North Queen Street Extension
Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Study

Date: December 5, 2013
To: Public Works and Infrastructure Committee
From: General Manager, Transportation Services
Wards: Ward 5 (Etobicoke-Lakeshore)
Reference Number: P:\2013\ClusterB\TRA\TIM\pw13014tim

SUMMARY

The Official Plan provides for incremental improvement of the road network in the Sherway area, which is generally bounded by Highway 427 on the east, the Queen Elizabeth Way on the south, The West Mall on the west and the CP Rail corridor on the north. The redevelopment of this area is hampered by its lack of continuous public roads through the area.

Staff have undertaken a transportation infrastructure planning study, following the Municipal Class EA process, to define a road network that would support development, improve area access, and ease local traffic constraints. Several alternative road configurations were developed and evaluated, with input from City Divisions (Transportation Services, City Planning, and Engineering and Construction Services) and consultation with the public, property owners, and key stakeholders such as Hydro One and Canadian Pacific Railway.

The recommended plan (Alternative 3B) includes:

- A new east/west public road linking the intersection of North Queen Street at Manstor Road through the south portion of 51 Manstor Road, to The West Mall. This extension is recommended to be a four-lane road with bike lanes, in a 26 m right-of-way.
- A new north/south public road linking The Queensway and the new east/west road east of The West Mall. This link is a two-lane road with bike lanes, in a 20 m right-of-way.
A preliminary estimate of the capital cost to complete the project is $13 million, depending on market conditions, the timing of property acquisition, the availability of private property through the development review process, removal of contaminated soils, and further geotechnical investigation. Funding for this project is to be considered for inclusion in a future Transportation Services 10-Year Capital Plan.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The General Manager, Transportation Services, recommends that:

1. City Council authorize the General Manager of Transportation Services to issue a Notice of Completion and to file the Environmental Study Report for the North Queen Street Class Environmental Assessment Study in the public record for a minimum 30 days in accordance with the requirements of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment.

**Financial Impact**

The estimated cost of the recommended plan is $13 million. This may be divided into phases (both temporally and physically) depending on the timing and amount of funding assigned to project implementation.

No provision has been made for this project in the Transportation Services 2014 Capital Budget and 2015-2023 Capital Plan. However, project funding will be considered as part of future Transportation Services Capital Budget processes.

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

**ISSUE BACKGROUND**

The Official Plan provides for incremental improvement of the road network in the Sherway area, which is generally bounded by Highway 427 on the east, The Queen Elizabeth Way on the south, The West Mall on the west and the CP Rail corridor on the north, as shown in Attachment 1 of this report. The redevelopment of this area is hampered by its lack of continuous east/west and north/south public roads through the area. Site Specific Policy 19 in the Official Plan states that: "a new public network of local streets will be required to divide the area into a more urban pattern of streets and blocks, providing a framework for reorganizing and intensifying existing uses and accommodating new uses and forms of development."

The extension of North Queen Street was initially identified in the former City of Etobicoke's Sherway Centre Secondary Plan, which was replaced by Area and Site Specific Policies 2, 12, 13, 19 and 20 in the Toronto Official Plan (2006). Area and Site Specific Policy 19 continues to provide for both the westerly and northerly extensions of...
North Queen Street, and are designated as "Planned But Unbuilt Roads" in Schedule 2 of the Official Plan.

City staff initiated discussions with Hydro One in 2005 about the potential routing of the new road through the area transmission corridor. This option was included in the EA study. Subsequent retail development on North Queen Street brought the area close to its development cap, based on road network transportation capacity. Staff therefore negotiated some funding for the study from SmartCentres, a major landowner in the area including the existing retail mall bounded by North Queen Street, The Queensway and Highway 427, in order to carry out the EA and develop plans for the road network that would unlock potential redevelopment lands.

The EA study was initiated in fall 2008. The study has proceeded deliberately in order to address numerous technical and planning issues, not always under the City's control. CP Rail also made a financial contribution to the study to help address the potential north-south rail grade separation issue, and a detailed study of various transmission corridor options was commissioned from Hydro One. Numerous discussions with property owners took place, and every effort was made to investigate and analyze the various alternatives that emerged from those discussions, in an effort to create a road network with maximum functionality, minimum impact on private property, and reflective of CP and Hydro One technical requirements.

**COMMENTS**

**Environmental Assessment Process**

The North Queen Extension Class Environmental Assessment Study has been completed in accordance with the requirements for a Schedule "C" project under the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (the Class EA). This process includes:

- Phase 1 – identification of the problem or opportunity;
- Phase 2 – identification and evaluation of alternative solutions (Attachment 2); and
- Phase 3 – identification and evaluation of alternative design concepts for the preferred solution
  (Alternative 3B).

The preparation of the Environmental Study Report (ESR) and the filing of the document in the public record, which is the subject of this report, constitute Phase 4 of the environmental planning process. Phase 5 is the construction and operation or implementation of the project, and monitoring of impacts, in accordance with the terms of the EA approval.

If City Council endorses the study recommendations, the ESR will be filed in the public record for a minimum 30-day review period. During this period, any interested party may request that the Minister of the Environment issue a Part II Order under the EA Act. The City is then obliged to work with the requestor to resolve their concerns or to advise
MOE of the rationale for setting aside the request. If a Part II Order is not granted or if requests or objections received during the filing period are resolved, the project may proceed to implementation.

The Class EA Study was carried out with the assistance of technical consultants and supported by a Technical Advisory Committee comprised of staff from Transportation Services, City Planning, Toronto Water, Engineering and Construction Services, and Public Consultation.

Public Consultation

There are no residential areas affected by the study; the impacted lands are solely in industrial or commercial use. The consultation program therefore focused on property owners and area businesses. In doing so, the Study Team conducted 10 meetings with stakeholders.

Two Public Information Centres were publicized and held on June 11, 2009 and November 12, 2013 in the Etobicoke Civic Centre. These sessions were lightly attended by the general public. Details of the public consultation process and the primary concerns expressed by the public and stakeholders are documented in Attachment 4. Consultation material is available on the project web site at www.toronto.ca/involved.

Problem / Opportunity Statement

There are currently no continuous east/west or north/south public roads through the Study Area, west of North Queen Street. This lack of connectivity in the road network is an impediment to existing and future vehicular access, accessibility and mobility for non-auto modes of travel, and the future urban redevelopment of the area. The discontinuous network also overloads certain roads and intersections (e.g. The Queensway / North Queen Street) which must accommodate diverted traffic.

In addressing this problem, the following opportunities are apparent:

1) ability to improve transportation conditions for all users;

2) ability to support/create the conditions necessary to fulfill future land-use and redevelopment objectives; and

3) ability to support urban design objectives of creating public spaces that are not only usable but attractive places to be.
Alternatives Considered

The Official Plan provides for several new road links within the Study Area, including:

1) the westerly extension of North Queen Street, from its intersection with Manstor Road to The West Mall;

2) a north/south road linking The Queensway, at its intersection with the existing driveway east of the West Mall serving the book store, with the potential westerly extension of North Queen Street noted above; and

3) the northerly extension of North Queen Street, from its intersection with Manstor Road across the CP Rail corridor to The West Mall by either a tunnel or a bridge.

The recommendations contained in this report reflect the transportation infrastructure prescribed in the Official Plan - Site and Area Specific Policy #19 for this area. As such, no changes are required to update this policy.

The six main alternative road networks considered are illustrated in Attachment 2. For east-west link (1), two groups of alternatives were considered:

- Using the Hydro One transmission corridor, which requires either a property exchange to create an alternate corridor for Hydro use or providing for an underground high-voltage conduit.

- Avoiding the Hydro One corridor by either bisecting or running along the southern edge of 51 Manstor Road.

Extensive consultation with Hydro One determined it would be too complex and costly to assemble the blocks of public and private property that would allow Hydro One to protect for a new transmission corridor through the area while freeing up the existing right-of-way for the road. An alternative means of constructing a road in the existing corridor is to bury the hydro cables in a set of conduits, but the cost and technical complexity of this process is also problematic and not recommended. In the end, a route which traversed the 51 Manstor property and avoided the Hydro corridor was determined to be the most feasible and cost-effective plan. There are minor modifications possible to the alignment within the 51 Manstor property which will be explored further in the property negotiation and detail design process.

With east-west link (1) alignment defined, the alignment for north-south link (2), also shown in Appendix 2, was established.

Link (3), the CP rail corridor crossing, was investigated in considerable detail but factors of cost ($36 M - $60 M), significant private property impact, road geometry, and constructability led the study team to conclude that it not be pursued further. In light of this conclusion, the need for this Rail Crossing alternative will be reconsidered in the 2014 Sherway Area Planning Study. Should that study confirm the need to retain this
connection as a Planned Road, further study will be required to determine a feasible alignment.

The above recommendations are shown as Alternative 3B in Attachment 2.

**Recommended Design**

The recommended road plan as illustrated as Alternative 3B in Attachment 2 includes:

- **East/West Roadway** with a 26.0 m wide right-of-way connecting North Queen Street through Manstor Road to The West Mall comprising:
  - 17.6 m wide pavement:
    - Four 3.5 m wide vehicle travel lanes
    - Two 1.8 m wide bike lanes
  - Two 4.2 m wide boulevard areas, each including a 1.7 m wide sidewalk

- **North/South Roadway** with a 20.0 m wide right-of-way connecting the East/West North Queen extension to The Queensway comprising:
  - 10.6 m wide pavement:
    - Two 3.5 m wide vehicle travel lanes
    - Two 1.8 m wide bike lanes
  - Two 4.7 m wide boulevard areas, each including a 1.7 m wide sidewalk

The recommended design was chosen as it reflects the most cost-effective option, and is preferred over Alternative 3A as it keeps the remaining lands for 51 Manstor Road whole rather than split. Additionally, the owners of 51 Manstor Road have expressed interest in redeveloping their site, so that through the development review process, it may be possible to obtain the necessary right-of-way at a nominal cost.

**Property Impact**

Most of the right-of-way for the recommended road works requires acquisition of private lands and negotiation of access to Hydro One lands. The details of the property impacts are outlined in Attachment 3.

It is expected that the 51 Manstor property will ultimately be redeveloped; it may be possible to obtain the necessary road right-of-way from that property through the development review process. The new roadway will significantly enhance the access and development potential for the 51 Manstor site.
Project Cost and Implementation

A preliminary cost estimate has been prepared, showing basic roadworks in the order of $5 M and property acquisition in the order of $6 M. Including a $2 M provision for removal of contaminated soil, design work, construction administration, taxes, and other related construction items, it would be appropriate to set a preliminary budget for this project of approximately $13 M. It must be considered, however, that property costs may vary considerably depending on the circumstances of acquisition, timing, and market conditions. It is possible to acquire property and to implement the project in stages.

Next Steps

Following approval of this report by City Council, the ESR will be filed in the public record for a minimum 30-day period. Staff will address any issues that may arise in the course of that review through the provisions of the Municipal Class EA process. Following completion of the first four phases of the Class EA the project will be in a position to move to funding, property acquisition, detail design and subsequently to implementation.

The ability to move forward will depend on the availability of funding. As a result, consideration will be given to the inclusion of funding for this project in an upcoming 10-Year Capital Plan submission.

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SIGNATURE

_______________________________
Stephen Buckley
General Manager, Transportation Services

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Study Area
Attachment 2: Alternatives
Attachment 3: Property Impacts for Recommended Plan
Attachment 4: Public Consultation and Public/Agency Concerns
ATTACHMENT 2: Six Road Network Alternatives Considered

Alternative 1A
Alternative 1B
Alternative 2B
Alternative 3A
Alternative 3B
(Recommended Design)
ATTACHMENT 3: Property Impacts for Recommended Plan

Refer to table on next page for details.

Note 2 refers to some small City-owned land parcels that would be surplus to the road right-of-way requirements.
## Property Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site (ref. key plan)</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Estimated Property Req’d (m²)</th>
<th>Total Property Area (m²)</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Property (%)</th>
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* Property required per alignment shown in Attachment 3 and Figure 3B (Attachment 2). Further minor alignment modifications will be explored at the property negotiation and detail design stage which may alter these figures.
ATTACHMENT 4: Public Consultation and Public/Agency Concerns

Public Information Centre 1 (June 2009)

PIC 1 was lightly attended by the public. Those who participated in this meeting and submitted comments were generally pleased with the options presented, as well as the proposed evaluation criteria.

No further evaluation criteria were suggested.

One member of the public suggested an additional connection be considered, linking the proposed intersection of North Queen Street and The West Mall with The Queensway, west of The West Mall.

One member of the public suggested that any new roads being built should accommodate bicycle lanes and public transit as well as cars and trucks.

Public Information Centre 2 (November 2013)

PIC 2 was lightly attended by the public. Those who participated in this meeting and submitted comments were generally pleased with the options presented, as well as the proposed evaluation criteria.

One member of the public asked whether the City had considered a north/south connection from North Queen Street to West Side Drive.

Consultation with land owners

The owners or their representatives of the following lands were directly consulted:

- 1840, 1860, 1880, 1900 and 2000 The Queensway
- 20 Manstor Road & 170 North Queen Street
- 21 - Manstor Road – Toronto Hydro Electric System
- 27 - Manstor Road
- 39 - Manstor Road
- 51 - Manstor Road
- 145 The West Mall - Canada Post
- Hydro One
- CP Rail Corridor

One of the land owners suggested studying the potential to move the vacant Hydro One corridor to the south of the CPR corridor, thereby freeing up the vacant Hydro One corridor for the new public road. This option was studied, and is represented by Link 2. Other comments were made about the opportunity to refine the road alignment so as to minimize impact on developable land; some flexibility remains to accommodate minor changes in the recommended alignment.