



The Corporation of the
TOWNSHIP OF MELANCTHON

157101 Highway 10, Melancthon, Ontario, L9V 2E6

Township of Melancthon Road Surface Conversion Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to provide Council, Municipal Staff and Residents with a consistent process in identifying gravel roads for consideration for upgrades to asphalt; and a consistent process in identifying asphalt roads for consideration to be returned to a gravel surface.

Scope

This policy applies to all roads owned and maintained by the Corporation of the Township of Melancthon unless otherwise specified.

Definitions

Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT): The average twenty-four-hour, two-way traffic under normal conditions.

Council: The elected Council of the Township of Melancthon.

Gravel Road: A road surface that is not paved or surface treated.

Highway Classification: The class in accordance with the Minimum Maintenance Standards for Municipal Highways (239/02), as amended under the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended.

Local Improvement: The improvement of a roadway in accordance with the Local Improvement Act (R.S.O. 1990, C. L.26).

Municipality: Refers to the Corporation of the Township of Melancthon.

Paved Surface: A surface with a layer or layers of asphalt.

Platform Surface Width: The horizontal distance measured from top of ditch slope of one side of the road to the top of ditch slope on the opposite side.

Primary Route: A Municipal Road that has an AADT greater than 500 or more vehicles per day.

Right-of-Way (ROW): In a municipal context, a Right of Way (ROW) refers to a designated strip of land owned and maintained by the municipality for public use and infrastructure. This area typically includes the roadway used for vehicular traffic, and roadside ditches that serve drainage and stormwater management functions. The ROW may also contain underground or overhead utilities such as electricity, and telecommunications infrastructure. Municipalities hold legal authority over the ROW, allowing them to regulate its use, perform maintenance, and grant access for public services and development projects.

Road Section: A section of road between two other roads or as defined in the roads management plan.

Road Segment: A portion of a section of road.

Seasonal Roads: A road that does not receive winter maintenance, not applicable in this policy.

Unmaintained Road: A road that is not open by By-law nor receives any municipal maintenance.

Policy

4.1. Evaluation for Modifying the Road Surface Type

From time to time, the municipality may find it necessary to modify the surface of a road. This section of the policy outlines the Road Scoring Criteria, a Scoring Rubric, and Assessment Recommendations for both upgrading to hard surface, and returning a hard surface road to gravel.

Road Scoring Criteria: The Municipality will evaluate the following factors when assessing roads:

Traffic Volume: Primary consideration Roads with an AADT of 500 or more vehicles per day. Secondary consideration Roads with an AADT between 400-499 vehicles per day.

Truck Traffic Volume: Primary consideration on roads with greater than 15% of Truck Traffic. Secondary consideration on roads with greater than 10% of Truck Traffic.

Connectivity: Roads that connect to major Highways, or County Roads, or

serve as a primary route between communities.

Safety Considerations: Roads with a history of accidents or safety concerns related to their gravel surface. Roads where dust control is a significant safety issue.

Density: Roads that are a part of a plan of subdivision, hamlet or residential settlement area or will be given priority consideration to maintain hard surface. With the density of driveways per km given secondary consideration.

Maintenance Costs: Roads where the long-term maintenance costs of the existing or proposed gravel road is projected to be higher than the average gravel road section.

Additional Factors: The Municipality considers the following additional factors when scoring the roads in consideration for potential upgrades:

Financial: Where an analysis of the capital costs, operation costs and life cycle costs indicate savings to the Municipality or where there is significant savings to the Municipality by combining/splitting the upgrading of adjacent roads.

Condition, Structure and Drainage: Where the road has been determined to have sufficient structure and adequate drainage to support the increased traffic flow.

Risk Management: Where the non-standard condition of the road is correctable by upgrading to a surface treated road or paved surface and upgrading is determined to reduce liability issues.

Operational Benefits: Where there is a benefit by the reduction of operational and seasonal maintenance activities. Examples of operation benefits include but not limited to; gravel roads located in isolation requiring significant travel time, roads that experience consistent erosion or are washed out frequently.

Assessment Recommendations to Upgrade: The Municipality may upgrade a gravel road to asphalt based on following 3 Priority levels taking into consideration additional factors:

High Priority – Where the gravel road scores between 80-100 points on the Road Scoring Criteria and is recommended to be upgraded. Where the gravel road has been allotted as high priority, as determined in accordance with Section 4.1 of this Policy, that road segment will be included in the next annual budget discussion.

Low Priority – Where the gravel road scores between 60-79 points on the Road Scoring Criteria and is recommended to be upgraded in the future based on overall budget capacity. Where the gravel road has been allotted as low priority, as determined in accordance with Section 4.1 of this Policy, that road segment may be included in the next annual budget discussion, as budget capacity permits.

No Recommendation – Where the gravel road scores between 0-59 points on the Road Scoring Criteria and is not recommended for upgrades.

Through the annual budget process, Council may approve, defer, or reject requests based on strategic priorities and funding availability. If the annual budget request is deferred, the request will be added to the 5 year capital plan for future budget discussions.

Assessment Recommendations to Downgrade: The Municipality may downgrade hard surface roads based on following 3 Priority levels taking into consideration additional factors:

No Recommendation – Where the hard surface road scores between 70- 100 points on the Road Scoring Criteria and is recommended to remain hard surface.

Maintain Surface in Longterm – Where the hard surface road scores between 51-69 points on the Road Scoring Criteria and is recommended to be maintained as a hard surface road. However, if the current condition is severely deteriorated, it may be temporarily maintained as a gravel road and be placed in the 5 year capital plan for consideration.

Downgrade Recommendation – Where the hard surface road scores between 0-59 points on the Road Scoring Criteria and is recommended to be downgraded to a gravel road when the hard surface life cycle ends.

Scoring Rubrics: The Municipality will use the rubrics for evaluation purposes as per Schedule A for Road Surface upgrades and Schedule B for Road surface downgrades.

4.2. Process to Initiate Upgrade Consideration

Identification Method - Staff Review for Upgrading Gravel Roads to Asphalt

To ensure consistent, transparent, and data-driven decision-making in the upgrade of gravel roads to asphalt, this policy outlines the criteria and process by which the municipality may consider such upgrades. The goal is to prioritize upgrades that deliver measurable public benefit while maintaining fiscal and environmental responsibility.

This policy section applies to all municipally maintained gravel roads that are not currently designated for upgrade under capital plans or exempted by municipal criteria (e.g., seasonal roads, low-use access routes).

Gravel roads may be considered for upgrade to asphalt only when supported by documented issues such as traffic studies, safety reports, maintenance logs, community petitions and when they meet established criteria. This process is designed to limit discretionary decision-making and ensure upgrades are justified by objective data and community needs.

Review Process

The Public Works Department will compile and assess all relevant data using criteria found in Section 4 of this policy.

A standardized scoring matrix found in Schedule A and Schedule B of this policy will be used to evaluate each criterion and determine eligibility.

Staff Recommendations will be submitted to the Infrastructure & Emergency Management Committee for the Committee to put forth Recommendations to Council for Final Approval.

Limitations on Staff Discretion

Staff may not initiate upgrades based solely on observations or informal requests. All upgrade considerations must be based on documented evidence and evaluated through the standardized process outlined within the policy.

4.3. Returning Hard Surface Roads to Gravel

This policy section applies to all asphalt roads within the municipality that are scheduled for replacement due to age, deterioration, or structural failure. When roads have been identified as being in poor condition through inspections. This review will promote sustainable infrastructure management and ensure efficient allocation of municipal resources by evaluating each identified road section for potential downgrade.

All qualifying asphalt roads shall be reviewed for downgrade consideration to gravel.

Review Process:

The Public Works Department shall initiate the review upon identification of a qualifying road.

Staff will conduct the evaluation and prepare a recommendation report.

Staff Recommendations will be presented to the Infrastructure and Emergency Management Committee which will make recommendations to Council.

The Municipality will review the capital costs associated with improving the gravel roads to a desired minimum surface width with appropriate drainage and road geometry required to support the conversion to hard surface. The life cycle costs of each proposed upgrade will also be reviewed.

Capital and maintenance costs for asphalt surface compared to returning to gravel will be calculated by staff on a case-by-case basis for each individual road section.

With the conversion of hard surface road to gravel, it is important to note that there is the possibility of undesirable impacts arising from the conversion such as:

- Increase in the maintenance gravel program.
- Increase in dust.
- Increase in grader hours based on the level of service in the Minimum Maintenance Standards for gravel roads.
- Complaints from local residents and road users due to the change in surface type.

4.4. Council Approval for Road Surface Changes

To ensure consistent and accountable decision-making, this section confirms that all road surface change recommendations—whether upgrades or downgrades—require final approval by Council.

All recommendations to upgrade gravel roads to asphalt or downgrade asphalt roads to alternative surfaces must be presented to the Infrastructure and Emergency Management Committee for the Committee to put forth recommendations to Council for final approval.

Authority and Process:

- Municipal staff will evaluate roads and prepare recommendations based on the criteria outlined in this policy.
- All recommendations must be supported by documented evidence and submitted by staff to the Infrastructure and Emergency Management Committee for consideration.

- Council holds sole authority to approve, modify, or reject any road surface change.

Limitation of Staff Authority:

- No road surface change may be implemented without a formal resolution of Council.
- If Council defers a road surface upgrade, the road section will be added to the 5-year capital plan.
- If downgrade recommendations are not supported by council, replacement of the road section will be included in the 5-year capital plan.

5. References

Township of Melancthon Road Management Plan, 2019

O.Reg 239/2 Minimum Maintenance Standards for Municipal Highways

Local Improvement Act, R.S.O 1990, C L.26

6. Appendices

Schedule A - Scoring Rubric for Upgrading Gravel Roads to Hard Surface

Schedule B - Scoring Rubric for Downgrading Hard Surface Roads to Gravel