
HALDIMAND COUNTY

Report ENG-10-2022 Ministry of Transportation Connecting Links Program 2023-24 Funding Application – Highway 3 (Talbot Street) Jarvis

For Consideration by Council in Committee on December 6, 2022



OBJECTIVE:

To obtain the required resolutions for the Ministry of Transportation Connecting Links Program 2023-24 Highway 3, Jarvis funding application.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Report ENG-10-2022 Ministry of Transportation Connecting Links Program 2023-24 Funding Application – Highway 3 (Talbot Street) Jarvis be received;
2. AND THAT the Highway 3 (Talbot Street) Jarvis application meets the requirements of the Ministry of Transportation Connecting Links Program as described in the Program Guide;
3. AND THAT a comprehensive Asset Management Plan including connecting links has been completed and publicly posted;
4. AND THAT Haldimand County will comply with the conditions that apply to designated connecting links under the Highway Traffic Act to ensure the safe and efficient movement of provincial traffic;
5. AND THAT the Highway 3 (Talbot Street) Jarvis project put forward in the application will be completed and the milestones met as stated in the application;
6. AND THAT the Highway 3 (Talbot Street) Jarvis Connecting Links application is complete and factually accurate.

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Approved: Craig Manley, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Staff have submitted a funding application under the Ministry of Transportation Connecting Links Program 2023-2024 for Highway 3 (Talbot Street) Jarvis. One requirement of the Connecting Links Program application process is obtaining support of Council by approving the recommendations in this report.

This project was originally submitted through the 2022-23 Connecting Links Program and the County was not successful in being approved for funding. The MTO released the 2023-24 Connecting Links Program to municipalities on September 22nd with a submission deadline of November 16th. This funding application was submitted by the due date, however, given these timelines and the ongoing

municipal election, the MTO extended the deadline for the submission of the required Council resolution until the municipal election was complete and the first available meeting with the new Council.

BACKGROUND:

Connecting links are municipal roads that connect two ends of a provincial highway through a community. These are critical roadways that serve provincial and municipal interests, as they carry long distance provincial highway traffic moving through communities, as well as local traffic within the community.

Connecting links are formally designated under Section 21 of the Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P. 50 as amended. Under the Act, a Connecting Link remains a “highway” under the jurisdiction and control of the municipality, however it is still subject to certain conditions as outlined in the Highway Traffic Act.

Haldimand County has five designated connecting links on Highways 3 and 6 in the communities of Hagersville, Jarvis, Cayuga and Dunnville. The Ministry of Transportation’s Connecting Links Program provides dedicated Provincial funding for road and bridge projects on designated connecting link highways.

Through the 2023-24 Connecting Links Program the Province is investing \$30 million in for the construction and repair of roads and bridges on connecting links. This funding is available to the seventy-seven Ontario municipalities with designated connecting links. The Ministry of Transportation (MTO) will provide funding for up to 90% of total eligible project costs with a maximum amount of \$3 million funding per road project and \$5 million per bridge project. The objectives of the Connecting Links Program are to make connecting link investments that:

- address critical connecting link improvement needs;
- extend the lifecycle of the asset; and
- are cost effective and appropriate to address the connecting link need.

The Connecting Links Program has a one-stage application process requiring eligible connecting link municipalities to submit specific project information through a standard application form along with supporting documents. Funding decisions are expected in early 2023 and will be based on an assessment of connecting link needs, the MTO’s prioritization of submitted projects and the available budget in any year.

The County has been successful in the past with Connecting Link Program applications, receiving funding for the following projects:

- 2016 - Jarvis (Talbot Street) Highway 3 – \$1.3 million.
- 2017 - Hagersville (Main Street) Highway 6 – \$1.8 million.
- 2020 - Dunnville (Broad Street – Oak to Inman) Highway 3 – \$892,100.
- 2021 - Dunnville (Broad Street – Pine to Oak) Highway 3 – \$911,900.

It should be noted that the Highway 3 (Talbot Street) Connecting Link in Cayuga and the Highway 6 (Main Street) Connecting Link in Jarvis were completed by the County in 2015 and 2016, respectively, without funding through this program.

ANALYSIS:

The MTO released the 2023-24 Connecting Links Program to municipalities on September 22nd with a submission deadline of November 16th. Given these timelines and the ongoing municipal election, the MTO extended the deadline for the submission of the required Council resolution until the first available

meeting with the new Council. For this application staff submitted the same road section on Highway 3 that was approved for the 2022-23 intake.

Based on the existing condition of the County's connecting links, staff have submitted a funding application under this program for Highway 3 (Talbot Street) in Jarvis with estimated eligible costs of \$690,238 (including non-rebateable HST). This includes the cost to mill and repave the roadway and required spot repair of curbs and sidewalks. Since the last resurfacing in 2017 there have been multiple road cuts to the surface of the Talbot Street roadway so resurfacing will improve the ride for this arterial roadway. An application for the 2022 funding was submitted to the MTO for this same section of Highway 3 with eligible costs of \$551,000 (including non-rebateable HST). The increase in costs submitted for 2023 reflects the current construction prices.

It should also be noted that the 2016 Highway 3 (Talbot Street) project funded from the Connecting Link Program included the replacement of all curb and sidewalk as well as some stormwater drainage infrastructure. The current application is only for road resurfacing and hence the difference in cost between the current application and the 2016 grant amount.

One requirement of the Connecting Links Program application process is to demonstrate Council support for the project identified in the application by approving Recommendations 2 to 6 in this report and submitting a Council resolution as part of the application.

Recommendation 2 identifies that the project is eligible for funding as per the guidelines. Recommendation 3 refers to the County's 2022 Asset Management Plan which will be posted on the County's website. Recommendation 4 refers to the County's legislated responsibilities for connecting links under the Highway Traffic Act including MTO approvals for signal lights, traffic by-laws and bridge load postings. The remaining recommendations direct staff to ensure accuracy in the application and follow the process for construction and reporting should the funding be received.

FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

Funding for this project has not been previously budgeted. Based on current estimates, the eligible project costs will be \$690,238 (including non-rebateable HST) of which the County's 10% share will be \$69,024 and would need to be funded from internal reserves.

If the County is successful in receiving provincial funding through the Connecting Links Program, a subsequent report will be required to confirm the award of the funding and request the required budget revisions. If the County is unsuccessful in the funding application, the project will not proceed and will be identified in future Connecting Links Program funding applications.

STAKEHOLDER IMPACTS:

Not applicable.

REPORT IMPACTS:

Agreement: No

By-law: No

Budget Amendment: No

Policy: No

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Map