

Shelburne council seeks funding assistance for \$1.2 million truck bypass environmental assessment

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Shelburne Council has approved a recommendation to seek funding for an Environmental Assessment for a proposed truck bypass.

Recognized as an issue since at least 2003, the bypass discussion has passed through multiple hands over the past two decades. The town has highlighted semi-truck traffic as a known disturbance to residents and businesses.

Before any construction of a bypass can begin, however, a comprehensive Environmental Assessment (EA) is needed. This assessment is estimated to cost \$1.2 million.

Town CAO Denyse Morrissey said that, based on a similar EA conducted in the province, an estimate could be obtained from Ministry of Transportation for Ontario (MTO) staff they have been meeting with.

"The Town of Shelburne staff and our team took a look at the potential costs, and we used one (assessment) in Niagara with respect to a very similar undertaking that was awarded in 2025, and the cost was about 1.2 million," she said.

This assessment, Morrissey said, would cover all the required bases to move forward with the project if it's conducted.

"There has to be a very comprehensive assessment of routes, and all the issues associated with those environmental impacts assessed," she said. "That process will allow all the environmental concerns on preferred routes to be evaluated."

The town is hoping this process can be expedited "an EA on steroids," Morrissey said. This study could, however, take multiple years to complete, depending on the work required to complete it "potentially two to three."

She continued, saying that the province currently doesn't see the application as a priority, but if there were a more collaborative funding plan, they would be more likely to consider it.

The proposed recommendation is a three-way collaborative funding plan, in which the Town of Shelburne will contribute \$300,000, the County of Dufferin will contribute another \$300,000, and the province will contribute the remaining \$600,000.

Council acknowledged that this is an expensive undertaking, but Councillor Lindsay Wegener said that they want to make it clear that this is a mandatory step to move forward with a truck bypass, which residents have sought for a long time.

"To clarify for the public, this 1.2 million is only for the environmental assessment," she said. "In essence, a report, it's so expensive, and I find that's absolutely crazy, but we have no other option. We have to pay this to move forward with the bypass you all want."

Shelburne council accepted the joint funding recommendation, which will be included in the 2026 draft budget. The budget will be discussed at a council meeting on Nov. 24.