



## COUNTY OF BRUCE

### BRIDGE INFRASTRUCTURE MASTER PLAN CENTRAL BRUCE COUNTY

#### PUBLIC MEETING NOTES

**Details:**

October 19, 2011  
Paisley Community Centre

Open House: 6:15 – 6:45 p.m.  
Presentation: 6:45 – 7:30 p.m.  
Questions: 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.  
Open House: 8:30 – 9:00 p.m.

**In Attendance:**

Brian Knox	Bruce County Engineer
Bill Goetz	County Highways Committee Chairman
Mike Smith	Bruce County Warden

Paul Eagleson	Mayor of Arran-Elderslie
Mark Davis	Deputy Mayor
Vernon Wepler	Works Manager

David Inglis	Mayor of Brockton
Roland Anstett	Deputy Mayor
John Strader	Works Manager

Andrew Ross	B.M. Ross and Associates (BMROSS)
Kelly Vader	
Sharon Anderson	
Sarah Tomaszewski	

Members of the public: 30±

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***6:15 p.m. - 6:45 p.m. – Open House***

- **Public Arrival**
  - Members of the public signed in upon arrival.
  - Poster boards were on display for the public to view.
  - BMROSS and County Staff were available to talk to the public as they arrived.

***6:45 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. – Presentation***

- **Power Point Presentation**
  - Brian Knox welcomed those in attendance and introduced County representatives in attendance including the Mayors of both Arran-Elderslie and Brockton. Both Mayors welcomed members of the public in attendance and introduced their respective members of Council who were present.
  - Brian Knox began the presentation by outlining the agenda for the evening. He then briefly described each of the primary bridges included in the study and discussed the purpose of, and scope of the Master Plan Study.
  - Andrew provided a brief overview of each bridge site, outlining the age and history of each structure and reviewing some of the deficiencies associated with each.
  - Kelly then discussed the Master Plan process and how the Class Environmental Assessment process would be utilized to complete the study. She then summarized the specialized assessments to be completed as part of the analysis; the Natural Environment Characterization Report, the Cultural Heritage Assessment, and Transportation Study. Kelly noted that the transportation analysis had yet to be completed.
  - Andrew reviewed a map which illustrated transportation corridors within the study area boundary and explained how the replacement or removal of individual bridges, or a series of bridges, might affect the transportation network. He outlined the assessment criteria for the traffic analysis and discussed how the information collected would influence the Master Plan process. Andrew then reviewed the engineering analysis which would be undertaken in the next several months to determine potential costs associated with the possible replacement of each bridge.
  - Kelly completed the presentation by explaining the comparison criteria which would be utilized to evaluate the various options being considered, and then outlining the study timeline and next steps.

***7:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. – Questions***

- After concluding the presentation, questions were invited from the public.

- **List of Questions**

Q. When was the traffic study completed?

A. Brian explained that the traffic analysis had yet to be completed but that traffic volumes had been provided by the Municipalities and included data from multiple seasons.

Q. What if a bridge that is used for emergency access is closed?

A. Brian reassured the audience that emergency access and response times for various closure and replacement alternatives would be evaluated as part of the study.

Q. What is the budget for repair and replacement of these bridges?

A. Brian provided a brief history of infrastructure funding in the County over the past 50 years. He explained that only a small portion of taxes are allocated to bridge infrastructure and that the budget amount must be utilized for all 120 bridges that the County maintains, not just the structures being assessed as part of this study. Brian also noted that no grants are currently available to support infrastructure projects such as this, although past projects such as the Huron Terrace Bridge replacement in Kincardine did receive infrastructure stimulus funding. He estimated that approximately 1.5 million was currently in the fund.

Q. Will we be able to review the preliminary results next spring?

A. Kelly stated that the preliminary plan would be reviewed at the next public meeting.

Q. What impact does the heritage assessment have on bridge closures?

A. Andrew explained that retirement of a bridge doesn't necessarily mean that the bridge will be removed. He provided examples of several retired structures which had been preserved in situ while a new bridge was constructed either abutting the older structure or at a new location. Kelly confirmed that none of the structures were on the Ontario Heritage Bridge List or identified as being provincially significant.

Q. Is it more expensive to build a bridge with railings that you can see through?

A. Brian explained that bridge designs reflect the traffic volume and speed that they are designed to accommodate and noted that the engineers are bound by safety standards outlined within the Canadian Highway Bridge Design Code.

Q. Will slow moving vehicles be included when estimating the traffic volumes? Would the closure of bridges force more slow moving vehicles onto County road 3?

A. Brian confirmed that all vehicular traffic will be included in the traffic study. He also discussed current limitations associated with load restricted bridges which may not have the capacity to support the heavier/wider farm equipment often utilized today.

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- Q. Would costs associated with road alterations, which may be needed as a result of a bridge closure, also be included in the study?
- A. Brian confirmed that the study would consider costs for any necessary road alterations such as turn-arounds.
- Q. Is repairing the bridges an option? Could the decks be replaced?
- A. Andrew discussed the primary structural components of a bridge and explained that repairing decks is an option but there must be value in the bridge as a whole in order for repairs to be considered.
- Q. What is the cost of the environmental assessment and creation of the Master Plan?
- A. Brian suggested that the Master Plan process would cost approximately \$30,000 which included the cost of additional studies. He also noted that the price may escalate somewhat as a result of the comments and suggestions heard at the meeting.
- Q. Which bridges will be retired?
- A. Brian explained that decisions on future bridge retirements have not yet been made, but they will be identified through the Master Plan process.
- Q. Where will the preliminary plan be available for review?
- A. Kelly indicated that hard copies of the report would be made available for review somewhere in Paisley, at the Brockton and Arran-Elderslie Municipal Offices, at the Bruce County Highways Department office, as well as online.
- Q. Would copies be available before the next public meeting?
- A. Kelly replied that typically the Master Plan report is published at the conclusion of the process after the final public meeting, but that a draft report could be made available before the next meeting if that is what residents would prefer.
- Q. How are costs calculated for potential bridge replacements?
- A. Brian responded that the costs mentioned in the presentation were very rough estimates and will need to be refined as part of the engineering review. Andrew noted that he would utilize information from other bridge construction projects to estimate costs for the Master Plan study.
- Q. Is it possible to design a single lane bridge? Would fire trucks be able to access a single lane bridge?
- A. Andrew discussed Ministry of Transportation (MTO) standards for new bridges which demand at minimum a 2 lane bridge design. Special permission would need to be obtained for designs that varied from this minimum standard. He noted that there is little cost difference between single or two lane bridge designs because a large portion of the costs are associated with the abutments and supports.

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- Q. Is there federal or provincial funding available for bridge construction?
- A. Brian stated that a portion of the federal gas tax is allocated to the County for road-related projects, but that no other direct funding for infrastructure is provided by either the Federal or Provincial governments.
- Q. When will bridge closures occur and when will the bridge itself be removed? Will those costs be included in the bridge analysis?
- A. Andrew discussed the expected life span of bridges and noted that inspections are done every 2 years. He estimated that removal costs could be between \$100,000-200,000 and would be included in the study cost analysis.
- Q. If the MTO isn't putting money into the project why do the designs have to be approved by them?
- A. Andrew clarified that the MTO does not approve bridge designs. However their bridge design standards must be followed when constructing a new bridge. He compared the process to construction of a new home, which must follow the Ontario Building Code (OBC).
- Q. Have cost estimates been calculated for repairing the bridges?
- A. Andrew explained that each bridge would need to be individually assessed to calculate the costs and that the process is more complex than calculating costs for a new bridge. Each bridge is different and could have site specific issues that may need to be addressed.
- Q. If the budget fund only contains 1.5 million, replacing one bridge would exceed the budget amount.
- A. Kelly explained that the Master Plan, once completed, will be a long term plan and is intended to be implemented over the next 10-15 years. The first project that is identified will probably be implemented within the next 1-2 years.
- Q. Will information comparing repair vs. replacement be available?
- A. Andrew confirmed that repair and replacement costs will be included.

**8:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. – Open House****Individual Concerns**

- Members of the public were given the opportunity to have one-on-one time with BMROSS staff and County staff members, following the question period, to ask any additional question.