

To: Brockton Council

From: Mark Billington

Date: May 31, 2020

Subject: Riversdale Bridge Closing

---

This message is in regard to the decision by Brockton Council at its May 12, 2020 meeting, to close the Riversdale Bridge.

I have two points I wish to raise with Council.

Point 1: Closure and Planning:

The deteriorating condition of the bridge is well documented, well known, and should not be a surprise to council, municipal staff or residents.

Reports date back more than 15 years identifying issues with the Riversdale bridge. Councils meeting materials identify that replacement has been recommended since 2014.

By taking no action to maintain or repair the current bridge, closure was sure to occur at some point in time. Why is it acceptable to Council that residents are left with reduced road access when proactive work may have further prolonged the life of the existing bridge?

The engineering report does not recommend completing a load assessment at this time. The reason provided seems to suggest that farm equipment is the primary user of the bridge. This is not factually correct.

Mr. Furtney's letter makes no commitment to timing, outcomes, future communication with residents. It does make it very clear it will be quite some time before there is any talk of remedial work or an alternate option.

I'd like to remind you this is the second bridge in this immediate area to be closed. This latest closer makes this a "dead end road".

No action. No plan. No commitment to do anything.

That is the message to the people.

Point 2: Communication with Residents in the Area

Residents learned of the pending closure by chance.

Municipal staff and council made no attempt to communicate with residents affected by this situation. A letter, prepared by municipal staff after the fact, was sent to a limited number of

residents in the immediate area. Many living on Concession 2 west of Bruce Road 20 did not receive this letter.

Mr. Furtney suggests that residents “track future Council agendas for project updates and presentations”. Placing responsibility for monitoring this issue when staff and council are not able to commit to a communication plan and schedule is unacceptable.

Would it be reasonable to expect that municipal staff and Council provide a timeline to residents? For myself, such an approach show more accountability to the residents.

I am a resident that is directly impacted by the closure. I am surprised and disappointed that staff and Council do not consider it necessary to communicate directly, openly and with a plan with those living in the immediate vicinity.

I am very disappointed by the lack of timeliness, planning, communication and transparency on this issue.

Your decision affects people. The absence of any meaningful communication speaks loudly.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Billington