

**Meeting Date:** March 3, 2025  
**Department:** Engineering & Public Works  
**Report No.:** EPW-2025-15  
**Submitted by:** Mark Ortiz, Director of Engineering and Public Works  
**Approved by:** Rob Browning, Chief Administrative Officer  
**SUBJECT:** **2025 Tar and Chip Road Recommendation Update**

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**RECOMMENDATION: THAT: Report EPW-2025-02 “2025 Tar and Chip Road Recommendation Update” be received for information, and further;**

**THAT: Council direct staff to proceed with tendering a Revised 2025 Tar and Chip Program.**

**BACKGROUND:**

On November 18, 2024, Council received the 10-Year Road Needs Study which provided a comprehensive evaluation of the Municipality’s hard-surfaced roads and established a long-term infrastructure improvement plan. The study highlighted the importance of timely and adequate maintenance to prevent rapid road deterioration, which can lead to increased repair costs and potential safety concerns.

The Municipality maintains approximately 150 kilometers of tar and chip roads, predominantly in the rural areas. Industry standards recommend resurfacing tar and chip roads every 5 to 7 years. This schedule avoids the need for more costly double treatment applications by limiting maintenance to single treatment resurfacing, resulting in significant cost savings.

Using the findings from the Road Needs Study and visual evaluations from Public Works operators, staff identified tar and chip road resurfacing recommendations for 2025 as presented in Council Report EPW-2025-02 on February 18<sup>th</sup>.

On February 18, 2025, Council motioned the following:

*[Report EPW-2025-02] be deferred to the next Regular Council Meeting of March 3, 2025 to allow Mr. Ortiz to return to Council recommendations regarding Tar and Chip for Century Drive and Irish Drive and within the current budget.*

**COMMENTS:**

Staff have re-evaluated the road program to include two sections on Century Drive and Irish Dr. as directed by Council and shown in the Revised 2025 Tar and Chip Program below:

**Revised 2025 Tar and Chip Program (14.5km)**

**1) Century Drive from Springwell Road to Dead End (1km)**

- Convert gravel road to Two Lifts Surface Treatment

**2) Irish Drive from Melbourne Road to Sutherland Road (5km)**

- Convert gravel road to Two Lifts Surface Treatment

**3) Irish Drive from Christina Road to Adelaide Road (4.5km)**

- Rural Pulverize and Two Lifts Surface Treatment
- Shoulder and Slope Repair (<100 m)

**4) Juliana Drive from Railroad Street to Dead End (150m)**

- Rural Pulverize and Two Lifts Surface Treatment

**5) Sutherland Road from Switzer Drive to Longwoods Road (1.3km)**

- Rural Pulverize and Two Lifts Surface Treatment
- Although initially slated for 2027, recent visual evaluations from Public Works operators suggest advancing it to 2025.

**6) Falconbridge Drive from Sutherland Road to Christina Road (2.5km)**

- Surface Treatment – Single Surface
- Although initially slated for 2030, recent visual evaluations from Public Works operators suggest advancing it to 2025.
- Staff are aware of the Parker Drain work proposed along Falconbridge Drive. During Municipal Drain projects, road crossings are typically restored with asphalt to assist with the protection of road crossing infrastructure.

The revised tar and chip program includes a total of 14.5km of road resurfacing compared to the original 13.5km.

It is expected the additional 1.0km of road can be completed within the allocated 2025 budget, however this will limit the amount of repairs that can be undertaken and there is a higher risk that tender prices come in over budget due to annual price escalation. If tender pricing exceeds the allocated budget scope may need to be removed and/or staff may request additional funding through Council.

The 2025 tar and chip program for the roads identified above will include the following high-level scope:

- Tar and Chip Application
- Patch Repairs
- Traffic Control
- Stone Delivery
- Pulverizing

Final tender pricing and a recommendation for contract award will be presented to Council prior to construction.

Tar and chip application will be completed in the summer of this year, pending Council approval.

### **Public Works Value Addition**

The Municipality's annual tar and chip program benefits from cost-saving measures through in-house preparation work managed by Public Works staff. By handling key preliminary tasks—including fine grading, gravel supply, road base spot repairs, compaction, ditching, and shoulder maintenance—Public Works staff significantly enhance the value of the project while reducing costs.

Since 2022, the average cost for tar and chip has ranged from \$60,000 to \$70,000 per kilometer in the Municipality. In comparison, the Road Needs Study used industry averages of other Municipalities and estimates the cost of Rural Pulverized Surface Treatment with two lifts of surface treatment at approximately \$130,500 per kilometer. The price difference is heavily impacted by the preparation works completed by the Public Works staff.

Additional savings are achieved through proactive material procurement. Public Works staff purchase 1/4" and 3/8" washed aggregate (chip) ahead of construction, avoiding contractor mark-ups. During the tar and chip application, a Public Works operator loads the contractor's hauling trucks from the Mount Brydges Public Works yard, further reducing expenses.

### **CONSULTATION:**

- Manager of Public Works
- Public Works Operators

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The tar and chip program will be funded from the 2025 capital budget of \$915,000.

## **ALTERNATIVES TO THE RECOMMENDATION:**

1. Council to direct staff to proceed with original tar and chip road resurfacing recommendations as presented in Report EPW-2025-02.
2. Council to provide alternate direction.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

This matter is in accord with the following strategic priorities:

**Local Infrastructure and Capital Investment:** Households and businesses in Strathroy-Caradoc will be supported by reliable, financially responsible, and well-maintained infrastructure networks.

## **ATTACHMENTS:**

- Revised 2025 Tar and Chip Road Resurfacing Program