be working with First Nation and Indigenous Communities as part of the Archaeological Investigations.

Slide 18 - Natural Environment Features

A portion of the study area falls within the natural heritage system identified in the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Some of the key natural heritage features include the Grand River, deer wintering areas, Brantford Tufa Mounds and potential terrestrial and aquatic species at risk habitat.

Slide 19 - Natural Environment Features

The Grand River is a permanent warmwater thermal regime which is know to support a variety of aquatic species.

The environmental assessment includes an ongoing inventory of natural heritage elements which will document potentially impacted terrestrial and aquatic habitats, species at risk and mitigation measures.

Slide 20 - Socio-Economic and Land Use

This map identifies the designated land uses within the study area based on the City's draft 2020 Official Plan.

Land uses include core natural areas (including the green space abutting the Grand River such as Brant Conservation Area), residential, general employment and designated Greenfield.

The Oak Park Road corridor is identified for long-term corridor protection.

Slide 21 - Problem / Opportunity Statement

Phase 1 of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process requires that a Problem/ Opportunity Statement be prepared, which identifies the problems and opportunities to be addressed by the

Environmental Assessment and guides the selection and evaluation of the preferred alternative solutions and designs.

The City's Transportation Master Plan Update identifies alternatives to accommodate long term population and employment growth in the city including the Oak Park Rd extension corridor.

Traffic volumes generated by future growth in the city to 2041 will cause an increase in traffic congestion in the downtown core and other areas in the city.

Opportunities exist to accommodate growth in the city through exploration of a range of alternatives for the study area.

These include enhancement of the city's transportation system including regional and local movement of people and goods; addressing future travel demand associated with population and employment growth in the city and provide additional roadway capacity and reduce travel times between West Brantford northwest Brantford and the highway 403; measures to support all modes of transportation based on a complete streets approach; and consideration of the unique socio-economic cultural and natural environments of the study area.

Slide 22 - Alternative Planning Solutions

During phase two of the environmental assessment process, alternative planning solutions are developed to address the identified problem and opportunity statement.

The following alternative solutions are under consideration for this project.

The first alternative is the Do Nothing, in which the existing transportation system is not changed. This alternative provides for the baseline scenario which other viable alternative solutions are to be compared against.

The second alternative is to Improve Transit, Active Transportation and Transportation Demand Management (TDM). The project team wants to know if the congestion can be mitigated by improving active transportation, transit and TDM only, without the extension.

The third alternative is to Implement Localized Intersection Improvements. The project team wants to know if the congestion can be mitigated by improving intersections only, without the extension.

The fourth alternative is to Improve Alternative Roadways, such as improving parallel north-south corridors or providing an alternative crossing of the Grand River.

The fifth alternative solution is a combination of alternatives 3 and 4 which are localized Intersection Improvements and Improving Alternative Roadways.

The sixth alternative solution is to Limit Development of Surrounding Lands.

The seventh alternative is to Construct a New Roadway Crossing of the Grand River as shown in the City's Transportation Master Plan.

Slide 23 - Evaluation Criteria

The Alternative Solutions will be evaluated to determine the preferred Alternative Solutions.

A set of evaluation criteria will be used including:

- Transportation;
- Land Use Planning Objectives;
- Natural Environment;
- Social Environment;
- Cultural Environment;
- Economic Environment;
- First Nation & Indigenous Communities; and
- Other criteria such as utility impacts, grading, drainage, phasing and implementation.

For each set of evaluation criteria, the goal is to assess how the proposed alternative solutions score with respect to their ability to address the Problem and Opportunity Statement and potential impacts that can be identified at this stage of the study.

The public and stakeholders are invited to review these evaluation criteria and provide feedback.

For example, comments suggesting additional evaluation criteria, or ideas for the weighting of specific criteria will be appreciated and considered for inclusion as the study moves forward.

Slide 24 - Preliminary Evaluation of Alternative Solutions

A preliminary evaluation of the alternative solutions has been completed based on the evaluation criteria developed.

Based on the preliminary evaluation of Alternative Planning Solutions, Alternatives 2 and 7 currently score well across the 8 categories and for their ability to meet the needs identified in the Problem and Opportunity Statement

The selection of a preferred Alternative Solution has not been finalized and the purpose of this Public Information Centre is to solicit feedback from the public and stakeholders on the scoring as shown.

We are actively seeking your input into this evaluation and the selected criteria used to evaluate the alternatives.

All inputs will be gathered and fully considered before finalizing any decisions with regards to a Preferred Alternative Solution.

Slide 25 - Preliminary Evaluation of Alternative Solutions (Detailed)

This slide presents a detailed description of the preliminary evaluation.

This slide can be reviewed in more detail by downloading the slides from the City's project web page at www.brantford.ca/OakParkRoad.

Alternative 1 and 6 are not considered to sufficiently address transportation and land use planning objectives, and as such these are considered to be major flaws.

Alternatives 3, 4 and 5, while there are benefits to each option, they are not considered to adequately address the project needs identified in the problem and opportunity statement.

Alternative 2 and 7 perform well across the 8 categories with Alternative 7 scoring the highest under transportation and land use planning objectives.

Mitigation of impacts to the natural environment is a key component of the Environmental Assessment process and will considered through all phases of the study.

Should anyone be interested in a more detailed rationale behind the scoring of any number of criteria they are encouraged to contact the Project Team. Contact information is provided at the end of this presentation.

Slide 26 - Next Steps

Following this virtual public Information Centre #1, the project team will review and address comments received and will consider them in the detailed evaluation of alternative solutions.

We value your input and encourage you to stay connected throughout the environmental assessment.

A list of Frequently Asked Questions regarding the project is provided on the City's web page for this study. The Oak Park Road Feasibility Study referenced earlier in the presentation, is available on the City's web page.

You may also request to be added to the project contact list to receive updates and future public notices.

Please provide your comments by December 11, 2020 by sending them to either one of the project team members at the City of Brantford or Parsons.

Thank you for participating in virtual public Information Centre #1.