



**CITY OF HAMILTON**  
**PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**  
**Engineering Services Division**

<b>TO:</b>	Chair and Members Public Works Committee
<b>COMMITTEE DATE:</b>	January 13, 2020
<b>SUBJECT/REPORT NO:</b>	Birch Avenue Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (PW20004) (Ward 3)
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	Ward 3
<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	Megan Salvucci (905) 546-2424 Ext. 2732
<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>	Gord McGuire Director, Engineering Services Public Works Department
<b>SIGNATURE:</b>	

**RECOMMENDATION**

- (a) That the General Manager, Public Works, be authorized and directed to file the Birch Avenue (Barton Street to Burlington Street) Schedule B Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Project File Report (PFR) with the Municipal Clerk for a minimum thirty (30) day public review period; and
- (b) That upon completion of the minimum thirty (30) day public review period, the General Manager, Public Works, be authorized and directed to proceed with the implementation of the preferred alternative (attached as Appendix "B" to Report PW20004), to be funded through the proposed Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program: Public Transit Stream Process for 2022 with construction scheduled for 2022.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The City of Hamilton has completed a study following the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (MCEA) process for Schedule B projects, to address drainage improvements needed for Birch Avenue from Barton Street to Burlington Street. The study area can be viewed in Appendix "A" to Report PW20004.

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This project was initiated to support the development of Hamilton Transit's Bus Maintenance and Storage Facility (80 Brant Street).

Currently Birch Avenue is a one-way road with south-bound traffic and inconsistent pedestrian-only facilities; it travels underneath three rail bridges and has existing stormwater management challenges. As part of the corridor improvements, an environmental assessment was required to develop a preferred solution that addresses drainage issues that occur when the storm system reaches capacity. Through the environmental assessment process, the preferred stormwater solution was determined to be: Option 5 – Diversion of sewer flows from the south to Sherman Storm Relief Sewer at Princess Street and the installation of a single stormwater pumping station on the north-west side of Birch Avenue by Bridge 330 (75 metres south of Brant Street). The single stormwater pumping station will capture drainage needs for both bridges along the corridor that require improved drainage. The Birch Avenue EA also considered active transportation facilities, bridge clearance, and potential pumping station locations to support the stormwater assessment portion of the project.

The Project File Report is complete and ready to be filed on the public record for the minimum thirty (30) day public review period. Upon Council approval of this Municipal Class EA and subject to comments received during the review, staff will proceed with the functional design, detailed design and implementation of the preferred alternative.

**Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable**

**FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Financial: The funding for proposed works along Birch Avenue, from Barton Street to Burlington Street, has been scheduled within the proposed Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program: Public Transit Stream Process for 2022 with construction scheduled for 2022.

Staffing: N/A

Legal: N/A

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

Through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (previously the Public Transit Infrastructure Fund), funding was identified for studies pertaining to the reconstruction of Birch Avenue (Burlington St. to Princess St.) in 2017. The reconstruction was identified as work required to support the development of Hamilton Transit's Bus Maintenance and Storage Facility.

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The Birch Avenue Environmental Assessment (EA) was initiated in Spring 2019. A Public Information Centre was held on November 11th, 2019.

Upon completion of the required studies and public engagement, the draft Project File Report was completed in December 2019.

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS**

These recommendations are consistent with the Urban Hamilton Official Plan, Stormwater Management Master Plan, Hamilton Transportation Master Plan and all other corporate policies. This recommendation will not bind the Corporation or alter or contravene any established City Policy.

- **Legislated Requirements**

The Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) study follows the planning and design process of the Municipal Engineers Association (MEA) Municipal Class Environmental Assessment, October 2000, as amended in 2007, 2011, and 2015. The City has completed this study in accordance with the planning process applicable to Schedule B projects under the Municipal Class EA. These projects are approved under the Environmental Assessment Act (EA Act), as long as they are planned, designed and constructed according to the requirements of the Municipal Class EA document. If the City does not follow the process outlined in the MEA Municipal Class EA document, the City would be in violation of the document and as a result would have contravened the EA Act. The Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks could revisit the approval of a project or take away the City's right to use the Municipal Class EA document.

Through following the legislated process, the study has fulfilled the Class EA requirements for Phases 1 and 2 to determine the preferred planning solution and to document the results in the final report. This study will therefore fulfil all legal requirements of the planning process pertaining to Schedule B.

Following Council approval, the City will be providing the Project File Report to the public for a minimum thirty (30) day review for the public to provide any final comments that they may have with respect to this planning process. This will also be the opportunity for a Part II Order (appeal) for the public and agencies.

**RELEVANT CONSULTATION**

- **Members of Council**

The study area is located within Ward 3. Project details have been provided, throughout the project, to the Ward Councillor during various communications and representation at the Public Information Centre.

- **Indigenous Communities**

The following Indigenous communities were engaged during the Environmental Assessment process: the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy Council, the Six Nations, the Huron-Wendat, and the Métis.

- **Public and Stakeholders**

The Municipal Class EA process requires public and stakeholder consultation, according to the requirements of a Schedule B project. Consultation plans were developed and followed.

Public Consultation was carried out in the form of a Notice of Study Commencement and a Public Information Centre (PIC), which was issued on November 1, 2019 and November 8, 2019 in the Hamilton Spectator for the PIC. A mailout was sent to pertinent agencies, City Staff and 27 landowners within the study area. The PIC was held on Monday, November 11, 2019, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Norman Pinky Lewis Recreation Centre, 192 Wentworth St. N., Hamilton. The PIC followed a drop-in format which provides attendees an opportunity to review displayed information, present any comments and discuss them directly with City of Hamilton and their consultants. No written comments were received by the public at or subsequent to the PIC.

The pertinent project information was made available throughout the study on the project website: <https://www.hamilton.ca/BirchEA>

Throughout the public consultation process, no negative comments have been received.

- **Internal**

The following groups were consulted in the preparation of this report and the associated study: Engineering Services; Hamilton Water; Hamilton Transit; Transportation Operations; Transportation Planning; Environmental Services, Planning; and Energy, Fleet and Facilities Management.

## **ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- **Evaluation of Alternatives and Identification of Preferred Solution**

The evaluation of alternatives was done as part of a multi-phase assessment to fully capture the corridor's existing and future needs. While drainage is the trigger for this EA, there are a number of inter-related topics that were also explored as they influence the development and selection of a preferred alternative.

Prior to the evaluation of alternative solutions to stormwater management needs, the following topics were assessed and recommendations were identified:

- **Active Transportation:** As part of the overall corridor improvements, active transportation facility opportunities were assessed and evaluated against four

criteria categories. The resulting recommendation is for the installation of a multi-use path along the west side of Birch Avenue (Option 2). Further details on the options assessed are in Appendix “C” to Report PW20004 of the Staff Report and Section 5 in the Project File Report.

- Roadway Clearance: The three bridges along Birch Avenue were previously identified as requiring works. Bridge 330 (75 metres south of Burlington Street) and Bridge 332 (95 metres north of Princess Street) will require replacement. Bridge 331 (125 metres south of Brant Street) has been identified for removal as it is not in use. Options to ensure the bridges being replaced along Birch Avenue continue to comply with clearance standards were also assessed. The options were assessed against five criteria categories resulting in a recommendation to raise the bridges and lower the road in a combination approach (Option 4). Further details on the options assessed are in Appendix “D” to Report PW20004 of the Staff Report and Section 5 in the Project File Report.
- Location of Potential Stormwater Pumping Stations: As the roadway clearance project section recommended lowering the road, stormwater pumping stations became a likely option to address drainage. In preparation for the alternative solutions, analysis was done on optimal locations for potential stormwater pumping stations. Candidate sites for a pumping station were assessed against three criteria categories resulting in the identification of two potential locations: the southwest corner of Birch Avenue and Burlington Street (for the north) and the Public Works facility parking lot (for the south location). Further details on the options assessed are in Appendix “E” to Report PW20004 of the Staff Report and Section 7 in the Project File Report.

Based on the results from the earlier assessments, five stormwater alternatives were identified and evaluated as part of this study and further details are in Appendix “B” to Report PW20004 of the Staff Report and Section 7 in the Project File Report. The alternatives were assessed against the evaluation criteria as appropriate. The following evaluation criteria were considered:

- Drainage Remedial Measures: number of pumping stations required; outlet to harbour; hydraulic modelling results; constructability
- Economic: capital cost – stormwater, capital cost – pumping; annual operating cost – pumping
- Natural Environment: surface water and aquatic habitat; regulated areas; vegetation and vegetation communities; wildlife and habitat; species at risk; noise; air quality
- Social and Cultural: cultural heritage impact; archaeological impact; construction; property impacts

The selection of the recommended alternative involved identifying and making trade-offs among the advantages and disadvantages of the alternatives. The alternative that had the best overall balance of advantages and disadvantages was recommended as the preferred alternative.

- **Recommended Design Solution**

Based on the evaluation of alternative solutions, Option 5 - Diversion to Sherman Storm Relief Sewer at Princess Street (including a single stormwater pumping station) was selected as the preferred solution. The single stormwater pumping station is recommended to be installed on north-west side of Birch Avenue by Bridge 330 (75 metres south of Brant Street). This alternative solution had benefits over the other alternatives, particularly in the drainage remedial measures, economic, and social and cultural criteria categories.

A copy of the Project File Report is available upon request.

## **ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION**

N/A

## **ALIGNMENT TO THE 2016 – 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN**

### **Community Engagement and Participation**

Hamilton has an open, transparent and accessible approach to City government that engages with and empowers all citizens to be involved in their community. The study included public consultation through a public information centre and communications between the project team and residents throughout the study process.

### **Healthy and Safe Communities**

Hamilton is a safe and supportive City where people are active, healthy, and have a high quality of life. This project supported improvements to active transportation amenities along Birch Avenue.

### **Built Environment and Infrastructure**

Hamilton is supported by state of the art infrastructure, transportation options, buildings and public spaces that create a dynamic City. The preferred design improves the existing infrastructure and introduces new infrastructure to support both transportation and stormwater management needs along the corridor.

### **Our People and Performance**

Hamiltonians have a high level of trust and confidence in their City government. Through the public and stakeholder engagement process, community concerns were heard and solutions were incorporated into the final project recommendations.

**APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED**

Appendix "A" to Report PW20004: Study Area Map

Appendix "B" to Report PW20004: Evaluation of Alternative Solutions

Appendix "C" to Report PW20004: Active Transportation Assessment

Appendix "D" to Report PW20004: Road Clearance Assessment

Appendix "E" to Report PW20004: Pumping Station Location Assessment