

Fenelon Falls Second Crossing Environmental Assessment

On May 29, 2021, the City of Kawartha Lakes (City) and Dillon Consulting (Dillon) presented an update to the public on the progress of the Fenelon Falls Second Crossing Environmental Assessment (EA) and Traffic Study work. The virtual meeting was recorded and can be watched by visiting this link:

<https://jumpinkawarthalakes.ca/ffsecondcrossing/widgets/70720/videos/7354>

Leading up to the May 29th meeting, and for the weeks following the meeting, the City and Dillon team received multiple questions and comments from the public regarding the project. This document summarizes the questions received and provides responses. Although worded differently, many questions were received that raise the same issues. As such, this document summarizes and combines questions that address the same issues.

Based on the input received from the community, the technical team from Dillon is preparing an Interim Environmental Study Report for the City that will include information on the study findings, summary of input received and recommendations for next steps. The report will be submitted to the City in late summer/early fall 2021. The report will be made public and shared on the City's website.

Key Themes of Questions and Comments Received

The questions and comments received from the public and stakeholders varied by issue. The key themes of the questions and comments received include:

- Concerns with the impacts that a new bypass or a second in town bridge would have on people, property, environment, wildlife, recreation, quality of life, traffic operations/local road connections, road safety, boating and flooding.
- Concerns with the effectiveness of a new bypass to address traffic in Fenelon Falls.
- Concerns that a new bypass would be a truck haul route with truck traffic that would to residents along the bypass route.
- Concerns with the cost of a new bypass over the Burnt River.
- Questions regarding better use of existing bypass routes available in the surrounding area.
- Questions regarding the potential economic impacts that a bypass could have on in-town businesses.
- Questions regarding completion of an economic impacts and benefits study looking at a bypass and a second in-town bridge.
- Concerns with the effectiveness of in-town intersection improvements at Helen and Lindsay Street to address traffic in Fenelon Falls.
- Concerns with the impacts to businesses that could result from changes to the Helen Street and Lindsay Street intersection.
- Concerns with the impacts to residents on Elliot Street that would occur with the in-town traffic improvements that would increase the use of Elliot Street.
- Questions regarding the traffic study completed and the origin and destination of vehicles.
- Concerns with the condition of the existing in-town bridge and pedestrian connections in-town.
- Concerns with the property and traffic impacts that a second in-town bridge would have.
- Concerns with the location of a second in-town bridge in relation to schools and residences.
- Questions regarding the potential for a second in-town bridge in the future.
- Concerns regarding the design of the Tim Hortons drive-through and traffic queueing.

- Concerns regarding land use planning near the existing bridge in-town.
- Questions regarding next steps in the study process and when recommendations will be made.
- Concerns with lack of action and continued traffic congestion that will get worse.

The remainder of this document summarizes the questions received and provides responses. In addition to the questions posed in this document, there were many comments received from community members. There was an overall recognition in the comments of the traffic concerns in town and a desire to see lower impact solutions implemented in town first before other major new infrastructure is progressed that would displace and impact people. There were also comments in support of improving active transportation systems to support safe and attractive cycling and walking options, including across the existing bridge in town.

Frequently Asked Questions

Questions Related to Bypass Options

1. It sounds like you are saying the new bypass should be built. Why are you proposing a new bypass connection along 3rd Concession over the Burnt River?

A new bypass is not being proposed for implementation at this time. The new bypass is only one option that is being examined. The study is not complete and as such the bypass option is still being reviewed. There are no final recommendations going forward to Council at this time that confirm a new bypass to be constructed. The bypass option at 3rd Concession is being recommended for further study as there are complex issues that need further examination before a recommendation to proceed could be made. Current work is conceptual and high level. There is more work to do to understand the design requirements needed for a bridge in this area given the existing flood plain and topography. Additional work would also identify the range of impacts that a new bypass at 3rd Concession over the Burnt River would have before it could be recommended.

Important to note is that the Municipal Class EA process was recently updated by the Province which requires more detailed study for bridges over waterbodies that needs to be done for this bypass. These changes came into effect after the project began in 2019 but are now required. In order for a new bypass over the Burnt River to be recommended, a Schedule C EA study needs to be completed which involves more detailed review of concepts, designs, impacts and recommendations. The work that has been done to date provides the understanding of additional work needed to complete a full Schedule C EA for a new Burnt River bypass.

2. Why are you considering a new bypass connection with another bridge over the Burnt River when there are two existing connections that could be used instead? There is Mitchells Bridge on Northline Road and a bridge on Burnt River Road at Concession Road 6, can you use one of those as a bypass route instead of building new?

One key function of a bypass would be to redirect truck traffic. The bypass would act as the primary haul route to reduce truck traffic traveling through downtown Fenelon Falls. In 2006 a study of haul route options was completed that identified 3rd Concession with a new bridge over the Burnt River as the preferred route. The previous study recommended that an environmental assessment (EA) be completed for the identified route. This is now the EA that follows up on that recommendation. The

previous study did look at the existing routes options and did not recommend they be carried forward as haul routes that would be effective to better manage truck traffic through the region.

Subsequent to the 2006 study, Mitchells Bridge was upgraded. The current road connections to Mitchells bridge are not sufficient to handle truck traffic at this time. Load requirements of the bridge would need to be assessed to determine capacity if this were to become a more significant bypass. Given the turning requirements of trucks, all of the intersections along the Northline/Mitchells bridge route (along Northline and Poulson) would need to be redesigned. The turning requirements would limit truck use as long haul trucks are less likely to take routes with multiple turns that require slow lead in. Truck travel delays result in economic impacts to drivers. However, based on feedback received, there is the potential to review existing route signage for the Mitchells Bridge and Northline Road bypass around town that currently exists. The City is going to look into this. This can be done in the near future for general traffic during peak periods. This may result in improvements to in-town traffic congestion which can be reviewed and factored into the additional study required.

The other existing bridge connection further north over the Burnt River at Burnt River Road and Concession 6 was not identified as an appropriate haul route when the detailed haul route study was completed in 2006 as it is further from the connecting east-west routes.

3. Starting at 3rd Concession and Northline Road, what would be the travel time difference between taking the new bypass route straight across Concession 3rd, versus taking the existing route down Northline over Mitchells bridge, across Poulson and then up to 121 and 3rd Concession? Is it more than 10 minutes?

Mapping indicates that a regular vehicle can complete the existing route along Northline using Mitchells Bridge currently in approximately 9-10 minutes (heavy vehicles would operate at slower speeds and would increase that time to more than 10 minutes. We do not have detailed numbers on this).

With a new 3rd Concession Burnt River bypass, the 3.3 km connection would take less than 3 minutes in clear travel conditions.

4. What property impacts will the new bypass have (including the new Burnt River bridge and 3rd Concession upgrades)? Will you be expropriating?

The specific property impacts of a new bypass need to be confirmed through additional study. Given that a new bypass would include a new bridge over the Burnt River and the need to upgrade 3rd Concession, it is anticipated that if this option is recommended, there will be impacts to properties. These impacts may include full property acquisition for the footprint of the new bridge as well as potential easements along 3rd Concession. However, the extents of these property impacts are not yet known. Current drawings showing where the bridge would be located are for conceptual demonstration only and do not indicate any specifics about property impacts or the dimensions of the bridge or road upgrades. In addition, connecting the existing local roads that run north-south along Burnt River would need to be reviewed in order to determine safe connections at 3rd Concession. Changes to the existing road connections could also have property impacts. Further study is required to understand the limits of any potential property impacts. No decisions have been made about any expropriation or easements.

5. Will you be compensating people for impacting property values for those properties near the new bypass that are not expropriated?

It is too early in the work to identify specifics related to property impacts, impacts to property values or compensation approaches related to these issues. If the bypass option is progressed any further, additional studies will need to be completed that consider the full range of impacts of various bridge and road designs in order to understand what compensation may be appropriate and how the impacts could be mitigated.

6. What will the noise, air quality, water quality and natural environment impacts be of the new Burnt River bridge and required upgrades of 3rd Concession? Are you aware of the natural habitats, species, wildlife, woodlots and water in the area that would be impacted?

If the bypass option is progressed any further, additional studies will need to be completed related to air quality, noise, soils, water quality and quantity, wildlife, aquatic and terrestrial habitat and environmentally significant wetlands and woodlands. Baseline studies have been completed at a high level that identify general environmental conditions in the study area but this work will need to be supplemented with more detailed study to determine the potential impacts and mitigation that would be required if a new bypass is progressed further.

These additional studies would be completed as per the Schedule C Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Process that would be required for a bypass solution or a new in-town bridge solution. Specific environmental surveys would be needed once the footprint of a bridge and road improvements was identified.

7. Will the proposed bypass comply with existing planning and environmental policy?

The design of a bypass would have to consider the applicable policies and regulations as per the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process, including applicable municipal, provincial and federal regulations. Municipal infrastructure is permitted in the study area. If there are environmental impacts, they may require compensation and restoration. This would be determined through future study if the bypass solution is progressed further.

8. What impacts will the bypass have on existing recreation activities including boating, the boat launch, connections to the Victoria Rail Trail, walkers, runners and on ATVing and Snowmobiling?

If the bypass option is progressed further, additional studies will need to be completed related to specific impacts to existing recreation activities. Baseline studies have been completed at a high level that identify recreational assets and activities in the study area that may be affected but this work will need to be supplemented with more detailed study to determine the potential impacts and mitigation that would be required. This could include improving recreational amenities such as the boat launch, ATV routes and connections to and from the Victoria Rail Trail. This may also include improving pedestrian and multi-use trail connections along 3rd Concession as well.

Additional studies would be completed as per the Schedule C Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Process that would be required for a bypass solution or a new in-town bridge solution.

9. Have the consultants considered the slopes and geometry of 3rd Concession in designing the bypass and bridge over Burnt River? This includes consideration of sightlines, speeds, requirements for trucks to use loud engine-breaks and how to provide safe connections to the local roads servicing the properties along Burnt River?

The challenging slopes and flood plain in the study area are key reasons why further study is required before a new bypass on 3rd Concession over the Burnt River would be recommended. These issues require consideration of bridge and road design options that have not been done for the solutions level assessment so far. If the bypass option is progressed any further, additional studies will need to be completed related to the geometry of 3rd Concession and the design of a new bridge crossing. There are road and bridge design standards that must be met. These include standards related to safety, sightlines, design speeds and intersections/local road connections. Access to the local roads would need to be maintained. More detailed study to determine the design requirements and design options to implement a bypass and achieve safe connections would be required.

Additional studies would be completed as per the Schedule C Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Process that would be required for a bypass solution or a new in-town bridge solution.

10. Will access to the 4 roads accessing the 3rd Concession near the river remain as they are (River, Brook, Cedarplank and River Bank roads) or would they have to be moved?

Connections to the existing roads would need to be provided if a new bypass were built. If the bypass option is progressed any further, additional studies will need to be completed to determine how and where specifically to connect the four roads accessing properties along the Burnt River on either side of 3rd Concession. The team is aware of the connections required. Sightlines and safety would be key considerations for these connections.

Additional studies would be completed as per the Schedule C Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Process that would be required for a bypass solution or a new in-town bridge solution.

11. Have the consultants considered the flood plain and flooding issues around the Burnt River?

The study team is aware of the flood plain and the design requirements that would have to be met if a bypass was progressed further. If the bypass option is progressed further, additional studies will need to be completed related to the design of a new bridge crossing and impacts to the flood plain. There are road and bridge design standards that must be met in relation to the flood plain.

Additional studies would be completed as per the Schedule C Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Process that would be required for a bypass solution or a new in-town bridge solution.

12. Have the consultants considered spring (flooding) and winter (freezing) conditions for the road design in order to address safe road conditions in all seasons for all vehicle types?

Yes the consultants need to consider all seasons and conditions in the design of a roadway or bridge. If the bypass option is progressed any further, additional studies will need to be completed that consider all seasonal conditions for the design of a new bridge crossing and road upgrades. There are road and bridge design standards that must be met in this regard for all vehicle types.

Additional studies would be completed as per the Schedule C Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Process that would be required for a bypass solution or a new in-town bridge solution.

13. Will you be repaving/upgrading all of 3rd Concession for the bypass? Will you add a shoulder? Will you be adding signalized intersection lights at key intersections?

The specific upgrades required along the full length of 3rd Concession have not yet been determined. If the bypass option is progressed further, additional studies will need to be completed related to the requirements to repave or upgrade 3rd Concession. This will include review of intersections and shoulders that may be needed and will need to meet road design standards.

Additional studies would be completed as per the Schedule C Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Process that would be required for a bypass solution or a new in-town bridge solution.

14. Why are you proposing a bypass that is so far from the traffic issues that exist in the town of Fenelon Falls? Shouldn't the solutions be focused on managing the issues in town, especially since there are major commercial and retail destinations in town that a bypass won't serve?

There are multiple potential solutions being explored through the environmental assessment process. Some of the solutions are located in town. A bypass is one solution being explored. All of the other solutions being considered are located in town. The bypass would relieve some of the traffic congestion issues and provide a haul route for trucks to reduce truck traffic travelling through downtown Fenelon Falls. It is recognized that the bypass would not serve all travellers who are destined for town in order to access the retail, commercial or recreational amenities in town. Through this project, initial traffic improvements at the Helen Street and Lindsay Street intersection and at the Elliot Street and Lindsay Street intersection are being recommended. This will address some of the traffic flow issues in town.

15. How and when was the volume of traffic using the bypass determined? Where are these vehicles going?

The volume of traffic that would use the new bypass was determined based on current Streetlight data that demonstrates the existing volume of vehicles traveling through the region as well as local and regional origin and destination patterns. This data is then analyzed to determine an approximate percentage of vehicles that would use the bypass as a similar or better route given the origin and destination patterns that are observed in the data. Based on this analysis, approximately 20% of the vehicles going through town would likely use the bypass. The data analysis is approximate at the level of study done. If the bypass is progressed for further study, more information on traffic patterns and volumes that would use the bypass would need to be completed. The Interim Study Report that will go to Council in the Fall of 2021 will include the background traffic study completed with more detailed information on this analysis.

16. What impact will the bypass have on businesses in town that will no longer get the traffic? Have you consulted with businesses in town? Have you done a study of economic impacts and benefits to look at how a bypass may negatively or positively impact businesses?

Through the consultation process, the business community in town has been consulted. The concerns from businesses relate more to the impact that congestion has on attracting patrons who don't want to deal with traffic and parking. There have been fewer concerns from the business community in town that a bypass would take traffic away. Current conditions are seen to be negatively impacting businesses as traffic congestion limits driver interest to stop in town. Redirecting some of the traffic, including truck traffic, is seen as a positive by business owners/operators. There is also interest from the business community for a second in-town crossing to support economic growth in town.

There has not been a detailed study of potential economic impacts and benefits of a bypass or a second in town bridge. Completion of such a study may be recommended for next steps. There are many factors that contribute to business prosperity in small towns that would have to be considered, such as population demographics, population growth, work force, regional anchors, parking, business clusters, etc.

17. What is the traffic volume planned for intersection of Hwy 35 and 3rd Concession? Will intersection need to be modified? Any safety concerns?

The traffic volumes at this intersection have not been studied in detail. If the bypass is progressed for further study, traffic volumes and intersection safety at intersections along 3rd Concession would need to be reviewed. Recommendations for improvements along 3rd Concession and at intersections would need to be identified in the next steps.

18. If the bypass is built will there be truck restrictions through town to ensure that trucks take the bypass?

The City would look at implementing a designated haul route and restricting trucks of a certain size from using the bridge in town.

Questions Related to Second In-Town Bridge Options?

19. A second in town bridge would have just as many or more impacts to people, property, environment, water quality and quality of life as a new bypass. Have you looked in detail at all of the impacts that new in town bridge would have and talked to Parks Canada about this given that the Trent Severn is a Federally protected National Heritage site?

The study has considered the impacts that a second in town bridge would have on the existing community and environment. Similar to the bypass solution, more study would be needed to understand the specific impacts, design options and mitigation requirements if a second in town bridge was progressed further. The project team has been in contact with Parks Canada and would have to continue to work with Parks Canada if a second bridge crossing in town was progressed for further consideration.

20. Can the City protect for a future second bridge crossing now so that as growth comes online in the area the City is able to proceed with designing and implementing a second in town bridge?

The City would have to consider the value of protecting land now and reserving the space for a future right-of-way. Such an approach has the potential to sterilize the surrounding properties and would have to be examined more closely.

21. Why is a second in-town bridge crossing not being proposed at Clifton Street?

A Clifton Street connection was examined in the early stages of work. A new bridge connection at Clifton would require easements and property taking from all of the residential properties along Clifton Street given the current right-of-way extents. The current uses along Clifton Street are all residential uses. It is not recommended that a road that is residential for the complete length of the road be used for a bridge connection. There are other options that have been examined that provide a more reasonable alternative route than Clifton Street. The other routes being explored do not include solely residential uses. In addition, the proximity of Clifton to Colbourne Street is not preferred as it runs parallel to the

existing traffic route on Colborne Street and could result in a relocation of traffic issues around the same few blocks of downtown.

22. Why are you considering a second crossing route in town on Wychwood that would go right by a school and a long term care home?

There are multiple factors that are considered when looking at options for a second bridge connection. Wychwood does have a school and long term care home but provides the best route option to connect the shorter distances over the Trent-Severn Waterway while having fewer residential properties along the majority of the route. Wychwood has fewer residential uses compared to other road connection options. The potential impacts to the school and long term care home would have to be examined in more detail if the second in town bridge crossing was progressed further. It is recognized that impacts to schools and the safety of children crossing roads is of paramount interest and would need specific attention in future study if progressed.

23. Are you aware of the historical cemetery that's located between Francis Street and Sturgeon Point Road? Would the new road connections needed to connect a second in town bridge impact this?

We are aware of the presence of a cemetery. Initial cultural heritage and archaeological studies have identified this. Future road connections would have to take the cemetery into account. Further study would be needed to confirm the exact extents and significance of the cemetery and then road designs would have to identify options to avoid impacts if a second in town bridge option was progressed.

24. Can an active transportation link/bridge be built at either the Victoria Rail Trail or to connect Clifton Street and the back of the Sobeys? This could be a pedestrian, cycling, ATV bridge only. Would this improve traffic flow on existing bridge? Could this provide space needed on the existing bridge to expand that for automobiles?

This is outside the scope of the study as we are not looking at bridge options that would be exclusively active transportation or pedestrian bridges. There is the potential that a new active transportation connection could be added in town. The work being done for this study would not preclude a new active transportation/pedestrian link. The added link may provide some improvement to traffic operations at the Helen and Lindsay Street intersection by reducing pedestrian crossings at the intersection but an active transportation connection in and of itself is unlikely to make a significant change to existing auto traffic issues.

25. Is the City concerned that if there is an emergency on the existing bridge, there is no way to get through town if the bridge is closed or cannot be used?

The City is aware of this concern raised by residents and has consulted with Fire and Emergency Services on this issue. Fire and EMS have not said this would be a major concern as there are other routes around if necessary that Fire and EMS are aware of and would use. Having a second bridge is an advantage related to emergency response but it has not been identified as a requirement.

26. Does the City have a long term vision for Fenelon Falls that considers how the town will develop over time, including supporting the downtown character, increased tourism and economic growth, improving pedestrian and cycling connections, improving the overall transportation network and protecting and enhancing the green space?

The City has an Official Plan, Growth Management Plan, Transportation Master Plan and Servicing Master Plan that cover the whole City of Kawartha Lakes including Fenelon Falls. These plans include consideration of growth, transportation, environment, economy, etc. The City is starting a review of these in 2021/2022 that will look to establish a medium and long term vision out to 2051. There is also a Fenelon Falls Downtown Revitalization Plan that the City recently developed with local residents and businesses that has led to recent improvements.

Questions Related to In-Town Traffic Operations Improvements

27. Can you adjust the signal timing at the intersection of Helen and Lindsay Streets to improve traffic flow? This includes adding/increasing advanced left turns from Lindsay Street into Sobeys and onto Helen Street?

The City and Dillon have looked extensively at this. The City has tried multiple signal timing arrangements over the years and the current arrangement provides the best operation possible given the competing movements. Dillon also examined this at the beginning of the study in 2019 and confirmed that there are limited additional signal timing changes that could be made to significantly improve intersection operations. Unfortunately, each modification to the signal phases has a knock on impact to another movement that just modifies the traffic delays but does little to reduce them.

28. Is the City of Kawartha Lakes working with Sobeys and Tim Hortons to address their traffic issues to find better solutions? In particular, the drive-thru at the Tim Hortons is not big enough and results in long queues that back up along Elliot and at peak times down Lindsay Street. Can the Tim Horton's access on Elliot be shifted further east on Elliot to accommodate longer queue lanes both on-site and along Elliot itself or can the Tim Hortons be moved further south on Lindsay to a larger lot?

The project team has corresponded with Tim Hortons and Sobeys and will continue to consult with them on issues related to traffic operations. Through this study the City is only able to provide solutions that relate to the design and operations of public rights-of-way. The City recognizes that there are concerns regarding on-site traffic operations and traffic queuing on Elliot Street related to the Tim Hortons drive-thru. The City will continue to consult with property owners to improve traffic conditions where possible.

29. Why was the gas station on the corner of Helen Street and Lindsay Street approved for increases recently given all of the known traffic issues?

The gas station is an existing use and the approval was a renovation. The City cannot prevent a property owner from completing a renovation when the use is not changing.

30. Will the entrance to The Locker also be closed/adjusted given that it also has traffic during peak times?

This will be looked at during the next steps of design work required for the in town intersection modifications if supported for implementation. The Locker is not the primary source causing traffic queuing and should be looked after other improvements are made.

31. Are you closing or moving the Helen and Lindsay Street intersection entirely? What is happening at that intersection and will there still be lights at the intersection of Helen and Lindsay Street?

The Helen and Lindsay Street intersection will remain in place as a signalized intersection. Based on the traffic study recommendations, the movements that would no longer be permitted at the Helen and Lindsay Street intersection would include:

- No southbound left turn from the bridge into the Sobeys/Tim Hortons/RWH access driveway
- No driving straight through the intersection from Helen Street into the Sobeys/Tim Hortons/RWH access driveway
- No left turns onto southbound Lindsay Street to exit the Sobeys/Tim Hortons/RWH site
- No driving straight through onto Helen Street to exit the Sobeys/Tim Hortons/RWH site

The movements that would continue to be permitted at the Helen and Lindsay Street intersection, that would continue to be signalized, would include:

- Right turn into the Sobeys/Tim Hortons/RWH access driveway from northbound Lindsay Street
- Right turn out of the Sobeys/Tim Hortons/RWH access driveway onto the bridge northbound
- Through traffic heading north and south on Lindsay Street and on the bridge
- Right turns from Helen Street onto Lindsay Street southbound
- Left turns from Helen Street onto the bridge northbound
- Right turns from the southbound bridge onto Helen Street

The proposed intersection modifications would require signal coordination of the existing signalized intersection at Helen and Lindsay Street with the new signalized intersection proposed at Elliot and Lindsay Street.

32. Do you have data on how much traffic is caused by Sobeys and Tim Hortons specifically? Will you get this data before a final decision is made?

Through the traffic study work, the number of vehicles that enter and exit the parking lot via the Helen and Lindsay Street intersection have been obtained. The number is a total number and does not differentiate between Sobeys versus Tim Hortons users. Through the traffic study it was observed that approximately 300 vehicles enter/exit the Lindsay Street access per hour on a peak Saturday midday. Vehicle volumes for the separate Tim Hortons entrance on Elliot Street were not obtained. Additional traffic data can be obtained in advance of intersection design, and through discussions with project stakeholders.

33. More development is being proposed in Fenelon that would affect Elliot Street traffic. Have you accounted for this growth? Particularly for the projects that would be on Juniper Street? What do your "2031 capacity" traffic numbers include for considering growth in Fenelon Falls? Are we at capacity with existing population by 2031 or does that include growth?

The 2031 volumes were obtained from the City's Corridor Study which includes background traffic growth representing growth in population and employment in and around Fenelon Falls as well as approved developments. Based on the study, 1.15% growth was assumed. The capacity numbers include these growth considerations. The study does not include traffic volumes that could result from new developments that are conceptual and not approved.

34. Will you be updating local roads in town, including Elliot Street, to handle the extra traffic that the in town intersection changes at the Helen and Lindsay Street intersection will create?

Yes, local roads will be improved. There are planned improvements to Elliot Street that have been on the City books prior to this study. The improvements include repaving, adding a turning lane for queuing into the Tim Hortons and adding sidewalk connections. The Elliot Street improvements are planned regardless of the outcome of this study as they are needed to improve Elliot beyond the current condition.

35. Will your work consider the changing traffic patterns as a result of COVID and post-pandemic life as more people permanently or partially work from home or work flexible hours or move permanently from urban city residences to seasonal cottage residences?

COVID-19 has affected travel patterns but we do not yet know what the permanent changes may be. Every 5 years the City does a roads review for updating the 5 year plan and the next one will commence in 2022. For this the City will look at current traffic patterns. For the 2022 study, that will include the traffic patterns that have resulted from the pandemic. In addition, the City just initiated the planning work required for updating the Growth Management Plan, Master Servicing Plan and Master Transportation Plan. These plans will look at recent growth and travel patterns as well as future projections. These studies are all going to commence within approximately one year and as such can include consideration of pandemic effects.

36. Currently, how many days of the year are there traffic delays at the Helen and Lindsay Street intersection and how long are the delays?

Vehicle data was not obtained at the intersection for every day of the year. However the following information can be provided regarding general travel patterns using the Fenelon Falls bridge that contribute to traffic delays at the Helen and Lindsay Street intersection.

- Summer volumes can be up to 30% higher than winter volumes at the intersection
- Summer Fridays and weekends can be up to 40% and 30% higher than Summer weekdays, respectively
- The traffic delays are primarily caused by vehicles trying to enter and exit the Sobeys/Tim Hortons/RWH access driveway on Lindsay Street. The biggest issue is related to the southbound left turn vehicles queuing on the bridge to enter the Sobeys/Tim Hortons/RWH access entrance. The queues back up and block the through vehicles which cannot get to the intersection. This is compounded by vehicles from Helen Street and from northbound Lindsay Street that are also trying move through the intersection to access the Sobeys/Tim Hortons/RWH driveway as well as head northbound on the bridge.
- Based on the data collected and information from the previous traffic study, it is estimated that vehicles would be delayed an average of 2 traffic signal cycles during the peak seasonal periods between May and September. This will continue to deteriorate. We have heard from community members who have experienced delays of 3 or more traffic signal rounds to get through the intersection.

37. What will be the result of the proposed traffic operation changes? Will most of the congestion be eliminated?

It is anticipated that the proposed changes would have an immediate improvement on traffic flow in town. The modifications would reduce vehicle congestion by more effectively managing the southbound left turn queue and reducing the traffic delays. With the implementation of the recommended improvements it is anticipated that the intersection would be able to operate under capacity to 2031.

38. Can the intersection modifications be implemented on a seasonal basis? So that they are in place during summer peaks but not for the remainder of the year? This would allow permanent residents to continue using the existing connections that we are used to outside of the seasonal busy periods.

This is something that the City can look at in next steps of detailed design for the intersection modifications if the modifications are supported and carried forward to next steps.

39. Will the new Elliot and Lindsay Street intersection also have long queues of traffic trying to access the Tim Hortons and Sobeys? Given how close the intersections will be, will the left turn queuing from Lindsay Street to Elliot Street back up and spill into the Helen and Lindsay Street intersection and block that as well?

Based on the Synchro traffic modelling done, the amount of queuing storage space that would be available with the implementation of the Elliot Street intersection would be enough to handle the volume of vehicles modelled. There may be circumstances that would cause back-ups on occasion but that would relate more to illegal traffic moves than to the proximity of the two signalized intersections. With the proposed arrangement of intersections and with coordinated traffic signals, the traffic should be able to clear through the lights and no longer cause back-ups that extend through downtown.

40. The signals at Colbourne and Francis Street are also an issue, how is the study considering this intersection?

Beyond this study the City is also making improvements to Colbourne and Francis Street. These improvements were planned ahead of this study and are being implemented. The plans for Colbourne and Francis Street were considered in the study.

Questions Related to the Existing Bridge

41. Can you expand the existing bridge in town to accommodate more traffic? Including removing/relocating the pedestrian sidewalk to use that space for more auto traffic?

A significant expansion of the existing bridge to accommodate more lanes for through traffic and/or left turn queuing is not recommended. Slight expansion of the southbound left turn queueing lane may be possible to provide some space for a few more southbound left turn queueing vehicles but this would not address the majority of the traffic issues as the number of vehicles in the southbound left turn queue continues to grow beyond the queue capacity that would be available even if more space was added. Furthermore, the complications of expanding the existing bridge include issues related to road geometry, the existing power station, the falls and the lock system. Given that Colbourne Street remains a two lane road (single lane in each direction), the technical issues related to expanding the existing bridge would only be met with more traffic issues that would bottleneck at Colbourne and Water Street. The traffic problems would then just be relocated to a different intersection in downtown.

42. Will the existing bridge be refurbished including the pedestrian connections to allow more space for pedestrians and mobility devices to pass? There are concerns about the existing condition of the bridge and the safety and comfort of the sidewalks and cycling options.

Yes. Refurbishment has been approved and initial emergency repairs were done in January and February 2021. The City is currently evaluating options for the asset for other improvements needed. This includes improving the pedestrian connections and providing pedestrian connections on both sides of the bridge.

43. Did Dillon Consulting review the report provided by Ainsley to the City of Kawartha Lakes in 2016 entitled ENG-2016-019 FENELON FALLS CORRIDOR ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT? There were some recommendations for pedestrian improvements that have not been implemented. Why not?

Yes Dillon has reviewed the Ainsley report. The City is currently working on pedestrian improvements that have been considered in this study, including a new lookout on the existing bridge and a new mid-block pedestrian crossings on Lindsay at the Secondary School between Green Street and Elliot Street. The pedestrian improvements need to be coordinated with the bridge rehabilitation and will improvements to Elliot Street.

Questions Related to Consultation Process

44. We did not know about previous meetings and are concerned about how notifications have been provided. How did you notify people?

The City provided notices through multiple means including newspaper notifications, hand delivered notices to residences along Burnt River in the area of the bypass, Admail notices using Canada Postal services to postal codes in the potential areas of impact in town, letters to agencies and stakeholders, advertisement on the electronic road sign in Fenelon Falls, and through email outreach to community stakeholder groups and local businesses in Fenelon Falls.

45. Did you notify all potentially impacted property owners of the project and the consultation opportunities?

Yes. We understand that previous notices may have been missed which is why an additional public meeting was held on May 29, 2021. That meeting was held to make sure that potentially impacted property owners were aware of the project and have the opportunity to provide input and feedback to the project team and the City. The City welcomes people to continue to provide feedback and input on the project and to ask questions of the project team. Decisions have not been made on recommendations and next steps and as such the City encourages people to reach out to the project team with questions or comments.

46. Are you aware that many rural residents don't have the bandwidth to attend Zoom meetings?

Yes. Unfortunately with the COVID-19 pandemic, we must follow the direction of public health and limit in-person consultation. Recognizing the access issues that virtual meetings pose, the May 29th meeting was recorded and can be watched at any time by following this link:

<https://jumpinkawarthalakes.ca/ffsecondcrossing/widgets/70720/videos/7354>

Questions Related to Next Steps

47. How is the City going to pay for the project? Out of what budget?

Depending on the option that is progressed, the next steps of study would include identification of budget and include information on which capital budget would be required to cover the cost of implementation.

48. When will we get more information on the recommendations and when will construction begin?

Dillon Consulting is preparing an Interim Study Report with recommendations to go to the City in late Summer/early Fall 2021. At that time there will be a presentation either to Committee of the Whole or to City Council. Recommendations will proceed depending on direction from Council. This direction is anticipated in Fall 2021. Following this, depending on the recommendations that are progressed, more design work needs to be completed before any construction can begin. Depending on the recommended solution(s), this can take anywhere from 1-3 years to confirm designs with implementation occurring after that time depending on budget approval and the permitting process.

49. Will there be more consultation and how will the directly affected property owners be notified?

Consultation will depend on recommendations and direction from Council related to the options for consideration. If the City is directed to complete further study of a new bypass or of a second in town bridge crossing, there will be more consultation in accordance with the Schedule C Class Environmental Assessment Process. This includes direct consultation with impacted property owners. Notification will include door to door mail to affected properties as well as notices sent via email to the full list of project contacts that have expressed interest or sent in comments to the project team. In addition, road signs, newspaper ads and social media posts by the City may also be used to notify the public of meetings. If the City is directed to pursue next steps for the in town traffic modifications, there will be consultation with specific property owners and information on the detailed designs for the intersection improvements will be shared.

50. Will input from the community be reflected in recommendations?

Yes. Recommendations will be framed in context with the community input received. It is important to note that all of the options have received mixed input ranging from supportive to against. There is no option where all input received has been supportive and there is no option where all input received has been against the option. However, public input received has made clear that a new Burnt River bypass and a new second bridge crossing in town would have the greatest impacts to residents and the environment and have received extensive criticism.