



Report to County Council

From: Peter Dutchak, Director of Engineering Services

Date: April 14, 2026

Subject: ENG 26-08 Highbury Avenue – Upload Request

Recommendation(s):

THAT Highbury Avenue is an important economic corridor connecting the City of St. Thomas and its Power Co. development to the City of London and Highway 401 corridor, and;

THAT the Province's Southwestern Ontario Transportation Planning Study has identified Highbury Avenue as part of the regional Strategic Goods Movement Network, that supports the needs of businesses and employees, that moves goods and services reliably and safely and that facilitates economic drivers, and;

THAT the transportation master plans of the County of Elgin and City of London have identified that Highbury Avenue will exceed its 2-lane capacity, necessitating widening from two to four lanes in the next 10 years at an estimated cost of \$150 million requiring multi-jurisdictional coordination and complex planning, and therefore;

THAT the County of Elgin requests that the Province of Ontario accept the transfer of jurisdictional authority over Highbury Avenue at no cost, with the respectful request to collaborate with the County to ensure this important asset accommodates the region's needs.

Introduction:

Highbury Avenue (CR 30) has been acknowledged as an important strategic corridor by the County of Elgin, City of St. Thomas, City of London and Province of Ontario in their respective master transportation plans and studies. This 2-lane roadway is expected to reach operational capacity within the next 10 years and will require expansion to a 4-lane highway design. The cost of this future project exceeds local government's ability to fund and therefore this important regional transportation asset is best suited under the Province's jurisdiction.

This report presents a recommendation, with Council's support, to request that the Province of Ontario assume jurisdiction over the County of Elgin's portion of Highbury

Avenue, and between Ron McNeil Line and Webber Bourne, being a total distance of 5.7km.

Background and Discussion:

The County's Transportation Master Plan has identified Highbury Avenue (CR 30) will exceed its 2-lane capacity, necessitating widening from two to four lanes in the 2035-2045 timeframe. This outcome aligns with the City of London's Mobility Master Plan which recommends the same improvements along this corridor. The Province's "Southwestern Ontario Transportation Planning Study, 2025" has also identified Highbury Avenue as part of the region's strategic goods movement network.

Delivering these upgrades will require significant multi-jurisdictional coordination between the County of Elgin, City of London, City of St. Thomas and Province and cost an estimated \$150 million to create a four-lane roadway between the City of St. Thomas to Highway 401.

Recognizing the scale, cost, and regional importance of upgrading Highbury Avenue in support of PowerCo, its supply chain, and the broader Yarmouth Yards development exceeds what local governments can reasonably deliver on their own.

Uploading Highbury to the Province would:

- Support Ontario's significant investment in PowerCo and the growing manufacturing ecosystem
- Improve goods movement efficiency across the region
- Relieve unsustainable financial pressure on municipal taxpayers
- Strengthen both regional and provincial economic resilience
- Enable and support population growth for commuters, residents and visitors

The City of London requested a delegation at the Good Roads conference in Toronto at the end of March to advance this file. Representatives from the City of London, County of Elgin and City of St. Thomas met with Parliamentary Assistant Hardeep Singh Grewal (MPP-Brampton East) to request that the Province assume jurisdiction over Highbury Avenue. The meeting was successful in delivering the message of need and the delegation was subsequently requested to provide formal resolutions from each respective municipality stating the ask of the Province formally as next steps. Once all three municipalities obtain resolutions from their respective Councils, they will be sent to the Province.

Financial Implications:

Staff recommends to offer the transfer Highbury Avenue (CR 30) at no cost to the Province, and respectfully requests the Province for ongoing collaboration to ensure upgrades meet the needs outlined in our TMPs.

Advancement of the Strategic Plan:

This initiative supports the responsible maintenance and management of County assets as laid out in the Asset Management Plan. This work reflects the County's ongoing commitment to maintaining safe, functional, and efficient facilities and infrastructure.

Local Municipal Partner Impact:

None.

Communication Requirements:

A copy of the resolution endorsed by Council will be sent to the Province, seeking their response.

Conclusion:

The County's Transportation Master Plan has identified Highbury Avenue (CR 30) will exceed its 2-lane capacity, necessitating widening from two to four lanes in the 2035-2045 timeframe.

Recognizing the scale, cost, and regional importance of upgrading Highbury Avenue in support of PowerCo, its supply chain, and the broader Yarmouth Yards development exceeds what local governments can reasonably deliver on their own and a request to upload the asset to the Province.

Following a delegation with the P.A. Grewal, this report provides a resolution for Council's approval and to be sent to the Province to advance this request.

All of which is Respectfully Submitted

Approved for Submission

Peter Dutchak
Director of Engineering Services

Blaine Parkin
Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk