



**BURNSIDE**

**Public Information Centre  
Summary Report  
Muskoka Road 15  
(Santa's Village Road)  
Transportation Improvements  
from the Beaver Creek Bridge to the  
Entrance of Santa's Village**

**The District Municipality of Muskoka  
70 Pine Street  
Bracebridge ON P1L 1N3**

**R.J. Burnside & Associates Limited  
128 Wellington Street West Suite 301  
Barrie ON L4N 8J6 CANADA**

**September 27, 2017  
300038371.0000**

**R.J. Burnside & Associates Limited**

**Report Prepared By:**



Deanna De Forest, B.Sc.  
Environmental Assessment and Regulatory Coordinator  
DD:jb

**Report Reviewed By:**



Paul Hausler  
Senior Project Manager  
PH:jb

## Table of Contents

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Introduction and Background .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Method of Notification.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Public Meeting Format.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Participation Levels and Summary of Comments Received.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Discussion of the Rankings .....</b>	<b>3</b>
5.1	Overall Preference .....	4
5.1.1	Group 1 – Residents of Muskoka Road 15 .....	5
5.1.2	Group 2 – Local Road Stakeholders .....	6
5.1.3	Group 3 – Destination Road Stakeholders.....	7
5.2	Summary of the Rankings.....	8
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Questions/Concerns and Answers .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Feedback and Advice.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Next Steps.....</b>	<b>11</b>

## Appendices

- Appendix A Newspaper Advertisement
- Appendix B Display Boards
- Appendix C Comment Sheets

## 1.0 Introduction and Background

The District of Muskoka (District) has initiated a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) to consider transportation improvements to Muskoka Road 15 (Santa's Village Road) from the Beaver Creek Bridge to the Entrance of Santa's Village. Improvements to address road surface, road base and subgrade performance deficiencies, drainage, erosion control and active transportation were considered.

Alternative solutions include:

1. Do nothing (includes re-paving and other regular maintenance activities).
2. Rural Cross Section with Shallow Ditch.
3. Semi-Urban Cross Section with Bike Lanes.
4. Semi-Urban Cross Section with Multi-Use Trail.
5. Semi-Urban Cross Section (no trail or bike lanes).
- 6A. Enhanced Road Profile Complete with 2 m Paved Shoulder on South side and 1 m paved Shoulder on North Side of Road.
- 6B. Enhanced Road Profile Complete with 1.5 m Paved Shoulders on Both Sides of Road.

The planning of the road improvements are being carried out in accordance with the Schedule 'B' requirements (Phases 1 to 2) of the Municipal Engineers Association Municipal Class Environmental Assessment document (October 2000, as amended in 2007, 2011 and 2015), which is approved under the *Ontario Environmental Assessment Act*. A key component of the study includes consultation with interested stakeholders. This report documents the Public Information Centre (PIC), held on August 10, 2017 and summarizes the notification process, the information presented and the comments received during and after the PIC.

## 2.0 Method of Notification

Details of the date, time, location and purpose of the PIC were published in the Bracebridge Examiner and the Weekender on July 20, 2017 and July 27, 2017. A copy of the advertisement is provided in Appendix A. A media e-blast was also sent out to those that subscribe to the District website for updates and notification about road projects and road construction.

Notification of the PIC was posted on the District of Muskoka website and was also mailed to regulatory agencies, municipalities, Indigenous Communities and local residents who live within the study area.

### **3.0 Public Meeting Format**

The PIC was arranged as a “drop-in” style session where representatives from the study team were available to answer questions and discuss the project with interested members of the public. Attendees were greeted upon arrival, were encouraged to sign-in and were offered a comment form to provide comments on the project and alternative solutions. A total of 63 people attended the PIC, excluding the project team members, as indicated on the sign in sheets.

The open house began at 6:00 p.m. Display boards were placed around the room and representatives from the project team were available to answer questions and discuss the project with attendees from 6:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. A presentation of the summarized material in PowerPoint format was conducted by members of R.J. Burnside & Associates Limited (Burnside) and the District. A second presentation was conducted at 7:00 p.m., as advertised, by a member of Burnside, while the Technical representative was available to review display boards and answer questions from individuals. The Project team continued to answer individual questions until the close of the PIC at 9:00 p.m.

A copy of the display boards is provided in Appendix B. A copy of the summary presentation is also provided in Appendix B

Participants were requested to provide input to the process by completing the available comment forms. If individuals wished to take comment forms home to fill out later, or to download the comment form from the District of Muskoka website, they were requested to return their comments either via email or to the mailing address provided, by September 12, 2017.

### **4.0 Participation Levels and Summary of Comments Received**

This section provides an overview of the feedback received from participants at the PIC and following the PIC. Written comments/comment sheets were received from 130 local stakeholders, two agencies and one Indigenous community (Chippewas of the Thames First Nation) during the comment period following the PIC. A copy of the comments received are provided in Appendix C.

The comments received during the PIC and subsequent comment period included the following themes:

- Concerns over the existing traffic speed and that road improvements, such as widening or straightening curves, may result in an increase in speed.

- Concerns over guiderails limiting access to the River, including for people with accessibility issues.
- Concerns over existing property and private infrastructure that may be removed or damaged during construction.
- Concerns with removal of trees and habitat.
- Concerns over curb and gutter for ruining the rural nature of the road, creating a hazard for cyclists, and being a problem for winter maintenance.
- Desire for safe active transportation along the road.
- Desire to improve the road for increased tourism and enjoyment of the River.
- TransCanada Pipelines has two mains in the Study Area.

## 5.0 Discussion of the Rankings

The comment sheets were provided with a short description of each alternative and participants were asked to rank the Alternatives from 1 to 7, with 1 being most preferred.

In the evaluation of the alternatives against the natural, technical, social and economic environment, the ranking order of the Alternatives is considered along with comments from the stakeholders, the Municipality and Agencies that were provided during the EA process. The selection of a preferred alternative is not based solely on the rankings provided by participants during the PIC and PIC comment period.

The rankings are utilized to provide context for accompanying participant comments, provide a better understanding of stakeholder opinions and to provide balance in the evaluation of the preferred alternative.

The alternative with the most first preference ranks (i.e., ranked 1 by participants), provides an indication of an overall shared preference for one alternative. The less-preferred choices are considered when no one alternative attains more than half of the first preference ranks. Then, rankings from the least preferred alternative are transferred to the other alternatives for consideration.

The alternatives ranked most often in the top three (ranks 1, 2 and 3) and bottom three (ranks 5, 6, and 7) were reviewed to provide an indication of the general preference of participants among the alternatives. In this way, one, some, or all of the alternatives could be ranked without splitting the vote between alternatives that may be similar.

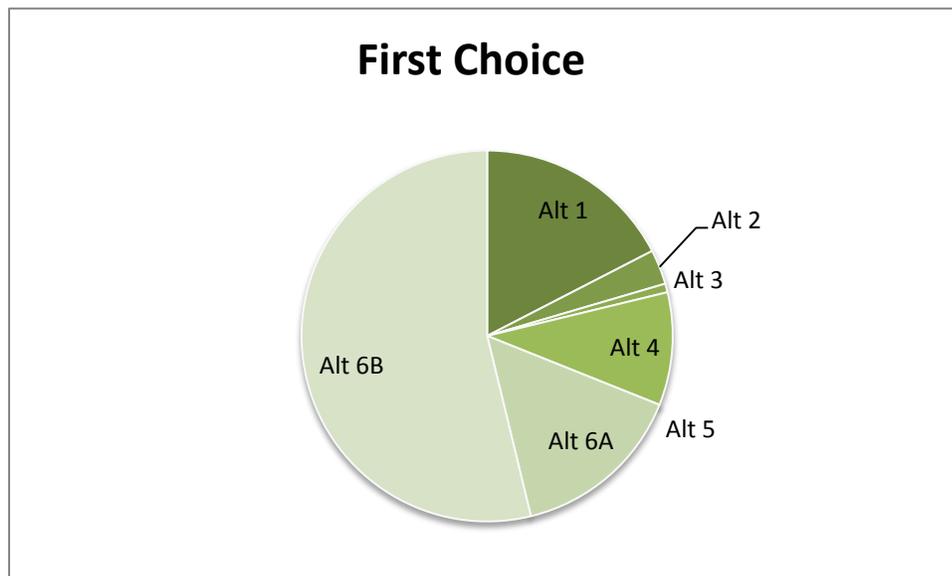
Participant ranking submissions were organized into three general groups based on where the participant lives relative to the study area, to provide context for the selections.

1. Group 1 - are residents on Santa's Village Road, who would be subject to potential direct impacts of the alternatives (e.g., tree felling, river access, property acquisition, etc. in addition to high frequency usage of the road).

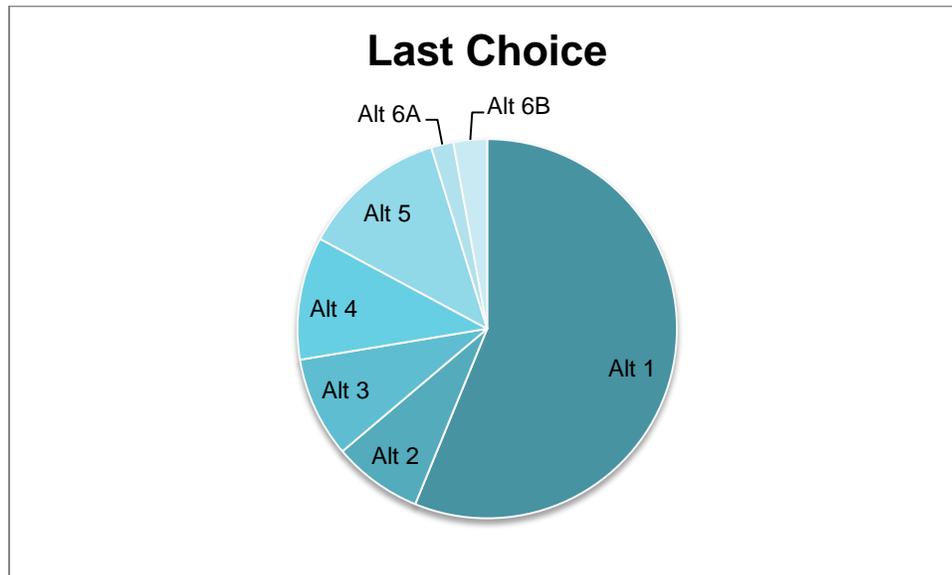
2. Group 2 - are residents who are located on local roads that directly connect to Muskoka Road 15, who are highly probable to drive on the road with a high frequency, but will not experience the same potential direct impacts as Group 1.
3. Group 3 – are residents who are located beyond Muskoka Road 15, outside of the immediate study area, but for whom the road is likely a destination.

### 5.1 Overall Preference

Alternative 6B had over half of all first rank scores, based on all comment sheets received during the PIC comment period. Alternative 1 and Alternative 6A were the next highest respectively, based on the number of first ranks received. Alternatives 2, 3 and 5 all received the fewest first ranks.

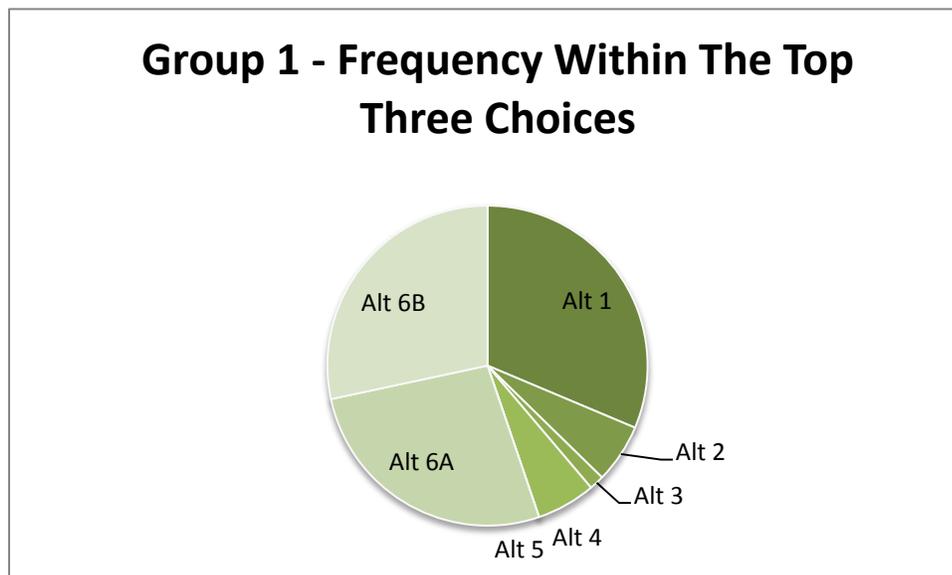


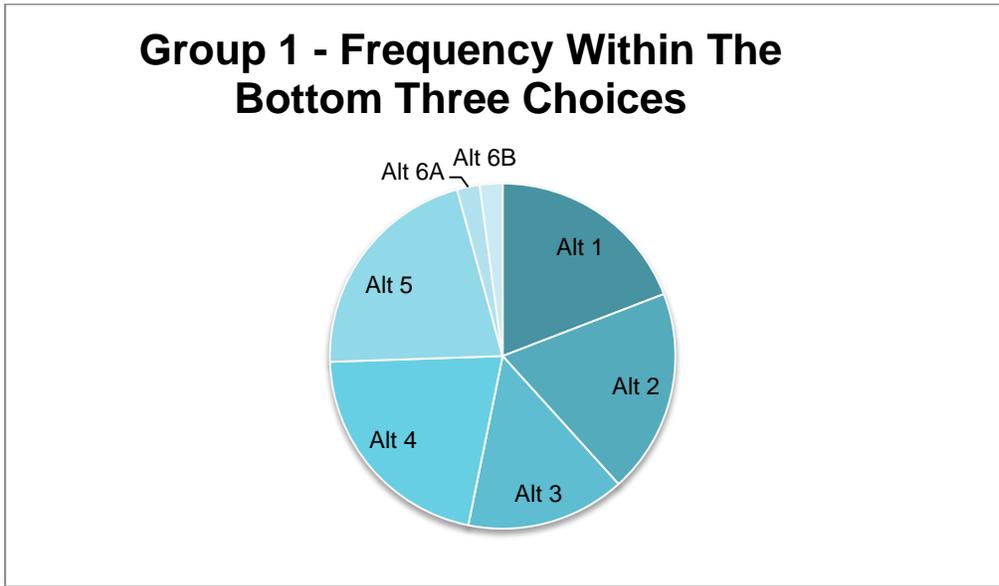
Of those comment sheets that indicated a least preferred Alternative (i.e. ranked as a 7), Alternative 1 had the highest number of last place ranks scores, with over half of all last ranks. Alternatives 6A and 6B received the fewest last ranks.



**5.1.1 Group 1 – Residents of Muskoka Road 15**

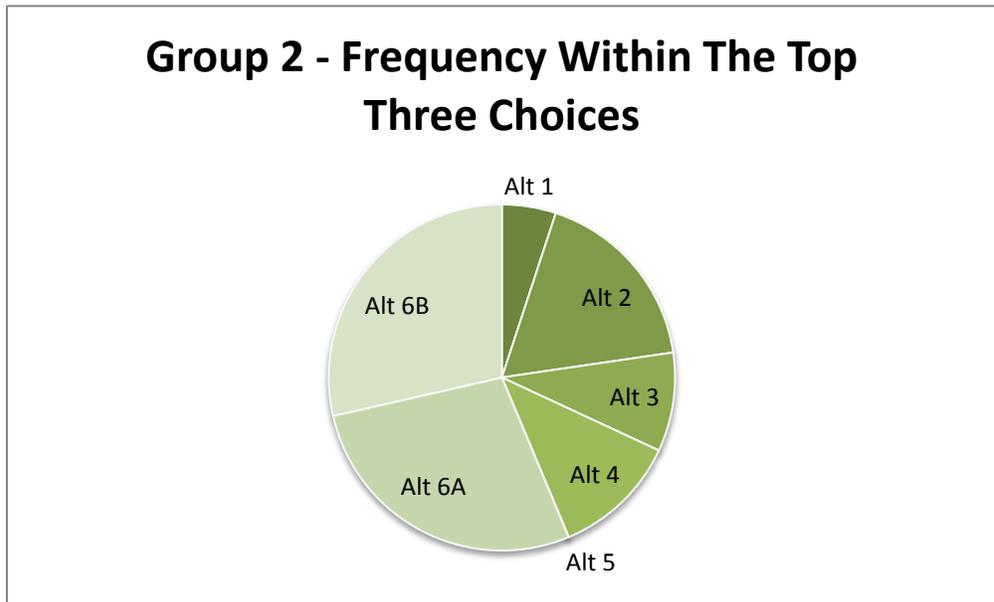
Group 1 ranked Alternative 1, 6B and 6A most often among the top three rankings, with marginal support for the remaining alternatives. Group 1 ranked Alternatives 1 to 5 most often within the bottom three ranks, while Alternatives 6A and 6B garnered the fewest selections as one of the bottom three rankings.

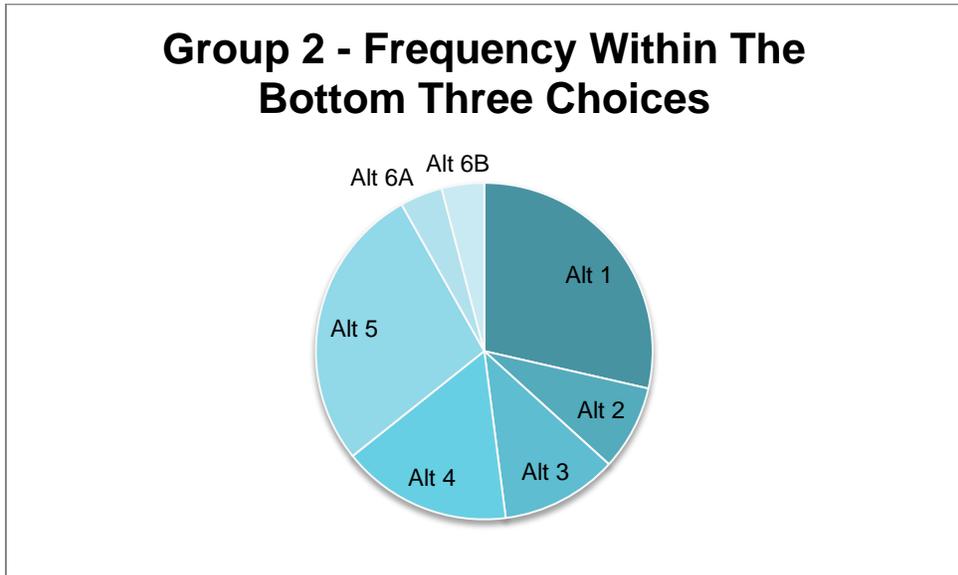




#### 5.1.2 Group 2 – Local Road Stakeholders

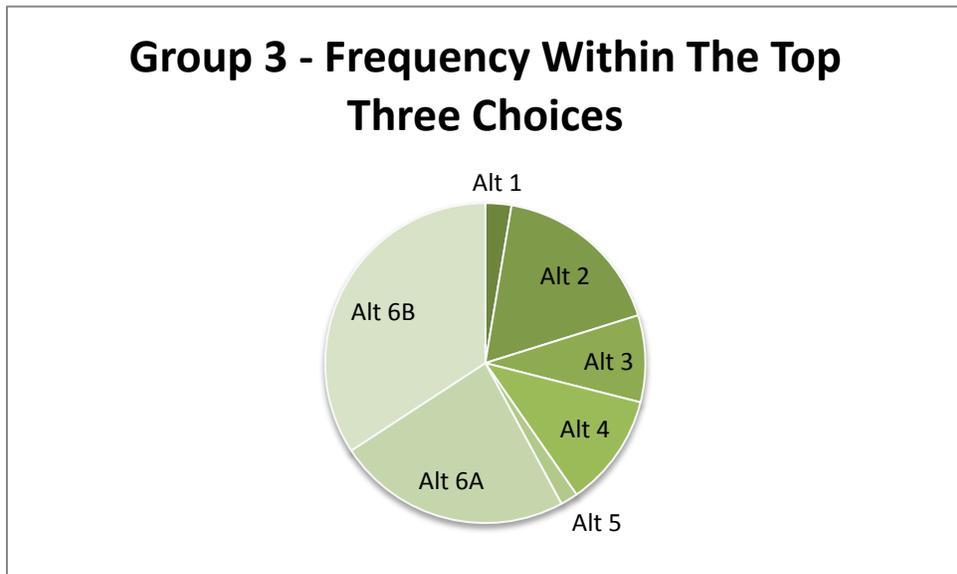
Group 2 ranked Alternative 6B and 6A most often among the top three rankings. Alternative 5 did not receive any top three rankings. Group 2 ranked Alternatives 1 and 5 most often among the bottom three rankings, while Alternatives 6A and 6B garnered the fewest selections as one of the bottom three rankings.

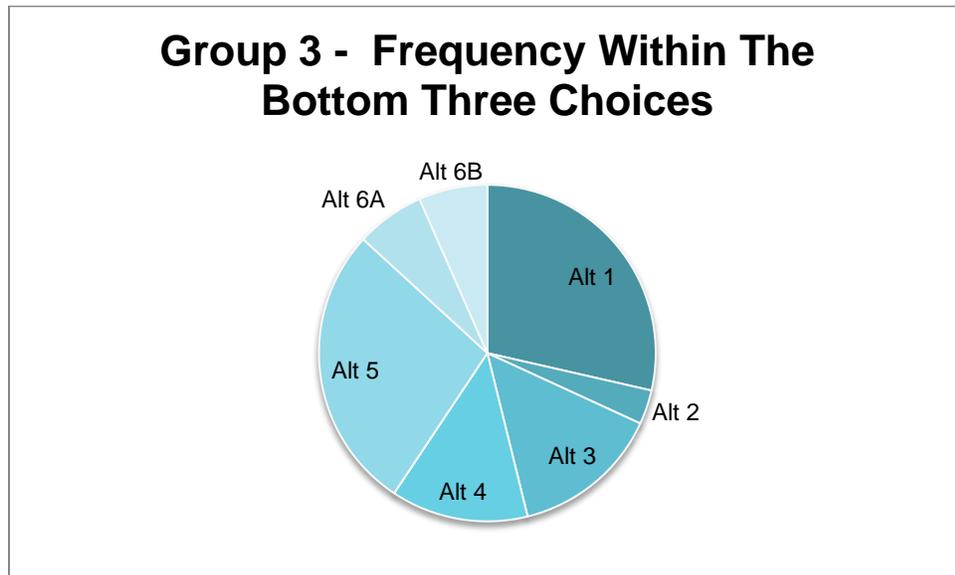




**5.1.3 Group 3 – Destination Road Stakeholders**

Group 3 ranked Alternative 6B and 6A most often within the top three rankings. Group 3 ranked Alternatives 1 and 5 most often within bottom three ranks, while Alternatives 2, 6A and 6B garnered the fewest bottom three ranks.





## 5.2 Summary of the Rankings

Alternatives 6A and 6B were high ranking across all three Groups and had the fewest low rankings of any Alternative. Of all Alternatives, 6B was the Alternative with the highest positive ranking overall. Alternatives 2, 3, 4, and 5 had minimal support from stakeholders. Alternative 1 had the most support from Group 1 but also placed within the bottom three ranks for Group 1 along with Alternatives 2 to 5. Alternative 1 had the least support from Groups 2 and 3 and was ranked most often among the bottom three rankings.

## 6.0 Questions/Concerns and Answers

A summary of questions included as part of the comments received from the PIC are as follows.

Q1: What are the effects of drainage on road longevity?

A1: *Road longevity is directly linked to drainage. Where drainage of the road base is provided to minimize long term saturation of the road base material, significant decreases in road maintenance is achieved due to reduced instances of frost damage and loss-of-support to the road.*

Q2: My driveway would be severely altered if the road is widened too much, who will pay to reroute driveway?

A2: *During the detailed design of the preferred solution, the location and grade of each driveway will be considered and the road design will be adjusted accordingly. Where the new road design directly impacts the grade and/or location, measures*

*will be implemented during design and construction to minimize impacts. Any impacts to the driveway and related mitigation costs will be the responsibility of the District.*

Q3: Will existing private electrical/plumbing lines under the road be maintained or replaced?

A3: *Private electrical/plumbing lines should not typically be located within the District's Right Of Way (ROW). If any of these are encountered during construction, the District will review this with the property owner and they may be required to be relocated. Depending on the situation, the District may consider a license of occupation agreement that will be subject to specific terms and conditions as well as an established fee structure.*

Q4: Who is responsible for costs to repair/replace private infrastructure on River side that is damaged or removed in construction, if the River frontage is not privately owned.

A4: *Private infrastructure should not typically be located within the District ROW. Where private infrastructure interferes with the construction of the road, the owner will be consulted and may be responsible to remove and/or relocate the affected infrastructure. This will be negotiated on a per occurrence basis between the District and the landowner.*

Q5: When are rumble strips added to the pavement? Is it ground in or stamped in after the asphalt is down?

A5: *Rumble strips are added after placement of the asphalt and they are ground out.*

Q6: Do the rumble strips impact negatively the longevity of the road?

A6: *We do not anticipate any effect to the longevity of the road by the addition of rumble strips.*

Q7: What is the difference between "bike friendly rumble strips" and regular rumble strips?

A7: *Some rumble strips can be raised ridges. We do not anticipate using raised ridges due to snow removal problems. Gaps in the rumble strips could be placed at regular intervals to allow bikes to exit the lane or paved shoulder safely.*

Q8: I support Alternative 6B, but the alternative should be completed as full depth reconstruction for the entire road footprint, as opposed to resurfacing for the existing footprint and full depth reconstruction for the widening, only.

A8: *Full depth reconstruction will add significantly to the costs for Alternative 6A or 6B. This will also add to the schedule for completing upgrades to the road, due to budgeting constraints.*

Q9: Clarification requested on definition of the various forms of active transportation lanes/trails (e.g., can pedestrians walk on bicycle lanes).

A9: *Pedestrians should not walk on/use designated bicycle lanes. Pedestrians, however, are allowed to use paved shoulders. At present Ontario's Highway Traffic Act prohibits any vehicle (bikes included) to actively use road shoulders for conveyance.*

Q10: Why is #2 so expensive?

A10: *Alternative 2 is the largest footprint alternative, which means that it requires additional expenditures for tree removals, property acquisition and related construction items, such as retaining walls.*

Q11: Would there be a shallow ditch for 6A/6B?

A11: *Existing ditching and drainage characteristics, where possible, would be maintained. However, minor deviations to the existing drainage features may be required to maximize positive drainage throughout the project.*

Q12: Why is guiderail different for different options?

A12: *Traffic Design Guidelines provide minimum distances from the traffic lanes to hazards, such as the slope of the river bank. If these distances cannot be met, then guiderail is required to mitigate the hazard. Items such as curbs can reduce the minimum distance required to a hazard, whereas a bike lane or trail on the River side could provide the minimum distance without the need for guiderail.*

## 7.0 Feedback and Advice

Participants shared the following suggestions for the District's consideration.

- Consideration for guiderail to have accessibility for residents and accommodate people with accessibility issues.
- Reconstruction of overly impacted driveways.
- Locate and restore plumbing and electrical crossing road (where legal).
- Preserve trees where possible during construction.

- Native trees and shrubs plantings post-construction to replace removals.
- Regular maintenance program to clear brush to improve sightlines.
- Regular maintenance program to clear sand from shoulders/paths/trails in early spring.
- Implementation of traffic calming measures, such as narrow lanes and rumble strips, where possible to limit traffic speed.
- Rumble strips for safety/separation of active transportation and motorists.
- Increase signage to promote “Shared Road”.
- Any ditching slopes should have seniors/accessibility considerations.
- Drainage should be strongly considered in detailed design.
- TransCanada Pipelines should be notified during detailed design and prior to any Construction.

## **8.0 Next Steps**

Comments and concerns received during the PIC and PIC comment period will be reviewed for incorporation into the evaluation of a preferred alternative. Next steps include completing the evaluation of alternatives, followed by the selection of a preferred alternative solution, and presentation of preferred alternative solution to the District for review and approval.

Following the approval of a Preferred Alternative Solution, the choice of Municipal Class EA Schedule will be reviewed and confirmed or changed as appropriate for the Preferred Solution.

If the Preferred Alternative Solution is confirmed as a Schedule A+ project, then a Notice of Project will be issued in advance of construction.

If the Preferred Alternative Solution is confirmed as a Schedule B project, then a Notice of Completion will be issued, and a Project File Report will be available for public review and comment for a minimum 30-day review period.