

Burlington asked to ante up
Study delays costly
Dianne Cornish, Review Staff
Published on Oct 03, 2008

Placing the blame on the City of Burlington for delaying work on studies for the proposed widening of Waterdown Road to four lanes, the City of Hamilton has asked Burlington to pay cost overruns of \$124,902.

The additional costs for the environmental assessment studies were caused by Burlington's request for new design evaluations, including a phased in implementation of the four-lane Waterdown Road that would include an initial three-lane roadway on a four-lane pavement surface.

According to a Hamilton staff report to a recent public works committee, Burlington's desire to look at another design led to an almost three-year delay in the EA (Environmental Assessment) process for the Waterdown Aldershot Transportation Master Plan, causing the studies' costs to climb \$424,400 from Dillon Consulting's original estimate of \$542,000 to \$966,400.

Staff attributes almost \$125,000 of the additional costs to studying the three-lane option plus costs linked to inflation of about 6 per cent annually.

Flamborough councillor Margaret McCarthy said Hamilton has documentation to support their request for additional monies from Burlington.

"We didn't delay it (the EA studies)," she said. Noting that Burlington requested new evaluation criteria, she said, "Burlington did that and it caused a delay."

It's expected Burlington will be addressing Hamilton's request at an upcoming community development committee meeting, possibly on October 27. Burlington City Hall hasn't yet received any correspondence from Hamilton about the cost overruns, Burlington's director of engineering Tom Eichenbaum said last Friday.

When it does, he says, staff will likely be directed to prepare a report focusing on and explaining the extra costs.

"There was a bit of extra work," said Paul Allen, Burlington's senior transportation engineer, but he also noted that Burlington has paid some money to Dillon Consulting for it. Without having seen the documentation from Hamilton, he could not offer further details.

Allen did, however, confirm that upcoming public meetings on the Waterdown Road project will include a three-lane roadway design that can eventually be converted into four lanes. The meetings will also show separate and parallel designs of an upgraded two-lane King Road.

A tentative cost-sharing formula for the EA study has Hamilton covering 75 per cent of the costs, Burlington, 15 per cent and Halton Region, 10 per cent.

If Burlington balks at paying the cost overrun, the \$124,902 will be charged to the full cost of the study and Hamilton will end up paying three-quarters of the cost, or \$93,677.