



Administrative Report

To: Warden MacDonald and Members of Essex County Council

From: Allan Botham, P.Eng.
Director, Infrastructure & Planning Services

Date: Wednesday, July 17, 2024

Subject: River Canard Bridge Plaque Update

Report #: 2024-0717-IPS-R15-AB

Purpose

The objective of this Administrative Report is to provide County Council with information and an update pertaining to the proposed installation of commemorative plaques for the River Canard Bridge, B-08-02, and an application to the Ontario Heritage Trust.

Background

Administration provided report 2023-1018-IPS-R33-AB to Council with information on the proposed installation of a commemorative plaque at the bow string bridge over River Canard that borders LaSalle and Amherstburg.

Council adopted a recommendation that Administration prepare and submit application to the Ontario Heritage Trust (OHT) requesting a plaque to be installed at the River Canard Bridge B-08-02. Council also supported that two, bilingual signs be installed, one on both the LaSalle and Amherstburg sides of the bridge. The signs will have both French and English versions of the narrative on the same side of the sign and nothing will appear on the back of the sign.

Administration now understands from OHT that requests in 2024 must be submitted by July 31, 2024, for consideration in September 2024 by the OHT selection committee. Installation and unveiling will occur in 2025 at a date yet to be determined.

Discussion

An application is being prepared by County of Essex Administration along with input from both the Town of LaSalle and the Town of Amherstburg.



Figure 1

Should OHT award plaques to the County of Essex in late fall of 2024, discussion will continue regarding final wording, location, costs, delivery, unveiling ceremony, etc. Delivery, installation and unveiling of the sign would occur in 2025.

Input on the wording will come from the County of Essex, Town of Amherstburg, Town of LaSalle and the OHT. The County of Essex will provide the following as a draft proposal.

“This iconic bridge connects the communities of Amherstburg and LaSalle, crossing the River Canard near its mouth at the Detroit River. Situated in the shadow of historic St. Joseph Church, a designated heritage site, the River Canard Bridge is the only concrete tied arch or bowstring bridge that remains in the County road network from an original inventory of four. The bridge deck is suspended from overhead dual arches and, unlike most bowstring bridges, features thin vertical hangers and concrete railings. It was constructed in 1937 with a span of 36 metres and underwent significant rehabilitations in 2001 and again in 2016. It is one of the most photographed and painted structures in all of Essex County and serves as a landmark for River Canard.”

Potential locations to install the stand-alone signs, on posts, were reviewed and vetted by the Infrastructure & Planning Services department, Engineering and Operations divisions. Preferred locations are shown in Figure 1.

Financial Implications

The OHT plaque program is a cost-sharing program such that the OHT asks that each applicant contribute a minimum amount of \$6,500, per plaque, as well as in-kind support. OHT provided that the full cost of a single plaque, installed, is \$21,000.

An on-going benefit of the OHT plaque program is that OHT will then go on to maintain the plaque year over year with cleaning and minor maintenance.

Table 1 provides a summary of expected costs and contributions from the County of Essex, the Town of Amherstburg and the Town of LaSalle.

Table 1

Plaque Project Components	Estimated Cost / Contribution	Municipal Contributor	Notes
2 Commemorative Plaques	\$13,000	County	\$6,500 each; cost might be lower if the same mold can be reused.
Advertising and Unveiling Ceremony	\$2,000	County	For the unveiling ceremony and associated costs.
Installation (in-kind)	\$1,000	County	Post and installation completed by the County.
Town of LaSalle Contribution	\$3,000	LaSalle	LaSalle Administration is presenting a report to Council on June 25 th .
Town of Amherstburg	\$3,000	Amherstburg	Amherstburg Administration is presenting a report to Council on July 8 th .

Administration recommends that the contributions from both the Town of Amherstburg and the Town of LaSalle will be in addition to those of the County of Essex.

Administration also recommends that the County share of the plaque cost, \$13,000, and the cost of advertising an unveiling ceremony, \$2,000, be managed within the annual sign budget.

Consultations

Preparation of this report included discussion and consultation with the Director, Financial Services, Ontario Heritage Trust, and Administrations of both the Town of Amherstburg and the Town of LaSalle.

Strategic Plan Alignment

Working as Team Essex County	Growing as Leaders in Public Service Excellence	Building a Regional Powerhouse
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Scaling Sustainable Services through Innovation <input type="checkbox"/> Focusing “Team Essex County” for Results <input type="checkbox"/> Advocating for Essex County’s Fair Share 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Being an Employer with Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A Government Working for the People <input type="checkbox"/> Promoting Transparency and Awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Providing Reliable Infrastructure for Partners <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting Dynamic and Thriving Communities Across the County <input type="checkbox"/> Harmonizing Action for Growth <input type="checkbox"/> Advancing Truth and Reconciliation

Recommendation

That Essex County Council receive report number 2024-0619-IPS-R15-AB, River Canard Bridge Plaque Update as information, and

That Essex County Council direct Administration to make application to the Ontario Heritage Trust by July 31, 2024, for the supply of two plaques at the Bowstring Bridge over River Canard with a proposed financial contribution from the County of Essex totaling \$16,000.

Approvals

Respectfully Submitted,

Allan Botham

Allan Botham, P.Eng., Director, Infrastructure and Planning Services

Concurred With,

Sandra Zwiers

Sandra Zwiers, MAcc, CPA, CA, Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix	Title
N/A	N/A