

To: Mayor Siscoe and Members of Council

From: Tami Kitay, Director of Planning and Building Services

CC: Senior Leadership Team
Ontario Street Corridor Secondary Plan Advisory Committee

Date: April 22, 2024

Subject: Ontario Street Corridor Secondary Plan Study: Status Update

Summary

The purpose of this correspondence is to advise Council that due to matters beyond staff's control that the Ontario Street Corridor Secondary Plan workplan has been delayed. This pause will allow Planning staff to temporarily re-direct and focus efforts on supporting the City's Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) commitments and other strategic priorities, such as the Community Improvement Plan (CIP) review (next steps coming to Council in Q2 2024), the Official Plan update (pending the new joint Provincial Policy Statement/Growth Plan), GO Station Major Transportation Station Area (MTSA) zoning implementation, Port Dalhousie Secondary Plan zoning implementation, and on-going Provincial conformity exercises. In addition, the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks (MECP) has provided their Certificate of Analysis for the December 2023 sampling undertaking which demonstrates that abatement actions to reduce and control discharge of PCB contaminated stormwater from the site has been successful.

Ontario Street Corridor Secondary Plan

The Ontario Street Corridor Secondary Plan is intended to provide a land use framework that will support the development of a significant mixed-use neighbourhood centered around 282 and 285 Ontario Street, while promoting the evolution of the Ontario Street commercial corridor into a more compact, mixed-use urban environment. Council approved the Terms of Reference for this study on May 30, 2022. Recognising the central role of the 282 and 285 Ontario Street properties, the approved Terms of Reference for the study were predicated on collaboration and cost sharing with the land owners group associated with those properties. On August 8, 2022 Council authorized a Memorandum of Understanding with the ownership group which specified each party's contributions to the completion of the Secondary Plan. Certain major technical studies, including a Servicing Analysis, Transportation Analysis, and an Environmental Site Assessment are to be undertaken by the land owners group, at their sole cost.

The Secondary Plan Study commenced in earnest with an open house on February 7, 2023, which was to be followed by additional community engagement on visioning for

the study area and the evaluation of alternative approaches to development. Before meaningful work on visioning and the creation of alternatives can proceed, the background studies must first be completed to identify development constraints within the study area. Detailed terms of reference for each of the technical studies was prepared in the spring of 2023 by the City and provided to the land owners group and their consultants. The original work plan for the Secondary Plan Study anticipated that these technical studies would have been complete by the end of 2023, with 2024 primarily focused on establishing a preferred land use concept. Completion of the background studies has been delayed, which has effectively stalled the project.

Staff are reluctant to proceed with community visioning and the establishment of land use alternatives prior to completion of the technical studies as it is imperative that any outcomes are grounded in the reality of the site's known constraints.

Staff have been in ongoing contact with representatives of the ownership group and understand that work has commenced on the Slope Stability Assessment and Environmental Impact Study. Staff also received a completed Stage 1 Archeological Assessment. However, the three most significant and potentially impactful studies remain outstanding (being the Transportation Analysis, the Servicing Analysis, and the Environmental Site Assessment). The land owners group is not yet prepared to bear the costs of undertaking these studies at this time, citing the following factors:

- the land development market has been challenged since the pandemic which has resulted in a slow down of overall market conditions;
- land developers are having to review their options due to these changing market conditions over time related to Federal and Provincial policy changes;
- the net result has been an overall slowdown in decision making due to market uncertainty.

Representatives for the land owners group added that despite the changing market conditions, environmental cleanup has continued at 282 and 285 Ontario Street sites through the decommissioning of mechanical pits, continued debris cleanup, and the construction and operation of an onsite filtration system. They have advised that they remain committed to completing the necessary background studies, but to-date have not provided anticipated timing.

Staff will report back to Council in Q2 2025 with an update on project status and next steps. In the meantime, staff will divert their attention to other strategic priorities.

Twelve Mile Creek Sample Results

In June 2023, a surface stormwater management system was constructed on site for the purpose of onsite stormwater containment, in addition to capping manhole (STE-51) to prevent PCBs from entering Twelve Mile Creek. All stormwater from the site is now captured and contained in a temporary stormwater pond, treated with an on-site treatment unit to meet City stormwater by-law requirements, and discharged to the City's combined sanitary/stormwater sewer which transmits water to the Regional wastewater treatment plant.

The Ministry of Environment, Conservation, and Parks (MECP) conducted follow up sampling at the Woodruff Avenue city manhole on December 18, 2023. The sample results, attached to this email, confirm that concentrations of Total PCBs are now below the Provincial Water Quality Objectives. In fact, no PCB congeners were detected in the MECP sample. These results indicate that the abatement actions taken to reduce and control discharges of PCB contaminated stormwater from the site have been successful, and the risk for impacts to Twelve Mile Creek have been mitigated.

Should Council have any questions, please feel free to connect with me directly.



Tami Kitay, MPA MCIP RPP
Director of Planning and Building Services

Attachment:

- MECP Certificate of Analysis, Sample Results - December 18, 2023