

Paul Reale

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

May 13th, 2024

RE: Deputation on CSOPS.24.018 (125 Peel Street South Servicing)

Dear Madame Mayor and Councillors:

I stand before you to discuss what is the most significant project the Town of Blue Mountains has ever considered: the development of 125 Peel Street South. While I fully recognize our urgent need for long-term care and attainable housing, I am compelled as a concerned resident to question the methods we are employing to pursue this development. Alarming, we are relying on a Community Infrastructure and Housing Accelerator (CIHA) — a tool that the Ontario government is actively considering repealing due to concerns about its efficacy and appropriateness.

As we begin moving forward with this project of servicing 125 Peel Street South, a concerning cloud of uncertainty looms over the availability of crucial information. Despite an initial request for information on the project, I have been informed by Town staff that key documents, such as the traffic impact study and active transportation study, remain incomplete and will be withheld from public scrutiny for the time being. This situation poses a serious question: On what basis are we then poised to make such far-reaching decisions? The absence of critical information from the public seemingly violates the very standards of transparency and accountability that define our community's governance.

This absence of information has not gone unnoticed by our community. Concerned residents have felt compelled to file Freedom of Information requests to both the municipality and the province, seeking to uncover all the information that should naturally underpin a project of this magnitude. It is disconcerting that we must resort to these

measures to access information that should be freely available to every stakeholder in our community.

This situation finds us at a crossroads. Are we prepared to move forward in the shadows, or will we choose the path of informed, transparent governance? It is crucial that we opt for the latter, ensuring that every aspect of this project adheres to a clear and open public process, disclosing all the information so everyone can make informed decisions in good conscience.

Servicing

The proposed expansion of services beyond the pumping station at 125 Peel Street South to Alfred Street unveils a potential misalignment in the Town's planning strategy. This extension suggests that the footprint of development extends far beyond 125 Peel Street South. One must then ask: does this not necessitate a Secondary Plan for Thornbury West as a matter of course to guide future development? Such plans are essential frameworks that ensure developments are harmoniously integrated with the necessary infrastructure and community services. Without this, do we not risk falling into a pattern of piecemeal planning that could fragment our services and lead to haphazard development?

Moreover, consider the properties adjacent to and beyond 125 Peel Street South. What are the implications for these homeowners under the CIHA order? According to the Town's report, why are Baring Street and Alice Street included in the Future Secondary Plan Area, while Peel Street South is conspicuously absent? Does a CIHA extend to the other properties on Peel Street South? These are urgent concerns that impact real people's lives and homes.

Finally, how are we to proceed without imposing undue financial strain on our ratepayers? Mr. Jamie Witherspoon was on record at the Committee of the Whole stating that the Development Charges for water and wastewater run upwards to \$123,000/unit, which puts this project under the Town's unaffordability category before infrastructure is even put into the ground. Normally, such a project would be deemed unaffordable under the Town's Affordability Policy for Water and Wastewater Service Extensions and deemed not feasible

for both the Town and the resident. How will the Town resolve this conundrum? Moreover, what mechanisms do we have in place to prevent budget overruns, and why is there such haste to advance without these critical assurances? Let's not forget that the Town has already allocated \$11.5 million in the 2022 budget for servicing 125 Peel Street South, yet the report recommends using Development Charges to reconstruct Peel Street South.

Development Charges and Roads

The Town staff's assertion that it is “appropriate” and “proper” to use Development Charges for reconstructing Peel Street South does little to reassure us of the proposed planning procedures. The terminology used—“appropriate” and “proper”—is vague and raises more questions than it answers about the feasibility and legality of such actions under the current circumstances.

The Development Charges Background Study suggests that Peel Street South has been designated a Collector Road. Yet, the Town's Official Plan clearly categorizes it as a Local Road. This discrepancy leads to several pressing questions: Has there been a formal housekeeping amendment to the Official Plan to reflect this change? Does the Development Charges Background Study have the authority to override the Official Plan? And can the CIHA unilaterally dictate the standards of our roads without a comprehensive Secondary Plan in place?

Moreover, the proposal to upgrade and transform Peel Street South into a Collector Road is driven by the opportunity to apply Development Charges—a singular opportunity, according to Town staff. This approach begs the question: what are the consequences if we do not proceed with this upgrade? If Peel Street South remains a Local Road, are there repercussions for the Town or potential penalties? Could these Development Charges be reserved and allocated more judiciously pending a detailed future study that confirms whether such a road upgrade is truly warranted?

The argument to reclassify Peel Street South seems predicated solely on the financial benefits of leveraging Development Charges. However, changing the designation from a Local Road to a Collector Road should necessitate a thorough and transparent approval

process, involving public scrutiny and adherence to our Town's long-established planning practices. Bypassing these steps under the guise of financial expediency does not constitute good planning practices.

Traffic Safety

The Town staff's proposal to include a multi-unit trail in the reconstruction of Peel Street South raises significant safety concerns that must not be overlooked. This plan requires pedestrians and cyclists to navigate across Highway 26 via Peel Street South—an intersection with a speed limit of 70 km/h—to reconnect to the multi-use trail on Peel Street North. This setup poses a dangerous risk, especially for our most vulnerable residents, such as the elderly and children, who will find this crossing not just challenging, but potentially life-threatening.

Currently, the anticipated traffic increase of up to 300 vehicles daily on Peel Street South will exacerbate this danger. This begs the question: how have these safety implications been addressed in the planning stages? Has there been any discussion with the Ministry of Transportation to strategize on comprehensive traffic intersection upgrades to safeguard our residents? Why would the Town staff leave such a dangerous safety hazard for future consideration?

Furthermore, the potential addition of a roundabout at Peel Street and Highway 26 to mitigate these safety concerns, as mentioned in the Town staff's proposed design, introduces additional concerns. If implemented, we might end up with two roundabouts within a mere 800 meters of each other—complicating traffic flow and potentially creating new safety hazards rather than resolving existing ones at the critical intersection of Grey Road 113/10th Line and Highway 26.

Request for Council

Despite reaching out to our local Member of Provincial Parliament, Brian Saunderson, and Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Paul Calandra, for clarity, our concerns as residents remain unanswered. This continued absence of information highlights a pressing need for transparency and detailed explanations from those leading this project.

Therefore, I implore the Council to postpone any decisions regarding the servicing at 125 Peel Street South until we can conduct an open and public session with Mr. Saunderson and Mr. Calandra. Such a forum would facilitate a direct exchange with these key decision-makers and allow for a thorough discussion of our community's concerns. As residents, we are entitled to full disclosure and a comprehensive understanding of the project's impacts before moving forward.

We cannot afford to proceed with our eyes closed and fingers crossed, hoping for the best. Our recent experiences in Craighleith serve as a stark reminder of what happens when development is left unchecked and planning is reactive rather than proactive. The piecemeal approach there led to substantial infrastructure challenges that we are still grappling with today—issues that could have been mitigated with thorough planning and community engagement.

Let us not repeat the mistakes of the past but instead proactively shape a future development strategy that is thoughtful, inclusive, and discloses all of the information. Let this project be a reflection of our dedication to transparency and accountability.

Enclosures:

1. Email from Senior Infrastructure Capital Project Coordinator, TBM Operations Department (April 17, 2024)
2. Email to Simcoe-Grey Member of Provincial Parliament (April 23, 2024)
3. Email to Minister of Municipal and Housing Affairs (April 23, 2024)
4. Slide Deck Presentation



Paul John Reale [REDACTED]

RE: Request for Information

Mike Humphries <mhumphries@thebluemountains.ca>

Wed, Apr 17, 2024 at 11:42 AM

To: Kyra Dunlop <kdunlop@thebluemountains.ca>, Paul John Reale [REDACTED], Corrina Giles

<cgiles@thebluemountains.ca>, Town Clerk <townclerk@thebluemountains.ca>

Cc: Pruthvi Desai <pdesai@thebluemountains.ca>, Jeffery Fletcher <jfletcher@thebluemountains.ca>,"jamie.witherspoon@wtinfrastructure.ca" <jamie.witherspoon@wtinfrastructure.ca>, Jason Petznick

<jpetznick@thebluemountains.ca>

Good Morning Paul

You are correct, these studies are not on the Town's website. The design is still at a very preliminary stage. The Traffic Impact Study and Active Transportation study are well underway but not complete. We will post the studies on the website once they are completed. This will likely be in conjunction with the 2nd PIC at the 60% design stage. As indicated at the PIC the Arborists report will be advanced as the design is advanced. The tree inventory and condition assessments have been completed, we presented what we had at the PIC. The impact on the trees will be assessed in the next stage of design once Council provides direction. The Arborist's report including the tree protection plan will be posted sometime after the 60% design stage. We will include an update with the second PIC.

There is no additional information to provide at this time.

Please feel free to reach out to me anytime. I am happy to answer any questions you may have related to the servicing of [125 Peel St.](#)

Mike

**Mike Humphries C.E.T.**

Senior Infrastructure Capital Project Coordinator, Operations Department

Town of The Blue Mountains, 32 Mill Street, P.O. Box 310, Thornbury, ON
N0H 2P0

Tel: 519-599-3131 ext. 277 | Fax: 519-599-7723 | Toll Free: 1-888-258-6867

Email: mhumphries@thebluemountains.ca | Website: www.thebluemountains.ca

As part of providing accessible customer service, please let me know if you have any accommodation needs or require communication supports or alternate formats.

From: Kyra Dunlop <kdunlop@thebluemountains.ca>

Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2024 10:52 AM

To: Paul John Reale [REDACTED]; Corrina Giles <cgiles@thebluemountains.ca>; Town Clerk <townclerk@thebluemountains.ca>

Cc: Mike Humphries <mhumphries@thebluemountains.ca>; Pruthvi Desai <pdesai@thebluemountains.ca>; Jeffery Fletcher <jfletcher@thebluemountains.ca>

Subject: RE: Request for Information

Good morning Paul,

On behalf of Corrina I acknowledge receipt of your below correspondence and by way of copy forward same to our Operations staff for review and response. Thanks,



Kyra Dunlop

Deputy Clerk, BA (Hons)

Town of The Blue Mountains, 32 Mill Street, P.O. Box 310, Thornbury, ON N0H 2P0

Tel: 519-599-3131 ext. 306 | Fax: 519-599-7723

Email: kdunlop@thebluemountains.ca | Website: www.thebluemountains.ca

As part of providing [accessible customer service](#), please let me know if you have any accommodation needs, require communication supports or alternate formats.

From: Paul John Reale [REDACTED] >

Sent: Monday, April 15, 2024 8:18 AM

To: Corrina Giles <cgiles@thebluemountains.ca>; Town Clerk <townclerk@thebluemountains.ca>

Subject: Request for Information

Hi Corrina,

Hope you enjoyed your weekend!

On the March 7th PIC for [125 Peel Street South](#) servicing, town staff referred to 3 studies during their presentation:

1. Transportation Study by Paradigm Transportation Solutions LTD.
2. Active Transportation Study by Mobycon
3. Tree Inventory by Aboud & Assoc.

At the moment, these studies are not available on the town's webpage for [125 Peel Street South](#) servicing. Could you direct me on how I could formally request and procure these studies?

Thanks in advance for any information you can provide.

Regards,

Paul



image001.png
27K



Paul John Reale [REDACTED]

Question about a CIHA in a Future Secondary Plan Area

Paul John Reale [REDACTED]

Tue, Apr 23, 2024 at 3:23 PM

To: brian.saunderson@pc.ola.org

Dear Mr. Saunderson:

I am a long-time resident of Thornbury living at [REDACTED]. My family and I live next to 125 Peel Street South, the Community Campus of Care, which is under a Community Infrastructure and Housing Accelerator (CIHA).

The Community Campus of Care is designed to help alleviate the long-term care housing crisis in our area. However, this land is zoned in a Future Secondary Plan Area that has no Secondary Plan.

The town is now seeking to service the Community Campus of Care by bringing in infrastructure, such as water and wastewater, widened roads, a multi-unit trail and other 3rd party utilities to service the CIHA property. In short, full urbanization.

Much of this servicing requires urbanization of roads and the removal of well over 100 trees, all of which reside outside of the CIHA zoned area of 125 Peel Street South. This servicing is being proposed to be completed without a Secondary Plan in place.

I realize that the CIHA designation streamlines and expedites the development process on that designated property (in this case, 125 Peel Street South), but does it allow the Town to bring in infrastructure and full urbanization without a Secondary Plan down Peel Street South and across properties that are part of the Future Secondary Plan Area? Would they not need the consent of Grey County to bring in servicing and full urbanization without a Secondary Plan in a Future Secondary Plan Area?

I am having trouble finding accurate information on these questions, primarily because no municipality in Ontario has ever gone in to service a CIHA development in a Future Secondary Plan Area without a Secondary Plan. In all other cases, Secondary Plans have been in place and the development process has been guided by good planning practices.

With the recent introduction of Bill 185, which proposes to repeal the CIHA provisions under the Planning Act, I thought it best to find out what our rights are as residents in a Future Secondary Plan Area without a Secondary Plan because this scale of urbanization and infrastructure outside of the CIHA zoned area cannot be afterwards reversed.

Thanks for any information you can offer. Please don't hesitate to email or call me at: [REDACTED]

Regards,

Paul



Paul John Reale [REDACTED]

Question about a CIHA in a Future Secondary Plan Area with No Secondary Plan

Paul John Reale [REDACTED]

Tue, Apr 23, 2024 at 4:31 PM

To: Paul.Calandra@pc.ola.org

Dear Mr. Calandra:

I am a long-time resident of Thornbury, Ontario living at [REDACTED] in the municipality of the Town of the Blue Mountains. My family and I live next to 125 Peel Street South, the Community Campus of Care, which is under a Community Infrastructure and Housing Accelerator (CIHA).

The Community Campus of Care is designed to help alleviate the long-term care housing crisis in our area. However, this land is zoned in a Future Secondary Plan Area that has no Secondary Plan.

The town is now seeking to service the Community Campus of Care by bringing in infrastructure, such as water and wastewater, widened roads, a multi-unit trail and other 3rd party utilities to service the CIHA property. In short, full urbanization.

Much of this servicing requires urbanization of roads and the removal of well over 100 trees, all of which reside outside of the CIHA zoned area of 125 Peel Street South. This servicing is being proposed to be completed without a Secondary Plan in place.

I realize that the CIHA designation streamlines and expedites the development process on that designated property (in this case, 125 Peel Street South), but does it allow the Town to bring in infrastructure and full urbanization without a Secondary Plan down Peel Street South and across properties that are part of the Future Secondary Plan Area? Would they not need a Secondary Plan in a Future Secondary Plan Area to bring in servicing and full urbanization?

I am having trouble finding accurate information on these questions, primarily because no municipality in Ontario has ever gone in to service a CIHA development in a Future Secondary Plan Area without a Secondary Plan. In all other cases, Secondary Plans have been in place and the development process has been guided by good planning practices.

With the recent introduction of Bill 185, which proposes to repeal the CIHA provisions under the Planning Act, I thought it best to find out what our rights are as residents in a Future Secondary Plan Area without a Secondary Plan because this scale of urbanization and infrastructure outside of the CIHA zoned area cannot be afterwards reversed.

Thanks for any information you can offer. Please don't hesitate to email or call me at: [REDACTED]

Regards,

Paul

125 Peel Street Servicing Project

Paul Reale

Transparency and Accountability

- Why is the Town of the Blue Mountains relying on a tool (CIHA) for urban development that the Ontario government has proposed to repeal?
- On what basis are decision-makers poised to advance the servicing of 125 Peel Street South when critical studies and reports remain incomplete?
- How can we ensure true transparency and accountability when residents are compelled to file Freedom of Information requests to access basic project details?



Campus of Care Utility Servicing Plan

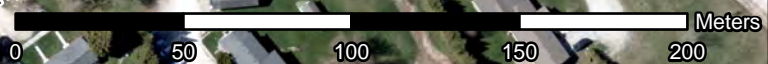


- Campus of Care Location
- Future Sewage Pumping Station (By Town)
- Future Sanitary Lines
- Future Water Lines
- Future Roads/ Pedestrian/ Street Lighting
 - Pedestrian includes multi-use trail and sidewalk

This map is intended for reference purposes only. Information shown on this map has been compiled from numerous sources and may not be complete or accurate and may be subject to change without notice. The Town of The Blue Mountains is not responsible for any errors, omissions or deficiencies in this drawing. No part of this map may be reproduced, modified or transmitted to others in any way without the written permission of © The Corporation of the Town of The Blue Mountains. THIS IS NOT A PLAN OF SURVEY.



For more information please visit www.thebluemountains.ca



Servicing

- Given the extension of services beyond the pumping station at 125 Peel Street South to Alfred Street, does this not indicate a need for a Secondary Plan for Thornbury West to ensure coherent and integrated development?
- What are the implications for homeowners on Peel Street South under the CIHA, especially concerning their inclusion or exclusion in the Future Secondary Plan Area?
- How will Council solve the conundrum that this servicing project has been deemed unaffordable under its Affordability Policy for Water and Wastewater Service Extensions?

Development Charges and Roads

- Why are Town staff recommending the road upgrade of Peel Street South when the Paradigm Transportation Solutions Traffic Impact Study concludes that such an upgrade is not necessary at the time?
- Has there been a formal housekeeping amendment to the Official Plan to change Peel Street South from a Local Road to a Collector Road?
- Who's paying the capital costs required to construct all the infrastructure and urban road design requirements along Peel Street South?

Traffic Safety

- How does the proposed crossing at Highway 26 to connect from the multi-use trail from Peel Street South to Peel Street North address the safety of an elderly person with a walker or a child at an intersection with a speed limit of 70km/h?
- Why would Town staff recommend leaving such a dangerous safety hazard for future consideration? Why are Town staff not speaking with MTO to address this safety hazard and safeguard our residents?

Request for Council

Despite reaching out to our local Member of Provincial Parliament, Brian Saunderson, and Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Paul Calandra, for clarity, our concerns as residents remain unanswered. This continued absence of information highlights a pressing need for transparency and detailed explanations from those leading this project. **Therefore, I implore the Council to postpone any decisions regarding the servicing at 125 Peel Street South until we can conduct an open and public session with Mr. Saunderson and Mr. Calandra. Such a forum would facilitate a direct exchange with these key decision-makers and allow for a thorough discussion of our community's concerns.** As residents, we are entitled to full disclosure and a comprehensive understanding of the project's impacts before moving forward.