

## **Highway 5 Functional Planning Study at Humboldt**

Thank you for your inquiry regarding the Highway 5 Functional Planning Study at Humboldt. Comments from the general public and all of the stakeholders are a valuable source of information and are regularly used in these types of engineering studies.

Highways 5 and 20 at Humboldt are major corridors serving commuter and resource based traffic. The City of Humboldt is growing and development is expanding along the highways. The growth of these sectors will continue to place demand on the highways. Saskatchewan Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure has hired our company to study and recommend a location for a future highway bypass corridor. Bypass construction will not occur in the near future, and likely not within the next decade, however there is a need for MHI, the City and R.M. to establish development controls for protection of the property required for the future infrastructure construction.

As you may be aware, four preliminary bypass corridor options were developed. One corridor was north of Humboldt and the other three were to the south. Comments and feedback from the City, the Rural Municipality of Humboldt, utility and railway companies, and other affected parties, as well as the general public will be taken into consideration in reviewing the location of the corridors and before undertaking the analysis that will result in our firm recommending a location for the bypass corridor.

Over the last few months, we have been gathering feedback from members of the community, as well as specific stakeholder groups including the City and the RM. The four preliminary options were presented at a public open house in Humboldt on Feb. 16, 2010.

These options outlined various benefits and impacts based on several factors including economic impact and potential future development, environmental considerations, landowner impact and current and future traffic flow patterns. Based on our analysis of these considerations, we presented a "preferred" option at the Open House. It should be noted that the wording "preferred" was used rather than "recommended" because the study scope required more work to be done before determining our specific recommendations. The objective of the open house was to gather feedback from local residents and various interests groups, as public response is another critical evaluation criteria. I am pleased to say that we have received and continue to receive feedback on all four of the options, and this will be taken into account as we move forward.

We are currently in the process of reviewing input from the open house and general feedback we have received via phone calls and written correspondence. This will be used to further assess the preliminary corridors as to location and the various benefits and impacts of each.

In summary, I would like to make it clear that the routes have not been finalized; our firm is not in a position to make a final recommendation as to the route selection as the study is not complete; and no route has been selected. Once we finalize the locations of the routes and determine our preliminary recommendation, the draft of the final study report will be reviewed with the elected City and R.M. Councils for further consultation. After that point, we will provide the final recommendations and report to the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure for its consideration. While it is important to secure the future bypass corridor, construction will not occur for several years in the future.

The study is expected to be completed by the end of May.

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