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Council-In-Committee Meeting – June 11, 2024

Subject: Proposed Examination of the Lynn Valley Trail (Decou Road to 16A Oakwood Ave) for use as a Utility Corridor
Report Number: EIS-24-035
Division: Environmental and Infrastructure Services
Department: Engineering
Ward: Ward 5
Purpose: For Decision

Recommendation(s):

That Norfolk County endorse the examination of the use of the Lynn Valley Trail (former Railway Line) between Decou Road and 16 Oakwood Ave as a utility corridor for the purpose of providing a trunk gravity sanitary sewer line to the lands on the North side of Decou Road between the existing Lynn Valley Trail and to the East of Ireland Road (south of Victoria Street); and

That the examination be undertaken by Calibrex Developments (Developer for 682 Ireland Road) with oversight of the examination provided by Norfolk County's Engineering Department; and

That the examination include the assessment of other sanitary servicing options for the surrounding development lands along with an analysis of the financial cost/benefit comparison, and assessment of identified environmental, and social impacts along with mitigation strategies to address same; and

That the examination include consultation with Norfolk County EIS, Community Development and Operations Divisions, the Long Point Conservation Authority, the Lynn Valley Trail Users, and abutting land-owners; and

Further that should the use of the Lynn Valley Trail be deemed the proposed preferred alternative route for providing sanitary services to the area, that such recommendation be brought to Council for consideration of approval.

Executive Summary:

Calibrex Developments is the owner of 682 Ireland Road. The subject lands are Draft Plan approved and are intended to be a mix of residential housing, apartments and office space. The development is in need of water, sanitary, and storm sewer servicing.

The developer did complete a Functional Servicing Study (FSR) as part of their development application in support of the Draft Plan approval for the lands. The sanitary servicing option assessed in the FSR was a local gravity sanitary sewer collection system within the development lands which fed into a sanitary pumping station which would need to be built within the development lands. The pumping station would then pump the collected sewage through a forcemain from the subject lands, north along Ireland Road to Victoria Street where it would connect to the main sanitary sewer line and then drain by gravity to the sewage treatment plant at 16A Oakwood Avenue.

Currently there are two (2) sanitary forcemains within sections of Ireland Road, this would add a third. Additionally, the pump station within the development lands would be transferred (assumed) by the municipality once built and fully operational. Sewage pump stations are more costly to operate and maintain than gravity systems and put undue pressure on the tax level in comparison to gravity systems.

Through a recent re-examination of options, the Developer has brought forward a request to consider the design and construction of a gravity sanitary trunk system from the development site to the Simcoe Wastewater Treatment Plant. This option is reliant on the use of the former rail line which currently supports the Lynn Valley Trail system.

In order to proceed with further consideration of this option, Council endorsement of this option is being sought. Details of the servicing proposal are set out herein along with the proposed method for further consideration of same.

Discussion:

Sanitary pump stations should be avoided if and where gravity systems can be reasonably provided. Additionally, trunk servicing options are more preferable over services that simply serve the lands that they emanate from or connect to.

Through a recent re-examination of options to provide sanitary servicing to 682 Decou Road (former Hub Lands), the Developer has brought forward a request to consider the design and construction of a gravity sanitary trunk system from the development site to the Simcoe Wastewater Treatment Plant. The route would run:

- from the 682 Ireland Road westerly along Decou Road to just east of the Lynn Valley Trail system, then
- north-easterly for a short section into and onto private lands (via a proposed easement), then
- westerly onto and within the existing former rail corridor lands (Lynn Valley Trail), then
- north-westerly along the former rail corridor to the Simcoe Wastewater Treatment Plant.

A high-level design concept has been drawn up in support of this option and preliminary introductory level discussions have taken place with Long Point Conservation Authority,

Lynn Valley Trail representatives, Norfolk County Parks and Open Space. Furthermore, a level of discussion has taken place between the developer of 682 Ireland Road and the owner of the potential development lands to the immediate west of this site.

A schematic of the proposed servicing options is set out in Attachment A.

The developer has assessed three (3) designs, two (2) of which provide benefit to lands beyond that of the development at 682 Ireland Road.

Option 1 – would be a local sanitary sewer system within the development lands that would collect sanitary sewage from the local area and direct it to a local pumping station (to be built within the development lands). The pump station would then pump the collected sewage through a forcemain that would run from the development site north along Ireland Road where it would connect to the existing gravity sanitary sewer system at Victoria Street. From here the sewage would flow through the existing Victoria Street sewer system making its way to the Simcoe Wastewater Treatment plant.

Option 2 – would be a sanitary sewer system that would serve the subject lands as well as the development lands to the immediate west. The trunk sewer in this scenario would support 850 housing units and resolve the sanitary servicing needs of both 682 Ireland Road along with sanitary servicing needs of the development lands to the immediate west. Should Scenario 1 be a reasonable and viable servicing option for the area, the design and construction would be best supported by an Inter-Developer Agreement to ensure the identified benefitting lands contribute through a cost sharing model that reflects the benefit derive by each.

Option 2a – would be a sanitary sewer system that would serve the subject lands, the development lands to the immediate west – with a total of 850 housing units. This option would also support potential future development on the lands along the immediate east side of Ireland Road between Decou Road and Victoria Street and support an additional 585 housing units. This option also provides the opportunity to decommission one or both of the private sanitary sewer pumping stations and forcemain lines currently servicing 634 Ireland Road and 660 Ireland Road. Scenario 2 could be financed through Development Charges and a front-ending agreement with Developer who advances and completes the design and construction of all or part of a proposed trunk sanitary sewer system.

The Developer has completed a preliminary level examination of Options 2 and 2a simply to confirm the high-level feasibility of the options along with a rough estimate of the larger area benefit for Option 2a. The review of options need not be limited to 1, 2 and 2a as there may be additional options available and those will also be considered moving forward from here.

Impact Assessment

While none of the proposed servicing options trigger the need to undertake and complete a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment, the options should be

assessed for social, environmental, fiscal, operational and natural heritage impacts so that the benefits and disbenefits of each are clearly understood and considered in resolving to a proposed preferred solution. Before any such examination of options is considered in any greater detail, the landowners of the land that would support any of the options need to be consulted and their endorsement secured. Endorsement in this case, simply means that their lands may be considered within options that are dependent upon their use/support.

The landowners (collectively) would decide which option (of all examined) is the proposed preferred alternative.

In the case of Norfolk County, this includes Ireland Road, Decou Road, but more particularly, the former rail line lands (host to the Lynn Valley Trail). Norfolk County's interest does go beyond that of simply a host to a servicing route. The County's interest will also focus on the construction (future re-construction) and operational aspects of any proposed preferred alternative. Additionally, the County will be interested in any impacts to the Lynn Valley Trail system and proposed mitigation plans that may be necessary to ensure any impacts associated with this route are mitigated. The examination should also consider opportunities for enhancing the area along this route recognizing the overall change to the area, not only through the placement of a utility line adjacent to/under the trail but also forthcoming future changes to the abutting land use (open fields converted to residential occupation).

Financial Services Comments:

There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report.

Staff will collaborate with the developers, but no additional costs are expected to be incurred at this time. Staff have committed to returning to Council after the proposed preferred option is investigated at which time an analysis of the financial implications for the County, if any, can be provided.

In principle, the costs for servicing a development should be borne by the developer, which would include collecting and transmitting wastewater. However, it is important to note that the County eventually assumes all subdivision/condominium specific infrastructure, so having staff work with developers to encourage cost-efficient and sustainable infrastructure solutions is beneficial in the long run.

Interdepartmental Implications:

N/A.

Consultation(s):

The Engineering Department has had preliminary level discussions with the Long Point Conservation Authority, representatives of the Lynn Valley Trail, Norfolk County - Operations - Parks and Open Space staff and the Developer.

Should Council endorse the consideration of the former rail line lands (Lynn Valley Trail) for use as a Utility corridor for sanitary sewer services to the area described herein, the Developer, with oversight and guidance from Norfolk County staff will proceed with further development of area servicing (inclusive of those that would rely upon the former rail line lands), along with documentation of the social, environmental, operational and fiscal impact of same, from which a proposed preferred alternative will be derived for final consideration and approval as necessary and appropriate.

Strategic Plan Linkage:

This report aligns with the 2022-2026 Council Strategic Priority Building Norfolk - Develop the infrastructure and supports needed to ensure complete communities.

Explanation: The servicing proposal set out herein is intended to be examined through appropriate engineering, financial, environmental, and social lenses to ensure each aspect is properly considered in the overall assessment of sanitary servicing options for this developing area and the future communities that will depend upon it.

Conclusion:

Staff recommend that further examination be undertaken as it pertains to utilizing the former rail line lands (host to the Lynn Valley Trail) as a servicing corridor.

The examination will include consultation with impacted parties and a report back to Council prior to making any commitments.

Attachment(s):

- Attachment A – Schematic of Area Sanitary Servicing Options
- Attachment B – Letter of support/concurrence from P. Labiris (abutting landowner)

Approval:

Approved By:
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