



**TOWN OF MINTO**

**DATE:** April 21, 2015  
**REPORT TO:** Mayor and Council  
**FROM:** Brian Hansen Public Works Director  
**SUBJECT:** Removal of Horse and Buggy Route on Unopened Road Allowance in the Industrial Park, Harriston

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Agenda  
April 21, 2015  
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**STRATEGIC PLAN:**

- 10.8 Engage the Mennonite and Amish Community and facilitate interaction between Council and these communities.
  
- 11.0 Maintain and enhance infrastructure to protect public health and safety, prevent property damage, maintain high quality of life, and effectively manage financial resources to ensure Minto is an attractive and viable community for family living and business investment.

**BACKGROUND**

Back in 2013 a safety concern with horse and buggy access into Harriston on Highway 9 outside the Elora Street North Connecting Link beyond Tim Horton's was brought to Council.

At the July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2013 meeting Council adopted the following resolution:

THAT Council receives the Public Works Director and C.A.O. Clerks report dated June 21, 2013 and approves the alternate horse and buggy route from Highway 9, at the Hutchison Street intersection, along John Street and over the former rail lines to Adelaide and John Street subject to public notice being provided, stop signs being installed to the satisfaction of Public Works, and appropriate By-laws being brought forward to regulate traffic flow at the August 6th meeting, and that the route be monitored and reviewed at the end of 2013.

At the May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014 meeting another report was brought to Council requesting the temporary route be closed. Council questioned the Public Works Director on issues related to closing the route, whether Mennonite and Amish Communities were notified, and passed a second resolution:

THAT Council table the Public Works Directors report dated May 6, 2014 regarding Update Horse and Buggy Route Highway 9, and that Mayor Bridge write the Ontario Provincial Police requesting "zero tolerance" on trucks illegally parking in posted areas on Highway 9 in the area of the Harriston Tim Horton's.

**COMMENTS:**

Public Work Staff has monitored and reviewed this temporary route during the 2013 - 2014 construction seasons as per Councils resolution and has found that horse and buggies have occasionally used this route up to the winter months. However, on two separate occasions Public Works have noticed motor vehicles have used this route and are leaving deep ruts.

During the winter months this route was never maintained for snow removal so horse and buggy traffic had to use Elora to access Harriston.

On March 31, 2015 the Public Works Director spoke with Levi Kuepfer of the Amish Community regarding the proposed closure. Mr. Kuepfer found the temporary route helpful during construction, but his major concern was large trucks parked along the shoulders of the roads by Tim Horton's. It seems that sometimes the air brake release system on these vehicles lets off and scares horses. He knows that this is not intentional but asked if something could be done to deter the larger trucks from parking there. The Public Works Director advised Mr. Kuepfer that Council is in the process of tightening up truck parking issues and that his concern would be brought forward. He also said only a few members of the community used this route.

The Public Works Director also spoke to Willard Brubacher of the Mennonite Community and Mr. Brubacher who stated the Mennonite Community never used this route so had no concerns whether it was open or closed.

Although this detour route helped with horse and buggy safety during the re-construction of Elora Street, the Public Works Department recommends the route be put back to its original state as a walking path since the construction is completed. Staff are concerned that a vehicle classified under the highway traffic act (horse and buggy) is using an unopened road that is not built to municipal standard.

Horse and buggies can still follow Elora Street to Adelaide Street and then onto John Street south into the downtown. Without horse and buggy traffic coming from the trail on to John at Adelaide, the stop signs can be removed if that is Council's wish. This would require the by-law approving the signs be repealed. There was some public opposition when the stop signs went in. Staff has not asked residents of the area if the stop signs are needed. Since John Street will be a detour route when Harriston downtown is reconstructed, removing the stop signs would allow for more flow through traffic.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

Very minimal financial impacts would be occurred to repeal the by-law removal of the signs.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That Council of the Town of Minto receives the Public Works Directors report dated April 7, 2015 Removal of Horse and Buggy Route on Unopened Road Allowance in the Industrial Park, Harriston, and that the temporary route be closed; and further

That public notice is issued that a By-law will be brought back to the May 19<sup>th</sup> Council meeting repealing the three way stop at the intersection of John Street and Adelaide and should that by-law pass all signage would then be removed.

Brian Hansen Public Works Director