



## Committee of the Whole Report

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**Report Number:** ENG2024-001

**Meeting Date:** February 6, 2024

**Title:** **Update on the Status of the Low Volume Gravel Roads Program**

**Description:** This report updates Council on the status of the Low Volume Gravel Roads program and outlines options relating to discontinuance of the program.

**Author and Title:** Michael Farquhar, Manager of Technical Services ECA

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### **Recommendation(s):**

**That** Report ENG2024-001, **Update on the Status of the Low Volume Gravel Roads Program**, be received; and

**That** this recommendation be brought forward to Council for consideration at the next Regular Council Meeting.

**Department Head:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Financial/Legal/HR/Other:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Chief Administrative Officer:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Background:**

At the Special Council meeting on December 1, 2020, Council adopted the following resolution:

### **CR2020-397**

Moved By Councillor Elmslie  
Seconded By Councillor Yeo

**That** Staff be requested to provide a list of small low volume gravel roads, in consultation with Council, and report back to Council by the end of Q2, 2021 on the cost to hard-top the roads identified.

### **Carried**

Subsequent to Council's direction through resolution CR2020-397, staff reported back to Council at the June 15, 2021 Committee of the Whole meeting, appended to this report as Appendix A (Low Volume Gravel Roads ENG2021-014).

This report identified low volume gravel roads in built up areas around towns, villages, hamlets and built up lakefront communities as well as gravel road segments identified by Public Works as being maintenance-intensive due to distance from other gravel roads. The report provided lengths of these road segments and costs for upgrading them to hard topped roads. It was the intent of ENG2021-014 to provide information on this subject to Council for discussion purposes. If there were any unintentional omissions, or sections that don't meet the initial intention of Council then they would be identified and addressed based on any further direction by Council or updates to the program.

The report outlined the 895 Km gravel road inventory in the City at the time, as shown in Appendix A of this report. Within that network there are approximately 63 Km of gravel roads considered to be in towns, villages, hamlets, or built up lakefront communities. Report ENG2021-014 itemized these gravel roads by section, location, length, estimated AADT (annual average daily traffic) volume, and cost to upgrade to a hard topped surface. The estimated cost was based on an averaged unit cost per kilometre to resurface these roads with a hi-float surface as well as preparation for this type of road surface. The total cost of this work was estimated in Report ENG2021-014 to be \$6,306,780.

Council then adopted the resolution below at the June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Council meeting.

### **Low Volume Gravel Roads**

Mike Farquhar, Supervisor, Technical Services

- CR2021-312

Moved by Councillor Richardson

Seconded by Councillor Yeo

**That** Report ENG2021-014, **Low Volume Gravel Roads**, be received.

**Carried**

At the January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022 Council meeting, Corporate Services brought to Council Report CORP2022-001 regarding the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund (OCIF) allocation. This report outlined options for funding the resurfacing of identified low volume gravel roads shown in report ENG2021-014. Below is the resolution adopted by Council amending the 2022 Capital Budget by creating a multiyear project for the Low Volume Gravel Roads program, allocating \$2,519,746 to the program in 2022 and the balance to be allocated through the City's capital budget process from 2023 to 2026.

### **2022 Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund Allocation**

Jennifer Stover, Director of Corporate Services **CR2022-008**

**That** Report CORP2022-001, **2022 Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund Allocation**, be received;

**That** the 2022 Capital budget be amended to include a multi year project titled "Low Volume Gravel Roads" in the amount of \$6,800,000;

**That** additional \$2,519,746 of Ontario Community Infrastructure Funding received in 2022 be allocated to the Low Volume Gravel Roads capital budget for 2022; and

**That** the balance of the project be funded equally over four years (2023-2026) from the annual Ontario Community Infrastructure Funding allocation.

**Carried**

Through this resolution Council funded the Low Volume Gravel Roads program in the amount of \$2,519,746 in 2022 and subsequently \$1,100,000 in 2023 through the capital budget process for a combined allocated amount of \$3,619,746. Due to carryover projects in 2022 that were deferred from 2021, program work did not start until 2023.

As part of the 2024 capital budget process, Report **CA2023-005** was brought to Council and adopted with the following resolution below:

**CR2023-613**

Moved By Councillor Perry  
Seconded By Councillor Joyce

**That** Report CA2023-005, **Proposed 2024 Tax-Supported Capital Budget**, be received;

**That** the Mayor's Proposed 2024 Budget and Business Plan, consisting of the:

- Proposed 2024 Tax-Supported Capital Budget;
- Proposed 2024 Operating Budget;
- Proposed 2024 Special Projects Budget; and
- Proposed 2024 Water and Wastewater Capital and Operating Budgets;

and attached as Appendix A to Report CA2023-005, be received;

**That** the Mayor's Proposed 2024 Tax-Supported Capital Budget, be amended in accordance with Appendix B to Report CA2023-005, inclusive of \$1,218,000.00 in uncommitted Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund (OCIF) financing in the Low-Volume Gravel Roads capital program;

**That** the Mayor's Proposed 2024 Tax-Supported Operating Budget be amended to reduce the 2024 Asset Management Reserve contribution by \$1,400,000.00; and

**That** the Mayor's 2024 Tax-Supported Capital Budget, as amended, be deliberated by Council.

**Carried**

Within the body of Report CA2023-005 are a number of recommendations pertaining to the Low Volume Gravel Roads program as follows:

“The City is facing a number of financial pressures which are challenging its adherence to the LTFP. In an effort to reduce the 2024 general tax increase to an affordable level under these circumstances, staff recommends three measures respecting the current Low-Volume Gravel Roads capital program as follows:

1. Pause on Financing Installments: The Proposed 2024 Tax-Supported Capital Budget does not include the financing installment of approximately \$1,100,000 originally planned for 2024 in the program’s 2022-2026 lifespan. Even if the City were not currently facing financial pressures, this financing pause would still be recommended to let work under the program catch up to existing committed financing.

2. Reallocation of Uncommitted OCIF Financing: Over 2022-2023, the Low-Volume Gravel Roads capital program was financed entirely by OCIF in the amount of \$3,619,000. Of this, approximately \$1,909,000 has been expended or otherwise committed through work undertaken through the program to date, leaving approximately \$1,710,000 in uncommitted financing in the program. This report recommends that \$1,218,000 of this amount be reallocated to the Proposed 2024 Tax-Supported Capital Budget, leaving approximately \$492,000 of uncommitted financing in the program. Appendix B of this report outlines how this \$1,218,000 in added OCIF financing is applied to various proposed 2024 capital projects to reduce AM Reserve financing commensurately.

3. Report to Council: Staff support existing direction of Council for staff to report to Council on the state and future of the Low-Volume Gravel Roads capital program in Q1 of 2024. Staff expects the program to be discontinued in its current form whereby capital projects to pave gravel roads will instead be incorporated into the Rural Resurfacing capital program through the Asset Management Plan, LTFP and future tax-supported capital budgets. “

This report flows from that and prior direction provided by Council.

### **Rationale:**

The purpose of this report is to update Council on “the state and future of the Low-Volume Gravel Roads capital program” as recommend in Report CA2023-005. It is the intent of this report to highlight the sections of roads identified in Report CORP2022-001 that have been completed through this program as well as to address any deletion of road segments from the program due to non-compatibility with the original intent of the program, through input from Public Works. It also promotes discussion among Council to determine whether and how the balance of the program and its work will be addressed.

In 2023 staff implemented the first year of the Low Volume Gravel Roads program, and Table 1 below identifies the road segments that were upgraded to a paved surface as a result.

Table 1: List of roads completed in 2023

Road	From	To
Elm Tree Road	Valentia Rd	West End
Station Road	Cresswell Rd	Farmstead Rd
Perdue Road	CKL 17	CKL 17
Lawson Court	Scenic Hill Rd	West End
Scenic Hill Road	Valley Rd	Lawson Court
Sturgeon Road South	Rutland St. E	South End
Sunrise Road	Frankhill Rd	Boundary Rd
Windmill Road	Frankhill Rd	West End
Whitetail Road	Killarney Bay Rd	Country Lane
Romany Ranch Road	Balsam Grove Rd	West End
Robinson Ave	Hartley Rd	East End
Iris Drive	Killarney Bay Rd	West End
Kodiak Road	Birch Point Rd	Killarney Bay Rd
Hillhead Road	River Rd	North End
Moorings Drive	Fells Point Rd	South End
Fells Bay Road	Northline Rd	Fells Point Rd
Osborne Street	Peace Rd	South End
Pondview Street	Hwy 7	South end
Lila Street	Bridge St	West End
Tartan Street	Bridge St	West End
Coldstream Road	Bridge St	West End

The scope of work for the upgrading of these road sections involved ditching, road base repair, culvert replacements where required, application of gravel, grading and resurfacing with two applications of hi-float (tar and chip). This work was completed utilizing the City’s pre-existing tenders for resurfacing works. For the most part, roads included in the 2023 work plan were selected from the program list based on their having been previously improved through former programs such as Gravel Road Rehabilitation.

The total value of committed work in 2023 was \$1,909,000, including certain works (e.g. slurry seal) which remain to be completed on newly paved roads, which converted **19.8 Km** of gravel roads to hard topped roads. Appendix B of this report indicates the various locations of this work. To date, approximately 31% of the program’s roads have been resurfaced and upgraded. Based on this and program funding allocated and since removed, Table 2 below summarizes program financing allocations and commitments, with all figures relating to the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund (OCIF):

Table 2: Chart of program spending

2022 and 2023 Allocations	Committed to Date Through Paving of Gravel Roads	Removed by Council Resolution CR2023-613	Uncommitted Balance Remaining
\$3,619,000.00	\$1,909,000.00	\$1,218,000.00	\$492,000.00

In the absence of Council directing otherwise, the balance of OCIF remaining in the Low Volume Gravel Roads program will be used in 2024 to upgrade, on a priority basis, the next series of roads within the program as shown in Table 3. Selection of these sections from Appendix C was based on targeting the highest AADT (annual average daily traffic count) sections within built up areas. This work would exhaust remaining uncommitted program financing of \$492,000 and could be integrated into existing capital contracts.

Table 3: List of roads to be resurfaced in 2024

Road name	From	To	Length_km
Wagar road	Admiral Dr.	Gillis St.	0.14
Daytonia Beach road	Long Beach Rd.	Pleasure St.	0.46
Daytonia Beach road	Pleasure St.	North End	0.72
Oriole Road	Redwing Ave	West end	0.31
Bass St.	CKL 8	Oriole road	0.20
Redwing Ave	CKL 8	Oriole road	0.06
Riley lane	Elmtree road	Birchwood Lane	1.46
Wrenhaven road	Highway #35	McNevan Dr.	1.66
Total			5.00

Table 4 represents a list of road sections that were originally identified through report ENG2021-014 as part of the overall program and have now been removed . As stated in that report, staff would update Council on any errors or omissions or deletions to the program list. In collaboration with Public Works the follow list was recommended for removal from the program.

Table 4: List of roads to be removed from the program

Table 4

Road name	From	To	Length in km's
Berry Lane	Ranch road	Manchester Trail	0.56
Birch Lane	Brooks Lane	North End	0.26
Birch Rd.	Cambray road	East End	0.16
Boundary Rd.	Yankee Line	South End	0.08
Byrnell Ave.	CKL 8	Grove road	0.22
Chisholm Trail	Brooks Lane	Black River road	0.19
Chisholm Trail	Eldridge Lane	Amon Dr	0.26
Lock St.	Coldstream road	South End	0.19
Manchester Trail	Berry Lane	North End	0.06
McNevan Dr.	Wrenhaven road	North End	0.09
Miller Rd.	McNevan Dr.	Wrenhaven road	0.17
Oxby Lane	Sadowa road	East End	0.42
Ranch Rd.	Berry Lane	North End	0.13
Response St.	CKL 8	North End	0.22
Royal Cedar Rd.	Hwy #35	Mason Lane	0.43
Star Rd.	South Fork Dr.	West End	0.42
Vern Court	Benson Blvd.	North End	0.23
Waterside St.	Aipine St.	Alpine St.	0.13
Total			4.21

**Other Alternatives Considered:**

In the absence of Council directing otherwise, staff will continue with the Low Volume Gravel Roads program in 2024 so as to exhaust the remaining OCIF financing of \$492,000 on the next highest-priority roads within the scope of the program. Should



Council wish to discontinue the program, however, staff would recommend that Council provide the following alternative direction:

**That** \$492,000.00 in Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund (OCIF) financing in the Low-Volume Gravel Roads capital program be reallocated to the 2024 Rural Resurfacing capital program and applied to capital projects therein, as determined by the City Treasurer, so as to displace \$492,000.00 in Asset Management Reserve financing, which shall be returned to the Asset Management Reserve.

Should Council discontinue the Low Volume Gravel Roads program but still wish for the roads therein (as identified in Appendix C) to eventually be upgraded to a paved surface, staff would recommend that Council provide the following additional direction:

**That** gravel roads identified in Appendix C of Report ENG2024-001 and which remain unpaved at the completion of the Low Volume Gravel Roads program be included in the 2025-2031 iterations of the Rural Resurfacing capital program.

Staff notes that 2031 is the current horizon of the Long-Term Financial Plan.

### **Alignment to Strategic Priorities**

This report aligns with the below strategic priorities of the City:

1. Good Government

This report responds to Council with information to help Council make decisions on service levels for low volume gravel roads.

### **Financial/Operation Impacts:**

If Council discontinues the Low Volume Gravel Roads program entirely, the net financial impact will be a \$492,000 increase in the Asset Management Reserve balance. If Council further directs that gravel roads identified in Appendix C but not paved through the Low-Volume Gravel Roads program be paved over 2025-2031, then annual funding of the Rural Resurfacing program would need to be increased by about \$549,000 (in 2024 dollars) accordingly. Recognizing this amount would need to be increased over time to account for inflation, staff would make the necessary adjustments to the Long-Term Financial Plan.

## **Consultations:**

Public Works

Corporate Assets

## **Attachments:**

Appendix A:



ENG2021-014 Low  
Volume Gravel Road

Appendix B:



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ads\_Program\_2023\_1

Appendix C:



Appendix C  
updated Low Volum

Appendix D:



Table 2 Low Volume  
Gravel roads locatio

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**Department Head: Juan Rojas, Director of Engineering and Corporate Assets**