

Hope Side Road/Old Richmond Road Corridor (Terry Fox Drive to Highway 416)

Minister's Review of Issues Raised by the Greenspace Alliance of Canada's Capital:

Issues	Response
Consultation	
<p>Contend that a Terms of Reference for this Project was not subjected to public consultation.</p>	<p>A Terms of Reference is not required for projects that are approved under a Class Environmental Assessment parent document. This Project was planned in accordance with the Municipal Engineers Association's Municipal Class Environmental Assessment parent document which sets out the standard planning process that a proponent must follow in planning Class Environmental Assessment projects.</p> <p>As part of the planning process, a Statement of Work was issued to describe the City's intentions with respect to the study's scope, methodology, public consultation and deliverables for the study. The Project's Statement of Work was presented and approved at the City's transportation committee on November 21, 2007. An amended Statement of Work was then presented and approved at the City's transportation committee on December 5, 2012. Both of the meetings were public meetings and the public were invited to speak. The Statement of Work was also made available to the public through the City's website one week prior to the meetings. Notices of public meetings are made available to the public online at the City of Ottawa's website.</p> <p>I am satisfied that the City has planned the Project in accordance with the approved Class Environmental Assessment and adequately provided the public with the opportunity to review the Project's Statement of Work.</p>
<p>Concern that the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority did not have an opportunity to comment on the draft Environmental Study Report.</p>	<p>The Class Environmental Assessment does not require the Proponent to provide review agencies with the opportunity to comment on the draft copy of the Environmental Study Report. Throughout the Class Environmental Assessment study, the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority participated as a member of the Agency Consultation Group and attended the two Agency Consultation meetings (held on April 16 and September 9, 2013). The Rideau Valley Conservation Authority was also given the opportunity to review the final Environmental Study Report during the 30-day public and</p>

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	<p>agency review period. The Rideau Valley Conservation Authority provided the City with comments on the final Environmental Study Report indicating that their concerns would be better addressed during the detailed design phase. The Rideau Valley Conservation Authority has advised Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change staff that they will work with the City throughout detailed design to ensure that their concerns are resolved and impacts on the natural environment are minimized.</p> <p>I am satisfied that the City has met the agency and public consultation requirements of the Class Environmental Assessment and that the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority was given an opportunity to take part in the planning process and review the final Environmental Study Report. I am also satisfied that the City will continue to work with the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority to resolve any outstanding issues or concerns.</p>
<p>The general public would have appreciated an opportunity to comment on the draft Environmental Study Report.</p>	<p>The Class Environmental Assessment does not require the Proponent to provide the general public with the opportunity to comment on the draft Environmental Study Report. The Proponent is required to place the final Environmental Study Report on file for public review for a period of 30 days. During the 30-day public review period, members of the public were given the opportunity to comment on the final Environmental Study Report. Members of the general public were also given an opportunity to comment on the Project during the two Open Houses (held on April 25, 2013 and September 16, 2013 as part of the Class Environmental Assessment process) prior to the filing of the final Environmental Study Report.</p> <p>I am satisfied that the City has met the public consultation requirements of the Class Environmental Assessment.</p>
Alternatives	
<p>Concern that the City had no intention to examine Fallowfield Road as an alternative route.</p>	<p>In response to concerns raised by the public, the City adjusted the study area to investigate Fallowfield Road as an alternative route (see Appendix B, Figure 4). The City concluded that the Fallowfield Road alternative would not be carried forward because it does not address the travel demand from the Kanata-Stittsville area, and would result in</p>

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	<p>out of the way travel. The City also concluded that the Fallowfield Road alternative would potentially put pressure on the urban boundary and may increase pressures on rural communities and land uses. The City determined that the Fallowfield Road alternative is not consistent with the policies in the City's Official Plan (2013) and Transportation Master Plan (2013) and therefore would not be carried out as the preferred alternative.</p> <p>I am satisfied that the City has met the requirements of the Class Environmental Assessment by assessing a reasonable range of alternative solutions for the Project.</p>
<p>The City's method to 'adjust the study area as they go along' reflects poor methodology to assess the alternatives.</p>	<p>As part of the Class Environmental Assessment process, the City adjusted the study area to ensure that a reasonable range of alternatives were considered. As the Class Environmental Assessment Study was undertaken by the City to assess the road corridor along Hope Side Road, Old Richmond Road and West Hunt Club Road, the primary study area. The City expanded its primary study area to comprehensively assess the alternative routes including the Fallowfield Road alternative.</p> <p>I am satisfied that the alternatives were adequately assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Class Environmental Assessment.</p>
<p>Concern that the City's comparative analysis between the Old Richmond Road/West Hunt Club corridor and Fallowfield Road alternative contains numerous weaknesses.</p> <p>The City's argument against the Fallowfield Road alternative does not address the</p>	<p>Using the 2008 Transportation Master Plan TRANS model, the City completed a traffic demand study to assess the trip origins and destinations of residents using the Old Richmond Road/West Hunt Club corridor and Fallowfield Road alternatives. The study determined that the Old Richmond Road/West Hunt Club corridor is primarily used by people travelling to and from Kanata and Stittsville, whereas Fallowfield Road is primarily used for travel to and from Ottawa's rural southwest. The study concluded that widening Fallowfield Road would not address the Project need and therefore would not be pursued.</p> <p>The City examined traffic projections for the year 2031 assuming that Fallowfield Road was widened. The results of the study indicated that even if Fallowfield Road was widened, travellers from Kanata-Stittsville would still choose</p>

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<p>identified Project need.</p> <p>Concern that the City did not provide an analysis of the cost comparison between the two alternatives.</p>	<p>to utilize Old Richmond Road to reach destinations within the Greenbelt (Ottawa Centre, Alta Vista, Merivale, Bayshore/Cedarview) because it is closer. As Kanata and Stittsville are expected to be the major growth areas in Ottawa, the option that will provide service to this area is preferred.</p> <p>The City acknowledges that it did not consider comparative costs for the Fallowfield Road option when evaluating the alternatives. Within its review, the City determined that the Fallowfield Road alternative did not address the Project need and therefore a thorough cost analysis was not required.</p> <p>I am satisfied that the alternatives were adequately assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Class Environmental Assessment. I am satisfied that the City has selected an alternative that will address the identified Project need.</p>
<p>Contend the City's claim that the Fallowfield Road alternative may put pressure on the urban boundary.</p>	<p>The City has agreed with your claim that pressures for urban boundary expansion may happen regardless of a Fallowfield Road widening. However, the City's Official Plan policy (2013) emphasizes the development of compact integrated land uses that ensure a more efficient use of municipal infrastructure. The City has assessed the socioeconomic impacts of Fallowfield Road and determined that this alternative is not preferred, in part, due to its potential to put pressure on the City's urban boundary.</p> <p>I am satisfied that the City has adequately assessed the socio-economic impacts of the alternatives and selected the alternative that is consistent with the policies set forth in the City's Official Plan.</p>
<p>Contend the City's claim that the Fallowfield Road alternative will potentially require Eagleson and Old Richmond Road south of Hope Side Road to also be widened.</p>	<p>The City utilized TRANS model data to review the downstream effects of travel demand on the road network and concluded that roads with more capacity tend to attract more vehicles. The study determined that an increase in vehicles on Fallowfield Road would result in increased travel elsewhere in the road network (Figure 4) such as Eagleson and Old Richmond Road. Since Eagleson and Old Richmond Road are already approaching capacity, the City's Project Team has determined that there is a good probability</p>

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	<p>Implementation of the Project is subject to National Capital Commission approval. The City has consulted extensively with the National Capital Commission throughout the Class Environmental Assessment process. I am satisfied that National Capital Commission principles must be met by the City prior to the Project moving forward.</p>
<p>The loss of wetland would result in a loss of carbon sink storage.</p>	<p>The City and the National Capital Commission's Joint Study to Assess Cumulative Effects of Transportation Infrastructure on the National Capital Greenbelt (2012) assessed the function of temperate wetlands as carbon sinks and the potential effects of transportation infrastructure on the Greenbelt. The study concluded specifically that the function of Stony Swamp wetland as a carbon sink will not be significantly affected due to proposed transportation infrastructure.</p> <p>The Federal Policy on Wetland Conservation considers carbon sink storage to be an important ecological function of wetlands. The objective of the policy is to "promote the conservation of Canada's wetlands to sustain their ecological and socio-economic functions, now and in the future." As part of the requirements for the City to acquire National Capital Commission properties, the City must attain the Federal Policy on Wetland Conservation's primary objective of no net loss of wetland functions which includes carbon sink storage.</p> <p>The City has committed to work with the National Capital Commission to develop mitigation measures through a compensation and restoration plan to ensure no net loss of wetland area or function. As net wetland area or function is not expected to be lost as a result of this Project, there should be no loss of carbon sink storage.</p> <p>I am satisfied that the potential impacts that may arise from loss of wetland will be sufficiently mitigated and addressed through the detailed design phase of the Class Environmental Assessment process and the federal environmental effects analysis.</p>

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<p>There was no assessment of the Project's impact on Stony Swamp.</p>	<p>As part of the Environmental Study Report, the City conducted a Natural Resource Inventory and Assessment Report (2014) which assessed the potential impacts of the proposed Project on natural resources in the Project's study area. An assessment of the potential impacts and a mitigation and compensation strategy for Stony Swamp was included within this study.</p> <p>The National Capital Commission is in the process of completing its Stony Swamp Habitat Restoration Plan which will identify the future desired ecological conditions for Stony Swamp and a prioritization of restoration actions. As part of the federal environmental effects analysis, the National Capital Commission will conduct a comprehensive environmental study of the Project's potential effects on Stony Swamp. The National Capital Commission will require the City to implement strict mitigation alternatives as part of the Federal Policy on Wetland Conservation.</p> <p>I am imposing a condition requiring the City to minimize environmental impacts within the Stony Swamp Conservation Area by carrying out monitoring and mitigation for species at risk as outlined in the project documentation and to implement construction best practices to ensure that potential impacts on species at risk are mitigated.</p> <p>In addition, a condition is being imposed requiring further consultation between the City and the National Capital Commission to ensure impacts are minimized wherever possible and that any unavoidable impacts to the Stony Swamp wetland are mitigated. Wherever possible, the City shall explore opportunities to enhance the wetland.</p> <p>I am satisfied that the City has assessed the impacts of the Project on Stony Swamp. I am also satisfied that impacts will be further assessed as part of the federal environmental effects analysis.</p>
Environment	
<p>There is no recognition of the magnitude between a 2-lane and 4-lane road as a barrier</p>	<p>As part of the Joint Study to Assess Cumulative Effects of Transportation Infrastructure on the National Capital Greenbelt (2012), the City and the National Capital Commission assessed the effects of building new roads as</p>

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<p>to the movement of wildlife.</p>	<p>well as widening existing roads on natural areas in the Greenbelt. The City and the National Capital Commission determined that creating a new road and thus a new barrier through the Stony Swamp Core Natural Area was unacceptable. It was therefore determined that widening the existing road was the preferred alternative.</p> <p>The City has proposed mitigation measures to facilitate wildlife movement across road barriers to avoid species road mortality such as turtle crossing under the road. The Environmental Study Report evaluates the difference between three and four lane options and it noted that mitigation measures such as fencing and walls are required to prevent landings turtles from accessing the road. I am satisfied that the City has addressed the impact of roadways on the movement of wildlife. I am also satisfied that the appropriate mitigation measures will be developed during detailed design to facilitate wildlife movement at the proposed road widening.</p>
<p>There is insufficient detail provided in the Environmental Study Report regarding the inevitable peat loss.</p>	<p>The City has indicated that peat deposits may be located beneath the proposed road widening at the north end of Old Richmond Road and east of Moodie Drive on West Hunt Club Road. The City has advised the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change that peat will either be removed from beneath the road embankment or pre-loaded so that settlement of the road occurs in advance of construction while the peat remains in place.</p> <p>The Rideau Valley Conservation Authority has indicated that a remediation plan will be required if organic soils are encountered within the road alignment. The remediation plan will demonstrate how the hazard to organic soils can be overcome without adverse environmental impacts. The Rideau Valley Conservation Area has indicated that site-specific soils will be collected during detailed design to determine if remediation is required. The Rideau Valley Conservation Authority will work with the City to ensure that the Project proceeds in a manner that will minimize impacts to the natural environment.</p> <p>As part of the federal environmental effects analysis that will be completed for this Project, peat will be considered under</p>

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	<p>the assessment of wetland function.</p> <p>I am satisfied that peat loss will be addressed by the City with the assistance of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority.</p>
<p>Concern with the mitigation measures outlined in the Environmental Study Report. More comprehensive mitigation measures regarding the adverse impact of widening the roadway are required for the Hope Side/Old Richmond/West Hunt Club Road corridor.</p>	<p>The City will work with the National Capital Commission, Rideau Valley Conservation Authority and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry during the detailed design phase to develop comprehensive mitigation measures. As part of the requirements of Strategy 2 of the Federal policy on Wetland Conservation, the City will need to develop a Compensation and Restoration Plan in consultation with the National Capital Commission. Once more detailed information about specific design and land requirements is known, the City will be able to determine more comprehensive mitigation measures. As part of the federal environmental effects analysis, mitigation measures will be considered for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhance wetland function • protection of habitat for species at risk • measures to facilitate turtle crossing • stormwater management • noise • traffic volumes; and • lighting <p>Mitigation measures must meet the requirements of the National Capital Commission and Rideau Valley Conservation Authority prior to the issuance of permits and approvals. As such I am satisfied that the Project will not receive permits and approvals if the negative effects cannot be mitigated. I am also satisfied that comprehensive mitigation measures will be developed during the detailed design phase and the federal environmental effects analysis.</p> <p>I am imposing conditions to require mitigation and monitoring of species at risk during construction, further consultation between the City and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and the National Capital Commission to ensure impacts are minimized wherever possible and that any unavoidable impacts to the Stony Swamp wetland are mitigated. Wherever possible, the City shall explore</p>

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	opportunities to enhance the wetland. The City shall also consult with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and the National Capital Commission to ensure that all Endangered Species Act requirements are met and exceeded wherever possible.