



Committee Report

To:	Warden Hicks and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	September 23, 2021
Subject / Report No:	TR-CW-20-21
Title:	Holland Sydenham Bridge (Structures 21 and 22)
Prepared by:	Pat Hoy, Director of Transportation Services
Reviewed by:	Randy Scherzer Deputy CAO
Lower Tiers Affected:	Municipality of Meaford & Township of Chatsworth
Status:	Recommendation adopted by Committee as presented per Resolution CW153-21;

Recommendation

- 1. That Report TR-CW-20-21 be received for information; and**
- 2. That staff be directed to bring back a staff report following a review of the applicable matters identified in the Report.**

Executive Summary

Structures 21 and 22 are located on the deviation border of the Township of Chatsworth and the Municipality of Meaford on the Holland Sydenham Townline north of Walters Falls. Due to identified structural deficiencies the structures have been closed by the Municipality of Meaford since 2016. There has been ongoing interest by local residents and businesses to have the road reopened. The Town of Meaford has obtained a legal opinion that Structure 22 is a County responsibility as it meets the minimum 20-foot span requirement as per County By-law 1102. There may be other information to consider in this regard. Meaford and Chatsworth are seeking a decision by County Council regarding ownership and future steps for Structure 22 which would then inform their decisions regarding repair or replacement of Structure 21. A delegation is coming forward to the September 23rd Committee of the Whole meeting suggesting that Structure 22 be assumed by the County and to fund the repairs.

County staff wanted to provide information to the Committee regarding Structure 22 and identify matters that would need to be investigated further if directed by Council.

Background and Discussion

Recently Grey County has been contacted by the Municipality of Meaford to investigate whether Structure 22 should be a Grey County asset. Structure 21 has a span of 5.1 metres and is well under the span length to be a County structure. Meaford report INF2021-08 states that Meaford and Chatsworth would follow the County's lead regarding decisions on either the replacement or continued closure of the structures.

See Figure 1 below which shows the locations of Structures 21 and 22. Figure 2 shows an image of the structures looking from the Holland-Sydenham Townline.

Figure 1: Map Showing Location of Structures 21 and 22



Bridge Ownership - Span

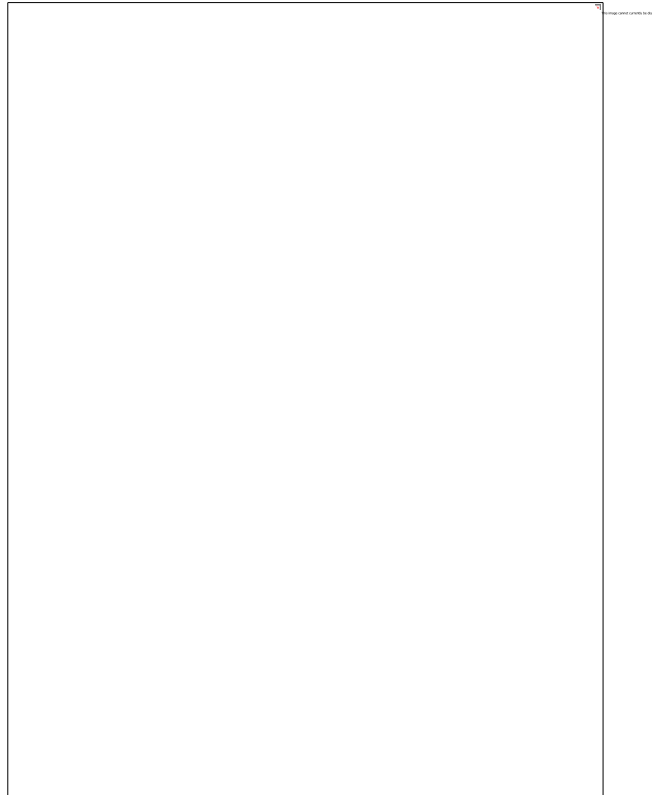
Typically, the County owns bridges on a Townline road with a span greater than 20 feet (6.096m). This is as per By-Law 1102 passed in 1928.

That all bridges on County and Township boundary lines of a length of span of twenty (20) feet and over and thus approaches not exceeding one hundred feet on each side, shall be built and kept in repair and be considered under the jurisdiction of the County Council. Provided that when a By-law of an adjoining County conflicts with these measurements then the length of span and approaches shall be such as may be agreed upon by the representatives of both Counties.

Structure 22 is currently not in the Grey County structure inventory. Meaford has been completing the OSIM inspections on Structure 22. The OSIM report states the span is 6.3m.

Grey performed a measurement in August 2021, with one side being field measured at 6.085m while the other side is 6.094m. Subsequently the structure was measured by Meaford's bridge consultant and found to be 6.10m and satisfies criteria to be a County structure. There are historical facts about the structure that are unknown to Transportation Services and these could be investigated further if Council directs, including who originally constructed Structure 22 and who has been maintaining (or contributing to the maintenance) of Structure 22 since the time it was originally constructed).

Figure 2: Image of Structures



Completed EA and Preliminary Design Report

Meaford has completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) in 2017 on the structures which recommended the structures should be removed (link to EA can be found in the Appendices and Attachments section of this Report). Grey County understands that Meaford Council will carry money in its budget to re-open the EA to potentially arrive at another result.

Meaford has completed a preliminary design report evaluating nine one lane options and eight two lane options. The prices of the proposed construction of both structures are summarized in the report and range from \$750,000 to \$4,053,600 Meaford estimates its cost share of Structure 21 only as between \$223,700 and \$523,500.

Grey County Road Network Importance

Structure 22 is not located on a Grey County road. However, the Holland Sydenham Townline does eventually become Grey Road 16, approximately 15km west of the structures. It is unlikely the Townline would ever become a County road due to the more suitable routes of Grey Road 40 and Grey Road 18. If Grey County owned the structure, the recommendation may be to remove the structure due to liability issues. Parties are currently moving barricades and using the structure which has no guiderail.

Economic Development and Support for Agriculture

Local citizens and farm businesses have expressed the importance of the structures and corresponding road to their farm operations. Many members demonstrated the support in the community for fixing the bridge as a large number of residents showed up on short notice when Grey County was measuring Structure 22.

There are also many trails in the immediate area, and the bridges provide linkages to potential trail loops.

Transportation Master Plan Recommendations – Bridge Rationalization

In July 2015, County Council received the 2015 Transportation Master Plan and directed staff to move forward with the recommended priority actions contained in [Report TR-CC-55-15](#). With respect to Bridge Rationalization, Council directed staff to:

- Develop Bridge Classification Criteria based on principles of when a bridge should be replaced or closed for County and local municipality structures.
- Evaluate the options to transfer County owned structures on local municipal roads in three years.

Bridge Classification Criteria has not been completed to date and therefore the evaluation of options to transfer County owned structures on local municipal roads has also not be explored at this time. However, staff wanted to highlight this previous direction from Council regarding structures on local municipal roads.

Further Investigations Required

As noted previously, Structure 22 potentially meets the required span to be considered a County structure. In order for Council to make a fully informed decision there are some other matters that would potentially need to be investigated should Council direct staff to explore this topic any further. These include:

1. History of the structure including when it was built, who built the structure and who paid for the original construction and on-going maintenance of these structures. Transportation Services would work with Grey Roots Archives staff to search for any potential historical records.
2. What are the liabilities/risks associated with this structure in its current state?
3. Confirming what the costs would be to replace Structure 22.

4. Confirming the plans/intentions of the Municipality of Meaford and the Township of Chatsworth with respect to Structure 21 e.g., if Structure 22 were to be replaced, would the Municipality of Meaford and Township of Chatsworth commit to replacing and maintaining Structure 21?
5. Is there a more cost-effective solution for all parties e.g., replacing the two structures with one and sharing the cost three ways?
6. Are there other options that the Municipality of Meaford and the Township of Chatsworth could consider that the County could assist with (e.g., leasing the road/structures to landowners/farmers in the area that would benefit from keeping this access open? Making this road a private road (which would include the structures) and transfer ownership to landowners/farmers through a road association that would own and maintain the road/structures?).
7. Other legislation and legal considerations that may need to be explored further.
8. Others?

Legal and Legislated Requirements

Pending determination of responsibility, Structure 22 would be added to Grey County's asset inventory.

Financial and Resource Implications

Grey County will be responsible for the costs of carrying out Council direction regarding the future of Structure 22.

Relevant Consultation

- Internal – CAO, Deputy CAO, Legal, Clerks
- External - Discussions with Meaford, Chatsworth and local area residents

Appendices and Attachments

[Meaford Structure 21 and 22 Environmental Assessment](#)

[Townline Bridge By-law 1102](#)

[Meaford Report Structures 21 and 22 Legal review June 2021](#)