



City of Hamilton Report for Information

To: Chair and Members
Public Works Committee

Date: June 9, 2025

Report No: PW25039

Subject/Title: Process Used to Inform the City's Planning,
Execution and Communication of Major
Infrastructure Works
(Outstanding Business List)

Ward(s) Affected: City Wide

Recommendations

- 1) That Report PW25039 respecting the Process Used to Inform the City's Planning, Execution and Communication of Major Infrastructure Works **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to respond to a motion regarding the present process used to inform the City's planning, execution and communication of major infrastructure works.
- The scope of this report includes capital works planned and executed by the Public Works Department, including projects initiated by the Planning and Economic Development Department through growth-related Environmental Assessments and Master Plans.
- Unplanned and emergency capital work, or operational and maintenance work is not included in the scope of this report.
- Capital projects not delivered by the City are not included in the scope of this report.

Financial Considerations

N/A

Background

At the December 2, 2024 Public Works Committee, the following motion was passed:

That staff be requested to report back to the Public Works Committee on the present process used to inform the City's planning, execution and communication of major infrastructure works particularly in relation to adjacent businesses and institutions for Q1, 2025.

Report PW25039 includes a summary of the present process used to inform the City's planning, execution and communication of major infrastructure works delivered by the City, particularly in relation to adjacent businesses and institutions.

Analysis

The scope of this report includes capital works that are planned and executed by the Public Works Department. It also considers growth-related projects that are initiated by the Planning and Economic Development Department and delivered by Public Works. Unplanned and emergency capital work, or operational and maintenance work is not included in the scope of this report. Capital projects not delivered by the City are not included in the scope of this report (e.g., delivered by developers, delivered by utilities such as Alectra, etc.). Major infrastructure works are not specifically defined, however are understood to include projects with potentially significant impacts to the community such as major road reconstruction projects.

For the purposes of this report, project planning means identification of project needs, project scoping including internal stakeholder engagement, estimating, project budget preparation, and approval of project budgets. Project execution includes the completion of any necessary studies (including but not limited to Municipal Class Environmental Assessments and natural heritage assessments), preliminary and detailed design, and construction. This is a simplified delineation for the purpose of this report and may differ from some existing processes and documents. LRT, being a major infrastructure project, is coordinated by the LRT Project Office through its own governance frameworks, which is composed of the City Core Working Team, City Extended Resource Team (CERT) and the City LRT Steering Committee. Communications regarding LRT are not included within the scope of this report.

The following sections provide a high-level summary of guiding resources, considerations, and present processes for communications of infrastructure projects planned and executed by the Public Works and Planning and Economic Development Departments.

Guiding Resources

There are several policies, procedures, and governing resources related to communication of planned capital work, for example:

- Projects that are defined as Schedule B or C of the current Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process, or that follow the Master Planning Process, are required to follow specific requirements according to the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act. City staff follow the industry accepted Municipal Engineers Association's User Guide for the consultation best practices through the Environmental Assessment process.
- The Public Works Department has a departmental Communication Requirements for Public Works procedure (PW-P-008-003), attached as Appendix "A" to Report PW25039. This procedure defines internal and external communication requirements for Public Works. The scope is limited to communications related to Public Works operations, services and processes.
- The Public Works Department has a departmental Minimum Standard for Communications to Public (PW-Y-008-01), attached as Appendix "B" to Report PW25039. This standard was released in January 2025. It outlines the minimum standard for external communication notification for planned capital and operational work delivered by the Public Works Department. This guideline does not apply to unplanned and emergency operational work.
- The City's Public Engagement Policy was approved by Council in January 2024. If project communications are tied to engagement initiatives, the Public Engagement Policy provides guidance on approaches and principles that should be considered when planning and carrying out engagement initiatives. This resource is available on the City of Hamilton website (<https://www.hamilton.ca/city-council/plans-strategies/strategies/engaging-your-city/public-engagement>).
- Staff follow public and stakeholder requirements as established through the Ontario Planning Act, as appropriate.

Present Planning Process

The present planning process for major infrastructure capital works begins when infrastructure needs are identified. Major capital works projects are typically identified through infrastructure master plan studies and taking into consideration asset management planning and growth-related needs. A capital project is created to fulfil that need, and is coordinated between the various asset owners for additional asset needs inside the capital project limits. The project is scoped, budgeted, and preliminary schedules are determined. Scheduling includes prioritization and coordination with nearby planned construction work and City's growth and development targets. This information is submitted and approved through the City's Tax and Rates budgets.

The Tax and Rates budgets, which include projects from Public Works and Planning and Economic Development among other departments, include 10-year forecasts outlining infrastructure works planned to be completed within this horizon. As projects progress, scopes, budgets, and schedules are refined.

Present Execution Process

Project execution begins following budget approval. For the purposes of this report, this includes background studies (including but not limited to Municipal Class Environmental Assessments and natural heritage assessments), detailed design, and construction. For certain projects, project execution may be formally defined. For example, Master Plans and projects defined as Schedule B or C of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process follow a specific process, with specific minimum communication requirements.

Throughout this process, staff endeavour to consider the big picture in terms of where projects are occurring. The Public Works Department is in the process of re-initiating regular cross-departmental project coordination meetings. These meetings are intended to focus on identifying and resolving opportunities of potential conflict, such as ensuring that major construction projects in the same geographic area are staggered if required, and to identify opportunities for coordination.

The majority of external project communications take place during project execution. Communications are tailored to the requirements of a project based on feedback from the public, businesses, institutions, and Ward Councillor(s). For example, below is a high-level summary of typical project communications that may be implemented for a major road reconstruction project:

- Background studies (such as Environmental Assessments) and detailed design are completed. As part of this, there may be one or more public meetings and notifications. Typically, a project website would be developed for each Environmental Assessment which serves as a source of information on the project scope.
- Transportation detour plans are developed, including input from several Public Works divisions including but not limited to Engineering Services, Transportation, and Transit
- Contact is made with schools prior to construction. If possible and beneficial, construction will be planned to avoid the school year
- If warranted, a project website and/or StoryMap page is created
- Construction notices are prepared and distributed to impacted residents, businesses, institutions, and the Ward Councillor(s) in advance of construction. Notices are typically hand-delivered to impacted residents and businesses, and emailed to the Ward Councillor(s)
- If warranted, a Public Service Announcement is distributed to media, posted to the City's website (www.hamilton.ca), and may be included in resident electronic newsletters
- Social media posts regarding the project are made through the City of Hamilton social media accounts
- Transit implements planned detour for affected bus route(s) and modifies the detour as conditions change
- Construction site is mobilized, construction signage is installed at the project location, and construction begins

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- Additional notices may be distributed during construction (for example, if there is a change to the scope of work, schedule, or when construction is resuming after a pause, etc.)

Appendix "C" attached to Report PW25039, includes additional details about current key communications for planned infrastructure projects, organized by lead division and department. The list in Appendix "C" is not exhaustive and is subject to change and tailoring depending on associated legislative requirements, best practices, project scope, and anticipated impact of the specific project. Depending on the project, there may be additional communication between staff and the Ward Councillor(s) and stakeholders including businesses, institutions and residents, at key milestones that are not captured in Appendix "C". For example, input may be sought, access may be discussed with impacted businesses and institutions, and Staff may provide updates regarding staging of the work, and the critical path of project delivery.

Alternatives

N/A

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

This report is related to the following Council Strategic Priorities:

Priority 3: Responsiveness & Transparency

Outcome 1: Prioritize customer service and proactive communication.

The City's process used to inform the planning, execution and communication of major infrastructure works considers customer service and proactive communication.

Previous Reports Submitted

N/A

Consultation

Staff in the following divisions were consulted and provided input during the preparation of this report, including:

- Engineering Services (Public Works)
- Transportation (Public Works)
- Hamilton Water (Public Works)
- Environmental Services (Public Works)
- Transit (Public Works)
- Corporate Facilities and Energy Management (Public Works)
- Corporate Asset Management (Public Works)

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- Growth Management and Development Engineering (Planning and Economic Development)
 - Transportation Planning and Parking (Planning and Economic Development)
 - Economic Development (Planning and Economic Development)
 - LRT Project Office (Planning and Economic Development)
 - Communications and Community Engagement (City Manager's Office)

Appendices and Schedules Attached

Appendix A: Communication Requirements for Public Works

Appendix B: Minimum Standards for Communication to Public (Public Works)

Appendix C: Key Communications for Planned City-Delivered Infrastructure Projects

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**Submitted and
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