




CITY OF HAMILTON
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
Engineering Services Division

TO:	Chair and Members Public Works Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	April 19, 2021
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Valley Inn Bridge Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (PW21022) (Ward 1)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	Ward 1
PREPARED BY:	Dipankar Sharma (905) 546-2424 Ext. 3016
SUBMITTED BY:	Gord McGuire Director, Engineering Services Public Works Department
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) That the General Manager, Public Works, be authorized and directed to file the Valley Inn Bridge Schedule B Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Project File Report (PFR) with the Municipal Clerk for a minimum thirty (30) day public review period;
- (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, to be funded through Unallocated Capital Levy Reserve (108020) and to be repaid once the donation is received from the McNally Foundation with construction scheduled for 2021;
- (c) The name of the bridge to be changed from Valley Inn Road Bridge to Valley Inn Bridge. This recommendation is to reflect existing active transportation use of the bridge.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Hamilton has completed a study following the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (MCEA) process for Schedule B projects, to address

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

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improvements needed for the Valley Inn Bridge. The study area is shown in Appendix “A” attached to Report PW21022.

The Valley Inn Bridge carries an active transportation trail over Carroll’s Bay Marsh and is located east of York Boulevard, between Hamilton and Burlington. This structure has not carried vehicular traffic since 2009. The Valley Inn Bridge is owned by the City of Hamilton but is located on the municipal boundary between Hamilton and Burlington.

In late 2019, the Valley Inn Bridge was closed to active transportation access due to structural and safety considerations. In 2020, the Patrick J. McNally Charitable Foundation generously offered a donation for repairs to the bridge. Due to the age (>40 years) and recognized heritage value of the existing structure, the City of Hamilton, with the support of the City of Burlington, initiated a required Schedule B Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) to review alternative solutions for improvements to the Valley Inn Bridge.

The Project File Report (PFR) 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 EA and subject to comments received during the review, staff will proceed with the detailed design and implementation of the preferred alternative as shown in Appendix “B” to Report PW21022.

Alternatives for Consideration – Not applicable

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: The source of the project is being funded Unallocated Capital Levy Reserve (108020) and to be repaid once the donation is received from the McNally Foundation with construction scheduled for 2021.

Staffing: N/A

Legal: N/A

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 1964 the original Valley Inn Road bridge collapsed after a tractor trailer passed over it and was replaced with a temporary Bailey bridge from the Province. Although the bridge was intended to be temporary, the City of Hamilton purchased the Bailey bridge from the province due to downloading, 32 years after its installation, in the amount of \$1. The single lane Bailey bridge underwent various repairs since the collapse of the original bridge.

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In 2003, the City of Hamilton completed emergency repair work as a short-term solution to secure the bridge structure. In the spring of 2005, a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment was initiated to address the structural deficiencies of the bridge. The EA, completed in 2006, identified that the preferred alternative was to remove vehicular traffic from the bridge and allow only pedestrian access (PW06030). This alternative was preferred for factors including lower cost, low to moderate natural environmental impacts, maintenance and enhancement of pedestrian and recreational opportunities, and retention of the existing character of the single lane crossing.

In April 2009, a by-law was enacted to close the Valley Inn Bridge to vehicular traffic (By-Law No. 09-089). Active transportation access was permitted to continue.

In December 2019, the Valley Inn Bridge was closed to active transportation access due to structural and safety considerations. In 2020, the Patrick J. McNally Charitable Foundation generously offered a donation for repairs to the bridge.

The design of the new bridge will be completed in the next phase of the project. Generally, the existing abutments will be left in place and new abutments will be built behind the structure. The new bridge will be constructed in sections off-site and a crane will be used to lift the bridge pieces into position. No in-water work is required, and the project footprint will be limited to the existing right-of-way.

Due to the age (>40 years) and recognized heritage value of the existing structure, the City of Hamilton, with the support of the City of Burlington, initiated a required Schedule B Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (MCEA) in January 2021 to review alternative solutions for improvements to the Valley Inn Bridge. Alternative solutions that were considered include: do nothing, remove the bridge, rehabilitate the bridge, or replace the bridge.

As part of this project, the following studies were completed:

- Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment
- Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment
- Natural Heritage Assessment
- Documentation and Salvage Report

The EA and the associated Project File Report has been completed. As part of the Municipal Class EA process, the City is required to place the Project File Report on the public record for a minimum 30-day review period. Subject to comments received during the review period, the City will proceed with the preferred alternative for the bridge.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

Recommendations from this study are consistent with the Urban Hamilton Official Plan, Transportation Master Plan, and all other corporate policies.

- **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 is completing 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.

By following the legislated process, this has fulfilled the Class EA requirements for Phases 1 and 2 to determine the preferred planning solution. Results will be documented in a Project File Report. This study will therefore fulfil all legal requirements of the planning process pertaining to Schedule B.

Following Council approval and completion of the study, the City will place the Project File Report on the public record for a minimum 30-day review for the public, agencies, and Indigenous communities 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).

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

- **Members of Council**
The study area is located within Ward 1. Information about the project has been shared with the Ward Councillor.
- **Indigenous Communities**
The following Indigenous communities have been engaged during the EA process: Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, Haudenosaunee Confederacy Council, Six Nations, Huron-Wendat, and Métis.

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- Public and Agencies
Public consultation was carried out in the form of a Notice of Study Commencement, which was issued on January 14 and 21, 2021 in the Hamilton Spectator, and on January 21 and 28, 2021 in the Burlington Post. A mailout including the Notice was sent to pertinent agencies, staff from the City of Hamilton, staff from the City of Burlington, and staff from Halton Region, as well as 10 property owners near the study area. Information about the project is being shared on the City of Hamilton project website (www.hamilton.ca/ValleyInnEA) as well as the City of Burlington project website (www.burlington.ca/ValleyInnRoadBridge).

A technical agency meeting was held on February 10, 2021. Attendees included representatives from the City of Burlington, Halton Region, Royal Botanical Gardens, Conservation Halton, Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries, and the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks.

Feedback received to date has been generally supportive of the recommended solution.

- City of Hamilton Staff
The following internal stakeholders were contact for this study:
 - ❖ Public Works - Asset Management, Design, Transportation Operations and Maintenance, Forestry and Horticulture, Parks and Cemeteries, Landscape Architectural Services;
 - ❖ Planning and Economic Development - Transportation Planning, Development Planning (Natural Heritage and Cultural Heritage); and,
 - ❖ Healthy and Safe Communities - Hamilton Paramedic Service, Hamilton Fire.
- City of Burlington
Additional consultation is being undertaken with the City of Burlington due to the location of the bridge. City of Hamilton and City of Burlington staff are in regular communication about the project and have been collaborating on the project communications including the Notice of Study Commencement and the project website.

Ongoing consultation continues with the McNally foundation as this project proceeds.

Following Council approval and completion of the study, a Notice of Study Completion will be placed in the Hamilton Spectator and Burlington Post for two (2) consecutive weeks. A mail out will also be sent out again to pertinent agencies, staff from the City of Hamilton, staff from the City of Burlington, staff from Halton Region, as well as property owners near the study area. This Notice will include information about the 30-day review

period including how and where to access the Project File Report, and how to submit questions, comments, and concerns.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Four (4) alternative solutions were identified and evaluated as part of this study:

- (i) Do Nothing – Maintain the bridge in its existing condition and do not proceed with any modifications. The bridge will not support pedestrians or cyclists and will remain closed. This option does not mitigate risk of the bridge experiencing complete structural failure, collapsing into the water and blocking the watercourse. In this event, emergency removal would be required at the time of discovery, regardless of the preferred timing of works respecting the natural environment.
- (ii) Remove the Existing Bridge – Remove the existing bridge and do not have a crossing in this location. Cyclists and pedestrians would be directed to Plains Road.
- (iii) Rehabilitation of the Existing Bridge – Rehabilitate the existing bridge and related infrastructure to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists.
- (iv) Replace the Existing Bridge – Replace the existing bridge with a new bridge to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists.

Additional details about the alternatives are provided in Appendix “B” to Report PW21022. The alternative solutions were evaluated against the following evaluation criteria:

- Impacts to the natural environment
- Impacts to the social and cultural environment
- Technical considerations
- Cost

The alternative that had the best overall balance of advantages and disadvantages was recommended was the preferred alternative.

Input received during the course of the study was collected throughout the process and contributed to the determination of the preferred alternative.

- **Recommended Solution**
Based on the evaluation of alternative solutions and feedback received during the study, Option 4, Replace the Existing Bridge with a new bridge to accommodate active transportation, was selected as the preferred solution due to avoidance of any in-water works and disturbance of the historical existing abutments, and cost and time savings to expedite the completion of the bridge works.

A plaque and/or sign commemorating heritage of the existing bridge is planned to be designed and constructed next to the new bridge.

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

The recommendation to rename the bridge from Valley Inn Road Bridge to Valley Inn Bridge is to reflect existing active transportation use of the bridge.

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.

Economic Prosperity and Growth

Hamilton has a prosperous and diverse local economy where people have opportunities to grow and develop.

Built Environment and Infrastructure

Hamilton is supported by state of the art infrastructure, transportation options, buildings and public spaces that create a dynamic City.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix “A” to Report PW21022 - Study Area Map

Appendix “B” to Report PW21022 - Evaluation of Alternative Solutions