

Sarnia Road Widening
Wonderland Road North to Sleightholme Avenue
Class Environmental Assessment and Preliminary Design

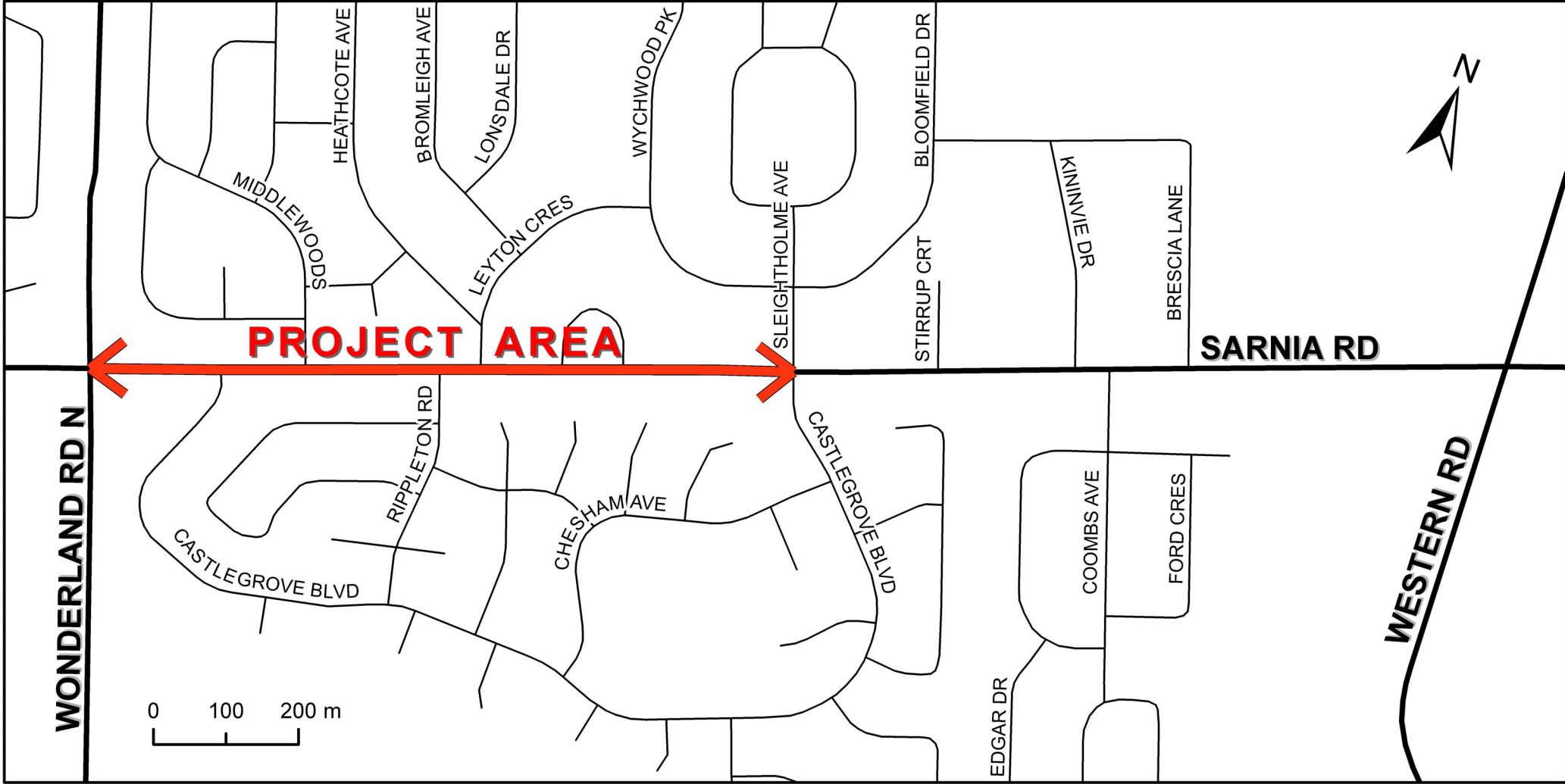


Public Information Centre No. 2
June 1, 2010

Study Background

- Sarnia Road is a major access route to the University of Western Ontario.
- Currently operates at its capacity carrying approximately 20,000 vehicles per day, anticipated to increase to over 30,000 vehicles per day by 2017.
- City of London Transportation Master Plan (2004) recommends widening Sarnia Road, from Wonderland Road North to Sleightholme Avenue to 4 lanes by 2014.
- Class Environmental Assessment (EA) and Preliminary Design recently completed to widen Sarnia Road from Hyde Park Road to Wonderland Road North to 4 lanes. First phase of construction to begin in 2011.
- Sarnia Road, east of Wonderland Road North, would be a bottleneck in London's arterial road network.
- Study is being completed as a Schedule C Class Environmental Assessment:
 - Provides a decision-making process to ensure that all relevant engineering and environmental features are considered in the planning and design of municipal infrastructure.
 - Requires public and agency involvement throughout.





Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Process



Objectives

Study Objective

- Determine the most appropriate course of action to address existing and future capacity concerns in the study area
- Review performance of existing intersections and identify improvements
- Design should be consistent with the City's Bicycle Master Plan

Public Information Centre Objective

- Obtain input on the recommended design for the widening
- Outline the next steps in the study



Overview of Key Comments Received To Date

Key Issue	Comments Received	Study Team Response
Noise	• Noise levels from traffic have continued to increase along the corridor	• Noise barriers will be provided as per the City's retrofit barrier policy within the study area
	• Announcement system on buses is audible in backyards along the corridor	• Noise barriers should reduce noise levels. LTC will be informed of noise complaints
	• Noise barrier will restrict direct access to Sarnia Road from backyard of property	• Effective barrier design does not permit through access
	• Noise barriers should be provided east of Sleightholme Ave.	• Barriers will not be extend beyond the limits of road widening
Cycling, Pedestrians	• Cycling lanes should be kept clear of snow during the winter	• On-street lanes will be maintained the same as City streets
	• In boulevard bicycle paths should be provided	• On-street lanes are safer for commuter cyclists and are consistent with London's Bicycle Master Plan
	• Curbface sidewalk is difficult to keep clear of snow and slush in the winter	• Some curbface sidewalk is being considered to reduce property requirements
Speeds	• Existing speeds on Sarnia Road are too high and will increase when road is widened	• No plans to change existing speed limit as part of this study
Traffic Calming	• Implement traffic calming on local streets during construction	• Not standard practice during construction since cut-through traffic is not anticipated with Sarnia Road remaining open • Any existing issues regarding speeding on local streets can be reviewed separately with city staff
Property	• Impacts on existing landscaping, fences	• Some landscaping, fences will be impacted. Specific impacts will be discussed during detailed design
	• Property requirements	• Some additional property required and discussed with individual property owners

Design Options – Blue Forest Drive to Middlewoods

Recommended Alternative	- Accommodates a future westbound double left turn lane at Wonderland Road N. - Removes existing islands from the Wonderland Road N. intersection - Restricts northbound left turns from Castlegrove Blvd. onto Sarnia Road
Pros	Cons
• Protects for the ultimate lane requirements (dual westbound left turn lane with right in-right out at Castlegrove Blvd. W.) • Allows for the future option of designating one lane for High Occupancy Vehicles (buses and passenger vehicles with two or more occupants) or as a transit queue jump lane when warranted • Improved traffic safety at Castlegrove Blvd. W. (reduces vehicle conflicts with traffic queuing from Wonderland Road N.) • Compatible with audible signals at Wonderland Road N. • Relocation of westbound bus stop to improve pedestrian safety (subject to confirmation by LTC)	• Increased property impacts • Increased pedestrian walking times across Wonderland Road N. would affect signal operations
Maintain Existing Configuration (Not Recommended)	
Pros	Cons
• No capital cost	• Does not accommodate existing or future traffic demands • Not compatible with planned improvements west of Wonderland Road N.

Design Options – Blue Forest Drive to Middlewoods

Alternative 1 - Maintain a single westbound left turn lane at Wonderland Road N. (Not Recommended) - Remove existing islands from the Wonderland Road North intersection - Restrict northbound left turns from Castlegrove Blvd West onto Sarnia Road	
Pros	Cons
• Reduced property impacts • Improved traffic safety at Castlegrove Blvd. • Compatible with audible signals at Wonderland Road N.	• Does not provide ultimate lane requirements (dual left turn lane) • Increased pedestrian walking times across Wonderland Road N. would affect signal operations
Alternative 2 - Provide a westbound double left turn lane at Wonderland Road N. (Not Recommended) - Restrict Castlegrove Blvd West to Right-in / Right –out (with the double left at Wonderland Road N.) - Modify existing islands on the east side of Wonderland Road N.	
Pros	Cons
• Improves westbound left turn capacity • Provides for future High Occupancy Vehicle or bus queue jump lane • Improves traffic safety at Castlegrove Blvd. • Reduces the impact of Castlegrove Blvd. upon the • Emergency vehicle access could be maintained with the use of mountable curb in the median • Reduced pedestrian crossing times would provide more flexibility for traffic signal timings	• Increased property impacts • Not compatible with audible signals • Access to Castlegrove Blvd would be further restricted • Modifications to the planned reconstruction west of Wonderland Road N. required.

Design Options – Middlewoods to Sleightholme Ave.

Recommended Alternative	
- Relocate existing pedestrian signal to east side of Rippleton Road - Restrict left turn movements at Leyton Crescent	
Pros	Cons
• Removes existing conflict between northbound left turning motorists on Rippleton Road and the pedestrian crossing • Improves traffic safety by addressing the close proximity of Rippleton Road and Leyton Cres. • Removes conflicts between opposing left turn movements and resulting blockages of adjacent through lanes • Sleightholme Ave. and Middlewoods provide accessible alternative routes for the limited number of left turning motorists at Leyton Cres.	• Minor increase in travel times for a very limited number of motorists • Left turn access to neighbourhood from Sleightholme Ave. and Middlewoods • Emergency Vehicle access to Leyton Cres. Would be marginally reduced however, the accessibility would remain better than much of the city

The potential to signalize the Rippleton Road/Sarnia Road intersection was reviewed, however, it currently does not meet the warrants for traffic signals. This intersection could be considered for traffic signals in the future if travel demands satisfy traffic signal warrants.

Maintain Existing Configuration (Not Recommended)	
Pros	Cons
• No Capital Cost	• Would not accommodate travel demands • Not compatible with planned improvements west of Wonderland Road North • The close proximity of the Rippleton Road and Leyton Cres. intersections will contribute to additional vehicle conflicts

Design Options – Middlewoods to Sleightholme Ave.

Alternative 1 - Cul de Sac Ruskin Court (Not Recommended)

Pros

- Requires left turning motorists onto Ruskin Court to use the east leg where left turn vehicle storage can more readily be provided.

Cons

- Affects the movement of school buses from Ruskin Court
- Impacts Ruskin Park

The designs were evaluated based on a number of criteria, including:

- Natural, social, cultural, and economic environments
- Extent to which design addresses the need for improvements.
- Ability to address existing safety concerns
- Consistency with city policy.
- Cost.

Design Options - Stormwater Management

Recommended Alternative - Multiple In-Ground Storage Systems	
Pros	Cons
• Eliminates potential surface ponding during major storm events • Makes use of existing infrastructure as much as possible	• Higher capital cost than maintaining existing configuration

Alternative 1 (Not Recommended) - Maintain Existing Configuration	
Pros	Cons
• No additional capital cost required	• Potential ponding during major storm events at: • Middlewoods • West of Rippleton Rd. • Ruskin Crt. • Southwest corner of the St. Thomas More school yard

Alternative 2 (Not Recommended) - Conveyance System Improvements and One In-Ground Storage System	
Pros	Cons
• Eliminates potential surface ponding during major storm events	• Not enough room in the existing right-of-way to accommodate one storage unit

Noise Assessment

- Based on the noise assessment completed, the recommended barrier height is 1.8 m along the corridor.
- Locations of the required barriers are shown on the recommended plan.
- Barrier design will not permit through access to Sarnia Road from adjacent backyards.

City Policy Regarding Noise Barriers

- *By-law 25(12) Noise Barriers on Arterial Roads* provides guidelines for installing retrofit noise barriers when an arterial road is widened adjacent to existing residential development.
- Objective of the By-law is that existing residential backyards backing onto arterial roads which are widened to four lanes or greater are not subject to significant noise level increases.



Examples of existing noise barriers in the City of London

Recommended Design

- Widen Sarnia Road to five lanes, from Wonderland Road North to Sleightholme Avenue
- Restrict left turns at the Castlegrove Boulevard (west leg) and Sarnia Road intersection
- Sarnia Road / Wonderland Road North Intersection:
 - Provide for a future double westbound left turn from Sarnia Road to Wonderland Road North
 - Remove all right turn islands at the intersection
- Relocate the existing pedestrian signal at Rippleton Road, to the east side of the intersection
- Restrict left turns at Leyton Crescent
- Provide on-street cycling lanes and new sidewalks
- Provide noise barriers, as required based on the City's Noise Barrier Retrofit Policy

Subject to funding and approvals, construction is currently planned to begin the spring of 2012 and would be completed over one construction season.

Next Steps

- Use input received at the PIC to refine the design (if required)
- Finalize the preferred design and complete the Environmental Study Report and Preliminary Design Report in early fall, 2010
- Present final design to the Environment and Transportation Committee and obtain Council approval
- Make the Environmental Study Report available for the required 30-day review period. The Notice of Completion will be published in the London Free Press and sent to the study Contact List
- Assuming any comments raised during the 30-day review period can be resolved, the City will proceed with Final Design
- Subject to approval, funding and the outcome of this Class EA, construction is anticipated to begin in 2012

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING

Please complete a comment sheet and place in the comment box today or submit by **June 16, 2010.**