



Municipality of the County of Inverness
Council Update
Whycocomagh Sidewalks

Update

During the February 20th, 2020 Council, Committee of the Whole meeting, Lisa Nearing and Heather Austin-Coulombe presented a petition to Council highlighting the desire for the construction of a sidewalk connecting the communities of Whycocomagh and We'koqma'q First Nation. With the proposed rotary being constructed in Whycocomagh, citizens encouraged the Municipality to work with NS Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (NSTIR) to pursue the creation of this sidewalk. Council directed staff to investigate costs of potential sidewalks.

Proposed Rotary

The new Whycocomagh rotary will require the Municipality to advance a linear infrastructure upgrade and Municipal staff have engaged Strum Engineering to provide design and costing for this work in coordination with NSTIR for permitting and tendering purposes. An update on this work will be forthcoming to council shortly.

Whycocomagh Sidewalks

In the meantime, the Whycocomagh Planning & Streetscape Committee have engaged Strum engineering (\$39,950.00 +HST) to survey, design and cost the construction of sidewalks throughout the village of Whycocomagh including connecting We'koqma'q First Nation and the village of Whycocomagh (see the attached design and costing). To comply with NSTIR criteria and ensure pedestrian safety the addition of retaining walls are necessary. Municipal staff are currently supporting this by engaging with potential funding partners to help offset the implementation cost of this work.

Alignment of Existing Work

1. Municipal Active Transportation Plan

The Municipal Active Transportation Plan completed in 2018 engaged residents of District 4 through an open house and an online engagement survey.

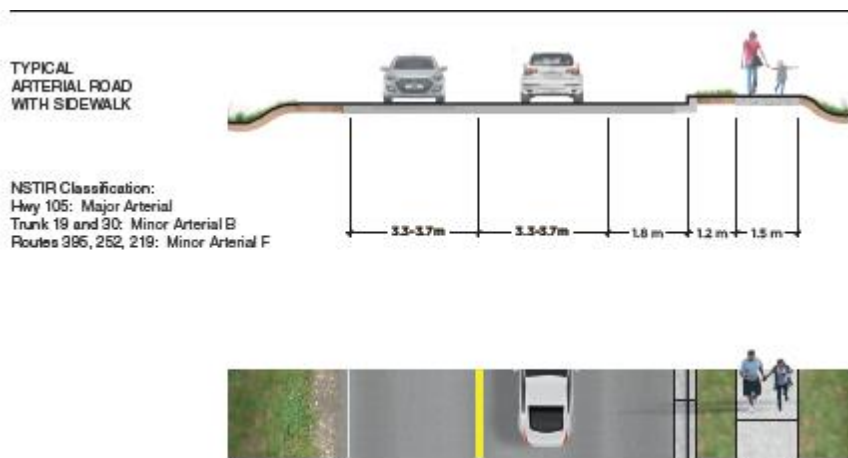
The issues were as follows:

- Safe crossing of the highway
- Improved gravel shoulder
- Need lighting, dangerous to walk at night
- Need sidewalks
- Safe pedestrian access to Skye River Trail
- Safe pedestrian access to Provincial Park
- Improvements to walkability of Main Street.

Highway 105 traffic volume from Port Hastings to Whycocomagh, daily traffic volume ranges from 3,300 to 4,500 vehicles per day.

The Municipal Active Transportation Plan recommendations are to provide a safe east-west walking connection through Whycomomagh. Of the service centres within the Municipality with major highways traversing through them, Whycomomagh is the only one, to date, that has not benefitted from any sidewalk or streetscaping projects. Vehicles travel through the community at high speeds and there are few visual indicators that drivers are entering the core of a community. Providing a curbed sidewalk and pedestrian scaled lighting along Highway 105 would not only enable safe walking but also ties together the heart of Whycomomagh and makes it less of a 'drive through' community. A walking connection would also connect We'koqma'q First Nation. In detail the Municipal Active Transportation Plan made the following recommendations:

1. A curbed sidewalk and pedestrian lighting along Highway 105 from Reservation Road to Farmer's Daughter.
2. A paved shoulder and pedestrian lighting along Main Street.
3. A curbed sidewalk and pedestrian lighting along Highway 105 from Main Street to the Whycomomagh Provincial Park.



2. J Class Road

Main Street has been submitted as a J-Class Road for repaving to NSTIR. At this time, a paved shoulder or curbed sidewalk option can be explored.

3. Whycomomagh Brand, Signage, Streetscape & Façade Program

The Whycomomagh Brand, Signage & Streetscape Plan is underway. This plan is focused on improving the community's attraction capability, slowing traffic down, encouraging the feel of a community vs. a drive through, improving pedestrian safety, supporting local business and enhancing civic pride. Once the plan is completed, implementation will begin.





Summary

The budget attached is solely for the We'koqma'q/Whycomomagh connection and does not include a contingency for pedestrian scaled walkway lighting (\$60,000.00).

Including the sidewalk work to connect We'koqma'q and Whycomomagh in the NSTIR tender will mean significant cost savings.

The purpose of this presentation is to update Council on the progress of this work. It is expected by the May, Council Committee of the Whole meeting a more thorough budget will be presented, and funding partners identified. If a portion of this work will be recoverable through an area rate for eligible property owners within the fire protection catchment area, public support will need to be demonstrated and budget presented to the community.