

Committee Report

To:	Warden McQueen and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	May 28, 2020
Subject / Report No:	PDR-CW-27-20
Title:	Overview of Proposed Dundalk Medical Health Centre and Potential Use of County Owned Lands for Associated Parking and Trail Crossing
Prepared by:	Randy Scherzer
Reviewed by:	Kim Wingrove
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	Township of Southgate
Status:	

Recommendation

1. That Report PDR-CW-27-20 which provides an overview of a proposed medical health centre in the community of Dundalk, Township of Southgate, be received which includes the proposed use of lands currently owned by the County for additional parking; and
2. That the proposed medical health centre be supported in principle and that staff be directed to work with the Township of Southgate and the South East Grey Community Health Centre to address any matters regarding the land in terms of potential land transfers and/or lease agreements that will be required to move forward with this proposal.

Executive Summary

The Township of Southgate approached County staff regarding a proposed medical health centre in Dundalk. The proposed medical health centre would be located on lands owned by the Township of Southgate and the lands would be leased to the South East Grey Community Health Centre. The lands are located adjacent to the CP Rail Trail and are directly west of the Dundalk Fire Department. The lands are not large enough to accommodate all the parking required for the medical health centre and therefore Southgate has asked if the County would consider them utilizing some of the lands owned by the County for overflow parking as well as for users of the CP Rail Trail and the community as a whole. A trail crossing would also be proposed to connect the

parking areas to CP Rail Trail and to the medical health centre. The County would need to retain at a minimum the rail trail corridor (approximately 25 metres in width) in accordance with the County Official Plan. Should Council support this proposal in principle, County staff would work with the Township of Southgate and the South East Grey Community Health Centre to finalize the details regarding the design of these uses while ensuring that the risk and liability to trail users is minimized. County staff would also work on the details regarding potential land transfers/leases including associated agreements that will be required to move forward with this proposal.

Background and Discussion

The Township of Southgate approached County staff about a proposed medical health centre in Dundalk. The medical health centre would be located on lands owned by the Township of Southgate that are at the corner of Dundalk Street and Grey Street West (see Figure 1). The subject lands are directly adjacent to the CP Rail Trail and are also located west of the Dundalk Fire Department. The medical health centre would be operated by the South East Grey Community Health Centre which currently operates a satellite clinic at 90 Artemesia Street South in Dundalk but they require a larger space.

Figure 2 shows a draft concept plan for the proposed medical health centre. The property owned by Southgate can accommodate some parking including accessible parking spots and parking for staff; however, additional parking will be required. Southgate has asked if the County would consider them utilizing some of the lands owned by the County adjacent to the CP Rail Trail that could be utilized for overflow parking as well as parking for CP Rail Trail users and for the community as a whole.

Part of the proposed parking area would also contain a stormwater management system which would be located under the parking lot. The concept also proposes a trail crossing that would connect the parking areas to the medical health centre. The proposal also includes redesigning the trail by adding curves as a traffic calming measure for motorized vehicles that are permitted on the CP Rail Trail (e.g. ATV's and snowmobiles). A drop off/pick-up area has also been included in the revised concept which is to be located at the front of the Medical Health Centre adjacent to Dundalk Street.

It is anticipated that pedestrian use of the CP Rail Trail in this area will likely increase as a result of the proposed medical health centre. There are also other uses within this block including the Huron Bay Co-op, the Dundalk Fire Department and the Dundalk Library which could also add to the pedestrian movement in and around this area. Motorized vehicles such as ATV's and snowmobiles are currently permitted on the CP Rail Trail and therefore there is a potential increased risk for County liability for injuries and damage that could result along the trail. This risk can be minimized through trail

design and trail crossing design. County staff have recommended that the Township consider adding sidewalks within this village block to provide further options for pedestrian movement between the proposed parking areas and the various uses. Trail maintenance and trail crossing maintenance within this village block will also need to be considered as part of any agreement with Southgate and/or the South East Grey Community Health Centre.

County staff and Grey Sauble Contract staff who help manage the CP Rail Trail have reviewed the proposed concept plans and suggested some revisions which have been incorporated into the latest draft concept plan. These include traffic calming measures, signage including stop signs at the trail crossing and warning signs of trail crossing ahead, lighting to illuminate the parking areas and the trail crossing, as well as having different materials to distinguish the trail crossing from the actual CP Rail Trail. These measures will help to minimize any potential risk and liability associated with the trail crossing as well as the use of the trail by pedestrians within this village block. Any agreements between the County, the Township of Southgate and South East Grey Community Health Centre would also address any liability with respect to the use of the trail and the trail crossing.

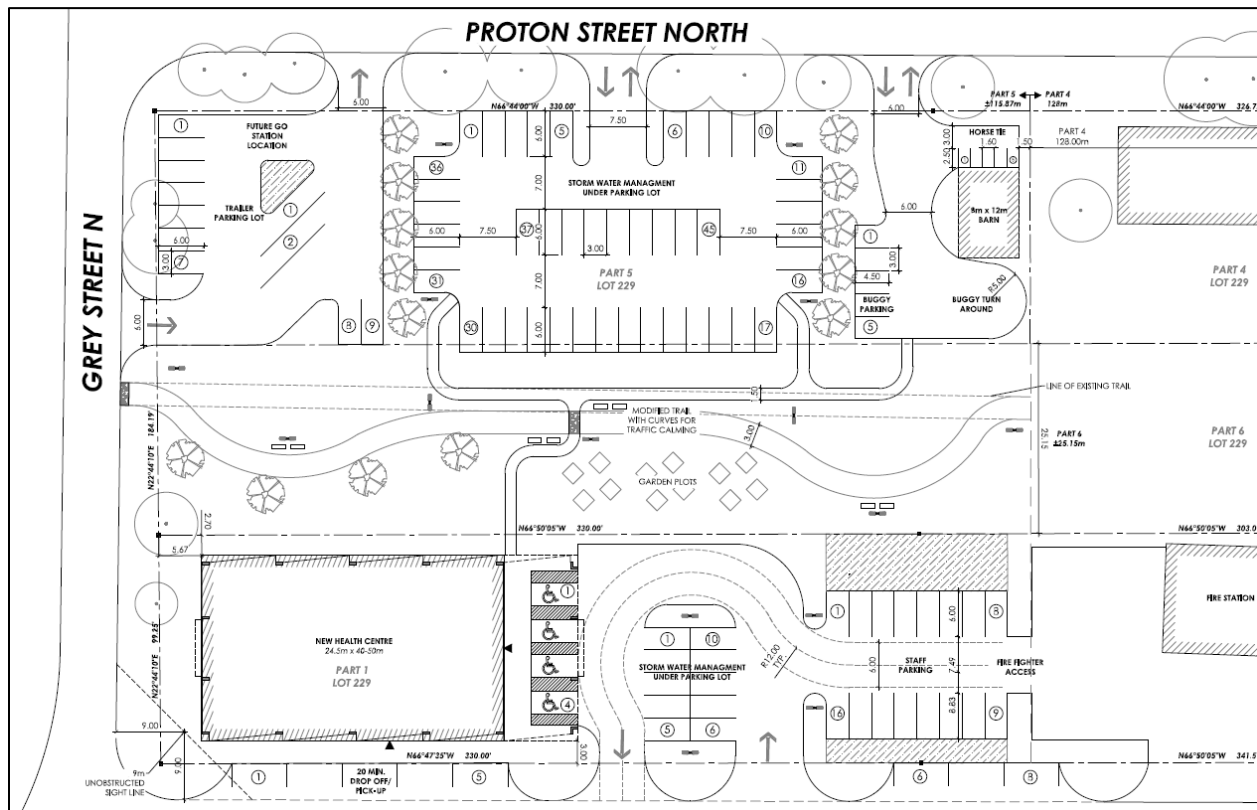
County staff see this an opportunity to improve the trail within this area of Dundalk as currently there are sections of the trail where it is difficult to determine what is the trail versus what are parking areas/trail crossings. County staff recommends that the trail improvements be considered for the entire village block. The design concept also includes benches, landscaping and garden plots as features adjacent to the CP Rail Trail. Having additional parking adjacent to the CP Rail Trail will also provide opportunities for residents and visitors to park and to enjoy the CP Rail Trail. Adding parking facilities adjacent to the CP Rail Trail is an action item that is recommended in the County's Recreational Trail Master Plan. County staff also see this as an opportunity to 'clean up' land ownership and leasing arrangements in this area as there are currently buildings that appear to encroach on the actual CP Rail Trail corridor in the village block.

Figure 1 – Subject Lands



The County would need to maintain at a minimum the actual CP Rail Trail corridor in accordance with the County Official Plan. The CP Rail Trail corridor is approximately 25 metres in width (lands identified in red on Figure 1). The County Official Plan identifies that the County will retain the CP Rail Trail corridor not only for the current use as multi-use recreational trail but also in case rail were to ever return to Grey County. Based on the Official Plan policies, it will be important to include provisions in the agreement(s) with Southgate and/or the South East Grey Community Health Centre to note the potential for rail to return and if rail should return that features and amenities may need to be removed in order to accommodate rail. In speaking with County Legal staff, the legal aspects regarding rail can be quite complex and therefore we may need to engage a lawyer that specializes in rail in order to assist the County with respect to these matters. The County also currently leases land to Huron Bay Co-op within this block and therefore it would be beneficial to clearly identify the part that is leased through a surveyed reference plan.

Figure 2 - Concept Plan of Proposed Medical Health Centre and Parking Areas



Should Council support the proposal in principle, County staff would work with the Township of Southgate and South East Grey Community Health Centre to work out details with respect to land transfers/leases as well as associated agreements. County staff would also finalize any design details with respect to the trail to ensure that is designed to reduce any risk and liability concerns. County staff would also work with Township of Southgate Planning staff to ensure that any planning matters are addressed. Southgate has noted that a local official plan amendment and a zoning amendment will be required to accommodate the proposed use.

Legal and Legislated Requirements

Planning Act

Municipal Act

The use of County land to provide parking or other land to support a private development engages “bonusing” restrictions. Any agreements reached in this regard will need to ensure that no “bonusing” occurs.

Since motorized vehicles are permitted on the trail area involved, and since the pedestrian presence on the trail in the area would be expected to increase, there is an increased risk for County liability for injuries and damage that result along the trail. Consideration should also be given to the responsibility for trail maintenance that would be required for pedestrians crossing the trail between the parking area and the development. These matters will be considered as part of the agreements with Southgate and/or South East Grey Community Health Centre.

Financial and Resource Implications

All costs associated with the Medical Health Centre, the proposed parking areas and the trail crossing/improvements would be part of the overall expenses associated with the Medical Health Centre and therefore would be paid for by Southgate and/or the South East Grey Community Health Centre. Should the County require legal support for the matters associated with rail there could be some additional costs which we hope can be covered by Southgate and/or the South East Grey Community Health Centre as overall expenses associated with the project.

Relevant Consultation

- ☒ Internal (Clerks, Legal, CAO, Planning Staff,)
- ☒ External (Grey Sauble Contract Staff, Township of Southgate, South East Grey Community Health Centre)

Appendices and Attachments

None