

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA-CARLETON  
MUNICIPALITÉ RÉGIONALE D'OTTAWA-CARLETON

REPORT  
RAPPORT

Our File/N/Réf.  
Your File/V/Réf.

DATE 25 March 1997

TO/DEST. Co-ordinator, Transportation Committee

FROM/EXP. Commissioner, Planning & Development Approvals Department

SUBJECT/OBJET **CUMBERLAND TRANSITWAY AND BLACKBURN HAMLET  
BYPASS EXTENSION - ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
PROPOSAL (EAP) TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR EA STUDIES**

### DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

**That Transportation Committee recommend Council approve:**

- 1. the EAP as the Terms of Reference for subsequent environmental assessment studies of the Cumberland Transitway and Blackburn Hamlet Bypass Extension;**
- 2. the undertaking of an Environmental Assessment Study for the section between the eastern limit of the Blackburn Hamlet Bypass and Trim Road.**

### BACKGROUND

In July 1995, Regional Council approved the undertaking of the EAP Study in order to plan for a new Transitway and roadway to serve the East Urban Community Expansion Area (EUCEA). Although these two facilities are separate initiatives, both were undertaken as one exercise because of their similar purposes and overlapping study areas. The EAP Study builds upon earlier urban planning exercises for the EUCEA. Specifically, it is to confirm locations for these major transportation facilities to enable development to proceed in an orderly fashion with full opportunity to readily introduce the transportation infrastructure as and when required.

A copy of the completed EAP was forwarded on 9 Oct 96 to all Regional Councillors for advance review. It was also circulated to members of the public and agencies who have actively participated in the Study.

Since the circulation, staff has been awaiting subsidy approval from the Province regarding the next phase of the environmental assessment, prior to reporting back to Committee. To date,

however, there is still no confirmation from the Province and it is no longer feasible to delay the submission of this report and its recommendations.

Meanwhile, the draft Transportation Master Plan has been completed and the findings of that study also support the need for the Cumberland Transitway and Blackburn Hamlet Bypass Extension.

## DISCUSSION

### Terms of Reference (ToR)

With the revised Provincial EA legislation, all new EA Studies beginning in 1997 must have an approved Terms of Reference (ToR), the development of which is the first step in any environmental assessment. The approved ToR is a legal document which outlines the framework and thereby identifies the tasks that are to be undertaken in the subsequent EA Study. Generally, it contains: the purpose of the undertaking; the preliminary identification of environmental considerations and effects; the consultation plan; and a proposed schedule for carrying out the EA, including key decision-making milestones.

The EA Proposal for the Cumberland Transitway and Blackburn Hamlet Bypass Extension was initiated and completed prior to the new legislation coming into effect. Not only does it address the provincial requirements for the ToR, but exceeds it with considerably more detailed work, assessments, and consultation. Specifically, with input from the public and government agencies, screening criteria were identified, alternatives were evaluated, and corridors were recommended for further study in the EA process. The result is an EA Study framework that is more focused and concise than generally required for a Terms of Reference.

Once Committee and Council approves the EAP/ToR, it will be formally submitted to the Ministry of Environment and Energy for approval. There will be a period of public review. It is not anticipated that any new issues will arise as the public and special interest groups had fully participated throughout the EAP process.

### Next Phase: Future EA Studies

A copy of the Executive Summary of the EAP is attached as Annex 1.

As a Terms of Reference, the EAP recommends that the EA Study be divided into two separate studies due to timing and development considerations. The study areas are depicted in Exhibit 1. The corridors recommended to be carried forward for further evaluation are shown in Exhibit 2.

Generally, the conclusions of the EAP, in conjunction with the draft Transportation Master Plan, indicate that in order to provide adequate transportation service to and from the EUCEA, the Cumberland Transitway and Bypass Extension are required, along with the widening of Innes Road (between Orleans Boulevard and Trim Road). The widening of Innes Road would improve transportation service for the northern-most sections of the EUCEA as well as the southern sections of the existing Orleans community. It's study would be undertaken as a separate environmental assessment, noting that the requirements of the provincial Class EA's Phase 1 (need and justification) and Phase 2 (alternative solutions) have been addressed in the draft Transportation Master Plan.

With regards to the Cumberland Transitway and Blackburn Hamlet Bypass Extension, there is an urgent need to get underway with the EA for the Eastern Section, particularly through the area of the Navan Road Corridor. To the north of Navan Road lies the Minto development of Chapel Hill South. The southern portion of their land has been "frozen" from development for several years due to the uncertainty of where the transportation facilities will be located. Minto has been actively developing Chapel Hill South, and are now in the position to market that southern portion of land. Also, on the south side of Navan Road there is a cluster of homes which make up the Southridge Community. The Cumberland Transitway and Bypass Extension proposals could have a significant impact on this community. The presence of the ravine and escarpment, coupled with the yet-to-be-determined alignment for the extension of Orleans Boulevard make it difficult to define the alignments for the Transitway and Bypass Extension without undertaking a thorough EA Study. A commitment has been made to Minto to have an answer to their development issue by the end of 1997.

In the Western Section, opportunities to protect for a Transitway corridor in the Cyrville/Innes/St.Laurent area also exists but since the timing of the development of these lands is not clear, the need for corridor protection is less urgent than the situation in the Expansion Area.

#### Eastern Section

As a result of the screening undertaken during the EAP/ToR process, one corridor was selected for the Transitway and one corridor was selected for the Bypass Extension. The next phase EA Study would involve assessing the best alignment for each facility within their respective corridors, identifying impacts and mitigating measures, and documenting the analysis in an EA Report (EAR). The Transitway component of the work would follow the Individual Environmental Assessment process, whereas the road component (the Bypass Extension) would be carried out under the Class Environmental Assessment Process.

## Western Section

This part of the study area extends from the Rideau River to the eastern edge of the Blackburn Hamlet community. Based on the screening work conducted in the EAP/ToR, several Transitway corridors were proposed to be carried forward into the EA Study for further analysis. The EA Study would involve determining the best Transitway corridor, the best Transitway alignment within this corridor, identifying impacts and mitigation measures, and completing the EA Report. No time frame has been established for completing this work.

Exhibits 3 depicts the EA processes and options for both sections.

As with the EAP/ToR process, there will be on-going consultation with the public and government agencies during the upcoming EA Study phases. The proposed consultation programme for the EA Study is detailed in the EAP/ToR document.

## CONSULTATION - DURING THE EAP PROCESS

In Aug 95, community and special interest groups within the study area were notified by letter of the initiation of the EAP process. Two public meetings were scheduled in early Sept 95 to outline the general EAP study parameters and to solicit comments from the public pertaining to specific community issues, concerns and values. In turn, the input received was used to develop the screening criteria which assisted in the evaluation of various alternatives and corridor options.

Throughout the course of the EAP development, other focus group meetings were held with the major developers in the area and the community groups most affected by the proposal. Both the Blackburn Hamlet Community Association and the Southridge Community Association were well represented at these meetings. In addition, at the request of the Southridge Community, the Project Team also met on two occasions at "kitchen table" type meetings.

The findings of the EAP study were then presented to the general public at an Open House on 18 March 1996 which was attended by approximately 140 people. Comment sheets and a questionnaire were provided at the meeting and the input received was incorporated into the final recommendation. Details of the Open House, responses to the questionnaire, along with general comments are also described in the EAP report. The EAP document was distributed in the fall of 1996 for advance review.

Generally, there is strong support from the developers and the community groups to get underway with the EA Study for the Eastern Section. Minto and the residents of Southridge community have urged that an alignment be defined as quickly as possible through the EA process so that the level of uncertainty posed by this project can be minimized and that appropriate development plans can then be put in place. Likewise, other developers in the area are also anxious to have the corridor issue resolved.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

It is estimated that the EA Study for the section between the eastern limit of Blackburn Hamlet Bypass and Trim Road can be completed for less than \$500,000. Funds are available in the account 942-33424 Cumberland Transitway Study and 912-33420 Environmental Assessment Studies. This work can be completed within approximately a year.

Although MTO had financially supported the development of the EAP, and in principle recognize the need to carry on with the EA Study, to date there has been no confirmed subsidy approval for further work. Staff will continue to follow up on the request, however this project cannot be delayed further while awaiting funding decisions. There are sufficient funds in the capital accounts to cover the EA Study should the subsidy not be forthcoming.

## CONCLUSION

Upon Committee's and Council's acceptance of the EAP document as the Terms of Reference and approval to proceed to the next phase of the EA Study, the EAP/ToR will be formally submitted to the Ministry of Environment and Energy. Concurrent with the MOEE review, the process to select a consultant to undertake the EA Study will be initiated. At the appropriate time, a separate report will be submitted to Corporate Services and Economic Development Committee to appoint the consulting team and identify the upset study cost.

*Approved by Pamela Sweet  
on behalf of Nick Tunnacliffe, MCIP, RPP*

VC/cm

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **E.1 INTRODUCTION**

The Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton initiated this Environmental Assessment Proposal (EAP) in July 1995 in order to plan for a new Transitway and a new roadway to serve the East Urban Community Expansion Area (EUCEA). These facilities are known as the **Cumberland Transitway** and the **Blackburn Hamlet Bypass Extension**. The Cumberland Transitway will provide fast, efficient and reliable transit service to the future development in the EUCEA as well as to existing communities such as Blackburn Hamlet. The Blackburn Hamlet Bypass Extension will provide for the transportation needs of the new community that are beyond those which can be accommodated by transit.

This work builds upon earlier urban planning exercises for the EUCEA. Specifically, it confirms locations for major transportation facilities to serve the EUCEA thereby enabling development to proceed in an orderly fashion with full opportunity to readily introduce transportation infrastructure as and when required.

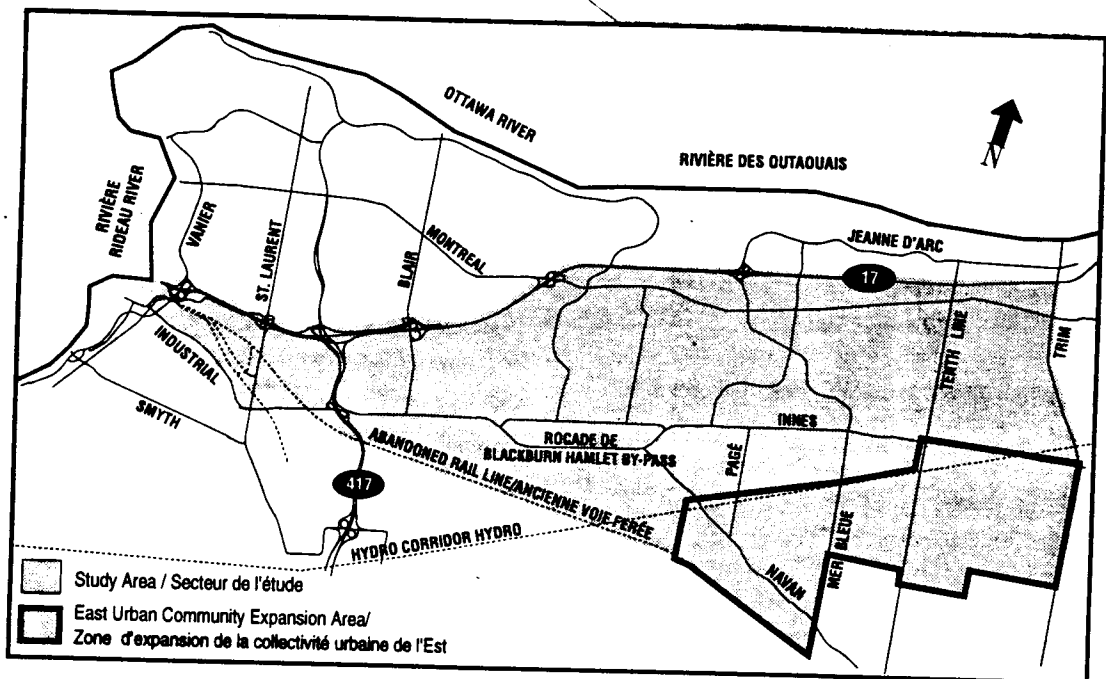
Although the facilities are separate initiatives, both are being considered in this EAP because of their similar purposes and overlapping study areas. The overall study area is shown in Exhibit E1.

This EAP represents the first two phases of the five-phase Harmonized Environmental Assessment Process (HEAP) established by the National Capital Commission (NCC) and the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton (RMOC). HEAP combines the requirements of the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act and the Federal Environmental Assessment Act. Following the completion of this EAP, it is proposed that the subsequent Environmental Assessment work be carried out as two separate studies. One study would examine the Cumberland Transitway west of the eastern limit of Blackburn Hamlet, while the other would investigate the Cumberland Transitway and the Blackburn Hamlet Bypass Extension east of Blackburn Hamlet. The reasons for carrying out two separate studies are as follows:

- The opportunity exists in the eastern section to provide an efficient transportation service in advance of the residential and commercial

- development that is scheduled to occur, and to coordinate the implementation of the proposed facilities with the advancing development;
- The staging of two separate environmental assessment studies over different time periods is easier to fund; and
  - It allows the assessment to begin earlier in the eastern half where development pressures are most pressing.

**Exhibit E1: Study Area**



## **E.2 NEED**

At the outset of this planning process there was an awareness of both a need to solve a future transportation problem, and the need to take advantage of an existing opportunity which would cease to exist over time. Therefore the need for these facilities is twofold: there is a need to satisfy the transportation demand to and from the future EUCEA based on the findings of previous studies (i.e., solving the problem), and there is need to protect available land for these facilities in the eastern half of the study area in advance of major development (i.e., taking advantage of the opportunity).

The need for these facilities is predicated on a 2011 East Urban Community (EUC) with 40,000 dwelling units. Two previous studies examined the future demand/capacity requirements of the area:

- East Urban Community Expansion Planning Study - Orléans Community Expansion Area Transportation Strategy, 1992; and
- East Urban Community Transportation Phasing Study, 1993

The need to protect land in the eastern half of the study area for the facilities is critical. Such land protection would have many benefits including:

- the provision of the transportation spine through the EUCEA would establish the primary components of the road network early in the community's development;
- the provision of an efficient, reliable and safe transit system early in the development of the community would encourage transit usage; and
- the release of development lands that are frozen pending the identification of appropriate transportation infrastructure serving the EUCEA.

It is important to note that both facilities are indicated in the 1988 RMOC Official Plan.

## **E.3 IDENTIFICATION AND SCREENING OF ALTERNATIVES**

Two levels of screening were conducted as a part of this EAP. The first was at the level of alternatives to the undertaking, the second was at the corridor level. Both levels required the development of alternatives, the development of screening criteria, and screening to determine the preferred alternative(s).



## **Alternatives to the Undertaking**

Five alternatives to the undertaking were developed:

- Do nothing;
- Transportation Demand Management (TDM);
- Rapid Transit;
- Roadways; and
- Combinations of the above.

In conjunction with the affected agencies and the public, the criteria with which to screen the alternatives were developed. These were then categorized into four groups:

- Transportation and Land Use
- Human Environment
- Physical Environment
- Biological Environment

Using these criteria groups, a screening was conducted which concluded that the best solution would be an integrated transportation system combining rapid transit, roadways, and TDM. This would include:

- a transitway in the corridor identified in Schedule E of the RMOC Official Plan,
- the extension of the Blackburn Hamlet Bypass, and
- TDM measures such as the temporary provision of bus-only lanes along Blackburn Hamlet Bypass/Innes Road and Blair Road and other measures which are to be developed as part of the RMOC Transportation Master Plan.

In addition, the widening of Innes Road was recommended to be carried forward as a separate Class Environmental Assessment Study.

Bus-only lanes from the EUCEA running north along either Orléans Boulevard or Jeanne D'Arc Boulevard connecting to the Highway 17 bus-only lanes (bus-only lanes along Highway 17 are assumed to be completed in both directions as a part of the do-nothing alternative) would not encourage transit use in the same way as would a transitway directly serving the EUCEA. Not only would trips be four kilometres longer, a major portion of them would be along the collector road system resulting in unattractive trip times. This would not encourage the necessary level of transit usage desired in the Regional Official Plan.

## **Development of Options for the Preferred Alternative**

A series of feasible corridors for the Cumberland Transitway and the Blackburn Hamlet Bypass Extension were developed that would satisfy the basic transportation requirements of the facilities. The corridors do not necessarily extend from one end of the study area to the other, but rather need to be connected to form a continuous east-west corridor.

Various indicators were developed for each of the criteria groups in order to identify areas that should not be carried forward as possible locations for a road or transitway.

It should be noted that the analysis was carried out at a broad level, meaning that the analysis was intended to reduce the number of corridors to those that were reasonable. Consequently, a corridor could be rejected from further study because of an extreme negative non-mitigatable effect based only on one criterion, without need to study the corridor in terms of other criteria.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the analysis carried out, a series of corridors was carried forward. These are illustrated in Exhibit E2. As shown, there are a number of different possible corridors for the Cumberland Transitway in the western half of the study area. For the eastern half of the study area however, there is only one Transitway corridor and only one corridor for the Blackburn Hamlet Bypass Extension. It is within these corridors that alternative alignments will be developed during the subsequent study phases. In addition, TDM measures will be carried forward. These include the temporary provision of bus-only lanes along Blackburn Hamlet Bypass/Innes Road and Blair Road and other TDM measures which are to be developed as part of the RMOCT Transportation Master Plan. The widening of Innes Road will also be carried forward as a separate Class Environmental Assessment Study.

## **E.4 PUBLIC AND AGENCY CONSULTATION**

Public consultation during the preparation of the EAP included newspaper advertisements soliciting input, meetings with land owners in the area, meetings with community associations, and a scheduled Open House for all interested parties.

Consideration was given to comments received and these are addressed to the extent possible in the EAP document.

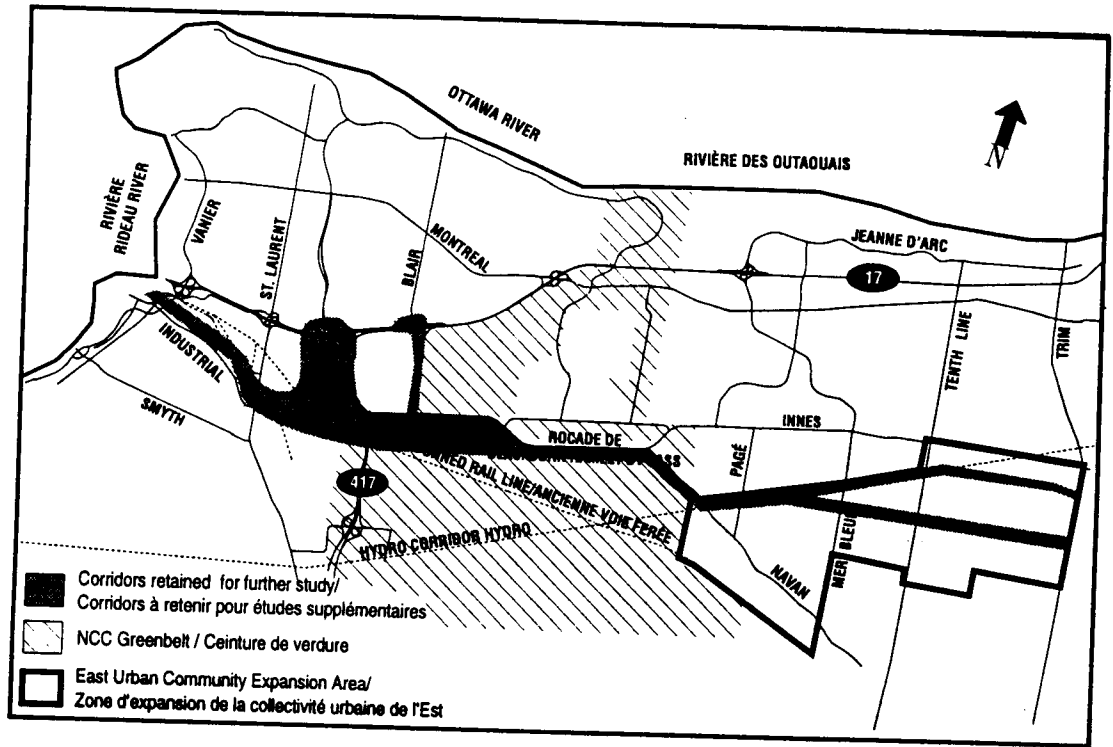
The major concerns that were expressed include:

- The subsequent study phases should commence as soon as possible in order to determine the Transitway and Bypass alignments. This would remove the uncertainty associated with the facility.
- Minimize effects (such as noise, disruption, and expropriation) to the existing environment (e.g., communities, residences, recreational facilities, natural areas, the Greenbelt).
- Encourage public transit and carpooling.
- The location of the facilities in the area of Navan Road.
- There were a few questions regarding the need for the facilities and for the timing of the study.

Many agencies participated in the development of the EAP. These include:

- National Capital Commission
- Ministry of Transportation of Ontario
- Ministry of Environment and Energy
- City of Ottawa
- City of Gloucester
- Township of Cumberland
- OC Transpo
- RMOC (Planning Department, Transportation Department)

**Exhibit E2: Corridors Proposed to be Carried Forward**



The following table provides a summary of the major issues and concerns that were brought forward by various interested parties.

ISSUE/CONCERN	PUBLIC	AGENCIES	LAND-HOLDERS
Noise and Air Quality	✓	✓	
Use of Greenbelt Lands	✓	✓	
Disruption of Homes and Communities	✓	✓	
Disruption to the Natural Environment	✓	✓	
Disruption of Wildlife and Fisheries Habitat		✓	
Compatibility with Official and Land Use Plans		✓	✓
Compatibility with Transportation Facilities		✓	
Timing of completion of EA study	✓	✓	✓

## E.5 PROPOSED WORK PROGRAMME

The proposed work programme for the subsequent phases of the Environmental Assessment Study is as follows:

### Western Section:

The EAP proposes that a number of corridor options be carried forward for the Cumberland Transitway in the western section. The subsequent phases of the environmental assessment study would be divided into three main components:

- Determine the best Transitway corridor;
- Determine the best Transitway alignment within the best corridor; and
- Complete the Environmental Assessment Report.

### Eastern Section:

The EAP proposes that only one corridor be carried forward for the Cumberland Transitway and one corridor be carried forward for the Blackburn Hamlet Bypass

Extension. The subsequent phases of the environmental assessment study would be divided into three main components:

- Determine the best Transitway alignment within the corridor;
- Determine the best Blackburn Hamlet Bypass Extension alignment within the corridor; and
- Complete the Environmental Assessment Report.


An exemption may be sought for the east end of the eastern section since the Transitway and Bypass alignments have been effectively fixed by previous planning work.

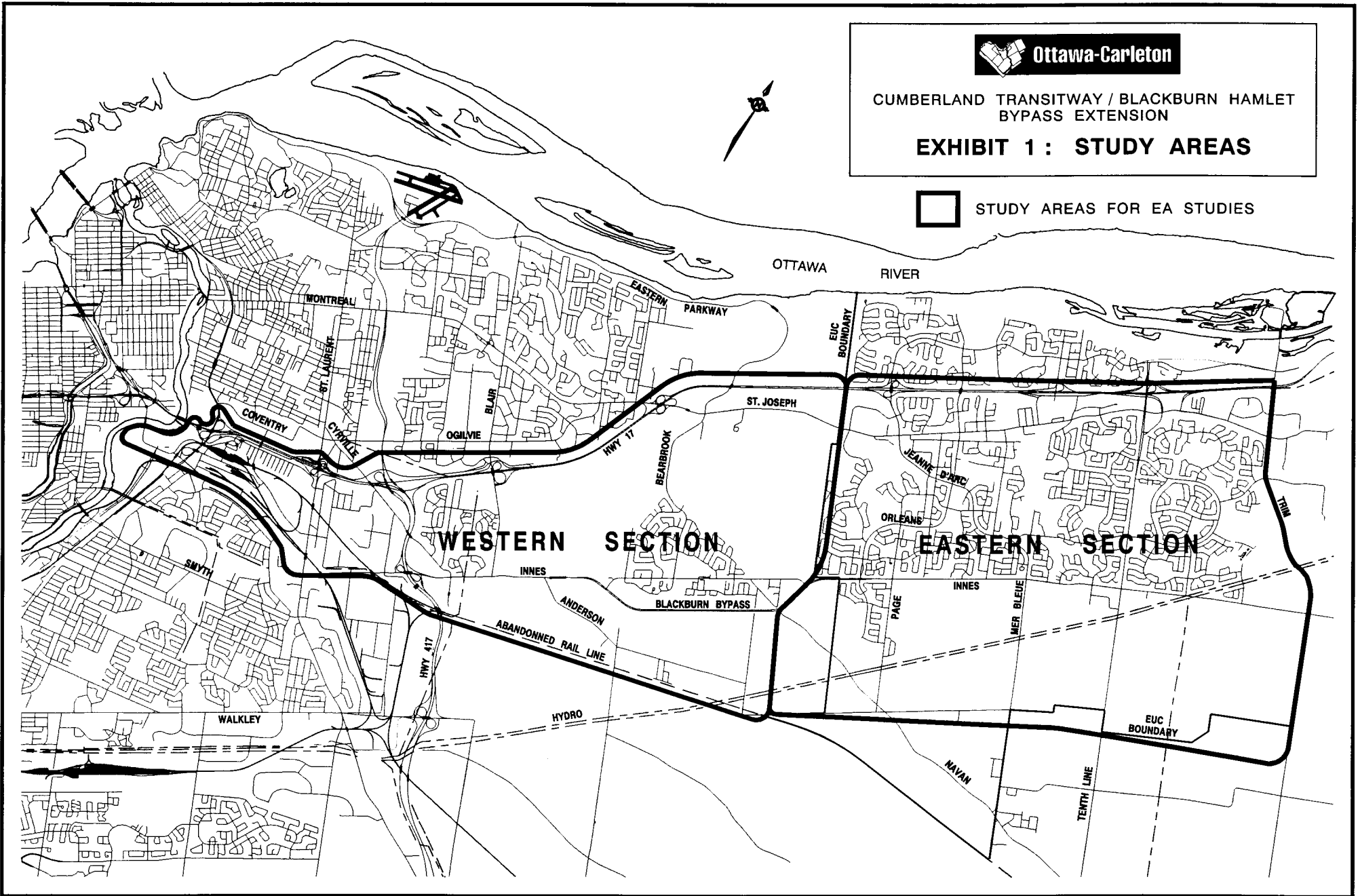
The subsequent Environmental Assessment work for the east and west sections will likely be conducted at different times, but will be made up of essentially the same components. These include significant public and agency consultation, environmental inventories and studies where necessary, detailed documentation of all work carried out, and consideration of cumulative impacts.



CUMBERLAND TRANSITWAY / BLACKBURN HAMLET  
BYPASS EXTENSION

**EXHIBIT 1 : STUDY AREAS**

 STUDY AREAS FOR EA STUDIES

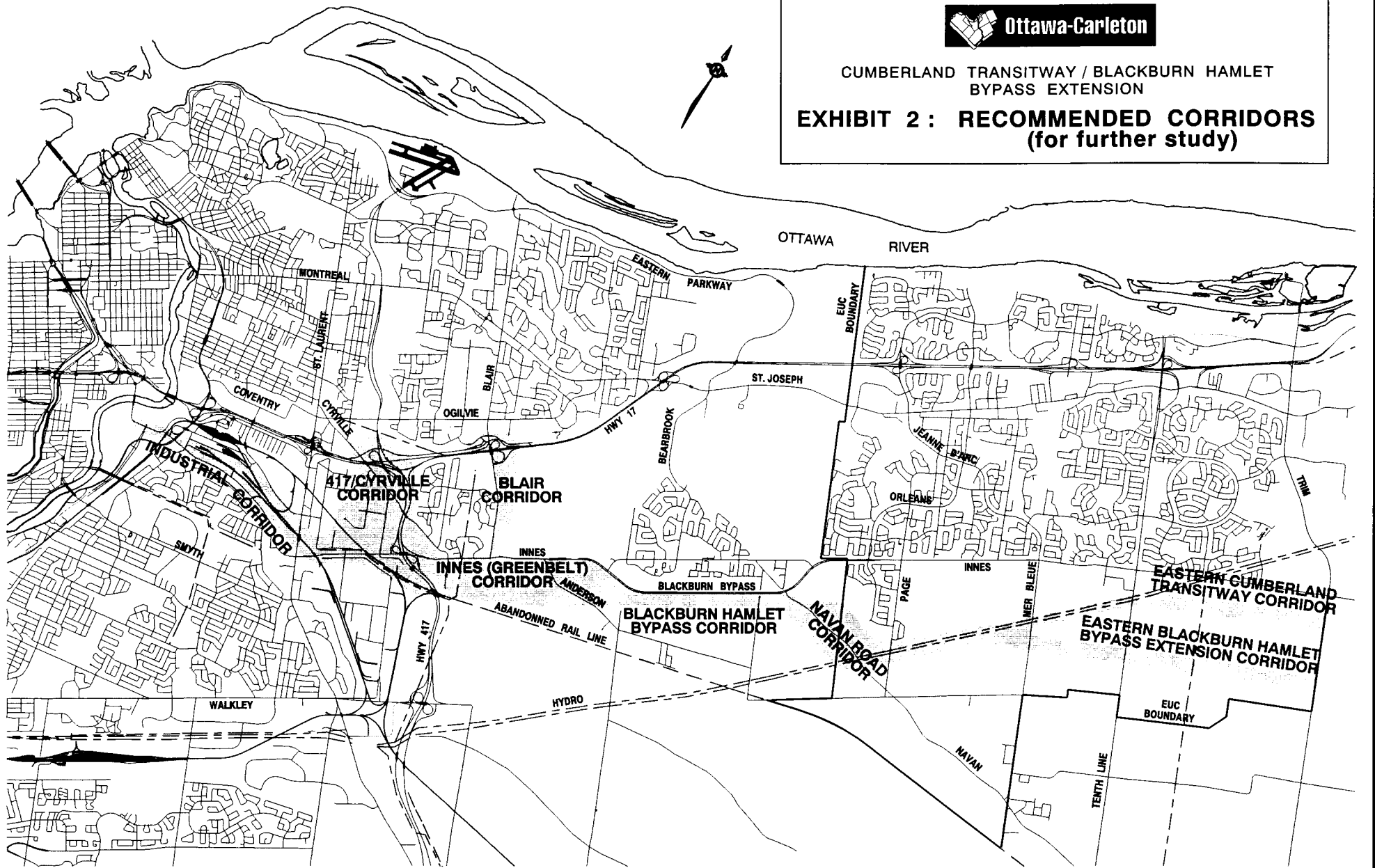




Ottawa-Carleton

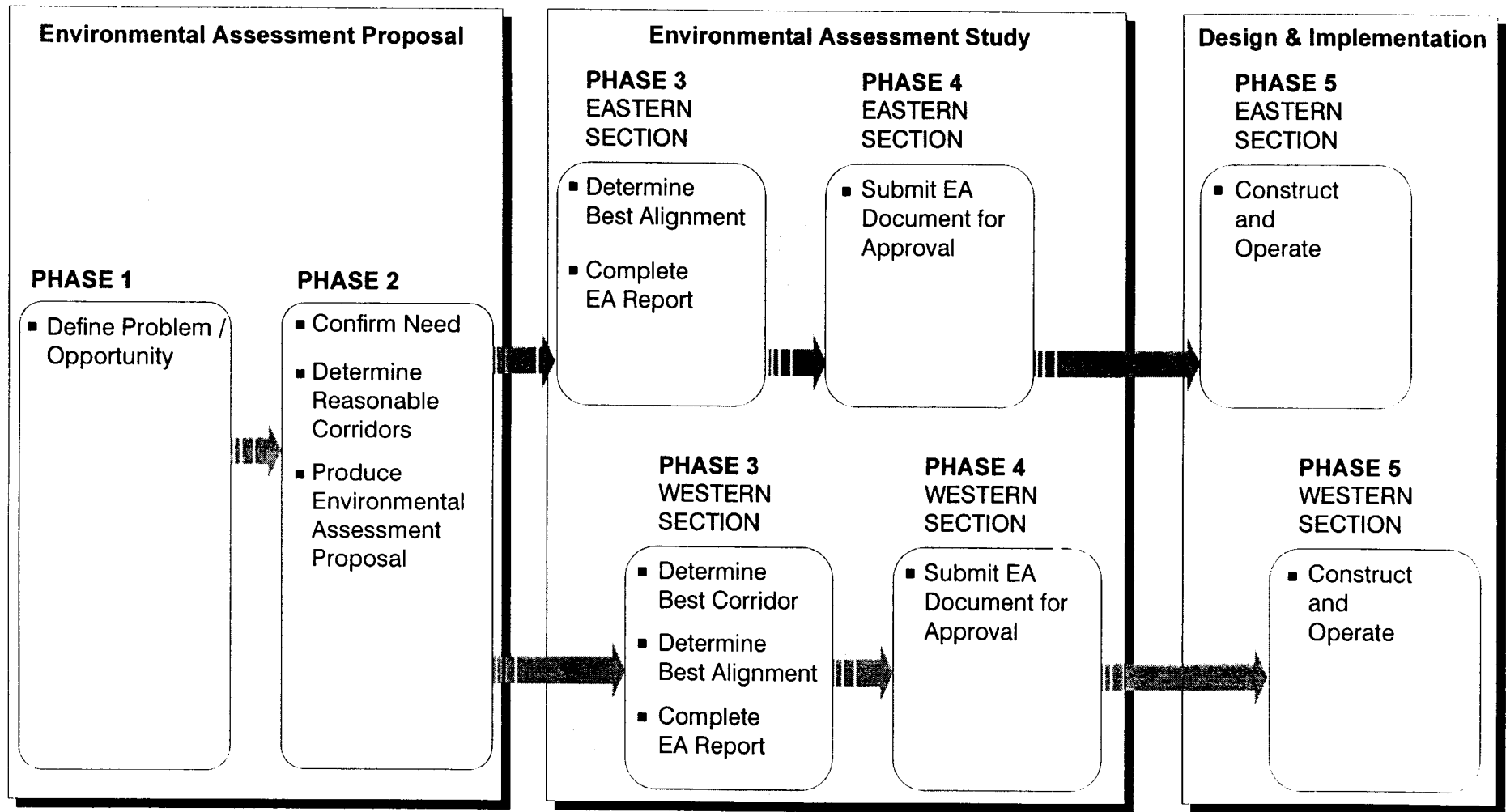
CUMBERLAND TRANSITWAY / BLACKBURN HAMLET  
BYPASS EXTENSION

**EXHIBIT 2 : RECOMMENDED CORRIDORS  
(for further study)**





**Environmental Assessment Process**



**EXHIBIT 3 : EA PROCESS**