

Region of Waterloo
Engineering and Environmental Services
Design and Construction

To: Sustainability, Infrastructure, and Development Committee
Meeting Date: March 4, 2025
Report Title: Project Approval Report for Westmount Road (Regional Road 50) Improvements, Fischer-Hallman Road (Regional Road 58) to Block Line Road, City of Kitchener

1. Recommendation

That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo:

- a) Approve the recommended design alternative for Westmount Road (Regional Road 50), Fischer-Hallman Road (Regional Road 58) to Block Line Road in the City of Kitchener, as described in Report EES-DCS-25-001, dated March 4, 2025.

2. Purpose / Issue:

To receive council approval of the recommended design alternative for Westmount Road from Fischer-Hallman Road to Block Line Road. The design aims to improve safety and accessibility for motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians.

3. Strategic Plan:

The project contributes to the objectives of the Region's Strategic Plan 2023-2027, Growing with Care. The recommended design alternative supports the Climate Aligned Growth strategy and the Equitable Services and Opportunities strategy. Proposed works will improve traffic operations and foster car alternative options by providing separated active transportation facilities as well as supporting transit movements.

4. Report Highlights:

A key plan of the project area is included in Appendix A. The recommended design alternative includes:

- Installation of a new storm sewer system including curb and gutter and reconstruction of the road base and asphalt improving drainage and driver experience.
- A new raised grass median (including trees) that will separate the two directions

of traffic. The median will encourage motorists to travel according to the posted speed limit.

- Two lanes of traffic (one in each direction) and all existing turning lanes to remain.
- New wider sidewalks and cycling facilities will be added in the boulevard on both sides of the road separating pedestrians and cyclists improving accessibility and safety.
- Addition of two new bus stops on both sides of Westmount Road at Tillsley Drive as well as upgrades to existing bus pads to address increased GRT ridership in the surrounding neighbourhoods.
- New permanent traffic signals at Westmount Rd. and Tillsley Dr. to replace the temporary signals installed in 2023 by the Region.
- Conversion to a fully protected intersection at Westmount Road/Block Line Road and a partially protected intersection at Westmount Road/Fischer-Hallman Road improving safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

The recommended alternative is shown on the drawing included in Appendix B.

5. Background:

The project limits on Westmount Road extend from Fischer-Hallman Road to Block Line Road, including reconstruction of these intersections. Westmount Road in this corridor borders on the Laurentian Hills and County Hills West neighbourhoods in Kitchener with the surrounding area consisting primarily of residential dwellings with some commercial and institutional presence (i.e. Church, Retirement Community, Banks, Restaurants, etc.). The roadway is in need of reconstruction due to the existing pavement condition.

The 2018 Transportation Master Plan identified plans to widen this section of Westmount Road with the addition of boulevard cycling facilities and accommodation of high-frequency transit. Subsequent project-specific traffic studies have considered future mode share targets and confirmed that the existing two-lane configuration (one in each direction) with existing auxiliary turning lanes is sufficient to accommodate future traffic growth in this corridor. Therefore, the project has focused on improved facilities for walking, cycling and rolling as well as improved access to transit.

Although the project is considered exempt from the Class Environmental Assessment process, the project team completed background studies, worked with project stakeholders and consulted with adjacent businesses and residents in considering design alternatives to establish a recommended design that will improve this corridor for all users.

6. Communication and Engagement with Area Municipalities and the Public

Area Municipalities: Staff from City of Kitchener have been kept informed of the project progress and have been actively involved in reviewing and commenting on the design drawings. City staff will continue to be updated and consulted as the project proceeds into detailed design. Overall, City staff have expressed support for the Westmount Road improvements project.

Public: On January 7, 2025, approximately 140 letters were hand-delivered to area tenants and property owners within in the vicinity of the project limits. All of the low density residential properties are back lotted along this section of Westmount Road. One phone call has been received to date from the Village of Winston Park Retirement Community identifying required access during construction for delivery of food, medical supplies, and other equipment, which will be accommodated. A Project Information Sheet is available to all members of the public on the Region website.

The recommended alternative for this project received endorsement from Region's Active Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) on Tuesday, January 21, 2025. The 3D renderings from the ATAC presentation are included in Appendix C.

7. Financial Implications:

The Region's approved 2025-2034 Transportation Capital Program includes a budget of \$279,000 in 2025 and \$2,627,000 in 2026-2028 for the Westmount Road Improvement Project (project #05675), to be funded from the Transportation Capital Reserve \$2,191,400 (75%) and from the Roads Regional Development Charges Reserve Fund \$714,600 (25%).

8. Conclusion / Next Steps:

Subject to Council approval of the recommended design alternative, Regional staff will proceed with detailed design and utility relocations, with construction planned for 2026.

9. Attachments:

Appendix A: Key Plan - Westmount Road, Block Line Rd to Fischer Hallman Rd

Appendix B: Preferred Design Alternative

Appendix C: ATAC Presentation

Prepared By: Karolina Krol, Engineer, Design and Construction

Jim Ellerman, Head, Design and Construction

Reviewed By: Frank Kosa, Director, Design and Construction

Approved By: Jennifer Rose, Commissioner, Engineering and Environmental Services