



Brantford Transportation Master Plan Update

Virtual Public Information Center #4 Question and Answer Video June 30, 2020



Virtual Public Information Centre (PIC) Process

In response to the advice of public health officials to limit in-person gatherings due to COVID-19, this Virtual Public Information Centre (PIC) has been developed. Through this Virtual PIC, you will be able to learn more about the Master Servicing Plan and Transportation Master Plan projects and provide comments on the study findings.

Virtual PIC Process

- **June 9 at 3:00 p.m.** PIC Boards and a video walkthrough of their content will be posted
- **June 9 – June 23** First question and comment submission period
- **June 30 at 3:00 p.m.** A question and answers video will be posted
- **June 30 – July 21** Second question and comments submission period
- **July 28 at 3:00 p.m.** A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document will be posted

In accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act, no personal information will be included with the responses presented on the project website and all comments will become part of the public record.



Wayne Gretzky Parkway / Park Road North

Question: Shouldn't widening WGP north of Hwy 403 to Powerline Rd be needed in conjunction with the WGP extension north of Powerline Road?

Answer: Slide 38 of the PIC material, entitled “2041 Preliminary Recommended Plan – Performance”, indicates that the 4 lane cross section of WGP will be adequate to the service the forecast demand to 2041. The corridor should be protected for a potential widening to 6-lanes as volume demand may warrant beyond the 2041 horizon of the TMP.

Question: Are any improvements identified for Park Road North?

Answer: No lane capacity improvements are proposed for Park Road North south of Powerline Road. Local intersection improvements will be required to optimize travel flow and accommodate changes in other road cross section (example: at Powerline Road and Park Road North). North of Powerline Road, a realignment of Park Road North will be required as it intersects with the future WGP. This realignment and intersection will be subject of a future Environmental Assessment Study for the WGP Extension.



Oak Park Road Extension

Question: TMP Slide 8: The “Oak Park Road & Highway 403 interchange upgrade” is currently under construction at a cost of \$6.75 million, with completion expected by the end of 2020. One could conclude from this that the City is determined to construct the Oak Park Road Extension regardless of any objections by the citizens of Brantford. Could you please comment?

Answer: The upgrades to the Oak Park Road interchange are being conducted as a result of the planned growth in the NW Business Park. This need is independent of the potential future Oak Park Road Extension.

Question: TMP Slide 11: Is it too early to consider the effects of COVID-19 or a future pandemic on transit ridership? I assume no effects have been included in the ridership numbers in the TMP.

Answer: Yes, it would be premature to speculate on the impacts of future transit ridership as a result of Covid-19. The long term impacts of the pandemic and associated restrictions are not known and will not be known for some time. This analysis was conducted prior to the Covid-19 outbreak in Canada and as such, no potential Covid-19 effects have been included. In looking 20 years into the future, the assumption is that there will always checks and balances, and shifts in outlooks. The goal of the long term analysis is to flatten the impacts of such shifts and set reasonable targets that meet the long term community vision.



Oak Park Road Extension – [continued]

Question: TMP Slide 13: Comparing Slide 8 to Slide 13, the overcapacity on Hardy Road has been eliminated due to TDM. Is this correct?

Answer: Yes. TDM does result in reduced volume forecasts on Hardy Rd. The impact of this reduction appears magnified due to the change from 'At or above capacity' to 'Approaching capacity'. In practice, the effects of TDM on Hardy Road are much more modest as Hardy Road is just over capacity in the 'Do Minimal' network and is just under capacity in the 'TDM' network.

Question: TMP Slides 13 & 14: Comparing Slides 13 & 14, the construction of the Oak Park Road Extension does not appear to have any effect on the overcapacity issues on Veterans Memorial Parkway and Clarence Street. Please comment.

Answer: The Oak Park Road Extension is expected to divert between 300-500 vehicles from the Paris Rd/ Brant Ave corridor and the Lorne Bridge (slide 16). With respect to the Veterans Memorial Parkway and Clarence Street, based on trip distribution patterns of vehicles using Veterans Memorial Parkway and Clarence Street (shown on slides 23 & 28 of the PIC material), the Oak Park Road Extension will have little to no impact on the future volumes on either Veterans Memorial Parkway and Clarence Street.



Oak Park Road Extension – [continued]

Question: TMP Slides 14 & 29: With the construction of the Oak Park Road Extension, a new area of overcapacity appears on Colborne St. W., between County Road 7 (Pleasant Ridge Road) and D'Aubigny Road. Is construction of the OPRE simply going to result in moving traffic congestion from one part of the city to another?

Answer: The role of Oak Park Road extension is to serve a specific future demand that would, and should, be diverted from a current corridor that is not capable of serving that demand. Over capacity demand in the existing corridor (Paris Road and Brant Street, and on Lorne Bridge) results in neighbourhood infiltration that local roads are not designed to accommodate. Yes, the extension results in some additional pressure points but these pressure points can be mitigated. The section of Colborne St. W., between County Road 7 (Pleasant Ridge Road) and D'Aubigny Road currently has a 3 lane cross section (2 lanes westbound and 1 lane eastbound). It will require a road widening to match the existing 4 lane cross section east of D'Aubigny Road. This road widening is included in the 'Recommended Plan'.



Oak Park Road Extension – [continued]

Question: TMP Slides 16, 20, 21 24, 26 & 29: The V/C ratios shown on these slides are those of the forecast 2041 “Do Minimal” traffic volumes. Could the consultant include additional V/C ratios using the forecast volumes in which the only alternative strategy is the construction of the Oak Park Road Extension (no TDM, TSM or road widening)? This would directly show the benefit of the OPRE to reducing the overcapacity on these roads. On Slides 20 and 23, the diagrams are very small and the V/C numbers are illegible. Could these numbers be enlarged?

Answer: The Do Minimal scenario reflects a 2041 condition with no additional TDM, TSM or road widenings. The aforementioned slides identify the travel demands and patterns of the problem areas and corridors, and provides commentary on the potential for various alternatives to address that problem. As we are looking at a system wide plan to address city wide issues, the 2041 network assessment tests the alternatives in a system context. The volumes in the 2041 Preferred Plan assessment show significant demand on the Oak Park Road confirming its significant role in the future network. Testing the extension in isolation would only result in additional demand for the facility. With respect to font sizes, these will be improved and provided in the next steps of the project.



Oak Park Road Extension – [continued]

Question: I have read a number of articles recently regarding a phenomenon called “induced demand” which “refers to the idea that increasing roadway capacity encourages more people to drive, thus failing to improve congestion”. With this in mind, is it possible that the construction of the Oak Park Road Extension will only reduce traffic congestion on the city streets in question for a few years after which time we find that congestion reappears on those same streets?

Answer: Existing corridors are shown not to be able to accommodate future forecasts. The Oak Park Road Extension is required to serve specific future demands between West Brant and NW Brantford/Highway 403. The need and role of this infrastructure has been determined both on the basis of no TDM, TSM or road widening, as well as with target TDM and TSM levels. As the demand has been consciously set to match aggressive policy goals for limiting the demand for automobile infrastructure, there will be limited room for induced growth of auto demand in the future due to the implementation of the Oak Park Road Extension. Even with the addition of the Oak Park Road Extension, very high volume demand is still expected on Brant Ave and the Lorne Bridge and as such induced demand is not considered applicable to this condition.



Oak Park Road Extension [continued]

Question: Based on discussions with councillors, the perspectives of residents living in the Ava Road area are being valued over other Brantford residents. Could you comment on this?

Answer: The problems, opportunities, and alternatives are being considered in the context of a multi-criteria evaluation and finding the best fit solutions that meet the needs of the entire community and City. No single stakeholder / stakeholder group is being valued above others.

Question: The TMP makes assumptions about the transportation decision making of residents commuting from the West Brant area to the East (i.e., assuming people will travel West to then go East). Please comment on how this is known.

Answer: The transportation analysis relies on existing traffic data (vehicle volume counts), recent travel behaviour survey for the community (2016 Transportation Tomorrow survey which provide trip purpose, origin-destination, and travel mode information for the GTA and surrounding area, including Brantford), and forecast land use information. This information is used in the City's transportation planning tools to forecast travel behaviour and magnitude of trips for the city broken down into discrete traffic analysis zones. This allows the project team to develop an understanding of the origin and destination of trips forecast for 2041.



Oak Park Road Extension [continued]

Question: In the Oak Park Road Extension Feasibility Study Final Report, there is no discussion regarding connections with Brant County that could be more fiscally responsible than the alternatives considered. Could you comment on why the city has not engaged with the Brant County to facilitate mutually beneficial solutions?

Answer: The TMP Project Team has engaged with County of Brant regarding the problems and opportunities, and the assessment of the alternatives. The Project Team will continue to engage the County through to the completion of the Study. Further, the City has recently initiated the Oak Park Road Extension Environmental Assessment study which will include the County as a key stakeholder. The EA will confirm the requirements of the project, develop an implementation plan, and prepare preliminary designs for the proposed infrastructure. In addition, the City is working with County on a Joint Strategic Transportation Plan to review cross boundary and joint transportation issues.

The project web site for the EA is as follows: <https://www.brantford.ca/en/your-government/oak-park-road-extension.aspx>



Oak Park Road Extension [continued]

Question: The proposed plan discusses how about 900 cars per peak hour will be reduced from Brant Ave, Colborne Street, and VMP combined and that commute time will decrease by about 5 minutes for those commuting. Can you explain how these numbers warrant the expense of the proposed plan?

Answer: The specific outcome related to travel time noted here is not a specific TMP outcome. Generally speaking however, travel time savings of a group of users expanded to annual benefits over many years can be significant. In combination with the environmental benefits of reduced idling (from reduced delay) and shorter travel distances (more direct routes), as well as improving the overall safety of the network (reduced collisions, less neighborhood infiltration) are also key to understanding the benefits of the investment



Oak Park Road Extension [continued]

Question: What will happen at the entrance to Brant Park?

Answer: The City recently initiated an Environmental Assessment study which will assess alternative alignments and designs for the proposed extension. This will include details related to the entrance to Brant Park. Please monitor the city's website for study notices and information.

(<https://www.brantford.ca/en/your-government/environmental-assessment-projects.aspx>)

Question: The public notice in the Brantford Expositor on June 11 uses ambiguous language regarding the bridge that will be required to complete this proposed plan: "TMP (2014) recommends the extension include a four-lane arterial road with a crossing over the Grand River". Mention of a bridge is also not clear in other editions of the proposed plan. A bridge will impact the cost of the proposed plan substantially. Please comment on how the "crossing" (i.e., bridge) will be accounted for in "today's dollars" (not past projections of the bridge cost). To be transparent with taxpayers, clarification of the cost of BOTH the road and crossing (bridge) is necessary.

Answer: In the next phase of the TMP update, costs for the Recommended Plan, including various programs, service, and infrastructure, will be prepared using today's 2020 dollars using current planning and engineering benchmark unit costs. The Recommended Plan will be prioritized into discrete time periods in order to provide guidance to the 10-Year Capital Program. Further more detailed construction costs will be established as part of the on going Environmental Assessment Study.

(<https://www.brantford.ca/en/your-government/oak-park-road-extension.aspx>)



Oak Park Road Extension [continued]

Question: There is no indication of the progression of the TMP (i.e., at which end construction will begin). Are we to take the "Oak Park Road & Highway 403 interchange upgrade" as an indication of the intended direction?

Answer: The future outcome of the TMP is a Recommended Plan for service and infrastructure. This will include an implementation plan identifying the priorities, timing, and general costs for the individual projects. These steps will be undertaken subsequent to the confirmation of the current Recommended Plan. The upgrades to the Oak Park Road interchange are being conducted as a result of the planned growth in the NW Business Park. This need is independent of the potential future Oak Park Road Extension. The next step for the Oak Park Road Extension, the EA, has been initiated by the City.
(<https://www.brantford.ca/en/your-government/oak-park-road-extension.aspx>)

Question: Is compensation for the residents living along the proposed OPRE to address the variety of impacts this project will have (e.g., environmental damage, noise, etc.) being considered?

Answer: The TMP is considering the impacts noted in the evaluation of the alternatives. The specific impacts of the implementation of a project will be the scope of the Environmental Assessment, as will be the identification of any mitigation and compensation potentials.



North Expansion Area

Question: The Plans show an arterial/collector road connection in the Expansion Lands north of Powerline Road (east of King George Road) extending north through the existing natural area. On what land parcel is this road proposed?

Answer: The alignment of this connection is conceptual at this time. Specific alignments of these development roadways will be the subject of future development submissions.

Question: Within the Expansion Lands there is a proposed collector road travelling parallel to Powerline Road with proposed connections southerly to Powerline Road. How will this road be funded and, given multiple landowners, how will coordination be addressed to ensure that the road is completed in a timely and complete manner?

Answer: The timing and design elements of this roadway, and other connections required to support development, will be the subject of future EA's or Draft Plans of Subdivision as development progresses.



North Expansion Area [continued]

Question: The 2041 Preliminary Recommend Plan shows only one potential connection northerly to extend through the natural area to provide access to future lands located outside of the urban boundary. However, Schedule 11 does not illustrate this same roadway as part of the Bike and Trails Network. There is a proposed off-road trail system within the natural area (east-west), shouldn't this connection also be shown?

Answer: This comment is noted. The noted roadway extension northerly is conceptual and the subject of further development related study. At such time as the roadway need and alignment is confirmed, it would be important to provide active transportation in this corridor.



Plan Implementation

Question: Are cost estimates available for the recommended alternatives?

Answer: As part of the project next steps, cost estimates for the Recommended Plan will be developed using current planning and engineering unit cost benchmarks.

Question: The Master Plans Review identifies a number of improvements with existing infrastructure (roads, water, sanitary), while there is no discussion related to any programs planned either through the 10 Year Capital Program and/or the Development Charge By-law/Development Charge Background Study that would provide for the identified improvements. Can this be provided?

Answer: As part of the project next steps, cost estimates for the Recommended Plan will be developed using current planning and engineering unit cost benchmarks. An Implementation Plan identifying the Plan priorities will be developed to inform both the 10-yr Capital Program and the Development Charges process.



Plan Implementation [continued]

Question: Given the impact of COVID-19 and other pressing government cuts and priorities on the city's budget (e.g., cuts to transfers from the Provincial government for healthcare, fulsomely addressing homelessness) , how is the proposed plan being funded? Or even the top priority?

Answer: The cost and potential funding for the Recommended Plan will be prepared as part of the project's next steps. Ultimately, the decision related to the spending of fiscal budgets are made by Council on the recommendation of City departments, and not an outcome of the TMP.

Question: The Master Plans Review identifies a significant amount of new infrastructure required; however, it does not discuss how these improvements would be funded? A discussion on funding should be provided.

Answer: A high level discussion related to funding will be included as part of the development of the Implementation Plan in the project's next steps.



Thank You!

If you wish to submit comments or would like to be added to the project mailing list, please contact:

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Information will be collected in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. With the exception of personal information, all comments will become part of the public record.

