

Hastings Highlands releases roads plan

By Sarah Sobanski

Council has officially released its five-year capital roads plan.

'I'm very happy, it was a long endeavour last year to get the roads plan together. It's great that council stayed with the plan,' said operations manager Adrian Tomasini. 'It gives staff a way in the future to do their budgeting ahead of the next year.'

Just under \$1 million will be spent on roads for 2017. That's more than \$530,000 for capital road improvements to sections of Musclow Greenview Road, Siberia Road and South Baptiste Lake Road, close to \$150,000 for road resurfacing ? asphalt and surface treatment for sections of Musclow Greenview Road, and close to \$330,000 for road resurfacing ? gravel for 15 other roads in the municipality.

Council opted to take up to an additional \$100,000 out of municipal reserves for a complete rework of South Baptiste Road.

'That section of road ? has failed this year, probably due to climate change. February we had a major thaw and I think there's quite a significant amount of truck traffic through there? It possibly should be addressed immediately but we didn't budget for it this year,' said Tomasini.

A portion of the road was to see around \$100,000 this year and around \$850,000 in 2020, but council determined the road needed immediate work.

'I've has some personal experiences on South Baptiste Lake Road, and also some representation from ratepayers regarding a stretch on [the road]. The best way I could describe it is it's like a causeway with water on both sides of the road,' said Councillor Alex Walder. 'If you split the job up ... and do the remaining 500 metres that you didn't do this year at a later date, that road is not going to get any better in the mean time.'

Around \$860,000 will be spent in 2018, more than \$3 million including more than \$2.5 million for capital road improvements to Hwy 62 in 2019, around \$1,275,000 in 2020, and just shy of \$1.7 million in 2021.

Council considering harsher penalties for illegal activities

Hastings Highlands council is cracking down on illegal dumping.

Council received a report from bylaw enforcement officer Mike Priestley showing that illegal dumping is on the rise in Hastings Highlands as the summer season closes in.

'It's just going to be something that gets progressively worse as more and more cottagers come up,' said Priestley, in an interview after the meeting. 'Right now there's been a problem with three different waste sites that people are typically dumping. Right now there's on average somewhere around 12 or 15 bags.'

Priestley reported that he has been advising those responsible that disposing of waste outside of the municipality's dumps is illegal, but he'd like to see council review fines for repeat offenders.

'Personally, I think the only reason that people would be doing it is just being lazy, not doing it within a timely manner. We have nine waste sites in our facilities. There's always somewhere that's open for them to dispose of their trash,' said Priestley.

He added, 'I would absolutely like to advise people because eventually people are going to start being examples. [They're] going to be set out on people to help clean up our community because from now on the animals are going to be out and they're going to be further destroying the trash and spreading it around to where it's just going to create other work for our waste site attendants and make things look nasty to all our visitors who come out and join us.'

Council directed staff to review its bylaws and fines surrounding waste and illegal dumping. It directed staff to do the same for parking bylaws after discussing illegal parking is a problem in the community.

'We need to address the handicapped parking issue, that's a big deal,' said Deputy Mayor Gregg Roberts. 'Especially for the people that need it, there's nothing more frustrating than to have someone walk out of their car and they don't care.'

Council discussed having staff record licence plate numbers to track repeat offenders.

HPEDSB chair to visit council

Councillor Matheson wished to remind residents that Hastings Prince Edwards District School Board's chair Lucille Kyle will be attending council May 17. She'll be answering questions regarding potential school closures including Maynooth Public School.

Council is asking anyone who may have questions to submit them to their council representative. It plans to compile these questions and submit them to Kyle before the meeting so she can come prepared.

Senior of the Year nominated

Council nominated local musical director Joey Shulman for Ontario's Senior of the Year. The award is given to 'an outstanding

senior who, after age 65, enriches the social, cultural or civic life of the community,? according to Ministry of Seniors Affairs.