



Staff Report

Report To: Council Meeting

From: Lee Gosnell, Manager of Operations & Community Services

Date: 2023-05-25

Subject: Downie Line Paving Request

Recommendation:

That West Elgin Council hereby receives the report from L. Gosnell, Manager of Operations & Community Services for information purposes.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to outline operational and financial implications regarding a request to hard surface a portion of Downie Line west of Furnival Road.

Background:

Staff received a request from a resident living on Downie Line that consideration be given to “paving of Downie Line on the west side of Furnival Road for a few hundred feet at least”. In the diagram below, there are two options shown for possible project lengths.

Option 1 shows the requested ‘few hundred feet’ west of the intersection, which would have the hard surface end at the driveway for 22319 Downie Line. This new section of road would run adjacent to one residential lot, two commercial lots, and one undeveloped building lot.

Option 2 shows what it would look like if we were to lengthen the project area to include all the residential lots which front Downie Line on the south side. This would require approximately 900 feet and would have the hard surface end at the west edge of 22255 Downie Line. This would include one additional residence and 2 additional building lots.

Traditionally, this section of Downie Line has been serviced like all other gravel roads in West Elgin. It receives spring/fall grading and spot grading when deemed necessary through regular patrols. It also has dust control product applied after the spring grading has been completed. Hard surfacing 300 – 900 feet of this gravel road would have minimal impact on summer maintenance timing and costs, as the grader and brine truck would need to travel this section to complete operations on the remaining 3.4 kilometers (ending at Blacks Road). However, this would pose an operational concern during the winter months because the new hard surface section would need to be serviced by a truck vs. the grader. The grader would not be able to complete ice control measures as it does on gravel roads with serrated blades. A plow truck would be required to travel this small section to plow the snow and apply product, which would be time consuming and lead to increased costs in labour, fuel, and material. Additionally, the truck and grader would both be travelling this 3.7 km stretch of Downie Line to service their respective sections.

Should this area become hard surface, drainage upgrades would need to be completed off the Furnival Road apron to deal with wash water which lays along the road edge when the adjacent business washes trailers.

Finally, consideration needs to be given to future requests of this nature. Converting a gravel road (or portion thereof) to hard surface for the purpose of eliminating dust is a costly option. It will increase maintenance costs moving forward and make winter operations less efficient. It will also set a precedent which West Elgin Council will have to consider when property owners from other areas of the municipality make the same type of request. Generally, hard surfacing of small sections of roadway should be avoided for these reasons.



Financial Implications:

The following outlines approximate costs associated with 4 different options –

Option 1 – Asphalt paving for 300' west of the intersection	\$25,040.00
Option 2 – Surface treatment for 300' west of the intersection	\$8,540.00
Option 3 – Asphalt paving for 900' west of the intersection	\$75,370.00
Option 4 – Surface treatment for 900' west of the intersection	\$25,620.00

Note – this pricing only reflects the material cost associated with the various options and does not include necessary drainage work or road preparation. This pricing also considers the contractor being in West Elgin for other work and not mobilizing specifically for such a small job.

Respectfully submitted by,

Lee Gosnell
Manager of Operations & Community Services