

PETITION TO COUNTY OF BRUCE REGARDING BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION IN WALKERTON

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED WALKERTON BUSINESSES, are very concerned about the impact the upcoming Walkerton bridge construction will have on local businesses, residents, emergency services, visitors/tourists, volunteer groups, Brockton taxpayers and the environment.

WE BELIEVE THAT WHEREAS:

1. Bruce County will be constructing a Durham Street bridge in Walkerton to replace the existing 80-year-old structure, with construction to take place over an 18-month to two-year period, and
2. The citizens of all of the Municipality of Brockton, and many neighboring jurisdictions will suffer irreparable harm environmentally, socially and economically without a temporary bridge for both pedestrians and vehicles or similar option across the Saugeen River during the construction period, and
3. Brockton's and Walkerton's livelihood and vibrant communities depend significantly on businesses in Brockton and Walkerton, and
4. The majority of Brockton and Walkerton businesses are classified as 'small business', and
5. Many of these businesses are still recovering from financial loss during COVID, and
6. Many of these businesses cannot survive economically over an 18 month to two-year period if a bridge is not constructed, as many customers will simply drive to neighbouring towns and visitors will avoid the area altogether, and
7. Bruce County must ensure timely response by First Responders, including Fire, EMS and OPP, potentially saving lives, preventing injuries and protecting property, and
8. Bruce County must consider the detrimental effects on low income, elderly and ill citizens who will be unable to access goods, services and health care on a timely basis, and
9. Disruption due to construction will have a significant effect on the success of community volunteer-run events, including fundraisers, sports tournaments and Homecoming (planned for 2026), and
10. Bruce County, through its Official Plan, is committed to protect and when possible enhance the quality of the natural environment, encourage economic development and prosperity, and encourage social, cultural and educational facilities and services, and

FURTHER THAT re-routing traffic to Conc. Rd. 2N and Bruce Road 19 during the construction period WILL:

1. Have a detrimental effect on response times of First Responders and the ability of residents to get to work and school, especially during winter months and spring floods, and
2. Triple current costs in time, fuel and vehicle wear and tear for Walkerton/Brockton residents and their families as well as business owners, and
3. Cause environmental harm due to thousands of tonnes of incremental greenhouse gasses from CO₂ emissions, and
4. Cause further economic and environmental harm and disruption for residents during the preparatory period including road remediation and traffic light installation, then

THEREFORE:

Be it resolved that the signatories to this petition demand:

- That pedestrians and vehicles shall continue to be able to cross the Saugeen River through Walkerton, unimpeded during the construction period, including First Responders of all types, and
- That Bruce County fund and construct a temporary bridge (or similar option) and, if necessary, approach both the federal and provincial governments for assistance, no matter what the cost, and
- That a detour costing millions of dollars not be considered unless absolutely necessary, and even then, in conjunction with a temporary bridge.

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