

REPORT TO COUNTY COUNCIL

Contract Award – Oxford Road 59 and Oxford Road 35 Reconstruction, City of Woodstock

To: Warden and Members of County Council

From: Director of Public Works

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That County Council award a contract to the low bidder, Viewcon Construction Limited, in the amount of \$6,355,573 (excluding HST) for the reconstruction of Oxford Road 59 (Vansittart Avenue), from the Oxford Road 59 Bridge to 100 meters south of the Devonshire Avenue/Vansittart Avenue intersection, and Oxford Road 35 (Devonshire Avenue), from Vansittart Avenue to Victoria Street;
2. And further, that County Council authorize the transfer of \$13,849 from the Development Charges – Roads reserve and \$67,527 from the Stormwater reserve, for a total of \$81,376, to fund the budget shortfall for the urban storm sewer works portion of this project;
3. And further, that County Council authorize funding the \$351,000 shortfall in the Oxford Road 59 reconstruction budget from Housing-Enabling Core Servicing Funding;
4. And further, that County Council authorize the Chief Administrative Officer and Director of Public Works to sign all documents related to the execution of the Oxford Road 59 and Oxford Road 35 Reconstruction contract, including a Transfer Payment Agreement with the Province of Ontario for the approved funding under the Housing-Enabling Core Servicing Fund.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The purpose of this report is to obtain County Council approval to award the above-noted road reconstruction contract to Viewcon Construction Limited, in accordance with the County's Purchasing Policy.

- The road reconstruction contract includes traffic signal replacement at the intersections of Vansittart Avenue/Devonshire Avenue and Wellington Street North/Devonshire Avenue, along with watermain, storm, and sanitary system upgrades. The finished roadway on Devonshire Avenue within the project limits will have single eastbound and westbound lanes with a continuous two-way left-turn lane, along with bike lanes and sidewalk improvements. See Attachment 1.
- The project will be completed in two phases to accommodate local traffic and emergency vehicles. During Phase 1 (Vansittart Avenue construction), southbound traffic on Oxford Road 59 (Vansittart Avenue) will be closed from Tecumseh Street to Vincent Street. Oxford Road 35 (Devonshire Avenue) will be closed to through traffic from Vansittart Avenue to Victoria Street. In Phase 2 (Devonshire Avenue construction), Devonshire Avenue will be closed to through traffic from Vansittart Avenue to Victoria Street. See attachments 2 and 3 for detour routes.
- This project is anticipated to begin in April 2025. Phase 1 is targeted to be complete in July 2025 while Phase 2 is targeted for completion by December 2025.
- This project has been approved to receive Housing-Enabling Core Servicing (HECS) Funding, a provincial program in Ontario that supports road and bridge infrastructure projects to enable more housing. The province will fund up to 50% of the Total Eligible Costs, amounting to a maximum of \$4,361,875.

IMPLEMENTATION POINTS

Upon Council approval, a construction contract will be executed with the low bidder, Viewcon Construction Limited, prior to proceeding with the work. Further, the Ontario Transfer Payment Agreement will be executed with the Province of Ontario. Staff will adhere to the established project milestones to maintain the agreement's requirements and secure the requested funding.

Staff (in conjunction with the Contractor) will maintain public outreach through various channels including social media posts, website publications, and the installation of advanced construction notice signage. A pre-construction meeting will also be held at the Oxford County Administration Building in April, with notices delivered to all properties within the construction area. This communication strategy will be implemented before construction commences.

The Contractor will maintain local traffic access to properties for residents, businesses and emergency vehicles at all times. Regulatory authorities, bus services and emergency services will receive advanced notice of the road closures and detour routes through Ontario 511 notifications.

Financial Impact

This work was approved as part of the 2025 Business Plan and Budget. The construction costs, other associated costs and capital accounts for this project are summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Funding Summary for Oxford Road 59 and Oxford Road 35 Reconstruction Project

2025 Budget Summary Account / Description	Available 2025 Budget	Bid Amount (excluding HST)	Non- Refundable HST, Contract Admin, Staff Time	Subtotal	Budget Surplus (Deficit)
930059 – Oxford Road 59 (Approved budget: \$1,215,000) (Less other projects: \$325,000)	\$890,000	\$1,179,710	\$60,763	\$1,240,473	(\$350,473)
930035 – Oxford Road 35 (Approved budget: \$2,500,000)	2,500,000	2,086,267	96,718	2,182,985	317,015
930198 – Urban Storm Sewer (Approved budget: \$2,695,000) (Less other projects: \$2,185,000)	510,000	581,148	10,228	591,376	(81,376)
960153 – Woodstock Water (Approved budget: \$1,405,000) (Less other projects: \$155,000)	1,250,000	1,224,074	21,544	1,245,618	4,382
950174 – Woodstock Wastewater (Approved budget: \$670,000) (Less other projects: \$95,000)	575,000	562,414	9,899	572,313	2,687
930300 – Traffic Signals (Approved budget: \$2,120,000) (Less other projects: \$1,120,000)	1,000,000	721,960	12,706	734,666	265,334
2025 EXPENDITURES TOTAL	\$6,725,000	\$6,355,573	\$211,858	\$6,567,431	

The stormwater portion of the project under Job 930198 is funded 17% by development charges (DC) with the remaining 83% funded by the stormwater reserve. The 2025 budgeted closing balance of the Development Charges – Roads reserve is approximately \$1.46 million, which is sufficient to fund the additional \$13,849 required DC funding. In the event that DC revenue collections are below projections and there are insufficient funds at year end to cover the additional need, the costs would be funded by DC revenue in a future year. The 2025 budgeted closing balance of the Stormwater reserve is approximately \$0.5 million which is sufficient to fund the additional requirement of \$67,527.

The County received notification in early 2025 that its application under the HECS stream of the Municipal Housing Infrastructure Program (MHIP) for reconstruction on Oxford Road 35

(Devonshire Avenue), from Oxford Road 59 to Oxford Road 54, was approved, with the Province contributing up to 50% of the total costs for the road and traffic signal components (Projects 930035, 930059 and 930300). As the funding status was unknown at the time of the 2025 Budget Development, the provincial revenue was not included as a funding source and the projects were funded by DCs and the Roads Reserve, as applicable. Forecasted funding from the Province will be updated as part of the forecast update during the 2026 Budget Process. The HECS funding is sufficient to cover the shortfall noted in Table 1 above for Oxford Road 59.

Receipt of the HECS funding allows existing funds within the Roads reserve to be re-directed towards other asset lifecycle needs, helping to reduce the funding deficit noted in the 2024 Asset Management Plan (AMP). This will further mitigate increases required to achieve proposed levels of service identified through the 2025 AMP.

Communications

The communication strategy for this project will be similar to other County construction projects. The Contractor's project manager and the County's Project Engineer will form an open channel of communication and will include other members of the project team as needed. These communications will commence upon approval of this report and will continue for the duration of the project. As part of the communication strategy, staff will require the Contractor to produce and install a sign to recognize the funding contributed by the Province at the project site.

Staff have communicated with City of Woodstock staff throughout the design stage of the project on items such as scope of work, planned project schedule, and road closure and detour routes.

For public communication, a project page was published on *Speak Up, Oxford!* on November 6, 2024, to share information and promote the fall Public Information Centre (PIC). The PIC, which was further promoted through various other communication channels, was held on October 10, 2024, at the Oxford County Administration Building to allow residents and businesses to view the detailed design plans and speak with staff about the design. This PIC was well attended, providing local residents with an opportunity to review plans and ask questions. A second notice will be delivered for an upcoming PIC prior to the commencement of construction.

During construction road closure, access to businesses and commercial properties will be maintained, and any interruptions will be communicated in advance. A Notice of Construction letter will be delivered to nearby property owners and business owners before construction begins, along with the posting of construction signage at the project location in advance to alert the general public. Residents and businesses will be informed about road closures and progress throughout the project through *Speak Up, Oxford!*, web updates, social media, news media, and advertising.

Staff will continue to work with key internal stakeholders (City and County Management staff, Transportation staff, Waste Management staff, and Water/Wastewater staff) and external stakeholders during the execution of this project as required to ensure the appropriate level of communication and outreach is maintained, and further ensuring all parties involved are updated on project status and outcomes as needed.

Ongoing communication with the Province will be crucial to maintaining the requirements of this agreement, and providing timely reports and communicating key project milestones will be an essential part of the process.

County staff will adhere to all requirements outlined in the Ontario Transfer Payment Agreement, including compliance with the Reporting Requirements and Communications Protocol (i.e. includes the installation of appropriate project signage). Although Indigenous consultation is not currently required, staff will undertake the necessary consultation if requested by the Province.

2023-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

Oxford County Council approved the [2023-2026 Strategic Plan](#) on September 13, 2023. The Plan outlines 39 goals across three strategic pillars that advance Council's vision of "Working together for a healthy, vibrant, and sustainable future." These pillars are: (1) *Promoting community vitality*, (2) *Enhancing environmental sustainability*, and (3) *Fostering progressive government*.

The recommendations in this report support the following strategic goals.

Strategic Plan Pillars and Goals

PILLAR 1	PILLAR 2	PILLAR 3
		
Promoting community vitality	Enhancing environmental sustainability	Fostering progressive government
Goal 1.2 – Sustainable infrastructure and development Goal 1.3 – Community health, safety and well-being Goal 1.4 – Connected people and places		Goal 3.4 – Financial sustainability

See: [Oxford County 2023-2026 Strategic Plan](#)

DISCUSSION

Background

Oxford Road 35 (Devonshire Avenue) is a key urban arterial road in north Woodstock. The project area spans from Vansittart Avenue to Victoria Street and includes a section of Vansittart Avenue from Devonshire Avenue north to the Oxford Road 59 Bridge. This stretch is a vital commuter route for residents in north-central Woodstock and serves as part of the City of Woodstock's bus transit system. The roadway experiences an average daily traffic volume (AADT) of 10,000 to 12,000 vehicles.

The project covers 0.4 km of Vansittart Avenue (Oxford Road 59), from Devonshire Avenue to the Oxford Road 59 Bridge, along with 0.6 km of Devonshire Avenue (Oxford Road 35) from Vansittart Avenue to Victoria Street. Currently, the roadway consists of a two-lane cross-section with curb-faced sidewalks, some boulevard sidewalks and on-street parking.

To enhance traffic flow, reduce accidents, and improve safety for all road users, the County plans to reconfigure the existing layout. The improvements will include converting the road to a two-lane configuration with a center two-way left-turn lane, dedicated bike lanes, and sidewalks on both sides.

The general scope of work includes:

- Replacement of storm sewer, including new storm sewers appurtenances and catch basin leads.
- Replacement of approximately 700 metres of sanitary sewer and appurtenances.
- Replacement of approximately 1,000 metres of (400mm diameter) watermain and appurtenances.
- Full depth pavement structure replacement of 1,000 metres of arterial roadway.
- Curb and gutter and sidewalk replacement.
- Grading and restoration.
- Traffic signal replacements (Devonshire Avenue and Vansittart Avenue, Devonshire Avenue and Wellington Street North).
- Utility relocations and coordination.

This reconstruction project was successfully awarded Provincial funding through the HECS program. HECS is a funding stream under the MHIP that helps municipalities build, maintain and repair municipal roads, bridges and culverts. The fund is part of the Provincial government's efforts to expeditiously increase housing supply by ensuring that essential infrastructure is in place to support residential development. The approved project is for reconstruction of Oxford Road 35 (Devonshire Avenue) from Oxford Road 59 to Oxford Road 54, which is being completed in two stages over 2025 and 2026. This tender award represents stage 1 being completed in 2025. A second tender will be issued in 2026 for stage 2.

To qualify, projects must align with provincial policies, including housing targets and growth management strategies. The fund provides financial assistance to municipalities for the planning, design, and construction of core service-related infrastructure, helping to offset a portion of capital costs and reduce the financial burden on municipal budgets. A key focus of the

fund is to prioritize projects in areas with housing demand or those identified as growth areas. It emphasizes alignment with affordable housing objectives and the development of sustainable infrastructure to support long-term community growth.

Comments

A prequalification process was completed ahead of the tendering stage of this project. Twenty-five Contractors expressed interest and eighteen were pre-qualified. The evaluation of submissions was based on a number of factors including Contractors' previous experience with similar projects of scope and scale, team background and experience managing projects of this scale.

After the prequalification process was completed, eligible Contractors were invited to the tendering opportunity through a competitive bidding process. The tendering process closed on February 27, 2025, at 2 p.m. and six bids were received in total, with the bid amounts outlined in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of Bid Submissions

Contractor	Bid Amount (HST Excluded)
1. Viewcon Construction Limited	\$6,355,573
2. Oxford Civil Group Inc.	\$6,983,726
3. J-AAR Infrastructures Limited	\$7,154,944
4. Omega Contractors Inc	\$7,254,644
5. Network Sewer and Watermain Ltd	\$7,946,855
6. Amico Infrastructure Inc	\$9,487,328

Staff have reviewed the submissions and confirmed that the low bid received from Viewcon Construction Limited, in the amount of \$6,355,573 (excluding HST) represents good value for the work. Viewcon Construction Limited's ability to complete the project in accordance with the schedule and specifications can be confidently expected as evidenced by previous projects completed for Oxford County.

As this project has the possible risks that would be associated with any construction project of this scale and scope, the successful Contractor is also required to secure construction bonds and insurance to mitigate risks related to the exposure of financial loss.

CONCLUSIONS

A review of the competitive bid submissions confirms that it is appropriate to award the proposed reconstruction on Oxford Road 59 and Oxford Road 35 to the low bidder, Viewcon Construction Limited, and to authorize execution of the Transfer Payment Agreement with the Province of Ontario.

SIGNATURES

Report author:

Original signed by:

Harry Goossens P. Eng
Project Engineer

Departmental approval:

Original signed by:

Melissa Abercrombie P. Eng., PMP
Director of Public Works

Approved for submission:

Original signed by

Benjamin R. Addley
Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Project Limits
Attachment 2 - Phase 1 Traffic Control and Detour Plan
Attachment 3 - Phase 2 Traffic Control and Detour Plan