

Staff Report

Presented By: Ruhul Amin, Manager Engineering Services
Meeting Date: January 26, 2026
Subject: Moore Bridge EA Recommendations
Attachment(s): Project Planning Report
Consultant's Presentation

Recommendation

That Council approve Alternative 3 - Removal of Moore Bridge to advance in 2028-2029 as per the 10-Year Capital Plan.

Report Summary

This report presents the findings of the Moore Bridge Project Planning Study, including background, environmental and technical considerations, review of alternatives, and recommendation for the preferred solution.

Background/Analysis

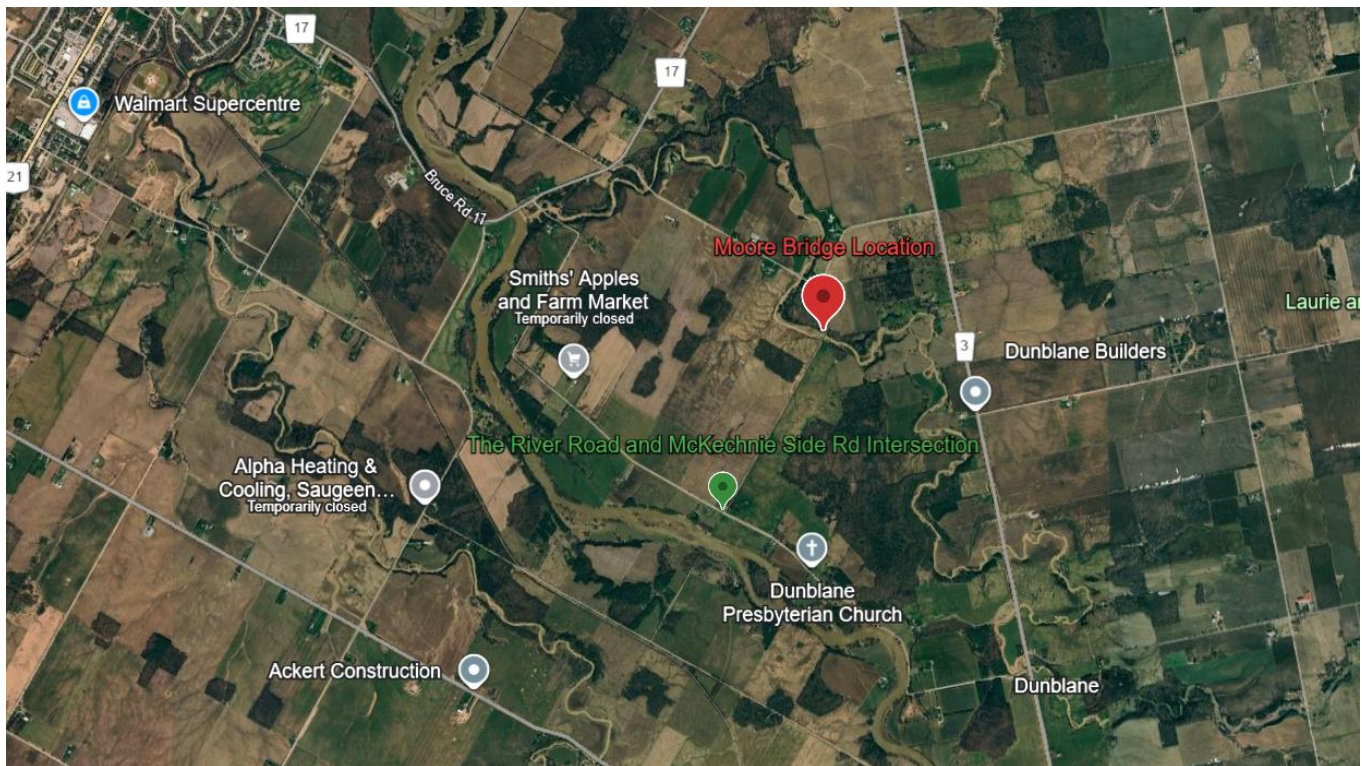
Moore Bridge is located on McKechnie Sideroad over Snake Creek, about seven kilometers southeast of Port Elgin. Built around 1920, it is a one-lane, single-span steel Warren pony truss bridge measuring approximately 24.8 meters in length and 4.1 meters in width. The bridge was closed to vehicular traffic in 2013 due to severe deterioration of its structural components.

The Town engaged GEI Consultants to review alternatives for the crossing, following Municipal Class EA principles, although the project is exempt from formal EA requirements. The study included cultural heritage and archaeological assessments, a scoped environmental impact study, geotechnical investigation, and floodplain and safe access analysis.

The main conclusions confirm that Moore Bridge does represent cultural heritage significance, nor does it contain archaeological features. The environmental review identified one Species at Risk (Eastern Meadowlark) located more than 20 meters away, as well as potential habitat for bats and other wildlife. Recommended mitigation measures include construction timing restrictions for vegetation removal, erosion control, and restoration with native plants. The floodplain analysis confirmed the existing structure cannot provide safe access during a Regional Storm; any replacement would require a 50% increase in span and raising the deck by one meter.

Reopening the bridge would also require two kilometers of road upgrades and redesigning approaches to improve sightlines and grades.

In terms of traffic demand, the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) in 1992 (i.e., before amalgamation) was reported to be 25 vehicles. Traffic volumes of less than 100 vehicles per day are technically considered to be low. Although the closure of the bridge did not occur until 20 years later, traffic had not increased significantly. It is recognized that McKechnie Sideroad was used, and continues to be used, by pedestrians, cyclists and ATVs. While low traffic counts are considered in the assessment of bridge alternatives, it is one of several factors discussed below that provide further rationale to justify the recommendation.



Moore Bridge Location

Alternatives Considered:

1. **Do Nothing** – Not viable, eventual collapse risk.
2. **Repair Existing Structure** – Estimated \$700K–\$1.1M; short-term benefit only.
3. **Bridge Removal** – Estimated \$600K–\$800K; restore riverbanks; eliminate future maintenance.
4. **Replace with Pedestrian Bridge** – \$1.6M–\$2.0M.
5. **Replace with Single-Lane Bridge** – \$3.0M–\$3.5M (includes road upgrades).
6. **Replace with Two-Lane Bridge** – >\$5.0M (includes road upgrades).

Public Consultations:

The Planning Report was posted on Engage Saugeen Shores (ESS) on December 1, 2025, for public review and to solicit feedback on the proposed recommendations. The Town also promoted the consultation opportunity through its social media platforms to encourage public participation via ESS. In addition, a flyer was hand-delivered to directly affected residents inviting them to submit comments through ESS. The deadline for providing comments was December 15, 2025.

In total, the Town received 19 public comments. A summary of the feedback is provided below:

- **10 respondents** supported constructing a pedestrian bridge or maintaining a river crossing limited to active transportation uses, either through repair, replacement, or by retaining the existing structure.
- **6 respondents** supported removal of the bridge.
- **3 respondents** supported construction of a standard vehicular bridge capable of accommodating vehicular traffic, including agricultural equipment.

Recommended Alternative: 3 - Bridge Removal

- Lowest capital cost and eliminates ongoing maintenance. Estimated Cost: \$600,000–\$800,000 for bridge removal and associated riverbank restoration. \$936,120 allocated in the 2028–2029 10-Year Capital Business Plan, funded through the Future Capital Reserve
- Future Costs: No additional inspection or maintenance costs.
- Alternate routes available; additional travel time minimal (2–3 minutes; up to 5 minutes during spring flooding).
- Environmental benefits: restoration of Snake Creek floodplain and improved hydrologic function.
- Traffic volumes do not justify replacement.
- No property access issues: two residences near The River Road will retain access via maintained road section.

Linkages

- Strategic Plan Alignment: Pillar 1: Meeting the Needs of a Growing Community
- Business Plan Alignment: Development Services Business as Usual

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding

Costs associated with this program are contained within the existing budget.

Prepared By: Ruhul Amin, Manager Engineering Services

Reviewed By: Mark Paoli, Director, Development Services

Approved By: Kara Van Myall, Chief Administrative Officer