



Town of The Blue Mountains

32 Mill Street, Box 310

Thornbury, ON N0H 2P0

Phone: 519-599-3131 Fax: 519-599-7723

www.thebluemountains.ca

Date: November 3, 2023

Re: Peel Street North Reconstruction Project - Public Information Centre #2

This memo is intended to provide a summary of the questions, comments and answers that were received prior to, or asked during, the Public Information Centre (PIC) held on October 5, 2023. The PIC was held virtually on Microsoft Teams from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. A total of 43 individuals attended the meeting.

Included below is a summary of the primary themes heard throughout the PIC, as well as a table with the verbatim written questions and comments that were submitted before and after the meeting. To see all of the questions and comments that were brought forward during the PIC, please view the [full recording of the meeting](#).

1. Traffic control at intersection of Highway 26 and Peel Street

Attendees were seeking more information regarding the potential for there to be a right-hand turn lane added on Highway 26 to access Peel Street North, as well as a traffic light added at the intersection of Highway 26 and Peel Street.

Town Response: Traffic light or intersection upgrades have not been included in the scope of this work. As a portion of that intersection is the provincial Highway 26, the Ministry of Transportation has a set of specific parameters that would need to be met to warrant the installation of any intersection upgrades. Residents interested in having traffic control measures installed could fund a traffic study to determine whether or not a set of lights is warranted. However, this process would take some time, and would not be completed along with the reconstruction project. The Town could also consider extending the Connecting Link out to the 11th Line and lowering the speed limit to 50 km/hr. With the increased traffic associated with the planned Campus of Care, this could help with traffic management throughout this area.

2. Cross section layout and traffic calming

Attendees had comments regarding multiple aspects of the cross section. These included comments on the width of the vehicle lanes, shoulders, boulevards, lighting and the multi-use trail (MUT). There were also inquiries about other traffic-calming measures such as islands, trees, speed bumps and speed limit reductions.

Town Response: The cross section has been designed to balance the needs of traffic calming and pedestrian safety within a narrow corridor. Vehicle lanes of 3.5m is the minimum width recommended by traffic engineers, the 1.5m boulevard between the roadway and MUT is required for snow storage and pedestrian separation, and the 2.7m MUT has been chosen to allow for multi-directional traffic on the trail. Lighting is being added to aid in pedestrian safety along the MUT, and will be dark-sky compliant to minimize spillage and light pollution. The primary methods of achieving traffic calming on a roadway are through geometrics. That is why the vehicle lanes have been set at 3.5m and one of the reasons why a barrier curb has been specified. A traffic island would not fit in the right-of-way, trees have not been proven as an effective traffic calming measure, speed bumps present issues during winter maintenance and the geometric elements recommended are considered to be more effective than just lowering speeds limits.

3. Multi-use trail (MUT) design

Attendees had comments regarding multiple aspects of the MUT. These included comments on the surface material, the width, the location within the road allowance and the extents of the trail.

Town Response: The MUT is planned to be concrete to increase durability and service life. The width of 2.7m was chosen as it is the minimum width which would allow two-way traffic that could include cyclists. The trail has been incorporated on the west side of the road so that it picks up the existing sidewalks on Timber Lane and High Bluff Lane. The trail will be installed from Highway 26 all the way through to the new pedestrian bridge that will cross the Little Beaver River at Bay Street West.

4. Barrier vs. mountable curbs

Attendees had multiple comments regarding the use of barrier curbs versus mountable curbs. Concerns with barrier curbs included cyclist safety and the “urban” look.

Town Response: Barrier curbs have been selected to provide additional traffic calming by making the roadway feel narrower, as well as to enhance pedestrian safety on the MUT by creating a physical barrier between the roadway and the trail. Barrier curbs also stand up better to winter maintenance activities, assist with stormwater management by creating a defined overland flow route in the case of severe weather events and reduce boulevard damage caused by plows and vehicles parking off the road.

5. Boulevard maintenance

Attendees questioned who would be responsible for maintaining the new boulevard that would be created between the MUT and the road surface.

Town Response: Although boulevards throughout the Town are located within the municipality’s right-of-way, it’s understood that maintenance of the boulevard is the responsibility of the private property owner that fronts the boulevard. In this case – given the size of the boulevards being created and the fact that this is a significant change to existing conditions – the Town can investigate low-growing surface coverage solutions that will require less maintenance from property owners. Depending on the surface cover selected.

6. Tree removals and tree replacement plan

Attendees had questions regarding the replanting plan and what measures would be in place to protect trees during construction.

Town Response: Peel Street is a Development Charges road which calls for deciduous trees planted every 16-20 metres on centre. A planting plan will not be finalized in advance of the construction tendering, but the Town will be working with its consulting engineer to find some areas where replanting could be possible within the right of way. Once construction is nearing completion, the Town will engage an arborist to assess conditions and select trees that could work within the constraints of the area. The Town and its consultant will have an inspector on site to make sure that only the necessary trees are being removed. All remaining trees will have tree protection zones put in place as outlined in the tree preservation report.

7. Stormwater management capacity and design considerations

Attendees were looking for more information regarding the design capacity of the storm sewer system, as well as overland flow routes.

Town Response: The stormwater system has been designed in line with the Town’s standards. In the case of a significant weather event, the overland flow route would be maintained within the road surface by the barrier curbs. A speed table is also being investigated for the trail crossing at Cameron Street to keep overland stormwater flowing towards the Bay.

8. Design capacity of pedestrian bridge, and winter maintenance and snow removal on MUT

Attendees questioned whether the pedestrian bridge would be engineered to withstand the weight of snow removal equipment, and whether that meant sidewalks on Timber Lane and High Bluff Lane would

begin to be plowed in the winter.

Town Response: The expectation is to treat the MUT trail and the bridge in the same way as a sidewalk for winter snow removal. Staff are in the process of bringing forward a proposal through the 2024 Budget that would extend the level of service for snow clearing out to the construction area and connecting streets.

Written Comments Received

<p>Rick Greene Emailed 9/14/23</p>	<p>Unfortunately, I will be out of the country and the time change may not make it possible for me to participate in the meeting by Zoom. I have a couple of questions regarding storm water management. What is the design capacity the management of storm water within the proposed underground storm sewer system (1 in 5 year storm, 1 in 100 year storm, other ?) If storm water for 1 in 100 year storm exceeds the design capacity of the proposed underground storm sewers, will the "excess" storm water be contained by curbs on the street and run down to Georgian Bay (and not flow overland)? If flow overland is expected, please clarify where this to happen.</p>
<p>Jonquil Foster Emailed 9/15/23</p>	<p>I have looked at the attached drawings and trying to see if there is a right turn lane off Highway 26 onto Peel Street North. At this time there is no right turn lane but I think it would be a good idea to put one in. There are many times that we are making a right turn giving drivers behind us plenty of warning but they decide to pass us in the left turn lane that is on Highway 26 which is very unsafe.</p>
<p>Mia Klein Emailed 10/2/23</p>	<p>Hopefully, we will have a traffic light at Peel Street soon. I've witnessed families with baby carriages and toddlers struggling to cross the busy highway. It's dangerous right now for pedestrians with the speed and the number of vehicles on Hwy #26 around Peel Street. The traffic has increased considerably over the last few years and at certain times of the day it is very difficult to make a left turn. The Georgian Trail attracts pedestrians and bicyclists who need to get across to the opposite side of the highway. I'm also concerned about the safety of seniors and disabled people on scooters trying to cross Highway #26.</p>
<p>Veronique Ponce Emailed 10/4/23</p>	<p>At the last meeting I attended in 2019, I was told that : "the pedestrian trail will be separated from the road by a row of trees". That is the answer I got when I worried about the lack of shade when walking to town in the scorching heat of summer. It was also going to make the street visually narrower and much more appealing for all users.</p> <p>Now the trail is a concrete sidewalk, and the row of trees is a strip of grass!! What happened? Since when grass provides shades to slow users?</p> <p>For people who live on or close to Peel St North, all amenities are within 10 to 15 minutes walk : pharmacy, grocery store, market, coffee shops, fitness class and yoga, clothing stores, Home Hardware, BVO, community center, etc. The goal would be to encourage people to walk or cycle and leave their car at home to get the newspaper, not discourage them.</p> <p>The current design that is being offered looks like a suburban road, all concrete and grass, devoid of any interest, with cyclists and pedestrians an afterthought. If we truly want to link the Georgian Trail to a pedestrian bridge further down on Peel, then we have to expect double or triple foot and cycle traffic from Spring to Fall. Let's plan for it intelligently. We've got only one chance here!</p> <p>The edge of the 'trail/sidewalk' proposed is particularly dangerous for cyclists. I have hit one of those a few years back and went flying over the handlebar! Another time, a friend of mine was not so lucky : her helmet broke in two pieces under the shock and she suffered a bad concussion. This design is very dangerous and is not being used any longer in Toronto because of the number of accidents. You need a smoother transition between trail and road.</p> <p>And we do need trees, real trees, especially if you are going to remove so many on either side to realign the road. Collingwood is waking up and wants to force developers to plant bigger trees for a larger canopy. But Thornbury is ok with grass...?</p> <p>Road 'improvement' does not have to be an ugly soulless thing. Increasing density does not have to be all in concrete either. We are building for a future, which is most likely going to get hotter and will need to rely less on cars. Let's have a vision. Could we please make Peel St N an example of what the roads of the future could be for all users equally, keeping in mind the changing climate?</p>
<p>Paul and Paige Richmond</p>	<p>A set of plans for the Reconstruction of Peel Street was completed and presented at a PIC in 2019. I will refer to those plans as the 2019 plans throughout this document. Because of negative feedback from the PIC, rather than approving those plans, council voted to have the plans revised to better address</p>

<p>Delivered 10/4/2023</p>	<p>community concerns. The result of that work was released for review in 2020 as CSOPS.20.023. It presented 3 options for moving forward.</p> <p>Option 3 was the unanimous choice of the community because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It reduced the width of works sufficiently to minimize its impact on the surrounding forest corridor. • It replaced the white concrete sidewalk with a multi-use trail (MUT) that everyone assumed would not be white concrete. <p>Nevertheless, it was immediately obvious the MUT solution as configured, would deliver an unacceptable level of risk to cyclists.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MUT would exceed Toronto's maximum slope for safety of 5%. (The current plans indicate 5.5%) • The reduced roadway lane widths and barrier curbs threatened the safety of cyclists using the road. <p>Although the Option 3, Option Comparison Sheet reads 'Cyclists should use the trail rather than the narrow road', no one thought that other than an occasional cyclist would ever do so. Everyone thought an MUT would never be the preferred choice of a cyclist through multiple residential blocks, adjacent to a lightly travelled, continuous, paved roadway.</p> <p>The question to be resolved was how to best redistribute the width of works between the MUT and the vehicle lanes so as to provide the highest level of safety and convenience to both pedestrians and cyclists.</p> <p>Subsequent discussions indicated increasing the lane widths to 3.8 m and reducing the width of the MUT to 2.1 m was acceptable to all, as long as mountable curbs were installed.</p> <p>The increased roadway width was confirmed to provide an acceptable level of safety by cycling on High Bluff Lane which has a virtually identical profile, 3.75 m lanes with 450 mm mountable curbs.</p> <p>The reduced trail width in asphalt remained wide enough to support the trail concept without looking like a sidewalk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although a white crushed limestone surface, similar to other trails in Thornbury was everyone's preference, it was recognized the steep slopes would make erosion an ongoing maintenance cost. Asphalt was OK. • The width of 2.1m matched the width of some sections of the white limestone trails in Thornbury and like those trails, grass on both sides of the travelled area would provide lots of room to get out of the way of reckless and out of control cyclists. <p>Except for the surface and slope, the resultant MUT was recognized to be very similar to the heavily travelled section of the Georgian Trail that connects the Bud Powell Pedestrian Bridge to Highway 26, behind Canadian Tire in Collingwood. That section has a 2.1m wide white limestone surface surrounded by grass.</p> <p>The principal objectives of the community dating back to 2019 had been met.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The forest corridor was protected. • The cement sidewalk was gone. • Ruralism would be preserved.
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Unfortunately recommendations related to the above did not make it into the current plans which I will refer to as the 2023 plans throughout this document. The 2023 plans still have 3.5m roadway lanes and a 2.7m MUT.

Over the past 3 years, much has changed.

- Cycling has become extremely popular, and e-bikes now make cycling an option almost everyone can enjoy.
- MUTs which promised to be a recreational delight in 2020 are now less favourably viewed because of the increasing risk of collisions they pose, between cyclists and pedestrians.
- Timber Lane is now almost fully built-out. The project has many more stakeholders.

Over the past 2 weeks the current 2023 plans have been the subject of discussions between those that made the earlier 3.8m proposal and those that have subsequently become members of the community.

On September 30th (last Saturday) at 4 PM about 20 members of the current community got together on Peel Street at 4 PM, to re-assess the 2020 recommendations and to discuss what would be ideal today. Measuring rods were fabricated in advance, in 1x2 spruce, in the lengths required to represent potential widths of the components of the project cross-section, grass, trail, boulevard, road lanes and curbs and gutters. These were painted grey for asphalt, green for grass and white for concrete. Community members were able to visualize the road and rearrange the components to explore options.

This exercise confirmed community recommendations in 2020 are still optimal and the current 2023 plan width is the maximum advisable.

It was agreed 3.8m should be wide enough for the safety of cyclists given the fact the area the road serves is almost fully built-out and any future increase in the volume of vehicular traffic will be minimal. It was agreed the 3.5m narrow lanes still posed a risk to cyclists in excess of their contribution to speed control.

If cyclists indicate 3.8 lanes are still too narrow, it was agreed the asphalt trail could be reduced to 2.0m and still serve the community's interest in keeping it looking like a trail and not a sidewalk.

The boulevard was discussed at length. It was agreed the boulevard could be reduced to 1.0m in width and still serve to adequately separate the trail from the roadway and provide sufficient room to accommodate snow from a road plow. Timber Lane residents also wanted assurances that the boulevard will be properly maintained by the town, either directly, or by funding a portion of their lawn maintenance costs.

On a technical note, the position of the west curb and gutter of the northbound lane can stay as is, which should minimize changes to the drainage layers.

North of Cameron Street

The document approved by Council for the development of the current 2023 plans (CSOPS.20.030) contained only the following single paragraph regarding this area.

North of Cameron Street a modified rural road section with a sidewalk is proposed for the remainder of Peel and Bay Street West up to the Little Beaver River. This section of the project is not funded by Development Charges. The ditches in this section will convey the storm water collected on Peel to Georgian Bay and the Little Beaver River. The sidewalk is possible because a ditch can be eliminated across the frontage of the WTP, the storm water drains to the bay and the river from the site.

The current 2023 plans are a far cry from that statement. It continues the MUT concept north of Cameron which delivers significant risk and environmental cost.

- On Peel Street the maximum pathway slope is 7.5% which exceeds by 50% the maximum recommended slope for an MUT, for safety, before factoring in the crossing of a blind driveway.
- On Bay Street it results in having to destroy two 40 year-old white pines that have the potential to absorb carbon and beautify this area and this section of the trail for the next 100 years.

Bay Street currently meets Peel Street at an angle. Because visibility approaching the merge is unobstructed, and as traffic from the back parking lot of the Water Treatment Plant is almost never encountered, driving through the intersection without stopping is both safe and efficient.

The 2023 plan continues barrier curbs to the waterfront and curves Bay Street towards Georgian Bay in order to meet Peel Street at right angles. The street markings indicate a full stop. This would be inconvenient to say the least and especially inconvenient for:

- transport trucks maneuvering to back up Bay Street to deliver to the plant.
- garbage trucks who use the circular access to Peel Street to turn around.
- fire trucks who back up, sometimes side by side, to take on water from the river, then use the circular access to the north end of Peel Street to accelerate before reaching the maximum 8% roadway slope up to Cameron Street.

The circular access to and from Peel Street around the island of trees should be retained.

The 2019 plan made none of the above changes. In addition:

- It terminated curbs and gutters on Peel Street at the bottom of the hill, before reaching Bay Street on the Bay Street side.
- It did not include curbs and gutters on Bay Street.
- The historic rainfall event of April 5, 2023 confirmed the current slope and drainage profile of Bay Street can handle any storm.

The sections of the 2019 plan that covered this area, were challenged in 2020 only because they included sidewalks that were deemed unnecessary.

The current proposal would likely suit every stakeholder if the sidewalks were removed and the Bay Street roadway was returned to its position in the 2019 plan, without curbs and gutters. The sidewalk along Bay Street in the 2019 plan also served to direct stormwater runoff in the direction of the Little Beaver River. A curb along the north side of Bay Street could be installed to provide the same function. To match the current road, the width of the planned road would need to be increased from 7.0m to 8.0m and its centreline located 15m in front of the Water Treatment Plant.

The west side of Peel Street north of Cameron could be widened and a fog line used to indicate the portion that is roadway and the portion that is trail, but even that provision may be hard to cost justify. Peel and Bay streets are dead-ends. They serve only 3 private residences and the Water Treatment Plant. There are seldom more than 15 vehicle movements per day and vehicles on Bay Street seldom travel more than 10 km/h. It is perfectly safe to walk along the road for the 138 meters from the proposed pedestrian bridge to the trail continuing offroad at Cameron.

The west end of the bridge is proposed to end within a meter or two of the Water Treatment Plant driveway which is 11m wide and would serve to smoothly transition trail traffic from the bridge to roadway.

South of High Bluff Lane

The 2023 plan has reduced the lane widths in the 2019 plan from 4.5m to 3.5m to accommodate the MUT and the boulevard. This has forced Peel Street to intersect with Highway 26 closer to Thornbury.

	<p>Because the stop lines in the 2023 plans do not align the traffic lanes across Peel Street at Highway 26, the intersection is one of the elements of the plan still under design.</p> <p>The 2019 plan works because it has only a 1.5m sidewalk and a 1.5m boulevard along Peel Street between High Bluff Lane and the Georgian Trail and eliminates both between the Georgian Trail and Hwy 26. Peel Street north is able to swing far enough west and Peel Street south is able to swing far enough east to align the lanes at right angles to Hwy 26.</p> <p>The 2019 plan intersection design can be applied to the 2023 plan if the MUT is reduced to 2.1m and the boulevard is reduced to 900mm between High Bluff Lane and Georgian trail.</p> <p>Between the Georgian Trail and Hwy 26 a boulevard is not required and the width of the MUT may be constrained by the intersection design. Lane alignment is a design priority which the design of connected roads and their related passageways must respect.</p> <p>At no time has the community requested a reduction of the width of Peel Street south of High Bluff Lane. It was assumed the road would be tapered from 4.5m to 3.8m north of High Bluff Lane. The intersection at Hwy 26 has to be as wide as possible for safety until a turning lane is installed.</p> <p>The current proposal does not include the turning lane that has been requested by the community for years. Turning from Hwy 26 westbound to Peel Street northbound can be hair-raising. To make the turn successfully while obeying the law by not crossing the white line that defines the boundary of the high-speed lane, requires decelerating to at most 25 km/h. This creates a speed differential with accelerating following traffic of 50 km/h or more. In order to permit escape from following traffic, the shoulder has been paved close to the intersection which has been a life-saver. Nevertheless, a paved shoulder is not a substitute for a proper turning lane.</p> <p>A proper turning lane should be included in the project. The paved shoulder is 2.5 m wide. It needs to be widened only 1.0 m to define a proper lane boundary. Additional shoulder would have to be provided and the post and cable barrier would need to be repositioned accordingly.</p> <p>To Wrap Up</p> <p>The issues involved are too complex to properly address at a virtual PIC. At least one additional in-person PIC is required to permit community members to freely interact. Community concerns related to the bridge and intersection design are unlikely to be resolved via Teams.</p>
<p>Ann Joyner Emailed 10/5/23</p>	<p>Good evening Jason and the Peel Street Reconstruction Team. We attended the meeting tonight and found the presentation well organized and informative. We live on Cameron Street and submitted a number of comments after PIC 1 and are pleased with the number of changes you made and particularly the hybrid option, night sky lighting, minimizing environmental damage, accommodating multi-use, improving safety.</p> <p>We have a few comments on the proposed design below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We strongly recommend the use of native/pollinator species in the boulevard strip in the multi-use trail and in replacing any trees. A low growing perennial grass, clover or pollinator flower mix would be great and reduce maintenance requirements for the boulevard. My husband and I work with Pollinate the Blue Mountains and are enjoying the collaboration with the Town on a number of new pollinator spaces in town. Advancing the pollinator species to streetscapes would be a great next step. The Pollinate the Blue Mountains group and the local Master Gardeners would be happy to volunteer ideas and examples from other municipalities if this would be helpful. (I am a Master Gardener too). We have personally had good success with a microclover for grass replacement and also white clover over our septic on Cameron St. • We would like you to consider speed bumps for traffic calming as an option on Peel St. to address the obvious concern about safety we heard tonight. It will be more efficient to build them into the design now than to add them later.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We agree that careful marking and monitoring the tree cutting process will be essential • We would support expanding the 50k limit west past Foodland to Peel St. • We have some safety concerns with diverting so much traffic to the 10th line and then across the Highway during construction as this intersection is dangerous due to speeds and so much traffic turning into Goldsmiths. Extra signage, lower speed limit might help during construction on Highway 26. Maybe there are other options? • We think we heard you say that construction on the utilities on Peel will start this fall. Is this correct? <p>Please confirm that you have received this email and sent it to the Peel St. team for consideration.</p>
<p>Arnis Pukitis Emailed 10/14/23</p>	<p>I watched the virtual public information session on the Peel Street Reconstruction project last week. I feel it provided good information and offered opportunities for public input.</p> <p>I was part of the first session back in 2019 when most of the respondents were disappointed as the Town chose their own urban street option, rather than the rural street option that public input vote preferred. The current proposal is a combination of the two and I think will accomplish what we residents of the area want to see (I live on Cameron St.).</p> <p>I have two suggestions that might help address two issues that came up in your public meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There will be a lot of disruption of traffic flow for residents of the area during the construction phase. I suggest building the pedestrian bridge across Little Beaver Creek right away in the project so that Cameron St. and Timber Lane residents have an option for getting into town. We often walk or bike, so do not have to take cars. Building it at the beginning, even if the road is not done will give people an option. 2. Traffic calming/speed was a big topic of conversation. Your choice of hard curbs, rather than gentle ones is to create a feeling of constraint that will force drivers to slow down. Speed bumps were suggested, but another option is to have a texture feature like pavers that draws attention to speed. Below is a picture of a city street with that in place. A small section, say at the intersections would draw driver attention to their speed.
<p>Catherine Sholtz Emailed 10/15/23</p>	<p>As you are aware I pointed out at the PIC that MTE's Tree Impacts and Removal slide contradicted the Tree Preservation Report (TPR), which identified 11 mature trees on our private property to be removed. It is our understanding from the presentation and your discussion that the TPR was only a draft and that the Operations Department, together with its Consultants, will now be revisiting this report to minimize or remove reference to all the identified mature trees (over 50 years old) on our private property.</p> <p>We will also note that there are a number of trees on our property that have large branches and root systems that may encroach on the existing road allowance. Any potential cutting/removal to these trees must be identified and also considered in the revised TPR.</p> <p>When will this revised TPR be completed and available to us? We assume that any changes being made will be brought to our attention before being submitted to Council for their approval.</p> <p>If any WORK is still required on or near our property line after the revised report is completed, then we would expect that a survey will be completed to confirm the right-of-way, as recommended in the TRP.</p> <p>Further to Michael's correspondence to you on September 13th, 2023, it appears that there are still several uncertainties that need to be resolved before any WORK is allowed on or near our property line. At this stage, we are still going to insist on a "Permission to Enter" Agreement that will allow you to carry out the WORK as determined by your final designs and will also protect us against any loss or damages to our property i.e. trimming of large overhanging branches from our trees that may encroach in the Town's ROW, back filling and impact on the root systems, removal/relocation of large boulders, and any other matters that may result in damages and/or loss in value to our property. The Agreement will include a</p>

	<p>clause specifying the type and method of compensation should there be any removals and/or damages caused by the WORK.</p>
<p>Catherine Sholtz Emailed 10/15/23</p>	<p>Michael and I are writing to you as a follow-up to the PIC re: Peel Street North Reconstruction Project held on October 5th, 2023 and ask that our comments be included in the PIC Summary of Comments Report to Council.</p> <p>I pointed out at the meeting that the maintenance of the 1.5m wide grass medium being proposed along our entire 73.26m road frontage and approximately 5.66m south (or 18.56 feet) or beyond our property line is considered unworkable for us to maintain, especially considering our age and the lawn equipment that we own. The total area of this medium would be over 1,100 sq. ft (109.89 m2) and this area would be considered unreasonable for any property owner to maintain, especially without a written contract outlining the liabilities associated with this Work i.e. crossing the MUT and hitting someone with the lawn mower or a pebble, etc. It was suggested at the meeting by a neighbour that drought resistant planting would be a better choice and should be considered. I'm sure there are also other options.</p> <p>The MUT, the width of the road at 7.0m (3.5m per side) and the barrier curbs are considered questionable and of concern to a number of us who have lived on Peel and Cameron Streets over the past 30 years or more.</p> <p>With regards to the MUT:</p> <p>Some cyclists and most likely most, which you even admitted in the PIC discussion, would continue to use the road instead of the MUT. We believe this to be true because sharing a trail that includes pedestrians can become dangerous based on the number of bikers that ride together, the type of bikes being used including electric ones, and the speed which they travel at, especially going downhill on Peel Street. Also, Michael walks the Georgian Trail quite often and has experienced first hand the number of near misses between cyclists and pedestrians that could have resulted in serious injury. Michael has also had many discussions on the trail with single walkers and families about how dangerous it has become for pedestrians over the past few years.</p> <p>We note that the MUT is now being proposed as 2.7m wide white concrete sidewalk (2.7m vs 1.5m). After, numerous objections by the many members of the community, the previous Council agreed to remove the urban concrete sidewalk from the design plans and replace it with a more rural MUT. The community and Council, at the time, were never told that the 1.5 m concrete sidewalk would be just replaced by a wider 2.7m concrete sidewalk and called a MUT. Other than maybe longevity, there are no other reasons why the MUT cannot be asphalt or similar to the construction of the road. An asphalt road has durability and is snow cleared in the winter on a regular basis by massive trucks compared to a sidewalk which is cleared by smaller snow removal equipment. An asphalt MUT would also blend in better with the rural community rather than display a larger urban concrete sidewalk that does not provide any rural charm. A greater issue is whether maintenance of a concrete MUT in this area would be justified considering the additional construction costs to the taxpayers and lack of winter usage by the residents in newer surrounding subdivision roads constructed west of the Little Beaver River.</p> <p>With regards to the width of the road at 7.0m (3.5m per side)</p> <p>You advise us that the narrow width of the road being proposed is to create "traffic calming". Your arguments are based on the hope (without providing any factual data) that cars and trucks will reduce their speed (below 50-60 km/hr) because of the narrow width of the road at 3.5m. We have lived on this gravelled road for over 30 years, and I can assure you that most drivers and especially trades' people who travel on Peel Street are not bothered by the existing dust-ridden gravelled potted road and will continue to speed beyond the posted 50 km/hr on a newly paved downhill road. More than likely, most will just drive down the middle of the road until another car or a cyclist comes in the opposite direction.</p> <p>The narrow width of the road without any shoulders and/or mountable curbs provides a trap for cyclists if confronted by speeding cars and therefore provides for an unsafe road.</p>

	<p>With regards to barrier curbs vs. mountable curbs</p> <p>As stated above, without asphalt shoulders and/or asphalt bike lanes on the road, barrier curbs will not easily allow cyclists to escape the danger of speeding and/or out-of-controlled vehicles on a narrow road. Also, barrier curbs will not easily allow cyclists to escape a group of pedestrians or out-of-controlled cyclists on the MUT.</p> <p>Mountable curbs are the norm throughout the Towns infrastructure rehabilitation project along Victoria, Alma, Louisia and Alice Streets. Most of these streets are not even considered cycle routes but it's very clear that this type of curb was the desired standard based on the Community's demands.</p> <p>I can also state based on extensive professional experience in the field of Disabilities and the AODA (25 years of providing training and consultation), that mountable curbs are considered much more accessible to powerchairs, scooters and walkers, etc. Cyclists prefer the mountable curbs vs barrier curbs. The City of Toronto is no longer recommending building MUT's as they present the above concerns and problems that have resulted in injuries and legal action.</p> <p>Further regards to the MUT and the barrier curbs, a lot of emphasis has been put on the fact that a concrete surface on the MUT and the barrier curbs will provide easier access and maintenance for winter snow removal. There may be some truth to your arguments but making changes for snow removal is not an excuse for overlooking the safety and cost benefits that alternative options provide. A concrete sidewalk may provide a longer life than asphalt, but where is the evidence that states that it is easier to plow a concrete sidewalk than an asphalt sidewalk. The road will be asphalt and will take a greater beating in the winter than the sidewalk.</p> <p>These are just some of our comments and concerns which should supplement the many others expressed by our immediate neighbours along Peel and Cameron Streets.</p> <p>We appreciate including the above comments in the PIC Summary of Comments Report.</p>
<p>Paul Richmond Emailed 10/18/23</p>	<p>I have viewed the Peel Street North Reconstruction PIC #2 video and would like the following comments to be considered as you debate changes to the plans currently on the table.</p> <p>At the PIC, 3.5m lanes were promoted by the Town for their contribution to speed control but there was no discussion regarding their major downside, the increased risk of a head-on collision.</p> <p>Ice on a gravel road seldom causes a loss of control but ice on a paved surface on a north-facing slope of up to -5.5 degrees in the path of moisture laden prevailing winds from the north-west over the relatively warm waters of Georgian Bay will exacerbate icing and occasionally cause a vehicle to lose control.</p> <p>Residents of Timber Lane will be turning right from their 4.25m road to a narrower 3.5m road. The tighter turning radius may not be an issue in summer, but in winter, when street markings are obscured and the road is covered with ice or snow, turning in front of a downbound vehicle may cause that vehicle to apply braking. Should that occur, even in conditions considerably less slippery than ice, that vehicle may lose control. The turning vehicle upbound on Peel will have very little velocity, limited traction with which to increase velocity, and limited opportunity to avoid a collision. Barrier curbs may increase that risk by funneling the vehicles towards each other.</p> <p>The community's recommendation that lanes not be reduced to less than 3.8m did not consider icing because the risk to cyclists alone was deemed reason enough to not reduce lane widths further. As 3.5m lanes are now proposed, the above risks should be re-assessed by the town and residents should be made aware of the results of that re-assessment.</p> <p>Increasing the roadway lanes to 3.8m also provides a safer pedestrian route in winter when the MUT is not cleared of snow and ice. More than one participant at the PIC inquired of the town's commitment to providing that service. Staff pointed out that the town currently provides sidewalk plowing to only a small portion of the municipality and currently has no program for extending that service. If current</p>

analysis indicates further funding is justified and a program is brought forward to council for approving its inclusion in the 2024 budget, that may result in services being extended where pedestrian volumes warrant. Given the few persons who actually walk Peel Street in winter, Peel Street is an unlikely candidate to qualify for that service, even after current volumes are increased by the largest reasonable estimate of pedestrians crossing the bridge. I would predict it to be a political challenge to further enhance those numbers by offering that service to private properties west of the Little Beaver River, without offering the same service to every ratepayer in the Town of the Blue Mountains.

Barrier Curbs vs Mountable Curbs

At the PIC, barrier curbs were promoted by the Town for their contribution to:

- Enhancing the perception of risk delivered by narrow lanes for control of speed.
- Protecting pedestrians from cars leaving the road.
- Directing surface stormwater runoff.
- Helping snowplough operators avoid damaging boulevards and lawns.

While all of the above are true, all of the above taken together may not deliver a level of risk reduction equivalent to that provided by 3.8m lanes bounded by mountable curbs for the following reasons:

- Speed control is a continued concern of residents largely because for many years, any vehicle travelling over 40 k/hr would raise clouds of dust. A wider paved surface with less obvious curbs will somewhat reduce the effect of traffic calming but it will still remain an effective deterrent as 3.8m lanes are still quite narrow.
- Speed control through signage remains a viable if not more effective option.
- The MUT is adjacent to the uphill, southbound lane of Peel Street (relative to the street’s definition, not the compass). Vehicles travelling this lane travel at modest speeds because they have come from a full or rolling stop at either Cameron Street or Timber Lane and are approaching a hillcrest which in itself provides a traffic calming effect. The risk to pedestrians of a vehicle leaving the roadway and crossing the boulevard is significantly less than the risk to cyclists in summer and south-bound motorists in winter of being trapped by a barrier curb.
- Mountable curbs in fill areas can provide a satisfactory level of stormwater management even on a greater than ideal slope but the number of catch basins and associated laterals may need to be increased. There may also be a need to flange out the curb from its normal roadway position for a few meters at some catch basins in order to provide an appropriate direction of flow and capture capacity.
- Snowplows will occasion more damage to boulevards and lawns than would likely be caused if barrier curbs were installed. The question is, how does the cost of repairing such damage compare with the risks of staying with barrier curbs? Damage is generally reduced as lane widths are increased. At 3.5m the trade-off might be arguable. At 3.8m safety would appear to win hands-down.

The Width of the MUT

At the PIC it was explained the width of 2.7m is proposed because it enables two-way cyclist and pedestrian passing and is the width of the Georgian Trail close to town hall.

In 2020 the MUT concept was accepted by the community because it promised to restrict the width of works sufficiently to protect the forest corridor. That width was considered to be the absolute maximum however so their recommended increase in the lane widths to 3.8m for the safety of cyclists, required the MUT be reduced by the equivalent amount to 2.1m to stay within the above width of works. As mentioned in my earlier submission, the width of 2.1m was considered adequate to serve as a trail given the projected number of cyclists and pedestrians likely to use it.

The addition of the pedestrian bridge will increase those numbers somewhat but the majority of users will still be local residents and they have not been polled regarding their preferences. Some may prefer the current plan width of 2.7m (8’ 9”), but most will concur with the community’s earlier

recommendation that a width of 2.1m (6' 10", 40% wider than a standard sidewalk), surrounded by grass, is sufficiently wide to serve as a trail.

The Surface of the MUT

At the PIC it was explained concrete was the proposed surface because it can stand up better to the abuse of winter plowing. It may also have been pointed out that concrete has an average service life of 30 years compared with only 20 years for asphalt. What was not discussed was the reason asphalt has been chosen over concrete as the hard surface installed on almost all of Ontario's MUTs.

- Asphalt can be prepared and compacted to provide a surface suitable for plowing similar to a road surface.
- Asphalt can be installed at a cost of only 50% to 60% of the cost of concrete.
- Asphalt remains somewhat flexible which inhibits cracking.
- Asphalt can be repaired and resealed at a fraction of the cost of repairing cracked concrete.
- Asphalt reflects less light than concrete which makes it less obvious in daylight and preserves dark skies at night.
- Asphalt arguably makes a trail a better recreational experience.

I have advised a number of persons to check out the new 1.9-million-dollar Awen Waterplay Splash Park behind McDonald's in Collingwood, to discover how function and beauty can be delivered by a design that ties a network of trails and recreational resources to an urban core with asphalt.

North of Cameron Street

At the PIC, the Peel Street intersection with Bay Street was referred to as a "bad" intersection at which the roads meet at an angle of 45 degrees. Actually, the roads meet at an angle of 55 degrees which is one of the reasons I would qualify the intersection as an excellent intersection, measured against the fundamental design criteria of 'form follows function'.

This intersection was designed in the late 1970s, in conjunction with the design and orientation of the Water Treatment Plant, the front face of which Bay Street parallels. It has been in service with close to current traffic volumes for at least 45 years and I am not aware there has ever been an accident, notwithstanding the fact the intersection has never had any traffic control signage. The 55-degree angle allows westbound Bay Street traffic to turn onto southbound Peel Street, across the northbound lane of Peel Street, safely and efficiently without stopping.

Vehicles approaching the intersection from Bay Street, have travelled only 28m from a dead stop and are seldom at a velocity of even 10 km/h before approaching traffic from the right is visible over a full 90-degree angle, around and beneath the canopy of the Austrian Pines. As the only source of that traffic is the back parking lot and as the back parking lot seldom hosts more than one or two vehicles per day, meeting a vehicle approaching from the right at that intersection is a rare event. In that event, the remaining 28m to the intersection provides lots of room to let the Peel Street vehicle pass ahead.

The 55-degree angle clearly indicates an intersection at which traffic may cross ahead and positions drivers to see that traffic in lots of time to react accordingly. There is no need to change the angle of this intersection although a stop sign and stop line could be proposed for Bay Street in an abundance of caution.

The geometry of every aspect of the roads and parking lots north of Cameron was designed to serve the operations of the Water Treatment Plant. Proposed changes from the 2019 plans, especially curbs and gutters on the east side of Peel Street north of Bay Street, could impact plant operations, the provision of municipal services, and recreational access to Georgian Bay.

The design of the MUT north of Cameron should be totally re-considered.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An MUT separated by a boulevard from Peel Street, between Cameron and Bay Streets would have a slope of -7.5 degrees (downslope), facing Georgian Bay. Ice accumulation, under conditions described above, could deliver serious injuries to unsuspecting pedestrians. It would be a perpetual liability whose construction would require large trees to be harvested and compromise the natural beauty of the approach to Georgian Bay.• There will not be any significant increase in the volume of vehicular traffic north of Cameron as residential areas south of Cameron are almost fully built-out. Well over 90% of today's traffic is occasioned by the sole residence on Peel Street, the 2 residences on Bay Street, and the operations of the TBM water treatment plant. There may be a few more kayakers and paddleboarders driving to the north end of Peel Street, but it is highly unlikely to ever be a tourist destination.• An MUT on Bay Street is not required. Until record-high Georgian Bay water-levels occurred in 2019, by mid-summer the flow rate of the Little Beaver River routinely dropped to the point where it was easy to cross on foot, with or without a bicycle. The behaviour of persons crossing the river is known. Most will continue to walk down Bay Street and up the roadway to Cameron, as they have for many years, because it is perfectly safe to do so. There is too little vehicular traffic, moving at too slow a velocity, over too short a distance to deliver any frequency of encounter or perception of risk, and no reason to walk in any direction but the direction that serves the objective of travel.• Completion of the Pedestrian Bridge over the Little Beaver River will restore river crossings, but walking along Bay Street which carries less than 1/100th of the traffic of the Foodland parking lot, does not justify harvesting any of the Austrian Pines. Austrian Pines are hearty trees that take the brunt of winds coming off Georgian Bay and drop snow like a snow fence, which reduces snow and ice build-up on Bay Street and on the hill up to Cameron Street. Properly protected, they have a potential life-span, over which to protect transit and beautify the area, for the next 100 years. <p>To sum up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• there is no justification for installing an MUT on Peel Street north of Cameron other than as an extension to the paved surface, separated by a fog line.• there is no justification for installing an MUT on Bay Street under any circumstances.
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