Harvie Road in the spotlight

City of Barrie Map A group of south-Barrie businesses want to speed up the construction of the Harvie Road crossing.

Barrie's Harvie Road crossing is in the city's sights.

It's the subject of a public information session April 23, to gather residents' feedback on a crucial component for battling traffic gridlock in the south-end.

The Harvie Road/Big Bay Point Road crossing at Highway 400 is the subject of a municipal class environmental assessment (EA), and part of that process is an opportunity for public comment.

In 2012, city council endorsed a seven-lane crossing there - but there are various ways this can be built.

Those options will be on display at the public information session and the preferred one will come back to council again. Comments and responses received are to be considered in the development of the preferred design.
“Those individuals and parties that requested to be kept informed of the Class EA process will be notified of the date that council may approve the preferred alternative design solution, so that deputations to council can be made if desired,” said Ralph Scheunemann, Barrie’s senior infrastructure planning engineer.

The EA process is needed to proceed to the design and construction phase of the project.

The city’s 2015-2019 capital plan includes the Harvie/Big Bay Point roads crossing of the 400. The cost is almost $3 million from 2017-2019.

And the city’s capital outlook for 2020-2024 shows a new Big Bay Point Road, from Bryne Drive to east of Fairview Road. The estimated costs are $2.4 million in 2020, $4.7 million in each of 2021 and 2022.

It also shows the Harvie/Big Bay Point interchange - but in 2024, for $647,000 worth of engineering services.

Connecting Harvie and Big Bay Point roads across Highway 400 is to entail six through lanes - three each way - and one turning lane.

The cost for a highway crossing is estimated at $15.7 million, while it is $26.3 million for a highway interchange.

Development charges or development contributions would pay 65% of these costs, while additional funding would come from area developers which were negotiated as part of development approvals, or from trigger agreements between the city and developers, such as Park Place.

The city has two major Highway 400 interchanges in its south end, at Mapleview Drive and Essa Road. Both experience east-west delays during peak traffic times, particularly in the ramp areas.

There are plans to widen Essa Road to six lanes, from Anne Street to the Bryne Drive/Ardagh Road area, and widen the 400 underpass, for $30 million.

The public information session on the Harvie Road crossing will be held Thursday, April 23 from 4-7 p.m. at Holly Community Centre, 171 Mapleton Ave., in the Multi-Purpose Room on the second floor.

Information about this session was mailed, or hand-delivered, to agencies, businesses, property owners and tenants directly affected by this project.

bob.bruton@sunmedia.ca