

**COUNTY OF BRANT COUNCIL MINUTES****SPECIAL MEETING RE: DRAFT TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN**

Airport Community Hall  
June 25, 2008  
7:20 p.m.

**Present:** Mayor Eddy, Councillors Wheat, Simons, Powell, Chambers and Coleman.

**Regrets:** Councillors Schmitt, Haggart, Atfield, Hodge and Gatward.

**Staff:** Compeau, Johnston, Lasko, Murphy and Carman.

Mayor Eddy in the Chair.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Moved by – Councillor Wheat  
Seconded by – Councillor Powell

That the Brant County Council agenda for the June 25, 2008 special meeting be approved as distributed, with the addition of consideration of a letter regarding the Brantford to Cambridge Corridor Study.

. Carried

**PRESENTATION – THE DRAFT TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN**

Don Drackley, Senior Associate, IBI Group, explained that a Transportation Master Plan is a comprehensive, strategic plan that provides direction to Council and staff for municipal infrastructure priorities and investments. This is a multi-modal plan that identifies existing and future levels of travel demand for the next twenty-five years, provides long-range direction for the next 20 – 25 years and provides a policy direction for the County's Official Plan.

Mr. Drackley explained the trip making relationship that involves residents travelling from home to work, shopping and other events and reviewed the commuter travel patterns to and from the County, noting that the vast majority of the trips are to and from Brantford, with 87% of trips taken using a personal motorized vehicle. He noted that the Highway 24 Planning and ClassEA Study has been cancelled by the Province and replaced with a Brantford to Cambridge Transportation Corridor EA Study. He questioned why the study area does not include County lands west of Paris. Mr. Drackley reviewed the Level of Service (LOS), noting that most roadways and intersections are operating at a good level of service. The truck haul routes are restricted to limited access highways, provincial highways and arterial roads.

Paris Taxi provides a public transit shuttle service between Paris and Brantford, as well as specialized transportation services for disabled residents. Active transportation includes cycling and walking, and Mr. Drackley noted the various trails in the municipality. He advised that although rail and air transportation were included in this study, no analysis or recommendations were included in the report.

Mr. Drackley noted that the public consultation included a notice of the study commencement, a project web site, four public information centres and notice of this special Council meeting.

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The key issues raised by the public include:

- high traffic volume on the Brant-Oxford Road from Waterloo Region
- traffic through Paris
- need for improvements on King Edward Street/Rest Acre Road
- Bishopsgate Road by-pass at King Edward Street
- potential for a Highway 403 interchange at Bishopsgate Road
- Highway 403/24 area industrial expansion
- Cainsville area road conditions and Colborne Street East capacity (currently being addressed)
- general need for truck route planning and management
- increasing traffic volumes on Pleasant Ridge Road, Brant County Road 18 and Powerline Road

Mr. Drackley advised that a Paris By-pass Study was conducted to examine alternative truck routes around Paris. There has been strong public opposition to both east and west by-pass route options, but truck route planning in the Paris area needs to be addressed. It is proposed that the King Edward Street/Rest Acres Road intersection be improved, and that Rest Acres Road be increased to four lanes between King Edward Street and Highway 403. Mr. Drackley pointed out that the Ministry of Transportation is in agreement with the proposal for a new interchange at Highway 403 and Bishopsgate Road, but will not contribute towards the costs for this work. He reviewed some alternative design concepts for this interchange and pointed out the various matters that should be considered for this interchange.

Mr. Drackley reviewed the three Strategic Transportation alternatives that had been considered for the County's Transportation Master Plan. The Status Quo is not recommended as this would result in no transportation network changes and would lead to indirect natural and social impacts from growing auto use, traffic congestion and delays on key corridors and a reduced transportation level of service. The second alternative, Enhanced Basic Mobility, which has been recommended as a basic requirement, proposes roadway capacity enhancements as required and supports increased auto use. This alternative does not improve the transportation choice and does not include public transit, active transportation or demand management opportunities. The preferred alternative, Towards Sustainability, promotes more active transportation, selected transit service and travel demand management programs which would lead to reduced air emissions, road congestion and fuel consumption. This alternative requires major behavioural changes and helps promote non-auto oriented lifestyles. It was noted that this strategy will result in additional costs for the County for the transit service, active transportation facilities and the demand management programs.

Mr. Drackley reviewed the growth area trip forecasts that have been calculated through the Official Plan process for the County overall and for Southwest Paris specifically over the next 25 years. These forecasts indicate that the existing roadway system cannot support the proposed increases, and that one more lane per direction in the Southwest Paris area will be required by 2021.

The following recommendations for the County's Transportation Master Plan were reviewed by Mr. Drackley:

2008 - 2011

- Paris area truck route study, including east and west options – also required is a truck route by-law that requires trucks to use certain roads.
- King Edward Street/Rest Acres Road – Class EA for widening to four lanes and improvements to the intersection and road

- Class EA for Bishopsgate Road/Puttdown Road realignment
- funding for marketing, in conjunction with the City of Brantford, for the shuttle service between Paris and Brantford
- support the TH&B Rail Trail master plan

#### 2011 – 2021

- implement truck route by-law
- widen Rest Acres Road by one additional lane in each direction
- construct one lane per direction on Bishopsgate Road realignment
- monitor transit ridership of Paris Taxi
- begin staged construction of the TH&B rail trail
- monitor traffic growth in Southwest Brantford area and impacts on County roads
- monitor traffic growth on Powerline Road

#### 2021- 2031

- construct new Bishopsgate/Highway 403 interchange
- widen Highway 24 (Rest Acres Road) to four lanes from Highway 403 to Bethel Road
- widen Bishopsgate from Highway 403 to the Brant/Oxford line

Mr. Drackley reviewed the proposed changes to the Road Classification System in the County's Official Plan. In regard to the truck route study, he strongly recommended the development of a truck route by-law for the County, and the establishment of a Trucking Advisory Committee to develop a strategic goods movement network plan with primary travel routes. He reviewed options for the transit service, recommending that the County use a private operator and utilize advertising and marketing to promote use of this service, in conjunction with the City of Brantford. Transportation Demand Management includes promotion of the transit system, ride-sharing programs and incentives, transportation-oriented subdivision design, traffic controls, etc. The Transportation Impact Study Guidelines involve traffic generation calculations, intersection analysis, forecasts for the level of service, identification of intersection improvements and identification of potential safety and operational issues. Other policies and guidelines that should be considered include access management, trails planning, transportation noise and roundabouts .

#### **Questions from Council**

In response to a question about the next steps in this process, Mr. Drackley advised that the consultants will be reviewing comments received from Council and the public, and then determining if adjustments need to be made to the Draft Master Plan. The finalized copy will then be presented to Council for their consideration. Once the Plan has been adopted by Council, County staff will recommend to Council the implementation plan for the recommendations. He noted that the Plan should be reviewed by staff on an annual basis, and reviewed every five years to ensure that it is meeting the County's needs.

In response to a question about how the Brantford to Cambridge Transportation Corridor EA Study fits into the County's Master Transportation Plan, it was noted that this study was not intended to merge with any municipal plans. However, if a new highway is built in the County, it will significantly impact traffic routes and County roads that intersect with the new highway. It was pointed out that it will be some time before any new highway would be built for this purpose.

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Councillor Wheat expressed his concern that no changes are shown for the St. George area which is growing, as well as the volume of traffic in downtown St. George. Mr. Drackley responded that their recommendations are based on the housing and employment growth projections provided by the County Planning staff. The current roads have the capacity to handle the proposed growth for this area. He noted that there is a sensitive balance to maintaining a healthy downtown core and yet controlling traffic.

It was suggested that development south of the City of Brantford will need to be monitored to ensure that the increase in traffic capacity is addressed. It was also suggested that if a westerly route is chosen for the Brantford to Cambridge Transportation Corridor, it may help to address the proposed increased traffic in Southwest Paris.

Mr. Drackley advised that forecasts do not support increasing Rest Acres Road to four lanes south of Bethel Road. However, improvements are required on this stretch of road.

In response to a question regarding public transit, Mr. Drackley indicated that European studies show that the price of gas will have to rise to \$2.00/litre before people make changes in their driving habits.

The proposal to realign Bishopsgate in the 2011-2021 period will benefit commercial truck traffic as well as commuter traffic travelling from Waterloo Region to Highway 403. Mr. Drackley reiterated that the County will need to review their transportation plan when the Ministry of Transportation makes a decision on the Brantford to Cambridge transportation corridor.

### **Questions from the Public**

Rick Leach, 675 Bishopsgate Road, noted his concern with the recommendation to develop a truck route to alleviate truck traffic in downtown Paris that would utilize the Bishopsgate Road/Puttdown Road route. He noted that the intersection at Puttdown Road and Highway 2 is a disaster, as well as the fact that trucks would be using Powerline Road to travel to Highway 403. There are no shoulders on Powerline Road, and the increase in pedestrian traffic on that road creates dangerous situations. Mr. Leach pointed out that a petition was presented to Council previously from residents of the area objecting to a truck route using Brant-Oxford Road, Puttdown Road, Bishopsgate Road and Powerline Road. He recommended that Council give this recommendation a great deal of thought, particularly the effect this truck route would have on the residents of Falkland.

David Miller, Buford, noted issues with a truck route being developed west of Paris, and suggested that a route to the east of Paris would be preferable. Mayor Eddy pointed out that the easterly route was not supported in the past by Paris residents. Mr. Miller also noted that there was nothing in the plan to increase cycling in the County. In order for people to feel safe and comfortable while cycling, safe trails and/or exclusive bike lanes along County roads are required. Councillor Wheat advised that the County is in the process of developing a Master Plan for the County's trail system. In response to a question, Mr. Drackley advised that the area trip forecasts were developed using information from the 2001 Census.

Linda Geary, Paris, questioned whether costing comparisons have been done to compare increasing the public transit system versus the costs of widening and improving roads. Mr. Drackley advised that costing comparisons have not been done because of the type of private transit service being used in the County. Ms. Geary also expressed concern that the establishment of a truck route may be the end of the Paris downtown because of the decrease in traffic.

Ella Haley, Ronald Road, noted the following concerns:

- the need to be able to cycle safely along County roads
- the trip comparisons should be based on today's factors, not the 2001 Census
- the cost to build roads will be increasing substantially, because the building process is very dependent on the oil industry
- a public transit system is needed between Brantford and Paris, as well as between Paris and Cambridge
- trains should be utilized more for transportation
- there appears to be a void in the plan for the East Brant area, noting that First Urban has asked for an interchange to be built at Jerseyville Road
- there is a need to look at alternatives to building a new highway between Cambridge and Brantford, including increasing the use of public transit and expanding the Greenbelt

In response to a question from Councillor Powell, Mr. Drackley advised that improvements to infrastructure to respond to growth as a result of development should be funded through development charges. Councillor Powell noted that the current public transit through Paris Taxi provides accessible transportation services for disabled residents. He suggested that a shuttle service between Paris and Brantford has a lot of potential. Councillor Powell also outlined a new initiative by the Local Health Integrated Network (LHIN) for transit services.

Nora Fueten, Blue Lake Road, advised that in addition to the Paris/Brantford shuttle, she also is in favour of public transportation between Cambridge and Brantford. She noted new studies that place a stronger emphasis on alternatives to building new highways, including the use of public transit, that take cars off the existing roads

Moved by – Councillor Wheat  
Seconded by – Councillor Simons

That the Draft Master Transportation Report be received, and that a final Master Transportation report be prepared for Council's consideration, taking into account comments received from the public and from this meeting.

. Carried

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Moved by – Councillor Coleman  
Seconded by – Councillor Powell

That Mayor Eddy be authorized to sign the joint letter from the Region of Waterloo, County of Brant, County of Oxford, Township of Blandford-Blenheim and the Township of North Dumfries to the Minister of Transportation requesting expansion of the analysis area for the Brantford to Cambridge Transportation Corridor.

. Carried

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**NEXT MEETING**

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m. to meet again on **Tuesday, July 8, 2008 at 7:00 p.m.** in the Council Chambers, Paris.

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Mayor

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Date Minutes Approved

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Clerk