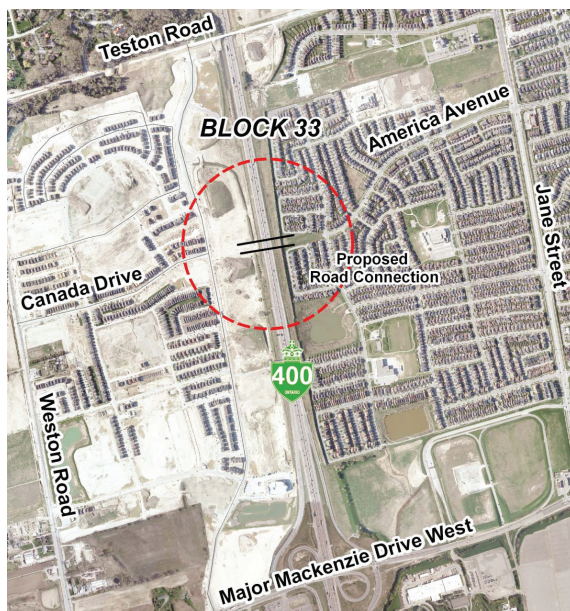


The Rationale for the Bridge

1. To improve the efficiency of the transportation network for Block 33 as well as the surrounding area. According to York Region's Transportation Master Plan, congestion is identified as one of the main problems in the Region. Economic and social costs of congestion can include: reduced economic output, higher costs for transit users from vehicle operating costs, travel delays, environmental and social costs.

2. To complete the "missing link" in the continuous street grid – During the planning process for Block 33 (East), the City of Vaughan identified key infrastructure requirements, such as the need to produce a



porous efficient internal road system with linkages to the existing and planned external road system. Specifically, the Block Plan has designated an east/west primary road across Highway 400. As a result of the "missing link", the residents in the area must utilize major regional arterial roads (such as Jane Street, Teston Road and Major Mackenzie Drive), to move from one side of Highway 400 to the other, resulting in poor transportation efficiency.

In addition, essential services (fire, police and emergency)

need the connection. The "missing link" increases the response time and potentially puts lives at risk.

3. To align the infrastructure with the City and Metrolinx initiatives such as:

- Reduce demand on transportation systems, minimizing unnecessary travel, shortening the distance traveled and making better use of the options we currently have.
- Increase choices for travel by providing a range of fully integrated, easily accessible, attractive and sustainable transportation choices for GTHA travellers and encouraging the use of options other than the automobile.
- Design and build communities to reduce travelling distances and facilitate walking, cycling and transit use.

Not Everyone Agrees with these Reasons

A number of residents, primarily on the East Side of Block 33, have voiced their concerns at the Citizen Liaison Committee (CLC), the Open House Meeting and with a petition. The following is a sample of their concerns about the "rationale:

The information that has been discussed to date has not shown me and my family the absolute need for this bridge is justified, especially when there will be a 4-lane Teston Road opened so close to America Avenue and Canada Drive."

"I suggest that you find a better way to convince me and my family that this bridge will help my current lifestyle and living condition."

The Study Team has compiled all public comments. The corresponding answers will be made available on the project website. The Team has also prepared individual letters addressed to each resident responding to their particular concerns. A letter to all signatories of the petition will be mailed out as well.

An interim report, which will document the first two phases of the Class EA process, will be produced to include the final problem/opportunity statement, identify the alternatives, provide a summary of existing conditions and a final evaluation of each alternative. In the near future, this report will be made available on our website, so please check regularly.

Alternatives Considered

The Problem Statement

Based on the discussions at the March 26th, 2009 CLC, the Study Team revised the draft Problem Statement to reflect the comments received.

Problem/Opportunity Statement:

The existing Block 33 road network does not provide connectivity between the east and west sides of Highway 400. Currently, residents must utilize major arterials to move from one side of Highway 400 to the other (i.e. Jane, Teston, Major Mackenzie, Weston), resulting in poor transportation efficiency and congestion. As a result, the surrounding arterial roads are reaching capacity, and according to various traffic studies, this is predicted to increase in severity over the next 20 years.

An opportunity exists to improve the transportation efficiency of Block 33 by providing a continuous road network between Blocks, shortening travel times, improving emergency response services, providing additional pedestrian facilities and offering access to enhanced transit systems and bicycle networks. This opportunity is consistent with the City's Official Plan, offers better access to community amenities and promotes sustainable multi-modal transportation options contributing to the reduction of gas emissions."

Four Alternatives were Studied

The Study Team identified four possible alternatives to address the problem statement

1. Do Nothing

No changes or improvements to Block 33 transportation network.

2. Reduce Auto Demand

Improve public transit, cycling and Travel Demand Management initiatives within and around the Study Area.

3. Upgrade/Improve Other Roadways

Improvements to other local roadways within the study area in conjunction with the ongoing Western Vaughan Transportation Improvements Individual EA.

4. Build Hwy 400 Overpass

Build a mid-block connection over Highway 400 between America Avenue and Canada Drive.

Preliminary Recommended Alternative Solution

A combination of Alternative #2 and #4 (Reduce Auto Demand and Build Hwy 400 Overpass) is Recommended for the following reasons:

- Combined, these alternatives are expected to address the Problem/Opportunity Statement. They offer the best opportunity to deal with the identified operational efficiency concerns for personal vehicles and emergency services, and they will fully implement and complete the planned road network as identified in the City's Official Plan.
- Implementing these Alternatives will also provide a local road connection within Block 33, which will allow for the sustainable movement of multi-modal services, including buses, cyclists and pedestrians, and therefore, facilitate access to local community facilities, businesses and schools.

Study Team working to address concerns expressed about the Recommended Alternative... an ongoing work-in-progress



MARTIN GROVE ROAD BRIDGE, CITY OF VAUGHAN



ISSUE/CONCERN:

Community members believe the proposed bridge is unnecessary to bring the community together as school boundaries do not cross Highway 400 and there are a lack of parks and recreational facilities on the west side. The ones that do exist are accessible by Teston Road.

RESPONSE:

Proposed development for the west side of Block 33 includes several schools, a major shopping centre (at the Corner of Weston Road to the west and Major Mackenzie Drive to the south as laid out in the Block 33 West Land Use and Planning Report) and other recreational facilities. Major Mackenzie Drive and Teston Road are Regional roads which are intended to provide a long-distance east-west connection within the City of Vaughan and the Region of York for commuter traffic. The existing roads (America Avenue and Canada Drive) are local roads, which are intended to deal with local traffic. By providing the connection via the North Maple Community Bridge, a link will serve as an internal local road and is intended to prevent the use of the arterial roads for travelling within the block.

ISSUE/CONCERN:

Concerns related to personal safety: What safety measures will be utilized to protect the community? Will traffic calming measures be implemented to ensure safety of residents due to an increase in traffic?

RESPONSE:

Both the City and the Project Team understand and appreciate the importance of safety for pedestrians. The Project Team welcomes all input from residents who can provide important local knowledge on current problems, as well as what types of mitigating factors they would like to see. It is important to note that pedestrian and citizen safety

was a criteria used in the evaluation of Alternative Solutions during Phase 2 of the Class EA process. Moving through the study, this criterion will also be included during Phase 3, which is Alternative Design Concepts. For example, traffic calming measures are being considered to reduce the likelihood of traffic related speeding.

The Project has a team of interdisciplinary professionals that will provide input in relation to the mitigation measures.

ISSUE/CONCERN:

Will the proposed bridge decrease property value of my home?

RESPONSE:

There are a number of various factors that determine property values, including: location, proximity to public transportation, schools, shopping centres, community facilities, condition of property, market demands, etc. While some argue that property values may go down as a result of providing a connection through Block 33, other determining factors including increased opportunity for transit and connectivity to key areas throughout the City, may in fact increase the value of the property as described below.

For example, location-specific factors that may affect an investor's risk perceptions have to do with the stage of development of an area. An investor may consider the purchase of a property in an area with little development, infrastructure, and supporting services as more risky, compared to a property located in a fully developed neighborhood.

There are many elements, as listed above, which determine property value. It cannot be stated with certainty that this proposed connection would be attributable to influencing property values, one way or the other.

ISSUE/CONCERN:

The Study Team is working to address concerns expressed about the Recommended Alternative... an ongoing work-in-progress.

There are concerns over environmental impacts due to:

- Potential increases in greenhouse gas emissions
- Dust pollution from construction
- Air Quality
- Noise

RESPONSE:

Greenhouse gas emissions:

- One of the main objectives of the project is to optimize the use of the road network and encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation reducing the greenhouse gas emissions.

Dust Pollution:

- Dust and debris control measures may include applying dust suppressants to control dust emissions, and construction techniques that employ low dust generating equipment.

Air Quality:

- No significant change is expected to occur as air contaminants emitted from vehicles will drift downwind and disperse as they travel. Contaminant concentrations depend on a variety of factors, including weather conditions and the distance from the infrastructure.

- The contractor will be required to meet the Ministry of Environment (MOE) criteria for noxious gases and particulate matter and maintain the construction equipment to ensure low emission rates.

Noise Pollution:

- The construction noise pollution will be minimized by the strict application of the residential noise by-laws.
- Highway 400 was identified as being the most significant noise source for road traffic. Thus, it is not expected that the construction of the bridge will increase the existing ambient noise levels.

ISSUE/CONCERN:

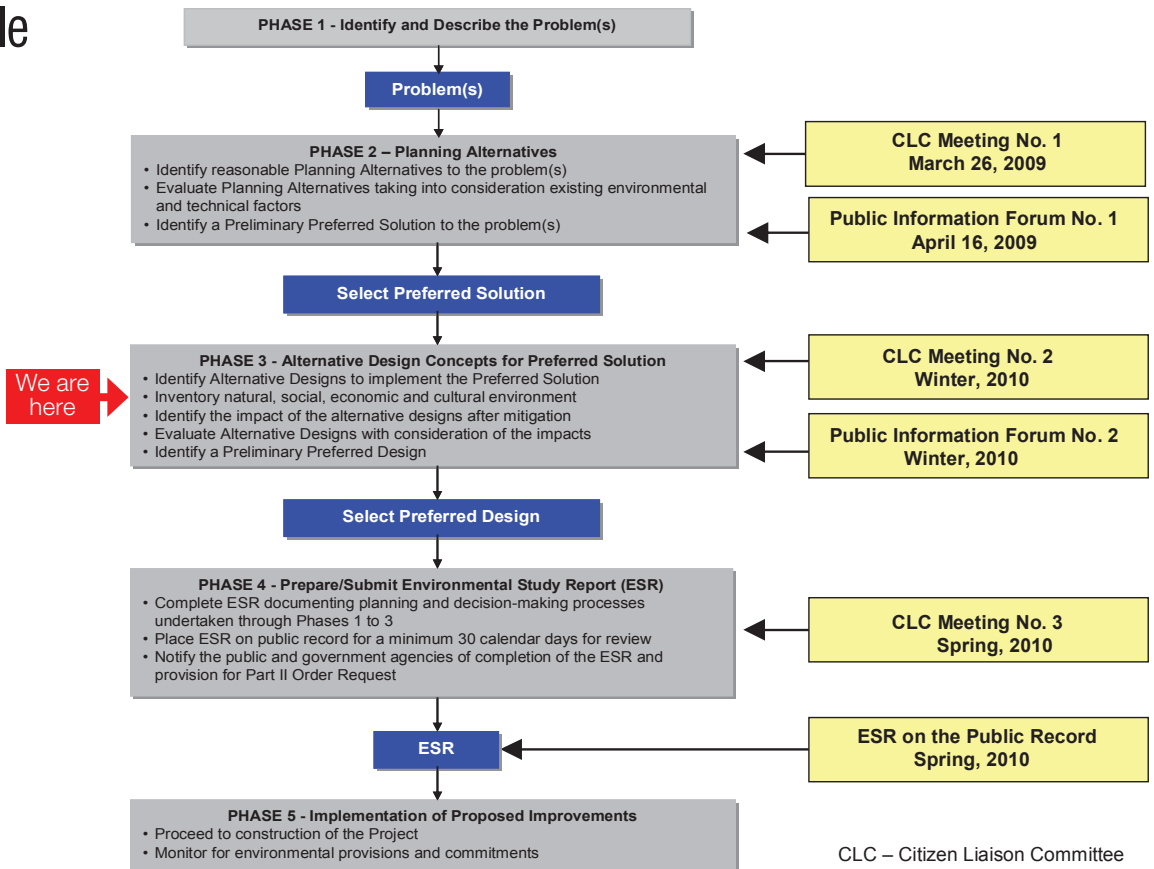
When will the potential environmental effects from the EA process be discussed? What measures will be taken to mitigate these environmental effects?

RESPONSE:

The potential environmental effects will be discussed during Phase 3 of the Project and presented to the public at Public Information Forum #2. The Study Team is developing alternative designs. For each alternative design the Team will identify and evaluate the potential social, environmental and economic impacts. Finally, the team will select the preferred alternative design and apply mitigation measures to avoid, eliminate, prevent or minimize negative effects where necessary.

Next Steps/ Study Schedule

Class EA Process



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