
HALDIMAND COUNTY

Report CDP-06-2025 Capital Grant Program Dunnville Grand River Bridge Lighting



For Consideration by Council in Committee on April 29, 2025

Objective:

To request Council approval for one of two options for the funding and installation of a lighting system on the Dunnville Grand River Bridge.

Recommendations:

1. THAT Report CDP-06-2025 Capital Grant Program Dunnville Grand River Bridge Lighting be received;
2. AND THAT staff be directed to proceed with Option #____, as outlined within the Analysis section of Report CDP-06-2025;
3. AND THAT capital project funding to an upset amount of \$17,500, representing up to 35% of the total project budget of \$50,000, contributed from the Community Partnership Capital Reserve, be approved;
4. AND THAT capital project funding to an upset amount of \$32,500, representing 65% of the total project budget of \$50,000, contributed from the Ward 6 Ward-Specific Funding Program, be approved;
5. AND THAT the project and funding approval are conditional upon compliance with Haldimand County policies and any legislated requirements and permits, including Haldimand County standards and processes;
6. AND THAT the revised budget, as outlined in Report CDP-06-2025, be approved.

Prepared by: Sheryl Sawyer, Senior Community Partnership Liaison

Reviewed by: Katrina Schmitz, Manager, Community Development & Partnerships

Respectfully submitted: Mike Evers, MCIP, RPP, BES, General Manager, Community & Development Services

Approved: Mark Merritt, CPA, CA, Acting Chief Administrative Officer

Executive Summary:

Council is asked to consider two options for adding decorative lighting, with functionality to change colour periodically, to the Dunnville Grand River Bridge (Attachment 1) and to provide approval and associated direction to staff.

The budget for the addition of lighting on Dunnville Grand River Bridge is \$50,000. Both options include a request for the project budget to be funded from the Community Partnership Reserve (35% or \$17,500) and from Ward 6 Ward-Specific Funding (65% or \$32,500).

Option 1, requested by the Rotary Club of Dunnville, is to retrofit the existing bridge with a lighting system intended to be operational in time for the Dunnville Mudcat Festival taking place on June 12-15, 2025.

Option 2, recommended by staff, is to instead incorporate an engineered decorative lighting solution into the planned bridge rehabilitation 2033 capital project.

Background:

Haldimand County's Community Partnership Program (CPP) capital grants stream is intended to encourage and enhance strategic partnerships for the benefit of community stakeholders and the municipality, offering a fair, clear, and consistent approach to assessing community initiatives and requests for projects intended to take place on Haldimand County property. The CPP balances the rigour of the review process—necessary to ensure legitimate public interest issues are addressed—with flexibility and respect for the volunteer commitment of the groups.

The Rotary Club of Dunnville has requested permission and funding approval from the Community Partnership Capital Reserve and from Ward-Specific Funding for the retrofitting of decorative LED lighting along the underside of the side rails of the Dunnville Grand River Bridge, in time for the annual Mudcat Festival in June 2025. The Ward 6 Councillor supports the project, including with the provision of \$32,500 in funding for the \$50,000 budget from the Ward 6 Ward-Specific capital budget. Both the Rotary Club and the Councillor for Ward 6 have been made aware of planned bridge rehabilitation in 2033 and that, if a lighting system is retrofitted onto the existing bridge, Haldimand County cannot be responsible to ensure the lights can be salvaged during construction, nor will it ensure the system will be compatible with the future rehabilitated bridge design, and that potential permission and funding for any reinstallation will be the responsibility of the group, if desired.

During staff review of the proposal from the Rotary Club of Dunnville to retrofit the existing bridge with a lighting system, (presented below as Option 1), several Divisions identified concerns with the proposal, including the expedited timing of installation, the specifications of the lighting itself, security of the asset and the lack of long-term value for money. As detailed in the Background and Analysis sections below, staff recommend that Council approve the alternate Option 2, which is to instead integrate a similar decorative lighting system into the planned bridge rehabilitation project in 2033.

Analysis:

The Proponent

The Rotary Club of Dunnville is a member club of Rotary International, whose mission is to 'enrich the local and world community by providing humanitarian service and youth development'. Locally, the group is comprised of 20+ volunteers who are actively involved in the community. Recent projects developed in partnership with and partially funded by grants through Haldimand County's Community Partnership Program include the restoration of the 'Muddy the Mudcat' public art statue and the installation of an accessible viewing platform over Thompson Creek between Centennial and Lions Parks in Dunnville, a structure which is much appreciated by residents and visitors to adjoining Grandview Lodge. Additionally, the Club contributes financial support and volunteer labour to Dunnville's Youth Impact Centre, local health initiatives, international contributions through Rotary International and the annual Dunnville Mudcat Festival, including reviving the popular "Mud Duck Race".

Community Need/Benefit

As a downtown enhancement project, Dunnville will benefit from changeable illumination of the Grand River Bridge, boosting tourism and supporting local businesses by enhancing the bridge's aesthetic appeal and providing soft indirect lighting at night, particularly given the ability to change the colours of the light display.

Staff Review

Staff are in agreement that lighting the Dunnville Grand River Bridge is a desirable enhancement for the community and would like to support the proposal. However, concerns with the project have been identified, including:

- The timing for the project as proposed may not be ideal for two reasons: Dunnville Mudcat Festival is in less than two months away; as well, the scheduled major rehabilitation of the bridge is planned for 2033, and there is a risk that the proposed lighting system may not be salvageable, compatible, or reusable with the new bridge design;
- The specifications as identified in the current proposal for the lighting system may not provide an impactful display for community and tourism benefit; and,
- Staff are concerned about the lack of value for money of the project, given the lifespan of the proposed lighting system is considerably less than a system designed to be compatible with the bridge reconstruction, including quality of the lighting package, security of the asset and lifespan.

The Project

The heavily-traveled bridge across the Grand River in Dunnville, built in 1963, is a focal point of Dunnville's waterfront and serves as one of the main entrances to Dunnville's downtown business community. Community groups have occasionally been permitted to temporarily install lights along the Dunnville Grand River Bridge as part of annual holiday decorations.

The request from the Rotary Club of Dunnville is that such decorative lighting be made permanent by retrofitting the bridge with an energy-efficient lighting system, whose base neutral white light temperature of 4,000 Kelvin can also offer Haldimand County the ability to modify light colours and patterns in celebration of events, holidays, or other commemorations.

The Rotary Club of Dunnville wishes to expedite and coordinate the retrofit of a lighting system in time for the 2025 Mudcat Festival (June 12-15), and has requested 35% funding through the CPP capital grant stream, while the Ward 6 Councillor has indicated his support for the balance of the budget to be funded from the Ward 6 Ward-Specific Funding. Details of this request are outlined in Option 1 below.

The Dunnville Grand River Bridge is an aging municipal asset, built in 1963 and scheduled to undergo an extensive rehabilitation project in 2033, as identified in the 2024-2025 approved Tax Supported Capital Budget as Project 772403. The proponent group and the Ward 6 Councillor have been made aware that any retrofitted lighting enhancement to the bridge will have to be removed during the planned rehabilitation project, and that no guarantee is offered that Haldimand County will be able to salvage any part of the lighting system nor to replace it once the reconstruction works are complete. As such, there is significant potential that the maximum life of this asset will be less than 8 years.

Following an extensive review, staff recommend an alternative solution for Council review, which is to instead integrate planning for a decorative lighting enhancement into bridge rehabilitation plans. Details of this recommendation are given in Option 2 below.

Option 1 – Retrofit existing bridge (2025):

Option 1 is for Council to approve the proposal as presented by the Rotary Club of Dunnville: that Brant Municipal Enterprises retrofits an LED rope lighting system onto the bridge, and subject to the

conditions that it be operational by June 2025 Mudcat Festival, as indicated is likely by the group and by the vendor.

Two quotes for the work were received by the group. They recommend the lowest qualified bidder, Brant Municipal Enterprises, whose system includes 374 metres of high-quality, dual-sided rope lighting, which is vandal-and-tamper-resistant, to be clamped securely out of public view and reach, within a recessed channel beneath the bridge's side rails.

The rope lighting system will be under mechanical warranty for five years while the workmanship warranty, including system operational support and monitoring, is for one year with an optional two years on offer, to be clarified through the Goods and Services Contract process to be completed under Council-delegated authority as indicated in Schedule B of Haldimand County's Procurement Policy (No. 2023-02).

The light display will be operated through a dedicated software application which shall comply with the Haldimand County Information Technology Acceptable Usage Policy (No.2025-02) and will requirement a technical solution request to accommodate the dedicated software application. It is unlikely that this application will be available in June for the Mudcat Festival. Administration of lighting changes, including requests from the community, will be the responsibility of Haldimand County. Staff will develop a policy, to be presented for Council approval, to address the process and timelines by which Haldimand County will approve and implement such community group requests.

Should Council approve Option 1, a Letter of Understanding (Attachment 2), shall be executed between Haldimand County, the Rotary Club of Dunnville, and Brant Municipal Enterprises, in order that each party explicitly acknowledges that the bridge reconstruction scheduled for 2033 may affect the lighting system as installed. Additionally, the Letter of Understanding will stipulate that Haldimand County and its contractors will make every effort to remove the lighting as part of the bridge rehabilitation project; however, Haldimand will accept no liability for damage nor provide reinstallation of the lighting system following the completion of the bridge project. The proponent group shall be invited to request permission and associated grant funding for reinstallation at that point, if desired.

Should Option 1 be approved by Council, the following amendments to Report CDP-06-2025 shall be added to the Recommendations above:

AND THAT the request from the Rotary Club of Dunnville to undertake the coordination of an LED lighting system installation on the Dunnville Grand River Bridge, be approved;

AND THAT staff be authorized to execute the attached Letter of Understanding between Haldimand County and the Rotary Club of Dunnville;

Option 2 – Incorporate lighting into bridge rehabilitation (2033):

Option 2 is for Council to approve the incorporation of a functionally-similar decorative lighting component into the 2033 planned capital bridge rehabilitation project, as identified as Project 772403 in the 2024-2025 Tax Supported Capital Budget.

Haldimand County's Engineering Services Division has indicated strong support for a lighting system at the Dunnville bridge, as a similar element is being considered for inclusion in the future replacement of the Caledonia bridge over the Grand River. Staff prefer to plan for an integrated, engineered and long-term (25+ years) lighting system as part of the Dunnville bridge rehabilitation project rather than to retrofit the existing bridge as it would offer better and more dramatic illumination, a more sustainable lighting system, and at a comparable cost.

Should Option 2 be approved by Council, then the following amendment to Report CDP-06-2025 shall be added to the Recommendations above:

AND THAT the request for funding of \$50,000 for an integrated lighting system be added to the rehabilitation of the Dunnville Grand River Bridge, identified as Project 772403 in the Tax Supported Capital Budget, scheduled for 2033;

Financial/Legal Implications:

Policy 2011-01 states that the Community Partnership Program (CPP) will encourage and actively support partnerships with not-for-profit community groups. Within the CPP Capital Projects grant stream, Council has the responsibility to approve community capital projects with an overall budget of over \$10,000.

The estimated budget for the proposed installation of LED lighting under the Dunnville Grand River Bridge is \$50,000, which includes allowances for potential engineering requirements and a small contingency. The request is for 35% of the actual costs to be funded through the Community Partnership Reserve, and for the balance to be funded through the Ward 6 Ward-Specific Fund.

It should be noted that, approval of the use of the Ward-Specific funding is to be done during the approval of the Tax Supported Capital budget. As such, the approval of the use of these funds at this time is in contravention of the policy regarding these funds.

Based on approved/recommended projects to date requiring funding from the Community Partnership Capital Reserve, there are sufficient funds available to support the request. Should this initiative be approved, as well as the initiative coming forward in report CDP-05-2025, there remains approximately \$14,063 in the Community Partnership Reserve which is unallocated for 2025.

The Community Partnership Program has seen immense uptake in recent years. This, coupled with increasing project costs, have put pressures on the reserve, which receives \$150,000 in funding annually. It may be beneficial to review the funding allocated to this reserve, as additional funding may be required. Any recommended changes to annual contributions will be brought forward and vetted through the annual budget process.

As a result of this proposed project, the following capital amendment is required:

Project Budget	Current Approved Budget	Proposed Revised Budget
Expenditures		
LED lighting installation	\$0	\$50,000
Total Expenditures	\$0	\$50,000
Financing		
Community Partnership Reserve (35%)	\$0	\$17,500
Ward 6 Ward-Specific Funding (65%)	\$0	\$32,500
Total Financing	\$0	\$50,000

In addition to the funding required for the proposed lighting enhancement, the Public Sector Accounting Board (PSAB) reporting standards require Haldimand County to record the fair market value of contributed assets. This capital enhancement will be amortized over the estimated lifespan of the associated enhanced asset for accounting purposes.

Approvals for this project are subject to the assurance that all work is completed in accordance and compliance with all Haldimand County policies, procedures, and standards for construction – including all required permits and authorizations required by Haldimand.

Ongoing additional operating costs for the system (inspections, maintenance, and minor repair) will be the responsibility of Haldimand County, which maintains the bridge, and may require an increase in the Tax Supported Operating Budget. Operating costs for hydro power for an LED lighting system on the Dunnville Grand River Bridge are estimated at approximately \$200 annually. Additional capital replacement or repair—including through any partnership(s) with community group(s)—may impact Haldimand’s existing long-range capital funding plan.

Stakeholder Impacts:

The request was assessed by the Community Partnership Program’s (CPP) Staff Review Team – which is comprised of staff from all Haldimand County Divisions. In particular, staff from Engineering Services (ENG), Public Works Operations (PWO), Financial & Data Services (FIN), Economic Development & Tourism (EDT) and Legal & Support Services (LSS) consulted with staff from Community Development & Partnerships (CDP) to identify and resolve impediments to the successful approval of this project.

The Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) was consulted and has confirmed that no permits are necessary for the project as presented. If, however, any excavation or regrading of the riverbank is required, the GRCA will require further consultation and potential permitting.

Report Impacts:

Agreement: Yes

By-law: No

Budget Amendment: Yes

Policy: No

References:

1. [Haldimand County Community Partnership Program Policy \(No. 2011-01\).](#)
2. [Haldimand County Information Technology Acceptable Usage Policy \(No. 2025-02\).](#)
3. [Haldimand County Procurement Policy \(No. 2023-02\).](#)

Attachments:

1. Location Map – Dunnville Grand River Bridge.
2. Agreement – Letter of Understanding between Haldimand County, the Rotary Club of Dunnville, and Brant Municipal Enterprises.