

**TABLE A – PROPONENT RESPONSE TO PART II ORDER REQUESTS**

<b>PROPONENT:</b>	The City of Guelph	
<b>PROJECT TITLE:</b>	Niska Road Improvements - Schedule C Class Environmental Assessment	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION:</b>	Niska Road (from Downey Road Intersection To City limits at the Speed River ), City of Guelph, ON	
<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	Philip Rowe, C.E.T.	Ken Vander Wal P.Eng.
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<b>Issues and Concerns</b>	<b>Proponent Response</b>	<b>Status</b>
*Specify issue in request	* specify response- either from EA report, separate consultation material, etc	* present status (ongoing meetings with requesters, etc.—DATES important)
<b>Healthy Transport Consulting</b>		
My objective recommendations to truly improve the City of Guelph’s Niska Road and Bridge project have been ignored.	Mr. Martin Collier requested to be on the CWG after the advertised cut-off date and selection meeting. However, Mr. Collier was included on the public consultation contact list as early as November 2013. Mr. Collier attended PIC #1 and discussed the project with our Senior Transportation Engineer but did not submit a comment sheet. No further correspondence was received from Mr. Collier during the EA process, (see attached email from Martin Collier to Leonard Rach dated November 27, 2014.	<b>No update required.</b>

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	<p>We also note that he had made presentations to Council, which are recorded in the <b>ESR Appendix A</b> on the following date - Thursday, December 3, 2015 – 6:00 p.m.</p>	
<p>Supply-side approaches don't work because they induce even more travel.</p>	<p>As per the Municipal Class Environmental definitions Niska road is not being widened.</p> <p><b>Road Widening</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Means increasing the number of lanes of an existing road and may include the widening of the right-of-way but does not include localized operational improvements.</li> </ul> <p><b>ESR Section 1.5</b></p> <p>The road reconstruction portion of the project could fall within the scope of a Schedule 'A+' Municipal Class EA Process. This project meets the description for Municipal Road Project #19 under Appendix 1 of the MEA document (on page 1-5), which states the following:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Reconstruction where the reconstructed road or other linear paved facilities will be for the same purpose, use, capacity and at the same location as the facility being reconstructed (e.g. no change in the number of lanes).”</i></p> <p>The preferred alternative is documented in the ESR and the preferred alternative includes replacing the Niska bridge with a two lane bridge to current codes and standards, reconstruction of Niska Road with the addition of sidewalks and bike lanes, plus traffic calming implemented. No additional travel lanes are proposed.</p>	<p><b>No update required.</b></p>

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<p>The table below demonstrates another way of looking at whether building a 2-lane bridge meets all of our planning objectives. TDM does meet all of our objectives while widening the bridge only meets a couple of them – and most likely only for a short time due to induced demand.</p>	<p>Each of the points in the table is addressed below.</p> <p>a) Congestion Reduction</p> <p>TDM was incorporated in the ESR design with the inclusion of shared vehicle/bike lanes as well as sidewalks, bus stops and traffic calming measures, which all aim to improve safe connections for pedestrians and cyclists. The Bridge is being re-constructed to meet current demands of about 4,750 vehicles per day. This traffic is currently utilizing the one-lane structure.</p> <p>As per the Provincial Policy Statement reproduced in <b>Section 3.1 of the ESR</b>.</p> <p><i>1.6.7.1 Transportation systems should be provided which are safe, energy efficient, facilitate the movement of people and goods, and are appropriate to address projected needs.</i></p> <p><i>1.6.7.2 Efficient use shall be made of existing and planned infrastructure, including through the use of transportation demand management strategies, where feasible.</i></p> <p>b) Roadway Savings Costs</p> <p>Both road and bridge require significant remediation and/or replacement in order to meet current and future traffic and safety demands of the corridor. A solution is required to address the deterioration of the road, the lack of safe pedestrian and cycle facilities, diminishing storm water management conditions, and a failing bridge including the abutments and foundation, while respecting the heritage aspects of the community. <b>ESR Section 2.0</b></p>	<p><b>No update required.</b></p>

Issues and Concerns			Proponent Response	Status																												
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Planning Objectives</th> <th>TDM</th> <th>Road/Bridge Expansion</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Congestion reduction</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Roadway cost savings</td> <td>✓</td> <td>x</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Parking cost savings</td> <td>✓</td> <td>x</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Better mobility options</td> <td>✓</td> <td>x</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Improved traffic safety</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓ / x</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Reduced pollution</td> <td>✓</td> <td>x</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Energy conservation</td> <td>✓</td> <td>x</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Land use objectives</td> <td>✓</td> <td>x</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Public fitness &amp; health</td> <td>✓</td> <td>x</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>(✓ = Supports Objective; x = Contradicts Objective)<sup>5</sup></p>	Planning Objectives	TDM	Road/Bridge Expansion	Congestion reduction	✓	✓	Roadway cost savings	✓	x	Parking cost savings	✓	x	Better mobility options	✓	x	Improved traffic safety	✓	✓ / x	Reduced pollution	✓	x	Energy conservation	✓	x	Land use objectives	✓	x	Public fitness & health	✓	x	<p>The Bridge Inspection Report predicted that approximately \$1,300,000 in repairs is required to restore the bridge to safe operating conditions. <b>ESR Section 4.1.2</b></p> <p>c) Parking Cost Savings</p> <p>Due to inadequate parking to access Speed River, the preferred solution includes provision of on-street parking near the bridge for recreational purposes.</p> <p>Destination parking is not a consideration of this Municipal Class EA</p> <p>d) Better Mobility Options</p> <p>TDM was incorporated in the ESR design with the inclusion of shared vehicle/bike lanes as well as sidewalks, bus stops and traffic calming measures which all aim to improve safe connections for pedestrians and cyclists. The Bridge is being re-constructed to meet current demands in excess of 4,750 vehicles per day. This traffic is currently utilizing the one-lane structure.</p> <p>Bus accessibility and accommodation of current bus routes were taken into consideration in the formulation of the proposed traffic calming plan for the Niska Road corridor. Traffic calming measures were presented to Guelph Transit staff for approval. Guelph Transit staff will continue to be consulted with during the detail design stage to ensure that final traffic measures implemented allow bus accessibility and bus route accommodation along Niska Road. <b>ESR Section 3.3.3</b></p>	
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	<p>The preferred design is providing a sidewalk along the entire corridor, where sections do not exist today, which will improve pedestrian safety and provide an opportunity for people to walk. Shared vehicle bike lanes will be provide along Niska Road on an 8 m platform (4 m lane per direction) to encourage cycling. Currently, Niska Road is only 6 m to 6.5 m wide in sections, which is not as conducive to cycling. The provisions of sidewalk and shared bike / vehicle lanes along the corridor will improve mobility options. The preferred design is shown in <b>Appendix J</b> of the <b>ESR</b>.</p> <p>e) Improved Traffic Safety</p> <p><b>ESR Section 8.3</b> (Partial List):</p> <p>In summary, a two lane bridge on Niska Road supports the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Conformity with the City's OP, Transportation Master Plan and other area transportation studies including EAs;</li> <li>▪ Compatibility with the road network through increased functional use of Niska Road by members of the surrounding community;</li> <li>▪ Safe pedestrian or bicycle accommodation with sidewalks and shared travel lanes;</li> <li>▪ Significant reduction in the risk of accidents at the bridge due to indecisions of drivers crossing the current one lane bridge where fatalities have occurred in the past;</li> <li>▪ Maintenance of current traffic volumes. The one lane bridge does not deter traffic to the extent that community would like, therefore noise, safety and general community enjoyment is a continued concern for residents;</li> <li>▪ Provision of enhanced opportunity to construct safety and recreational features as part of the bridge such as, sidewalks, traffic calming</li> </ul>	

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	<p>features, canoe launch, on-street parking, etc.;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ After wildlife crossing; and,</li> </ul> <p><b>ESR 9.3.4 Stage 1 - Evaluation of Modified Cross-Sections</b></p> <p>As noted above, 3 modified road cross-section types were fully examined for Niska Road from Ptarmigan Drive to the west side of the Bailey bridge over the Speed River including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Modified Urban cross-section;</li> <li>▪ Modified Rural cross-section; and;</li> <li>▪ Modified Semi-Urban cross-section.</li> </ul> <p>The key goals of assessing and comparing the alternative modified road cross-section types was to create a safe environment for all users while respecting the existing viewscape, streetscape and the current environmental condition.</p> <p>f) Reduced Pollution</p> <p>Vehicle emissions are a contributing factor in climate change. Reducing unnecessary idling will help improve the quality of the air. Removing the bottleneck of a one-lane bridge will help reduce idling of cars waiting to safely cross.</p> <p><i>City of Guelph , Idling Control By-Law Number (1998)-15945</i></p> <p><b>AND WHEREAS</b> the Council of The Corporation of the City of Guelph desires to assist in the reduction of adverse health effects and in maintaining the ozone layer by reducing the unnecessary emissions of carbon monoxide.</p>	

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	<p>3. (a) No person shall cause or permit a vehicle to idle for more than three (3) consecutive minutes;</p> <p>g) Energy Conservation</p> <p>See above.</p> <p>h) Land Use Objectives</p> <p>The proposed widening of Niska Road as well as the Niska Road Bridge conforms to TDM Land use objectives by maintaining the existing right of way corridor.</p> <p><b>ESR Section 10.0</b> Following the completion of many studies, assessments and significant consultation with interested stakeholders, the community, a project focused CWG and review Agencies, the following alternatives were selected as the preferred alternative solutions for the road, bridge and intersection components of this EA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Replace the Existing One Lane Bridge with a Two lane Pony Truss Bridge;</li> <li>▪ Reconstruct the Niska Road from the Bailey bridge to Ptarmigan Drive with a an urban road cross-section consisting of a 4 metre shared use lanes and with a sidewalk on the north side;</li> </ul>	

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	<p><b>ESR Section 9.3.7</b></p> <p><b>Urban Cross-section - Option 1</b></p> <p>This scenario is comprised of an 8.0 metre wide asphalt road (shared vehicle/bike lane), curb and gutter, 3.0 metre wide boulevard on the south side, and boulevard and sidewalk on the north side. All lands beyond the 3.0 metre section would be subject to minimal impacts to match proposed grades with the adjacent natural contours. No property widenings are being taken. The cross-section has been modified from the City’s standard cross-section between Ptarmigan Drive to the west side of the Bailey Bridge over the Speed River (<b>ESR Section 10.2.1</b>), which mitigates impacts and respects the land use objectives.</p> <p>i) Public Fitness and Health</p> <p>On street parking will be provided near the bridge for trail and river access.</p> <p>The proposed alternative meets with TDM objectives on Public Fitness and Health by providing facilities for cyclists and pedestrians to safely use Niska Road and to more safely cross the Speed River.</p> <p><b>ESR Section 3.3.2</b></p> <p>As per The City of Guelph Cycling Network Niska Road is planned to be a ‘signed route’ with Downey Road in this area supporting a bike lane. The proposed Class EA preliminary design supports the City’s proposed cycling</p>	

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	<p>network.</p> <p><b>ESR Section 4.2</b></p> <p>Niska Road is classified as a Collector Road in the City of Guelph OP and is averaging between 2,300 and 2,450 vehicles per direction, per day during the weekday, and between 110 and 120 cyclists per week. The pavement on Niska Road between the Niska Road Bailey bridge and Ptarmigan Drive is approximately 6.0 to 6.5 metres wide, with a failing rural cross-section. In summary, this section of road:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lacks sidewalks or bike paths; and as such, between the bridge and Ptarmigan Drive the roadway does not support safe pedestrian access; and,</li> <li>▪ Has inadequate parking for access to Speed River.</li> </ul> <p><b>ESR Section 8.3 (partial list)</b></p> <p>In summary, a two lane bridge on Niska Road supports the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Conformity with the City's OP, Transportation Master Plan and other area transportation studies including EAs;</li> <li>▪ Compatibility with long term surrounding land uses;</li> <li>▪ Safe pedestrian or bicycle accommodation with sidewalks and shared travel lanes;</li> <li>▪ Significant reduction in the risk of accidents at the bridge due to indecisions of drivers crossing the current one lane bridge where fatalities have occurred in the past;</li> <li>▪ Maintenance of current traffic volumes. The one lane bridge does not deter traffic to the extent that community would like, therefore noise, safety and general community enjoyment is a continued concern for</li> </ul>	

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	<p>residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provision of enhanced opportunity to construct safety and recreational features as part of the bridge such as, sidewalks, traffic calming features, canoe launch, on-street parking, etc.;</li> </ul> <p>The preferred plan meets the TDM objectives through providing safer facilities for pedestrians and cyclists and meets City of Guelph's objectives for their cycling network as well as conforms to the City's Official Plan and Transportation Master Plan.</p>	
<p><b>Close the bridge to vehicles</b> – This is the easiest and cheapest thing to do. There would be a bit of bridge rehabilitation but no traffic calming or other systems management required. This might inconvenience a few drivers but there are lots of options for them. Puslinch Township will be happy as they don't want to upgrade roads on their side of bridge – and deal with their own escalating costs. Liability issues will also be eliminated.</p>	<p>The option of closing the bride did not meet the following important consideration as outlined in the Problem / Opportunity Statement established at the onset of the project. <b>ESR, Section 13.3.</b></p> <p><i>The current City of Guelph's Official Plan recognizes Niska Road as a two-lane Collector road which collects vehicle trips from the immediate area and provides for through movement for vehicular travel to/from arterial roadways and expressways. A secondary function is to serve land access and to link the Townships of Puslinch and Guelph-Eramosa</i></p> <p>However, closing the bridge was one of a full range of alternatives that were considered, as summarized in the <b>ESR – Executive Summary, Page XIX, Section 9.1.</b></p>	<p><b>No update required.</b></p>

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	<p>The complete list of alternatives examined are as follows:</p> <p><b>Alternative 1: Do Nothing but Repair and Maintain</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This alternative includes rehabilitating the existing bridge structure, abutments, foundation and maintaining it in a ‘good state of repair.’</li> </ul> <p><b>Alternative 2: Close Bridge to Vehicular Traffic and Maintain</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This alternative rebuilds the existing Niska Road Bailey Bridge to accommodate pedestrian and cyclist traffic only. The bridge would be closed entirely to vehicular traffic. Niska Road could be converted to a local residential street.</li> </ul> <p><b>Alternative 3: Remove Bridge and Do Not Replace Existing Bridge</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This alternative would remove the bridge, convert Niska Road from a Collector Road to a local residential street and cut-off any direct access to the west across the Speed River.</li> </ul> <p><b>Alternative 4: Replace the Existing Bailey Bridge With New One Lane Structure and Provide Operational Improvements to Niska Road</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This alternative addresses the need to replace the existing Bailey bridge that has reached the end of its life. Operational improvements to address existing traffic and safety issues would be considered.</li> </ul> <p><b>Alternative 5: Replace the Existing Bailey Bridge with a Two Lane Structure and Provide Operational Improvements to Niska Road</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This alternative addresses the need to replace the existing Bailey bridge with a two lane vehicular structure over the Speed River. Operational improvements to the Niska Road to address the existing traffic and safety issues will be</li> </ul>	

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	<p>considered. <b>Based on baseline studies, detailed evaluations, consultation efforts and information collected through various studies, this option has been selected as the Preferred Alternative.</b></p> <p>The comment <i>“There would be a bit of bridge rehabilitation”</i> is fallacious as the bridge presently requires significant repair as per <b>page 84 of the ESR.</b></p> <p>Rehabilitative repair cost estimate is \$1,300,600.</p> <p>Further detail as to the extent of repair required can be found in the Biennial Bridge inspection reports found in <b>Appendix C of the ESR.</b></p> <p>As Niska Road carries approximately 4,750 vehicles per day (<b>ESR Section 9.2</b>) there will be more than “a few drivers inconveniences” as per the origin / Destination surveys undertaken. “These surveys concluded that many of the trips (approximately 48%) on the roadway were external indicating that the corridor is integral to external trips and is a significant roadway within the City of Guelph road network.” (<b>ESR Section 6.2.3</b>) Therefore 52% of the traffic has an origin or destination within the Hanlon Creek or Kortright Hills neighbourhood which would be an inconvenience to more than a few drivers.</p>	
<p><b>If the bridge must remain in place</b>, a simple stop sign located at each approach will decrease speeding and potential accidents. Cut-through traffic will also be reduced by this sign.</p>	<p>A simple stop sign located at each approach end of the bridge does not address existing deficiencies. In Section 5.1.3 Ontario Bridge Code Guidelines (<b>ESR, page ix</b>), the following was reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“Low volume roads are those in which the traffic volumes are less than 400 vehicles per day (vpd). However, even in this case, once you approach 400 vehicles per day it is strongly recommended that a two lane bridge is required;</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>No update required.</b></p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>On Niska Road the average weekday 24 hour volume eastbound is 2,450 and westbound is 2,300;</i></li> </ul> <p>The existing bridge does not meet existing Ontario Bridge Code Guidelines as existing traffic volumes are beyond the 400 vehicle per day threshold and a two lane bridge is recommended.</p> <p>Further, a stop sign would increase wait times and idling requirements for the bridge.</p> <p>Traffic calming is proposed along Niska Road as a mitigating measure to address residents' concerns regarding traffic speeds on Niska Road.</p>	
<p><b>Over time add a bridge toll</b> – City council requested this power from the province on Oct 26, 2015.</p>	<p>The decision to add a toll to the bridge is outside the scope of the EA study and does not address the current Niska Road deficiencies or the problem statement.</p>	<p><b>No update required.</b></p>
<p><b>TDM Investment</b> – A \$500K annual commitment to TDM (10% of new bridge cost) must be made.</p>	<p>The City's annual commitment of funds as a TDM investment is outside the scope of the EA study and is better addressed within the City's budgeting process.</p>	<p><b>No update required.</b></p>