

Niska Road Reconstruction Class Environmental Assessment Study Community Working Group Terms of Reference

The City of Guelph (City) has initiated a Class Environmental Assessment (EA) study to investigate opportunities for improvements to Niska Road from the City limits to Downey Road. Segments of the roadway and the bridge over the Speed River are nearing the end of their useful life and require a solution to address their deterioration and increasing maintenance costs. The City also recognizes that the community has concerns regarding impacts to the natural environment and community heritage in addition to addressing community safety and traffic issues. Therefore, the City wishes to establish a Community Working Group (CWG) as part of the public consultation component of the Class EA process to address all of these issues as it relates to road and bridge reconstruction options for Niska Road.

The purpose of this document is to provide potential members of the CWG with an understanding of the CWG role and responsibilities of members, expected level of commitment, rules of order, and a process to amend this Terms of Reference.

CWG Mandate

The City of Guelph believes that communicating with local residents and community leaders is important. The CWG will provide a forum for dissemination, consultation, review and exchange of information regarding the reconstruction of Niska Road, from the City Limits at Speed River to the Downey Road intersection, including the environmental assessment process, road design concepts, road safety features and bridge.

As with all project working groups within the City of Guelph, the CWG will not have the authority to commit City resources or direct the work of staff. As stated above, the CWG is a forum for information dissemination and gathering of feedback from stakeholders.

CWG Membership

The composition of the CWG will be structured to provide a balance of perspectives. In addition to inviting local community members to participate on the CWG, invitations shall also go out to other stakeholders who utilize this road corridor. This may include local residents living greater than 2,000 meters from the study area, property owners, seasonal residents, members from environmental committees, cycling committees, the transport industry, local businesses and the general travelling public. This process includes the following key steps:

- Notification of CWG opportunity through advertisement (e.g., Guelph Tribune, Wellington Advertiser)
- Formal request to volunteer to participate on the CWG can be provided in writing to either of the project team members listed below by letter or email with return contact information (home address, phone number and email address)
- **Attendance at a first meeting is mandatory.**
- Members of CWG will be finalized at the first CWG meeting.
- It is intended to convene a group consisting of up to 12 members not including the Project Team made up of City Staff and their Consultant.
- Depending on the numbers requesting participation a random selection process may be required and implemented.
- The City's Project Team will have the final word.
- The first CWG meeting date will be provided to volunteers in separate correspondence.

Members of the CWG shall be required to participate for the duration of the Class EA process. Based on similar types of projects, we anticipate that the duration of this study will last until May or June of 2014. However the study must follow the "Municipal Class Environmental Assessment" (Municipal Engineers Association, October 2000, as amended in

2007 and 2011) and as part of that process the project will continue until submitted and adopted by City Council.

The intention is to select a diverse and broad range of members of the Guelph community, to allow for a variety of perspectives. Amongst others groups, members may be drawn from:

1. Residents and property owners within 2,000 metres of the study area (6 members)
2. Interested non-governmental organizations (e.g., University of Guelph, committees concerned with the environment, cycling committees, members of the transport industry, local businesses) (3-4 members)
3. Other interested people or groups (e.g., residents who live greater than 2,000 meters for the study area and the travelling public) (3-4 members)

CWG members will not be limited to residents, property owners, businesses etc. from within the boundaries of the City of Guelph. Where appropriate, stakeholders from outside the City boundaries will be eligible for membership in the CWG.

City staff, including City Councilors are not eligible for membership on the CWG. City Staff and their Consultants will be available as resources at all meetings and will present project and study materials, data, maps and drawings.

Meeting attendance is very important, as such, if a stakeholder misses three consecutive meetings, the appointee will be deemed to have forfeited their position on the CWG, subject to the appointee having the opportunity to address the CWG in writing regarding their absenteeism. The CWG will then vote on their continued participation.

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all CWG members to participate in discussions, provide input and ideas from their perspective and listen to other points of view. Additional responsibilities are as follows:

City Staff

- Chair meetings.
- Keep CWG members up to date on activities of the project.
- Appoint a City staff liaison person to coordinate communications between the Chair of the CWG, the Consulting Team and City Council.
- Listen carefully to the opinions and perspectives provided.
- Provide timely responses and/or action as appropriate including follow-up on issues raised that could not be addressed at the meeting.

CWG Members

- Attend CWG meetings and participate in discussions. Become informed about the road and bridge design options, study area limitation, community traffic flows, area traffic volumes, traffic safety options, and environmental mitigation.
- Be prepared and informed for meetings by reviewing any materials provided in advance.
- Relay any input received to the broader community.
- Bring a community perspective to the discussion, complaints or issues raised by the public, offer opportunities and identify threats.
- Help the CWG operate effectively by contributing constructively and openly discussing ideas and opportunities.

City's Project Consultant

- Co-Chair meetings.
- Organize and attend CWG meetings and participate in discussions.
- Assist the Chair with the effective functioning of the committee including development and distribution of agendas, meeting notes, etc.
- Work with the City in keeping CWG members up to date on any issues raised within the community.
- Identify the Project Manager who will be the liaison person to coordinate communications between the City staff liaison person and the Chair of the CWG.

- Listen carefully to the opinions and perspectives provided.
- Provide research and design options to each meeting.
- Liaise with the City in providing timely responses and/or action as appropriate including follow-up on issues raised that could not be addressed at the meeting.
- Provide design decisions and/or assessment decisions that reflect the opinions, suggestions, comments and concerns of the CWG as project decisions are being advanced.

CWG Meeting Schedule and Format

The CWG will form once the project has commenced and the City has reviewed the submissions and selected the committee participants.

Within the first month of establishment of the CWG, meetings will be held once per month. All meetings will be held at Guelph City Hall (1 Carden Street).

Meetings will be chaired by either City Staff and/or the Consultant. Depending on the subject matter of a given meeting the CWG Chair could be called upon to chair the meeting.

We anticipate conducting approximately 6 evening meetings, (7-9 p.m.). Meeting will last approximately 2 hours.

The first meeting will focus on the role of the CWG and provide members with a basic understanding of the Class EA process, what is required under this process, an overview of the existing conditions and the project 'Next Steps'.

Standard meeting agenda items will include:

- Project update
- Discussion of CWG comments and concerns
- Design options and/or considerations
- Agency comments and requirements
- Review of issues and concerns
- Other agenda items as appropriate

Meeting materials including an agenda will be posted electronically to the City's website and emailed to the CWG members at least 72 hours prior to the next meeting. Meeting notes will be prepared by the City and posted on the City's website in draft format. Once these draft notes have been approved by the CWG, the final approved minutes will be posted to the City's website.

Rules of Order

Members of the CWG have a duty to conduct themselves in an impartial and objective manner. It is understood that members of the CWG will perform their duties in such a way as to promote public confidence and trust in the integrity, objectivity and impartiality of the CWG. The meeting Chair (i.e. City Staff or appointed Consulting staff) will have the right and responsibility to control proceedings of the CWG, including the right to exclude any member of the public or any member of the CWG who is interfering with or disrupting the CWG proceedings.

Every person, every idea and every concern has equal worth. It will be expected that the members of the CWG be fully respectful of others.

Final Word

The goal of the CWG is to achieve the following:

- To share an understanding of heritage, safety, transportation, traffic, operational and environmental problems and challenges currently being faced by the local community and travelling public.
- To work with the community to develop an acceptable preferred solution and design alternative that most addresses the responsibility of the City of Guelph to build and maintain a safe and effective road system and that also addresses the vision and needs of the local community.

For more information

Please contact either one of our project team members if you have questions, comments or would like to be added to the project mailing list.

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Information will be collected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. With the exception of personal information, all comments will become part of the public record and published with the final Environmental Study Report.