

Shelburne carries out underground test along main community thoroughfare

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The Town of Shelburne has started a geotechnical investigation at the intersection of Main St. and Owen Sound St. ? a way to figure out why the asphalt there has repeatedly broken up.

?Before we get into resurfacing next year, we wanted to make sure that it's just the stress of the wheels turning on those heavy load trucks at that intersection, and that we don't have something going on underneath the surface,? said Jim Moss, director of development and operations in the town.

Crew members on Tuesday (Oct. 13) drilled into parking spaces along the town's main road way, starting the geotechnical investigation, a process to study the physical properties of soil and rock that help identify possible construction problems. Crew members drilled six narrow holes, known as boreholes along Main St. collecting samples of the soil. Speaking with the Free Press, Moss said that the sample test would help determine whether work on other layers of the road needs to be done alongside the next resurfacing.

?It's a safeguard to know how far we do have to go with the project outside of possibly just resurfacing, if we are real lucky grinding, milling, and then asphaltting again,? said Moss.

When constructing a road, there different layers that are put down before the top layer of asphalt. The layers of a road include a sandy subbase, a layer of larger stones or B grade granular material allowing water flow, an A course that Moss said is usually three quarter inch stone, and then asphalt.

?We've had our public works crew out on a very regular basis cold patching and using our hot asphalt machine, that we now have replacing stuff in that corner,? said Moss. ?We want to make sure that it is as simple as just the stress of heavyweight vehicles turning the corner and make sure it's not a subbase issue.?

If the samples return that the breakdown of the asphalt is not from heavy vehicles, Moss said, ?If we do have to get into replacing sub base, then we've got to really look at traffic control and how we're going to deal with traffic coming through there since it is such a heavy traffic area.?

Results of the soil sample could mean the difference between weeks or days of constructions as well as cost.