



Staff Report

Operations – Engineering and Capital Projects

Report To: COW - Operations, Planning and Building Services
Meeting Date: February 25, 2025
Report Number: OPS.25.009
Title: HECS Funding Announcement
Prepared by: Pruthvi Desai, Manager of Capital Projects

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report OPS.25.009, entitled “HECS Funding Announcement”;

AND THAT Council authorize the Mayor and Clerk to execute the necessary agreements with the Ministry of Infrastructure, Ontario, to receive \$1,337,250.00 through the Housing Enabling Core Services (HECS) grant for the Town’s Bridge, Culvert and Guiderails Capital Works Project.

B. Overview

The Town has successfully secured \$1,337,250.00 in grant funding through the HECS Stream. This funding will support essential repair, and renewal works for municipal bridges, culverts, and guiderails, extending the lifespan of critical infrastructure and alleviating pressure on the Town’s Asset Replacement Reserves. This is another big achievement by the Town Staff after receiving approximately \$25.4M in grants for the upgrade of critical wastewater infrastructure under the Housing-Enabling Water Systems (HEWS) Funding by the Province. This achievement highlights the proactive efforts of Town Staff in identifying and obtaining external funding to support municipal priorities.

C. Background

Following the announcement of the HEWS Fund for water and wastewater infrastructure projects, the Ministry of Infrastructure introduced the HECS Fund to support road and bridge infrastructure projects. Recognizing the alignment with the Town’s Capital Project Workplan for bridge, culvert, and guiderail repairs, Staff submitted a funding application in October 2024. The application met all eligibility requirements, resulting in the Town being awarded the grant in January 2025.

Further details on the HECS grant can be accessed on the [Province’s website](#).

D. Analysis

Project Scope

The Town conducts biannual inspections of all municipal structures, including bridges, culverts, guiderails, and pedestrian bridges, following the Ontario Structure Inspection Manual (OSIM). Based on the findings of the 2023 OSIM report, structures in the most deteriorated condition have been identified as priorities for repair and renewal. The majority of these structures require concrete repairs to critical components such as soffits, wingwalls, and abutments to extend their service life. To address these deficiencies, the Town will initiate a comprehensive Capital Repair Program encompassing both engineering design and repair work.

Project Timeline

The engineering design phase of this project is scheduled to commence in February 2025 and is expected to conclude by December 2026. Subsequently, the capital repair phase will begin in April 2026, with an anticipated completion date of December 2027. These timelines align with the funding eligibility requirements, which stipulate that projects must begin no later than September 30, 2025, and be completed by March 31, 2028.

HECS Grant Details

The Town became aware of the HECS grant opportunity in September 2024 and promptly submitted an application in October 2024. By January 2025, the Town was informed of its successful application, securing grant funding to support the engineering and repair work for 10 bridges and two culverts. Staff will continue to provide updates to Council regarding the grant administration process and any additional requirements as more information becomes available.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that Council authorize the Mayor and Clerk to execute the necessary agreements to secure this funding for the Bridge, Culvert, and Guiderail Capital Works Project.

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

N/A

G. Financial Impacts

By successfully securing the HECS funding of \$1,337,250.00 for bridge and culvert capital work the Town has decreased its dependency on asset replacement reserve funds. These reserve funds can now be redirected towards other priority capital projects.

This funding source has not been reflected in the 2025 Draft Budget.

H. In Consultation With

Jim McCannell, Manager of Roads and Drainage

Michael Switzer, Manager of Finance.

I. Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report has not been the subject of a Public Meeting and/or a Public Information Centre as neither a Public Meeting nor a Public Information Centre are required. However, any comments regarding this report should be submitted to Pruthvi Desai, Manager of Capital Projects pdesai@thebluemountains.ca .

J. Attached

None.

Respectfully submitted,

Pruthvi Desai
Manager of Capital Projects

Alan Pacheco
Director of Operations

For more information, please contact:
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Report Approval Details

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

Pruthvi Desai - Feb 10, 2025 - 3:32 PM

Alan Pacheco - Feb 11, 2025 - 8:39 AM