
HALDIMAND COUNTY

Report LSS-12-2025 Road Closure and Conveyance of part of Onondaga Street and part of King William Street, Caledonia



For Consideration by Council in Committee on February 4, 2025

OBJECTIVE:

To provide details of an application requesting to purchase part of Onondaga Street and part of King William Street in Caledonia.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT LSS-12-2025 Road Closure and Conveyance of part of Onondaga Street and part of King William Street, Caledonia be received;
2. AND THAT Parcel A, as illustrated in Attachment 1 to LSS-12-2025 and legally described as PIN 38155-0137; Onondaga Street Plan 51 Between King William Street & Winniet Steet; Haldimand County, hereinafter "Parcel A" be stopped up, closed and declared surplus to all County needs;
3. AND THAT "Parcel A" as described above, be sold to the abutting neighbours, Shawn Douglas Rennie and Lindsay Jennifer Rennie, for the purchase price of \$40,000, plus HST plus costs of closure and conveyance inclusive of Haldimand County's legal fees;
4. AND THAT Parcel B, as illustrated in Attachment 1 to LSS-12-2025 and legally described as PIN 38155-0962; Part of King William Street, Plan 51; Haldimand County, hereinafter "Parcel B" be stopped up, closed and declared surplus to all County needs;
5. AND THAT "Parcel B" as described above, be sold to the abutting neighbours, Shawn Douglas Rennie and Lindsay Jennifer Rennie, for the purchase price of \$4,500 plus HST plus costs of closure and conveyance inclusive of Haldimand County's legal fees;
6. AND THAT public notice of proposed conveyance be given;
7. AND THAT the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to execute all necessary documents;
8. AND THAT a by-law be presented for enactment to authorize the closure and conveyance at a future Council meeting.

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Reviewed by: Lori Friesen, Manager, Legal & Support Services

Respectfully submitted: Megan Jamieson, CHRL, General Manager, Corporate & Social Services

Approved: Cathy Case, Chief Administrative Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The County has received a request from Shawn Douglas Rennie and Lindsay Jennifer Rennie (herein "The Applicants") to close and convey Parcel A (approximately 0.19 acres), as shown in green

hashmarks on Attachment 1 and Parcel B (approximately 0.40 acres), as shown in purple hashmarks on Attachment 1.

The Applicants have offered a purchase price of \$40,000 for Parcel A and \$4,500 for Parcel B, plus HST and all costs of closure and conveyance, including Haldimand County's legal fees.

Staff recommend proceeding with the sale of these portions of road allowance as there are no objections or concerns as a result of the analysis and due diligence review.

BACKGROUND:

In late 2023, an unsolicited offer was made by a developer for the road allowances identified in this report. When staff reached out to neighbouring landowners, the Applicants, along with other adjacent property owners, expressed their opposition to the idea of a builder possibly constructing a home on the road allowances known as Parcel A and Parcel B. In 2024, the developer withdrew their application due to unexpected potential building restrictions based upon the feedback received during their due diligence review and a lack of support from neighboring residents. This withdrawal led to the current Applicants, who abut both Parcel A and B, submitting their own application.

The Applicants submitted an application to purchase Parcel A and Parcel B, intending to merge them with their property at 496 Winniett Street (as shown in yellow hashmarks on Attachment 1). The Applicants provided a detailed explanation supporting their request including woodland preservation, prevention of water management issues, respecting hazard lands, minimal intensification, privacy preservation and neighbour considerations. Personal reasons were also highlighted. Their full rationale as submitted with their application is outlined in Attachment 2.

As a housekeeping note, during the due diligence review, it was determined that the spelling of "Winniet Street" in the Land Registry Office (LRO) records – reflecting the legal description – differs from the spelling used by the County, which is "Winniett Street". To ensure consistency with the legal description, the recommendations reflect the spelling found in the LRO records.

ANALYSIS:

Upon receipt of the Applicants request, staff circulated notice to County divisions: Public Works Operations; Facilities, Parks, Cemeteries & Forestry Operations; Building & Municipal Enforcement Services; Community Development & Partnerships; Economic Development & Tourism; Emergency Services; Engineering Services; Environmental Operations; and Planning & Development; as well as the necessary utility companies, the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) and abutting landowners. The following comments were received:

Building & Municipal Enforcement Services: Building staff stated the following, "Since the lands in question are currently deemed road allowance, they are not zoned. It is totally dependent on how the lands would be zoned if bought and/or merged, to determine if they are buildable lots on their own or not. Hypothetically, if both parcels were to take on the surrounding R1-A zoning it looks like they would conform with the minimum lot area and minimum lot frontage. Sanitary servicing appears to stop on Winniett Street at the east side property line of 492. Creating both parcels into separate lots would landlock Parcel B. A portion of the area in question is under the jurisdiction of the Grand River Conservation Authority. GRCA approval would a requirement to be able to issue building permits."

Planning & Development: Planning would support the sale of Parcel A and Parcel B together to a single entity. Parcel A should not be sold independently of Parcel B, as doing so would create a landlocked parcel. Given the extent of the regulated lands and the concerns raised by the GRCA, it

would likely be a better fit to merge the two road allowance parcels with the Applicants' lands. Additional information would be required to determine if Parcel A could be developed as a buildable lot. With the identified limit of the Natural Hazard, there appears to be limited development opportunities and building envelope on Parcel A. Also, with the presence of the hazard lands and natural features, the adjacent lands to the north (64 Kincardine Street) limits access opportunities to the two road allowances, and the parcel would still maintain frontage on Kincardine Street. If Parcel A and Parcel B were sold, they would absorb the adjacent "Urban Residential Type 1-A (R1-A)" zoning. The subject lands are designated Residential in the Haldimand County Official Plan, with Natural Environment Area, Supporting Environmental Features and Hazard Lands overlay. If Parcel A and Parcel B are sold as a single entity for potential consideration as a building lot, it is important to note that Planning applications would likely be required.

Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA): The subject lands include Seneca Creek and are impacted by floodplain and erosion hazards, with erosion being the most significant constraint. Parcel B is fully within these natural hazards, while Parcel A is partially affected by erosion. According to GRCA policy, development is prohibited in such hazard areas, and the GRCA advises against transferring lands with natural hazards into private ownership. As a result, it is recommended that the County not dispose of Parcel B. If there is interest in Parcel A, a geotechnical assessment by a licensed engineer should be required to define the extent of the erosion hazard. Only the portion of Parcel A outside the erosion hazard, along with a 6-metre access allowance, should be sold, with the hazardous area and access allowance retained by the County. Additionally, any development in a GRCA-regulated area will require a GRCA permit, and a geotechnical assessment will likely be needed for future development.

Abutting Landowner (64 Kincardine Street): The property owners at 64 Kincardine Street, situated directly north of the subject lands, have raised concerns about potential development on Parcels A and B, with Parcel B directly bordering their property. In their communication with staff, the owners of 64 Kincardine Street have no concern with the sale of the Parcels to the Applicants.

Abutting Landowner (500 Winniett Street): The property owners at 500 Winniett Street, located directly east of the subject lands, have no concerns.

Parcel A - The Applicants have offered a purchase price of \$40,000 for Parcel A, which is just slightly below the County's Vacant Land Value Chart (VLVC). As noted in the GRCA comments, the subject lands are impacted by floodplain, erosion hazards and natural hazards. Additionally, as noted in the Planning comments, due to the identified limits of the natural hazard area, there appears to be limited development opportunities and with a constrained building envelope. Based upon these limitations, the offer may be considered reasonable.

Parcel B - The Applicants have proposed a purchase price of \$4,500 for Parcel B. While this price is slightly below the VLVC, several factors affect the land's value. As identified by the GRCA, this Parcel includes a steep hill with erosion concerns and the lower portion being a floodplain that includes a regulated watercourse with regular flooding as noted by the neighbours. As a result, the property is unsuitable for any type of development, including the construction of structures such as sheds. Its primary value lies in preserving the natural landscape.

Based upon the due diligence review, there are no significant concerns regarding the sale of these two Parcels, aside from the advisement of the GRCA. The GRCA recommends against transferring lands with natural hazards into private ownership. Staff have carefully considered this recommendation and continue to support the conveyance of the Parcels, as the Applicants have expressed their intention to merge the Parcels with their own existing abutting property. Their stated focus is to preserve woodlands, manage water, respect natural hazards, limit intensification, protect privacy and neighbor

relations. If the Parcels are sold, the County will no longer be responsible for maintenance or retain liability and will benefit from receiving property tax revenue.

The application did make comment that acquisition of these Parcels would possibly enable minor additions to their existing home. In stating this, the Applicants are fully aware that this would be subject to building permits from the County, possibly the GRCA and Planning applications of which there are no guarantees of approval. This has been communicated to the Applicants.

The Applicants have signed an Environmental Acknowledgement, thereby agreeing that if Council authorizes the sale of Parcel A & B, the Parcels are sold on an “as is – where is” basis.

Based on the information outlined above, staff are recommending the sale of Parcels A & B to the Applicants, for the offered purchase prices, plus all closure and conveyance costs, including the County’s legal fees.

Council may direct staff to enter into negotiations with the Applicants if they deem it necessary, including providing negotiation parameters.

FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

If sold, all costs associated with the property transactions will be borne by the purchaser(s) and the identified property would no longer be the legal responsibility or liability of the County. Subsequently, any proceeds from sale, if applicable, would be contributed to the Land Sales Reserve in accordance with County Policy.

If the property is not sold at this time, the property will remain the legal responsibility of the County. All costs incurred by the County to date are off-set through the non-refundable application fee.

STAKEHOLDER IMPACTS:

Not applicable.

REPORT IMPACTS:

Agreement: No

By-law: Yes

Budget Amendment: No

Policy: No

REFERENCES:

None.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Map of Subject Lands
2. Applicants’ Application