



March 4th, 2019

North End Bridge Summary of Events

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In 2008 West Perth Council established a steering committee consisting of the following;

- 2 Municipal Councilors

- 1 Public Works Manager

- 1 UTRCA staff

- 3 B.M. Ross Engineers and Environmental staff

to initiate a Environmental Assessment (EA)

Purpose of the EA Study

1. To identify the need for an Additional Watercourse crossing
2. Identify Alternative locations for a potential crossing
3. To consult with Residents and review agencies on the project to gather input and insight into the issues and concerns
4. Define potential impacts
5. Select a preference option

Identify Need and Locations

Steering committee identified the following to investigate.

1. Construct a new vehicular watercourse crossing at Francis Street
2. Construct a new vehicular watercourse crossing at Henry Street
3. Construct a non vehicular pedestrian crossing at Francis/Henry St.
4. Do nothing



Potential Crossing Locations

Consultations

West Perth notified the public for input by advertised twice in the Mitchell Advocate, along with direct mailing notices to 154 residents living in the vicinity at the time.

We mailed notices to UTRCA, MOE, MOC, MNR, MTO, Transport Canada, Aboriginals, County of Perth and school boards.

The majority of public comments received were positive and in favor of the bridge, however commented on where they thought the location of the bridge was better suited.

Comments received from the agencies specified what authorizations and studies were required for us to proceed such as Navigable waters permit, archaeological, cultural heritage and endangered species. We did receive a comment from the MTO expressing a concern on the potential impact to the connecting link route.

Major Studies Undertaken

Characterization Report on the existing environment and composition of the Thames River and surrounding area.

- Investigation of the Significant features (Species at Risk)
- Terrestrial Community Investigation
- Aquatic Habitat Investigation

The investigations identified no rare or endangered species, however identified two potential species of risk which is the rainbow mussels, Black Turn bird and Ruddy Duck.

Major Studies Undertaken

Transportation Study

- Confirm the need and justification for the construction of a new bridge
- Address wherever possible current operational and safety deficiencies to improve overall traffic flow and safety
- Provide input to project team regarding alternatives

A detailed Traffic and Pedestrian study was conducted in Mitchell by Paradigm Consultants. They setup 4 traffic flow counter along Huron and Ontario Road at Napier, Blanshard, St. George and Wellington, and one on Hwy 23 North and South at Frances and Frank.

They also conducted traffic interviews at Ontario and Frank Street bridges to better understand where people were going.

Transportation Study

Findings

- 20 Pedestrians average per day walk across dam
- Ontario/Huron Street Bridge 12,000 average vehicles per day
- Average vehicle occupancy was 1.48 people
- Frank Street Bridge 1,800 average vehicles per day
- Ontario/Huron bridge at 65% capacity and based on development and historical figures will reach 95% capacity in 2029
- Over 30% of traffic going across was two points within town
- Primary destinations were Ketterson Park/Arena, Schools, Doctor offices, Lions park/pool, Golf Course and Nursing homes

Transportation Study

Conclusions

- Operations concerns with traffic flows at the following intersections;
 - Napier Street and Huron
 - Huron and Blanshard
 - Huron/Ontario/St.George Street intersection
- Huron/Ontario Street Bridge projected demand will reach 95% capacity by 2029.
- There is a need to begin planning for a future North end vehicular river crossing to;
 - relieve demand off Huron/Ontario Bridge, to extend its useful life and defer future maintenance and reconstruction costs
 - Relieve traffic congestion for Northwest residents at Huron and Napier Street

Steering Committee Next Steps

- Collected and reviewed additional Public input
- Obtained cost estimates for a bridge at both crossing locations
- Identified potential construction related impacts associated with each crossing location
 - Elevation and Spans (Frances lower and longer)
 - Municipal infrastructure (Municipal drains, nature trail, future Traffic Signals, and watermain)
 - Residential impacts
- Selected a Preliminary Preferred Alternative which was the Henry Street location due to the following
 - Elevations from East to West matched and aligned
 - Shorter span
 - No Municipal drain relocations
 - Able to keep and loop nature trail by installation of a pedestrian tunnel
 - If we require future Traffic signals at St. George and Henry we will have less restrictions from the MTO
 - Since 1990 watermain was planned for it to cross Henry to Campbell to provide additional servicing pressure and flows
 - No residential impacts

Steering Committee Next Steps (continued)

- Conducted and held a Public Meeting which was well attended and received.

Conclusion

- BM Ross presented completed EA Report to West Perth Council in 2010.
- Council adopted the Henry Street Bridge project into its strategic planning and development charges.
- West Perth staff directed to apply to any future grants that may qualify for the Henry Street Bridge project prior to the EA expiring.
- EA is valid for 10 years once submitted (Expires 2020).
- Received UTRCA approvals in 2018 to lower Mitchells spillway (Dam) in order to commence footing and piers into riverbed by September 2019 in order to complete project in late fall 2020.