

Blue Mountain Resorts LP

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January 5, 2016

BY EMAIL ONLY

Michael Kelly
Director of Transportation Services
Grey County
595 9th Avenue East
Owen Sound, ON N4K 3E3

Dear Michael:

**RE: 2016 Shoulder Widening Project Modifications - Revised Report TR-TAPS-66-15
Blue Mountain Resorts LP - Comments**

In December 2015, Blue Mountain Resorts LP (BMR) was contacted by members of the newly formed South Georgian Bay Cycling Coalition to discuss the matter of paved shoulders on Grey County roads with particular emphasis on Grey Roads 119 and 31, which have construction projects scheduled for 2016. May this letter serve as BMR's comments in relation to the presentation you made to the TAPS Committee on October 22, 2015 and the corresponding Revised Report TR-TAPS-66-15, which BMR understands was endorsed by County Council on November 3, 2015, as per Resolution CC148-15.

BMR has actively participated in various Grey County transportation-related studies over the years. One of the key comments BMR has provided and reiterated throughout these studies is the need to improve connectivity between roads and sections of roads with paved shoulders. It remains BMR's position that there are currently too many fragmented routes where paved shoulders end in the middle of a County road. This poses a challenge to bike commuters and avid road cyclists alike. It also poses a challenge for BMR employees to identify safe and well-connected cycling routes for our visitors.

BMR was a strong supporter of the County's provision for paved shoulders on Grey Road 119 from the Grey Road 19 roundabout to Banks in 2015. As a result, BMR was extremely disappointed to learn that County Council has decided to include a provision for paved shoulders with a width of only 0.25 metres along Grey Road 119 from Banks to Ravenna in the 2016 construction schedule. Figures 4-1 and 4-2 of the Grey County Transportation Master Plan Final Draft Report indicate paved shoulders are proposed for this particular stretch of road to form part of the County's Active Transportation Network and designated Cycling Routes. However, it was BMR's understanding that the paved shoulder width would be in the area of 1.2 to 2 metres as is typical in supporting non-motorized active modes of transportation. The provision of a 0.25 metre paved shoulder along this stretch of Grey Road 119 is inconsistent with the County's Transportation Master Plan.

BMR is also disappointed to learn that Grey Road 31 from 0.5 kilometers north of Simcoe Road 91 to Grey Road 2 is also scheduled to have paved shoulders with a width of only 0.25 metres in 2016. This stretch of Grey Road 31 represents yet another very popular cycling route in our area. It has formed part of the Centurion Cycling C50 and C100 routes since the event's inception in 2009 and has been used for the short, medium, and

long courses in the Grey County Road Race since 2014. The Grey County Road Race and Grey County Time Trial are currently the only North American qualifier events in the UCI World Cycling Tour.

BMR appreciates there are additional, upfront capital costs associated with the provision of paved shoulders on County roads. However, according to Committee Report TAPSR-116-08, over a fifteen-year period, paved shoulders are less costly to install and maintain than gravel shoulders. In addition, Grey County's Paved Shoulder Policy 'Roads 01-09' states the following:

- 2. When constructing new highway surfaces during County construction and spot improvement projects, the shoulder next to the driving lanes shall be paved on roads functionally classified as rural arterials regardless of traffic volume.*

It appears that a 0.25-metre wide paved shoulder along Grey Roads 119 and 31 is inconsistent with the County's existing Paved Shoulder Policy. Furthermore, it is BMR's opinion that the proposed paved shoulder width is insufficient and not reflective of the heavy use of this popular cycling route by area residents and visitors alike.

Goal #1 of the Grey County Transportation Master Plan is *'to create a vision for all modes of transportation in Grey County, with a particular focus on encouraging active transportation options (cycling, walking/running).'* Cycling for both recreational and utilitarian (active transportation) purposes is an activity that is growing throughout Ontario. Furthermore, the rural and recreational character of Grey County paired with the elevations offered by the Niagara Escarpment make this unique area a significant draw to tourists, including cyclists, from Canada and abroad.

Grey County has an incredible opportunity to position itself as a world class cycling destination. However, there needs to be political will to invest in this very important infrastructure now. The increased capital costs may be significant but the costs of this missed opportunity cannot be overlooked. As a result, BMR respectfully requests that Grey County reconsider the proposed width of paved shoulders on these two particular roads slated for construction in 2016 and that further consideration be given to the importance of paved shoulders as critical infrastructure in facilitating cycling and other modes of active transportation going forward.

Lindsay Ayers, Director of Planning & Environment, will be attending the meeting scheduled for Thursday January 7, 2016 on BMR's behalf and looks forward to continuing dialogue with the County on this matter.

Regards,



Dan Skelton
President & Chief Operating Officer

Cc: Kim Wingrove, Chief Administrative Officer, Grey County
Bryan Plumstead, Economic Development & Tourism Manager, Grey County
Randy Scherzer, Director of Planning & Development, Grey County
Andrew Siegart, President, Blue Mountain Village Association
Patti Kendall, Director of Marketing & Events, Blue Mountain Village Association
John McKean, Mayor, Town of the Blue Mountains
Shawn Everitt, Director of Community Services, Town of the Blue Mountains
Bill Abbotts, South Georgian Bay Cycling Coalition