

Municipality of Lakeshore - Report to Council

Engineering & Infrastructure Services

Engineering Services



To: Mayor & Members of Council

From: Krystal Kalbol, Director of Engineering and Infrastructure Services

Date: May 30, 2021

Subject: County Road 22 Corridor Alternatives and Strategies Study

Recommendation

This report is for information only.

Background

In 2006, the County of Essex completed an Environmental Assessment on County Road 22 which included the section of County Road 22 from County Road 25/East Puce Road to West Belle River Road.

In 2012, the Municipality of Lakeshore completed a Corridor Transformation Strategy, County Road 22 Special Planning Area Design Guidelines for this section of roadway.

Due to the existing condition of the roadway and significant growth (proposed land use and development projects), operations along County Road 22 (from County Road 25/East Puce Road to West Belle River Road) are expected to deteriorate and continue to raise operational and safety concerns for all road users.

Based on the competing interest of the corridor and the concerns noted above related to operational deficiencies and concerns, the County Road 22 Corridor Study was initiated by the County of Essex in March 2019. This study was conducted in partnership with the Municipality of Lakeshore.

WSP was retained as the consultant to assess the needs of the corridor.

This corridor study provided an opportunity to develop an alternative that will accommodate future growth, improve the operations and safety of the road, accommodate all road users including vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians, improve drainage, reduce the number of accesses, improve the streetscape and establish a long-term plan to guide the development of the County Road 22 corridor from County Road 25/East Puce Road to Belle River Road (approximately 5.8 km).

Comments

Country Road 22 is a County of Essex road and acts as an important inter-regional transportation corridor within the Municipality of Lakeshore. This corridor links major urban areas, including the communities of Belle River, Emeryville, Puce and Maidstone, and consists of Lakeshore's major commercial and employment areas with respect to upcoming growth.

As noted in the Corridor Transformation Strategy, "County Road 22 faces similar challenges as other urban arterial road corridors in Ontario, which accommodate a diverse range of commercial and business use which have historically existed and evolved over time, including automotive dealers, industrial malls, commercial strip plazas, expansive parking areas and older residential dwellings on large lots".

The Municipality identified this corridor as a Special Planning Area and developed strategies to transform/develop the corridor, over time, into an Urban Avenue.

Today, a majority of the corridor is dedicated to vehicular needs. While maintaining mobility remains a regional priority, efforts to improve multi-modal transportation and realize streetscape elements within the right-of-way were assessed to create an attractive, consistent and unifying public realm.

While traditional road design focuses on the transportation characteristics of the street, this study is more policy based and looks to 'maintain' transportation function over the next 20+ years but also considered alternatives based on an understanding that roads play both a transportation (Environmental Assessment) as well as a placemaking (Corridor Transformation Strategy) function.

Through the County Road 22 Corridor Study, the County and the Municipality took a more balanced approach to corridor planning in the study area.

This is the first step in revitalizing the street to align with Lakeshore's Corridor Transformation Strategy, and in turn with Lakeshore's vision.

While the corridor study was underway, WSP conducted an online survey to assist with the direction of the study from the public. This survey was conducted from December 21, 2020 until January 15, 2021.

Social media posts, including Facebook, a media release, signs on County Road 22, website posting, PlaceSpeak and the County of Essex also created a webpage with a downloadable survey as well as other online surveys. All comments that were received, in any format, were provided to the consultant to review. Due to COVID-19 regulations, we were unable to provide opportunities for in-person discussion.

1,965 people viewed the survey and 444 people completed it. In addition, 45 people conducted discussion through the online survey.

WSP has completed a review of the existing conditions of the corridor, modeled existing and future conditions, considered the public feedback to date and developed a preferred alternative that takes into consideration both the mobility and character of the road.

The selection of the preferred alternative was based on guiding principles including safety and accessibility, sustainability, as well as a realistic, cost effective and balanced approach and looked at a way to develop a 'complete corridor' which accommodates the needs of pedestrians, transit users, cyclists, trail users as well as vehicular traffic.

WSP is here to present the study findings and the preferred corridor alternative as per the attached presentation.

The next steps for this project include:

1. Presentation to Municipality of Lakeshore Council (June 8th) on the project status
2. Presentation to County Council (June 16th) on the project status
3. Hosting the PIC – June 17th commencing at 6:30 pm
4. Review of comments from PIC – 45 days
5. Finalize concepts and develop a preferred alternative
6. Submission of final report

This information will be presented to the public via a Public Information Center forum on June 17th, 2021 at 6:30 pm.

The Pubic Information Centre will be hosted virtually. Notification of the event will occur primarily through online resources such as the County and Lakeshore websites and social media pages.

The final report is expected to be received in late fall 2021.

Others Consulted

The County of Essex and WSP were consulted.

Financial Impacts

Funding was included in the 2019 Engineering Services budget to complete the County Road 22 Corridor Study. This study is cost shared 50/50 with the County of Essex.

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	County Road 22 Corridor Alternatives and Strategies Study.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Jun 3, 2021

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Rosanna Pellerito

Kristen Newman

Truper McBride