

Re: Staff Report # PBS.25.062-Report in response to the Deputation of Sarah Waggott of the Beaver River Trail Working Group

On behalf of CANN and its Beaver River Trail Working Group (the “Working Group”), I would like to thank Council, sitting as a Committee of the Whole, for this opportunity to submit our comments on the Report of the Manager of Community Planning, Operations, Planning and Building Services (“the Report”), responding our deputation of May 20, 2025 requesting that the portion of the Beaver River Trail (“the Trail”) located on the unopened road allowances on Alice Steet East and Russell Street be protected from encroachment by way of a Council decision to “stop up and close” these unopened road allowances. Such an action would provide long term protection for the Trail, the natural vegetation and wildlife that exists along these corridors. It would also provide a firm basis for future connection by way of a trail to the southern section of the Beaver River Trail and to other trails in the area.

In response to the Staff Report, the Working Group believes that the current use of the road allowance as a trail/public space is entirely in keeping with the Town’s requirements for park areas/public spaces. In fact, as indicated in our initial submission in May, this trail is the only public space/area in this particular section of Thornbury. To leave it unprotected in order to provide for some future use as a road would remove a long term trail/recreation area and remove a significant natural transportation asset in

the area. Accordingly, we respectfully submit that Option 2 concurrent with Option 3 be supported by Council.

First, addressing our support of Option 2: This option suggested that Council issue a Proclamation to support the long term protection of the Trail. We agree with this recommendation in the Report and urge Council to adopt the wording suggested in the Report and issue the Proclamation at its earliest opportunity. It clearly sets out goals and objectives of the Town for natural assets such as the Trail. However, this option offers minimal protection for the Trail in that, as the Report states, it has no legal status and is not a By-law. Furthermore, we would submit that this Proclamation should not be the end of the process but rather the first step in providing protections for the Trail which are necessary for the protection of this natural asset. We would also suggest that the wording of the Proclamation in the 3rd paragraph commencing with, “Whereas the existing vegetation and mature trees...” be amended by adding the following words “...and on the road allowance...” be added after the words, “...mature trees adjacent to...”.

Addressing our support of Option 3: We feel that Option 3 would provide the protection that this Trail requires given its location, its length of use, the lack of existing park/recreation facilities in this particular area and it’s real and tangible value to the Town as a park/trail on public (Town owned) land and its connectivity role with the trail system in the Town. It should be noted that the Town is not forever foreclosed from selling some or all of this Trail to a third party for another use at some future time by stopping up and closing these road allowances. However, a stop up and close

decision/order at this time would signal a clear signal to the community, residents, visitors, developers, trail users and future councils, that this Trail is a significant Town asset that deserves this level of protection.

The Report notes that there are several adjacent development properties the road allowances. We wish to point out that there is street access for these properties from other road allowances adjacent to these properties (fig. 2 of the Report) and so access to and from the road allowance for Russell Street should not be an issue for these properties

Regarding Options 4 ,5 and 6. We wish to express our appreciation to the drafters of the Report for including additional options however, as noted in the report aspects of these options are somewhat complex,lengthy, time and resource consuming. Should Council wish, the Working Group can provide more detailed comments addressing these remaining, but considerably less favored options.

Thank you for this opportunity to respond to the Staff Report # PBS.25.062.