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Date July 5, 2022 **Report No.** 2022-338

To Chair and Members
Committee of the Whole - Operations

From Inderjit Hans, P. Eng., PMP
General Manager, Public Works Commission

1.0 Type of Report

Consent Item ☐
Item For Consideration ☒

2.0 Topic Wayne Gretzky Parkway North Extension Environmental Assessment [Financial Impact - \$400,000]

3.0 Recommendation

- A. THAT Report 2022-338 Wayne Gretzky Parkway North Extension BE RECEIVED; and
- B. THAT Staff BE DIRECTED to proceed with the Schedule 'C' Environmental Assessment as presented in the City's 2020 Transportation Master Plan; and
- C. THAT funding BE APPROVED in the amount of \$400,000 from Development Charges – Transportation Reserve Fund (RF0406).

4.0 Executive Summary

The Wayne Gretzky Parkway north extension is identified in the 2020 Transportation Master Plan Update (TMP) as one of the many recommended major road projects approved by City Council (Report 2020-427).

Staff are recommending the acceleration of funding to complete the Schedule 'C' Environmental Assessment to better align planning activities within the interconnected Powerline Road East block plan.

The recommended Wayne Gretzky Parkway north extension provides a parallel route to connect travel demand back to the Highway 24 corridor for inter-regional travel via Governors Road or travel demand to future Provincial connecting link roadways. As a result, this would provide relief to the forecasted capacity issue on King George Road as presented in the 2051 transportation capacity constraint model.

5.0 Purpose and Overview

The purpose of this report is to seek Council authorization and funding approval allowing staff to commence the recommended Environmental Assessment for the extension of Wayne Gretzky Parkway to supplement planning activities in the Northern Expansion Lands to ensuring timing is in line with the expected development.

6.0 Background

In October 2020, Council approved the 2020 TMP Update (Report 2020-427). The TMP update included the Boundary Expansion Lands (Northern Lands and Tutela Heights Expansion Areas) and reflects conditions to the planning horizon of 2051, consistent with the Province of Ontario's *'A Place to Grow'* policies as amended in 2020.

The TMP update focused on several primary objectives including the plan to accommodate city growth to 2051; this includes the urban boundary expansion, the intensification target for development within the Built-Up Area and density targets within the Designated Greenfield Area as set out in the 2020 Official Plan.

6.1 Transportation Model Update and Assessment

The performance of the transportation system was assessed using the City's strategic travel demand forecasting model. This model accounts for land-use (at a traffic zone level of detail, as approved by the Municipal Comprehensive review process) trip generation, trip distribution and mode split in assigning travel demands to the transportation network. The assigned vehicle volume is then compared to the capacity of the infrastructure at a corridor and roadway link level to identify the impacts of the alternative strategies on the corridor

performance and asset in the identification of the impact of alternatives considered to address the identified roadway constraint.

It is important to understand that infrastructure and service provisions in one corridor can have impacts, positive and negative, in other corridors. The resulting recommended plan from the updated 2020 TMP included a combination of optimizing transportation infrastructure, adding additional transportation infrastructure and managing travel demand.

6.2 Wayne Gretzky Parkway – North Extension

Alternative solutions to the identified capacity constraints for King George Road (Hwy 403 to Powerline Road) were presented in the TMP update. Alternatives included a reduction in auto dependence through facility and transit service enhancements, optimization of intersection configurations and traffic control and lastly increasing infrastructure.

The extension of Wayne Gretzky Parkway north of Powerline Road and intersecting Park Road North was identified as an alternative option to provide relief to the forecasted capacity issue on King George Road. This would act as a parallel route to connect travel demand back to the Hwy 24 corridor using Governors Road.

In addition to providing capacity relief to the King George Road corridor, the extension of Wayne Gretzky Parkway will provide an adequate level of service to the Powerline Road East development block for north/south travel demands. This addition would also align with the Province's current transportation plan, *Connecting the GGH: A Transportation Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*, released in March of 2022 identifying a conceptual project for a future Cambridge-Brantford corridor (Hwy 401 to Hwy 403) in addition to the existing Hwy 24 connecting link.

The TMP update recommendations prescribed the Wayne Gretzky Parkway north extension with a short term project timing interval of 1-5 years due to the development potential of the Powerline Road East development block.

7.0 Corporate Policy Context

2020 Transportation Master Plan Update (Report 2020-427), section 8.4.1

- Approved by Council the recommendations identified in the 2020 Transportation Master Plan Update, including new road additions of

Wayne Gretzky Parkway extension to connect with Park Road north of Powerline Road, to provide relief on King George Road.

City of Brantford Official Plan, section 7.2.d:

- Endorsed by Council that the development of roads will be subject to the approval of the City's Public Works Commission and must be planned, designed and operated in accordance with City's Transportation Master Plan, Transit Master Plan and associated design standards.

City of Brantford 2021-2022 Council Priorities:

- Desired Outcome #3: A safe, efficient transportation system connects the community across neighbourhoods, with neighbouring communities and provincial transportation networks.
- Desired Outcome #5: Growth is successfully accommodated in expansion lands.

8.0 Input From Other Sources

Finance Department

The Finance Department has confirmed that there is sufficient funds and can be funded by the Development Charges - Transportation Reserve Fund RF0406.

Planning & Development Services

The City of Brantford's Official Plan – Envision Our City: 2051 requires the development community to prepare Block Plans for Community Areas in the Northern Boundary Lands. The Official Plan has identified eight areas where Block Plans are to be completed prior to the approval of development applications.

The land owners of the Powerline East Block Plan Area have completed the pre-consultation steps and currently preparing the Block Plan Terms of Reference as stated in the Block Plan Process. The Development Engineering Group is in support of accelerating the environmental assessment for the Wayne Gretzky Parkway north extension to better establish an overall conceptual plan for the Powerline East Block Plan Area.

9.0 Analysis

The City's master servicing studies including the TMP update and Master Servicing Plan (MSP) are developed based on factual and assumed information during the project period. This includes the scheduling of major growth projects that are then incorporated into the City's capital forecast. This is based on multiple criteria which would include project priority and staffing resources.

During the TMP update and MSP review, staff were aware of the potential development pace of the Powerline Road East block development and scheduled the Wayne Gretzky Parkway north extension project phases (EA, Design, Construction) to begin in 2023. This project schedule was established based on information known at the time the City's 2022-2031 Capital Forecast was in development.

The acceleration of the Wayne Gretzky Parkway north extension EA Study would not delay the delivery of current in-progress studies related to the northern expansion lands. Current studies in-progress would include the new PD2/3 elevated water storage facility EA study and the EA study for Northwest Municipal Services Expansion.

The foreseen benefits of accelerating the Wayne Gretzky Parkway north extension EA study would include the following:

- Permit EA activities to begin in spring 2023, including the review and completion of various natural environment studies;
- Reduction in staff time during the Block Plan process which includes the Block Servicing Strategy and the Conceptual Master Plan involving the Block Plan vision, purpose, design context and development considerations;
- Permit staff members to provide a higher level comprehensive design and integration between the Powerline East Block Plan and the future Wayne Gretzky north extension;
- Supports the alignment of construction schedules and creates an opportunity for develop led construction that would help reduce resourcing pressures on staff and management.

10.0 Financial Implications

Based on a preliminary review of current market conditions and supplementary cost estimate from the City's 2020 TMP update, the cost for this environmental assessment is estimated to be \$400,000.

The Finance Department has confirmed that there are sufficient funds and can be funded by the Development Charges - Transportation Reserve Fund RF0406.

11.0 Climate and Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications directly as a result of this report. However, a key component of the Environmental Assessment process is to consider impacts to the natural environment and climate change.

As the Environmental Assessment progresses, City Council will be informed about the environmental impacts through supplementary reports.

12.0 Conclusion

The Wayne Gretzky Parkway North Extension is identify as one of three interconnected management facets to address the anticipated 2051 capacity constraints along King George Road. The approval of the Environmental Assessment in 2022 will permit staff to commence with the conception and initiation planning phases for the study. This would better align block planning activities between staff and developers of the interconnected Powerline Road East development.



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In adopting this report, is a by-law or agreement required? If so, it should be referenced in the recommendation section.

By-law required	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no
Agreement(s) or other documents to be signed by Mayor and/or City Clerk	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no
Is the necessary by-law or agreement being sent concurrently to Council?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no