

**DATE:** October 15, 2024

**REPORT NO:** PD-46-2024

**SUBJECT:** **Provincial Bypass for Highway 20 on Southwest side of Smithville**

**CONTACT:** Brian Treble, Director of Planning & Building

**OVERVIEW:**

- In the 1970s, the Province registered an Order in Council on lands to the south and west of Smithville of a potential future bypass for, at that time, Provincial Highway 20 (Schedule 2).
- During discussions around the future proposal of a mid-peninsula corridor, later a Niagara-GTA corridor and later still a QEW widening program, the Region received notice from the Province of 3 prospective bypasses that were being transferred to the Region.
- The three bypasses included:
  - Highway 3 crossing the Welland Canal in Port Colborne
  - Highway 20 between Pelham and the 420 in Niagara Falls
  - Highway 20 – Smithville bypass
- The Transportation Master Plan that was completed as part of the Master Community Plan (MCP) for Smithville recommends three alternative bypass locations (Schedule 3) that should be considered as part of a future Environmental Assessment (EA) process.
- Now that OPA 62 is approved (OPA 63 is only partially approved), and the Master Transportation Plan has been endorsed, it is appropriate and timely to remove Highway 20 bypass from the record.
- This report is written to provide authority for staff to notify the Region that the Provincial Highway 20 bypass is no longer required as it is not consistent with the Transportation Master Plan completed as part of the MCP process.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. That, Recommendation Report PD-46-2024, titled “Provincial Bypass for Highway 20 on Southwest side of Smithville ”, dated October 15, 2024 be received; and,
2. That, Administration be directed to notify the Region of Niagara that the Provincial Highway 20 bypass is no longer consistent with the recommendations of the

Township of West Lincoln Transportation Master Plan and can therefore now be removed from the affected lands as they are no longer lands required for future bypass development.

#### **ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN:**

##### **Theme**

- **BUILD a safe, connected, caring and active community**
- **CHAMPION strategic and responsible growth**

#### **BACKGROUND:**

In 2003, Regional Council passed a resolution expressing support for building a transportation corridor (mid-peninsula) extending through Niagara past the Hamilton International Airport, connecting a number of 400-series highways through the Environmental Assessment process. In 2005, the MTO initiated the NGTA study. The EA process started in 2007 and a Provincial Draft Transportation Strategy report was released at the end of February 2011. This included the identification of three Provincial bypasses that the Region is now required to assess for future development.

#### **CURRENT SITUATION:**

In the 1970s, the Province registered an Order in Council on lands to the south and west of Smithville of a potential future bypass (see Schedule 2) for, at that time, Provincial Highway 20.

During discussions around the future proposal of a mid-peninsula corridor, later a Niagara-GTA corridor and later still a QEW widening program, the Region received notice of 3 prospective bypasses that were being transferred to the Region.

The three bypasses included:

- Highway 3 crossing the Welland Canal in Port Colborne
- Highway 20 between Pelham and the 420 in Niagara Falls
- Highway 20 – Smithville bypass

In 2011, the Region wrote report PWA-32-2011 and Township Administration wrote a letter to Mr. Ken Brothers, Commissioner of Regional Public Works at the time and copied Township Council (Schedule 1).

In 2019, the Township of West Lincoln Master Community Plan (MCP) commenced an analysis of the urban area of Smithville and its growth potential. Also, included in this review was a Transportation Master Plan that reviewed alternative transportation routes that will serve the future growth of Smithville and identified three alternative locations as found on the map at Schedule 3 to this report. Each alternative will be analyzed through an Environmental Assessment process that identifies the preferred alternatives for development. This will be a Regional task.

Now that OPA 62 is approved (OPA 63 is only partially approved) and the Transportation Master Plan has been endorsed, it is appropriate and timely to advise the Region to remove the southwest provincial highway 20 bypass from the books.

The Master Community Plan (MCP) work is now complete and two of the bypass concepts around Smithville extend north from Highway 20 in the west end easterly to the Smithville Industrial Park and beyond. The third option is southerly, but at a further distance from Smithville that the Provincial bypass concept. The map at Schedule 3 illustrates the three preferred concepts (from the Transportation Master Plan) that will be further evaluated by a Regional Environmental Assessment (EA) process.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

Not applicable to this report.

**INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COMMENTS:**

Administration has discussed this report with Regional Public Works Staff, the Master Community Plan consulting team members and Phelps Homes, who are all supportive of this report and the recommendation.

**CONCLUSION:**

Staff recommend that it is now appropriate to notify the Region that the Order in Council for the former Provincial Highway 20 bypass to the south and west of the current built up area of Smithville can be removed from the record since the new Township of West Lincoln Transportation Master Plan evaluated the Provincial bypass and recommended three different options for future consideration.

**SCHEDULES:**

1. Report PWA-32-2011 and letter from July 2011
2. Maps illustrating 1970s bypass
3. Map of Options from Transportation Master Plan

**Prepared & Submitted by:**

**Approved by:**

**Brian Treble  
Director of Planning & Building**

**Truper McBride  
CAO**