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Staff Report

Operations – Capital Projects Division

Report To:	**COW-Operations, Planning and Development Services**
Meeting Date:	November 28, 2023
Report Number:	CSOPS.23.060
Title:	Peel Street North Reconstruction PIC Follow-up
Prepared by:	Michael Campbell, Senior Infrastructure Capital Project Coordinator

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report CSOPS.23.060, entitled "Peel Street North Reconstruction PIC Follow-up";

AND THAT Council Direct Staff to advance the design to 100% stage using the approved road cross-section with a concrete surface for the multi-use trail.

B. Overview

A PIC was conducted on October 5, 2023, to present the Peel Street North Reconstruction 90% Design. Attachment 1 is the Notice of the PIC. This report provides the comments received at the PIC.

C. Background

The preliminary design was awarded to MTE in May of 2018.

The 30% Design PIC was conducted in the preliminary design phase on July 11, 2019, CSOPS.19.065 Peel Street Reconstruction Public Information Centre Report . This PIC presented cross-section options for the road based on the Town's Road Cross-sections approved by Council with the adoption of the Engineering Standards of 2009. Staff recommended use of the Town's Urban Road Cross-section because of its inclusion of a storm sewer, and it was suggested in the Development Charges Background Study. Use of a Rural Road Cross-section was not possible because the ditches required would have back slopes well onto private property. Feedback from the public against an Urban Road Cross-section prompted Council to direct Staff to bring options for the level of service on Peel Street. Attachment 2 is Council direction on CSOPS.19.065.

Staff took a "clean sheet of paper" approach to the Peel Street Cross-section and came up with 3 options of rural/urban hybrids. These were presented in CSOPS.20.030 Peel Street Reconstruction Cross Section Options Report on June 2, 2020. Council provided direction to

advance the preliminary design with Option 3, Attachment 3. At the time of this direction the surface of the multi-use trail was shown as gravel.

The Final Design and Contract Administration was awarded to MTE in June of 2022.

D. Analysis

Attachment 4 are the slides from the Peel Street Reconstruction 90% Design PIC.

Attachment 5 are the comments received associated with the PIC and the Town's response to categories of the questions.

The Public Information Centre recording can be viewed using this link.

The following is a more in-depth response to the categories of the resident comments.

Intersection Improvements at Peel Street and Highway 26

There were comments expressing an interest in improvements to the intersection of Peel Street and Highway 26. This intersection was improved by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) in 2011 with the addition of a left turn lane for Peel Street north and south. Further improvements of interest are a right turn lane for a movement onto Peel Street north and signalizing of the intersection.

These types of intersection improvements require traffic studies that would demonstrate a need that would be meet the warrant requirements of MTO. Typically, there is some form of trigger such as a significant new development or a traffic study that identifies a need for improvements. The second part of the improvement of course is funding.

The last new traffic light installation in the Town on Highway 26 was at Delphi Lane/Peaks Road. In this case the traffic lights were installed by the developer of the Neighbourhoods of Delphi. With development of a community with obvious interest in the Peak Ski Hill it is little wonder that the developer needed to get the skiers safely across the highway.

Cameron Street was developed in mid-twentieth century and Trail Woods Subdivision many years ago likely without a traffic study that suggested the need for traffic lights. With development into the Secondary Plan Area, specifically the Campus of Care, there may be a push to have a look at the need for traffic lights.

A traffic study was not part of the scope of work for the Peel Street North Reconstruction Project.

Another option that might be worth considering would be to discuss changes to the Connecting Link boundary with MTO. Possibly the connecting link boundary with Highway 26 could be pushed out to the 11th Line and the speed limit lowered to 50KPH beyond Lora Bay Drive. These efforts might help with the intersections in this stretch of the road that will be experiencing growth in the foreseeable future. In 2024, Town staff will be bringing a

Comprehensive Speed Limit By-Law and Traffic Management Policy for Council consideration. This will be a good opportunity for residents to bring forward traffic related comments for Town owned or managed roads.

Peel Street Cross-Section Design

There were quite a few comments about the approved road cross-section, from slight changes to the width of elements within the design to changes to the elements. The road is challenged by the fact that we are trying to fit a new vertical alignment into existing topography. The approved road cross-section is inevitably a compromise that Staff took time to develop and believe to be a workable solution.

Road Width

Transportation engineers state that the minimum lane width on today's roads should be 3.5m. This came to light in the recent review of the Town's new 2023 Engineering Standards. Staff use this as one of the basic elements of the road cross-section.

Bike Lanes on the Road

The approved road cross-section does not include bike lanes however the 3.5m lane width can safely accommodate both users. Bike lanes are a modern element that are being introduced to the urban landscape, but are they needed? Bicycles are vehicles under the *Highway Traffic Act*, they have as much right to the vehicle lane as motorized vehicles. When a vehicle approaches a bicycle, the overtaking vehicle must be sure it is safe to pass. Both vehicles also need to follow the rules of the road. Cyclists can use the roadway if they choose and if they are concerned about auto interactions the multi-use trail is available.

Barrier Curbs

Residents expressed concern about the use of barrier curbs versus mountable curbs. Barrier curbs were selected for a few reasons. Barrier curbs keep motorized vehicles and plows on the road reducing boulevard damage and offering a level of safety to the multi-use trail users. The Barrier curbs also increase the depth of the overland flow route to keep storm water heading to the bay. The road goes through both cut and fill sections; the barrier curb will help prevent storm spills from the road in fill sections. Barrier curbs are also required as part of our new 2023 Engineering Standards.

Speed Tables at Multi-Use Trail Crossings

An element that has not been discussed before is the use of speed tables for the multi-use trail at road crossings. A speed table is relatively new traffic calming devise that has not been used in Thornbury. The asphalt road surface is raised through the intersection for the width of the multi-use trail. This devise is like a wide speed bump, while the vehicles turning onto Peel Street from Cameron Road, Timber Lane and High Bluff Lane have a stop sign it will slow traffic turning into these roads when trail users are crossing the roads. The use of speed tables could be implemented at any time if required.

Multi-Use Trail

The Town's 2023 Engineering Standards lists 2 types of multi-use trails. Non-Motorized, Low Impact Trails have a width of 2.0 to 2.7m with the wider width where walking and cycling are anticipated. Non-Motorized Multi-Use Trails have a width of 3.0 to 4.5m. The width of the multi-use trail was selected as 2.7m as a reflection of the Georgian Trail past the Town Hall which seems to accommodate all trail users. Pedestrians, cyclists, dog walkers etc. seem to be accommodated in this trail width. These trails might have limestone, asphalt or concrete surface. The trail grades recommended are 0% - 6% with maximum sustained grades of 6% to 10%. The trail grades will match the road grades there are a couple of short sections where the trail grades will be 8%. Staff have spoken with a local wheelchair user who reported 8% is not ideal but manageable.

The surface of the multi-use trail was originally thought to be gravel like the Georgian Trail. During the deliberation on elements to be incorporated into the Beaver Street Parkette the trail surface was discussed. This multi-use trail needed to be plowed along with the rest of the Town sidewalks, and a gravel trail would not be suitable. A few asphalt trails/sidewalks have been used within the Town but they do not perform well, grass comes up through the surface and they lose their smooth surface over time. Asphalt roads are constructed with curbs to restrain the surface and have a deep gravel structure that is drained with sub-drain system connected to the storm system. Concrete was selected as the surface for the Beaver Street Parkette and it is the surface selected for the multi-use trail on Peel Street.

Boulevard

The typical ground cover in the boulevard is either sod in an urban setting or hydro seed with an MTO mix in a rural setting. In an urban setting the property owners maintain the boulevards as they are an extension of the lawn. In a rural setting with a roadside ditch the Town might cut the near slope of the ditch once a year.

Peel Street abuts different properties through its length with most of it fairly wild and not maintained by the residents. The type of properties abutting the road have changed through recent development and some of the properties meet the boulevard with manicured lawns. Some residents were concerned that having to maintain the boulevard as a lawn was an undue burden. Staff will use a no mow ground cover for the boulevard unless residents that abut the boulevard want sod and will maintain the ground cover. The boulevards that have the no mow ground cover will become wild and will have an unmaintained appearance.

The Development Charges Background Study includes Peel Street from Highway 26 to Cameron Street as a Development Charges Road that will include street trees at 20m on center on both sides of the road. These trees will be planted behind the multi-use trail on the north side of the road and behind the level boulevard on the south side.

Tree Removal

The nature of this construction project is challenged by the requirement to fit a new vertical alignment into existing topography. On major road projects of this type, the initial design is

completed to identify lands that would need to be expropriated to complete the project. When Staff developed the approved road cross-section a keen focus was kept on keeping the road/multi-use trail footprint as narrow as possible. After a few versions of the centerline profile, MTE was able keep the cuts and fills mostly within the right-of-way. The only area where the cut extended onto private property was the condos on the south side of the road at the top of the hill. As it turned out the condo grading had to be cut in this area for walk out units so the grades for the road and the condo matched well.

Trees in the right-of-way should be limited to the Town street trees. Private landscape elements, trees, shrubs etc. should not encumber the right-of-way as it may conflict with Town or private utilities or may cause issues with sight lines. Trees that Property owners rely on for screening their property may be removed during construction. Screening trees should be on private property to assure they are not removed.

Trees will be removed in the right-of-way due to private utility relocation, renewal of the municipal infrastructure including lateral to the property line and regrading of the boulevards. A tree inventory was completed to assess current health and trees that will be or could by impacted by construction activities. The project team has made changes to the engineering design to avoid and mitigate tree impacts where possible. The current Tree Preservation Report is being updated to reflect these changes and provides details on where and why certain trees require removal. Tree protection measures will be used during construction to mitigate impacts to existing trees.

Streetlights

The Development Charges Background Study includes Peel Street from Highway 26 to Cameron Street as a DC Road that will include streetlights. The street will be illuminated, but we have few details at this time. The streetlights will be mounted to the existing utility poles and the heads will be dark sky compliant.

Inground Works

In addition to the surface works some inground works will take place.

Water and sanitary mains will be extended to the connecting link portion of Highway 26 for the future Campus of Care project. The Town met with MTO to discuss crossing Highway 26. It was determined that the termination of Highway 26 and in turn MTO's control is the old centerline of Peel Street. The water and sewer mains that cross the highway will be kept east of the boundary keeping the infrastructure on Town land. This will allow the mains to be installed by open cut rather than installed in casings as would be required if crossing an MTO controlled highway. This will save the project close to $1,000,000.

The water main on Peel Street will be enlarged between Cameron Street and Highway 26 to meet the needs of future development in the west end of Thornbury.

A sanitary sewer may be installed for a pending development on Peel Street.

The bulk of the inground works will be the storm sewer system.

Pedestrian Bridge

The original project was a Development Charges initiative to service the historic and recent development of the area. The reconstruction of Peel Street north (east) of Cameron Street and Bay Street to the Little Beaver River was added to the project, the Town is taking advantage of the mobilization for the DC project.

Early on in conceptualizing the project the addition of a pedestrian bridge was considered. This element was eventually presented to Council for consideration and added to the project.

Conclusion

In light of the numerous comments received regarding altering the approved cross-section Council may want to direct staff to further consider the cross-section. Additional cross-sections could be drawn and reviewed through a public process. This will of course add engineering costs delays in advancing the project to construction.

E. Strategic Priorities

1. Communication and Engagement

We will enhance communications and engagement between Town Staff, Town residents and stakeholders.

2. Organizational Excellence

We will continually seek out ways to improve the internal organization of Town Staff and the management of Town assets.

3. Community

We will protect and enhance the community feel and the character of the Town, while ensuring the responsible use of resources and restoration of nature.

4. Quality of Life

We will foster a high quality of life for full-time and part-time residents of all ages and stages, while welcoming visitors.

F. Environmental Impacts

None. A construction project will occur, and it will have its inevitable environment impacts however all attempts will be made to mitigate these impacts. Slight changes to the road cross-section will have negligible environmental impacts.

G. Financial Impacts

Depending on direction from Council additional engineering costs and delays in the project may occur.

H. In Consultation With

Jason Petznick, Communications Coordinator, Capital Projects

I. Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report has been the subject of a Public Meeting and/or Public Information Centre which took place on October 5, 2023. Those who provided comments at the Public Meeting and/or Public Information Centre, including anyone who has asked to receive notice regarding this matter, has been provided notice of this Staff Report. Any comments regarding this report should be submitted to Michael Campbell, Senior Infrastructure Capital Project Coordinator, cc@thebluemountains.ca.

J. Attached

1. Notice of PIC
2. Council Resolution dated November 13, 2019
3. Council Resolution dated June 15, 2020
4. Peel Street Reconstruction 90% Design PIC Power Point
5. Comments received at the Peel Street Reconstruction 90% Design PIC

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Campbell
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Shawn Carey
Director Operations

For more information, please contact:
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Report Approval Details

Document Title:	CSOPS.23.060 Peel Street North Reconstruction PIC Follow-up.docx
Attachments:	- Attachment 1 Notice of PIC.pdf - Attachment 2 Council Resolution dated November 13 2019.pdf - Attachment 3 Council Resolution dated June 15 2020.pdf - Attachment 4 Presentation.pdf - Attachment 5 Comments.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Nov 16, 2023

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Shawn Carey - Nov 16, 2023 - 3:09 PM