

Highway 89-Townline Rd Intersection Improvements Schedule B, Class Environmental Assessment

Project Newsletter

February 2013

Introduction

Dufferin County is undertaking a Class Environmental Assessment (EA) study for intersection improvements of Highway 89 and Amaranth-East Luther Townline Road (referred to as "Townline Road"). Improvements to Townline Road are the responsibility of the County. However, Highway 89 is a provincial highway and the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) is responsible for undertaking improvements to Highway 89. GENIVAR Inc. has been retained to assist the County in completing the project.

Highway 89 and Townline Road is currently an off-set intersection with no auxiliary lanes. Planning related to the Dufferin Eco-Energy Park (DEEP) has identified the need for re-alignment of the intersection to eliminate the offset intersection and the provision of a westbound left turn lane on Highway 89, to accommodate future anticipated traffic demands.

Class Environmental Assessment Process

The project is being conducted in accordance with the requirements for Schedule B projects as described in the Municipal Engineers Association's (MEA) *Municipal Class Environmental Assessment* document (October 2000 as amended 2007 & 2011). As such, it requires the following be completed: definition of the problem, identification and assessment of alternative solutions, and selection of a preferred solution. Consultation with the public and government review agencies is also a necessary and important component of the project.

The project is also being conducted in accordance with the *Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Transportation Facilities, 2000*. This requires the completion of an environmental screening document to meet the MTO requirements.

The intersection improvements will address Townline Road and Highway 89 issues and thus it was determined to combine the two Class EA documents into one report that would address both the MEA and MTO processes.

Both Class EA planning processes allow for the integration of sound engineering judgment, prudent long-term planning, protection of all aspects of the environment (natural, social, economic and cultural) and consultation

with the public and affected agencies, to obtain comments and input, to achieve acceptance of the preferred solution.

Problem Definition

The County is developing the Dufferin Eco-Energy Park (located on Townline Road south of Highway 89). As part of the approval process, MTO required that the County consider intersection improvements to eliminate the existing offset intersections. To accommodate increased traffic (including truck traffic) on Townline Road and through the intersection with Highway 89 intersection improvements related to turning traffic are required.

Identification and Evaluation of Alternative Solutions

To meet the EA planning requirements, alternative solutions were identified to address the problem. The following alternative solutions were evaluated to determine the recommended solution:

1. **Do Nothing.** This option does not address the problem as there are no intersection improvements.
2. **Improve Travel Demand Management** - provide improvements by promoting carpooling, work from home program and/or similar initiatives. This solution on its own does not fully address the problem. This solution only helps to reduce the rate of increase in traffic congestion, but traffic demand and congestion will continue to increase at the intersection.
3. **Improve Parallel Roadways** by adding additional lanes and upgrading parallel gravel roads by paving to attract traffic away from the corridor. This solution may not fully address the problem since there are no direct improvements to the intersection. Furthermore, diverting traffic to parallel roadways may cause significant impacts to the parallel roadways greater than the anticipated impacts on either Highway 89 or Townline Road.
4. **Improve Existing Intersection** by adding eastbound and westbound left turn lanes and realigning Townline Road perpendicular to Highway 89 opposite 8th Line intersection. This is the recommended solution.

Recommended Solution

The recommended solution is to improve the existing intersection. This solution can address the problem and provide the greatest opportunity to accommodate the projected traffic demand since it is the direct improvements to the existing intersection. This solution requires high implementation cost and will have short-term construction related effects for residents, businesses and roadway users in the area. However, by adding left-turn lanes, capacity will be improved and both incidence and rear-end collisions will be reduced, resulting in safer and smoother traffic movements through the intersection.

An evaluation was also undertaken to compare the alternative design concepts for the recommended solution. The intent was to comparatively evaluate realignment of Townline Road and the addition of left turn lanes on Highway 89 versus construction of a roundabout and realignment of Townline Road. The preferred design concept was the realignment of Townline Road with a reduction in the posted speed limit to 60 km per hour and construction of opposing left turn lanes on Highway 89. This design has the lowest implementation cost while providing the capacity that meets the growing future traffic demand with minimal impact to the existing environment. The lower posted speed limit will reduce the risk of conflict between slower trucks turning in and out of the DEEP site and through traffic.

Next Steps

Once the EA document is finished, a Notice of Completion will be issued identifying where and when the document will be available for a minimum 30-day public and agency review period.

For further information or if you have any questions regarding the project at this time, please contact one of the following:

Mr. Gary Drennan
Consultant - Project Manager
GENIVAR Inc.
600 Cochrane Drive, Suite 500
Markham, Ontario L3R 5K3
Phone: (905) 475-8727 Ext. 18278
Fax: (905) 475-5994
Email: gary.drennan@genivar.com

Mr. Scott Burns
Director of Public Works
Dufferin County
55 Zina Street
Orangeville, ON L9W 1E5
Phone: (519) 941-2816, Ext. 2601
Fax: (519) 941-4565
Email: sburns@dufferincounty.ca

Figure 1: Proposed Intersection Improvements

