



## **Administration and Operations Committee Report**

---

**To:** The Chair and Members of the Administration and Operations Committee  
**From:** Clint Brown, Public Works Technologist  
**Date:** July 15, 2025  
**Report #:** RPT-0130-25  
**Subject:** Salt Spring Church Road Stabilization Plan  
**Purpose:** For Approval

---

### **Recommendation**

---

That Council direct Staff to proceed with the detailed design of the recommended alternative, which includes constructing new property accesses, completing road improvements and area rehabilitation works, to support the permanent closure of a portion of Salt Springs Church Road due to ongoing slope stability and erosion hazards.

### **Strategic Plan Priority**

---

Strategic Priority 2 - Focused Growth and Infrastructure

### **Impacts and Mitigation**

---

#### Social Impacts

The recommended alternative of closing Salt Springs Church Road reduces the connectivity between Hamilton Road and Brant County Road 18.

A public meeting was held on January 8, 2025, at the TF Warren Group Cainsville Community Centre to present the preferred alternative and to receive feedback from the community.

A Stage one (1) archaeological assessment will need to be completed during the design phase to investigate any undisturbed areas for potential archaeological resources.

#### Environmental Impacts

No significant environmental impacts are anticipated as a result of the preferred alternative recommendation.

#### Economic Impacts

Sufficient funds were approved in the 2025 Capital Budget to complete detailed design. Additional funds will need to be added to the 2026 Budget to complete construction works.

## Report

---

### Background

On April 6, 2021, a slope failure was discovered on Salt Springs Church Road (adjacent to the Grand River), between County Road 18 and Hamilton Road. A map of the location and pictures of the slope failure are included as Attachment one (1).

This section of Salt Springs Church Road has been closed to traffic between Salt Springs Church and 82 Salt Springs Church Road since this slope failure was discovered. County of Brant (County) staff placed jersey barriers and appropriate signage at each end of the road closure in April 2021, which currently remain in place. Staff also communicated directly to the three (3) abutting property owners about their access needs during the road closure.

Emergency services were notified of the road closure and are aware of the detour route that include County Road 18, No. 6 School Road, and Hamilton Road. The County's Roads division will continue to provide a high level of attention to snow removal along the detour route.

The slope failure continues to advance further into the paved road platform. The access to 82 and 86 Salt Springs Church Road could potentially be impacted if the slope failure continues to advance. County Staff continue monitoring the slope failure and potential impacts to nearby properties.

Matrix Solutions Inc., a Montrose Environmental Company (Matrix) was retained in the Fall of 2023 to complete an erosion hazard and alternatives assessment for Salt Springs Church Road. A preliminary erosion hazard assessment for the slope was submitted to the County in the Winter of 2024. A stable slope setback was determined through the slope stability analysis that extends beyond the existing roadway and onto adjacent private lands. The impacted properties are 82, 86 and 61 Salt Springs Church Road as shown in Attachment two (2). A high-level alternatives assessment has been completed for the roadway and potential solutions have been developed.

A Public Information Centre (PIC) was held to engage with the community and receive feedback from residents and landowners. The PIC was held in January 2025 to introduce the project and the problem/opportunity statement, to present the various alternatives being considered, and to present the preferred alternative.

### Analysis

A Site Characterization Report was prepared to present the findings from investigations completed in 2023 and 2024 (geotechnical, geomorphological, and natural heritage) and was used to inform the development and evaluation of alternatives to address slope failure at the site. The objective of the assessment was to identify a feasible management solution for the failing slope that addresses all environmental, ecological, social, financial, and policy-related constraints. The initial phase of alternative development involved a pre-screening of potential solutions according to the Municipal Class EA process.

During the Public Information Centre (PIC), community members raised concerns regarding the movement of agricultural equipment along the proposed detour routes Brant County Road 18 and No. 6 School Road due to their higher traffic volumes compared to Salt Springs Church Road.

Emergency services were engaged and provided comment that Salt Spring Church Road is not utilized as a primary emergency access route.

The County is currently undertaking a comprehensive assessment of twelve (12) slope stability areas affecting County roads. When compared to the other locations under review, the Salt Springs Church Road site is considered a lower priority for long-term investment, as it serves fewer users and does not provide sole access to residential properties.

However, due to the unexpected failure of Salt Springs Church Road, the County was required to advance a separate assessment contract ahead of schedule to address immediate safety concerns and provide a viable solution.

Initial findings from the broader slope stability assessment indicate that several of the remaining sites will require significant future investment, particularly those impacting high-volume roads and critical access routes. The full assessment, including recommendations for each location, is expected to be completed by Q4 2026.

This information is being provided in advance of the final report to help Council understand the broader context and implications of the decision related to the Salt Springs Church Road slope failure. It is important that Council consider how this early investment aligns with and may influence future priorities within the larger 12-site assessment area.

### **Alternatives:**

Alternatives that were brought forward to the evaluation phase are shown in Attachment three (3) and are described as follows:

**Alternative 1** – The ‘Do Nothing’ option is included as a baseline comparison to highlight the impacts of leaving the existing conditions as-is. Under this scenario no improvement would be made to prevent further degradation and erosion of the slope along Salt Springs Church Road, and the identified erosion hazard limit would not be mitigated

**Alternative 2** – Close a portion of Salt Springs Church Road and construct a new municipal access road to provide access for affected properties.

**Alternative 2B** – Similar to Alternative 2, but with a shorter section of re-aligned road to provide access to affected properties.

**Alternative 3** – Realign Salt Springs Church Road around the erosion hazard between Salt Springs Church and 124 Salt Springs Church Road

**Alternative 4** – Retain and protect Salt Springs Church Road in its current alignment, implementing slope stabilization and erosion protection measures along the slope and riverbank.

The table below illustrates the high-level cost estimates that were developed during the evaluation process:

Alternatives	Cost Estimate to complete Construction
<b>Alternative 1</b> – The ‘Do Nothing’ option is included as a baseline comparison to highlight the impacts of leaving the existing conditions as-is. Under this scenario no improvement would be made to prevent further degradation and erosion of the slope along Salt Springs Church Road, and the identified erosion hazard limit would not be mitigated	\$1,900,000
<b>Alternative 2</b> – Close a portion of Salt Springs Church Road and construct a new municipal access road option to provide access for affected properties. (cost includes land purchase)	\$900,000
<b>Alternative 2B</b> – Similar to Alternative 2, but with a shorter section of re-aligned road to provide access to affected properties.	\$200,000
<b>Alternative 3</b> – Realign Salt Springs Church Road around the erosion hazard between Salt Springs Church and 124 Salt Springs Church Road (cost includes land purchase)	\$2,600,000
<b>Alternative 4</b> – Retain and protect Salt Springs Church Road in its current alignment, implementing slope stabilization and erosion protection measures along the slope and riverbank.	\$5,720,000

Based on the criteria and methodology applied through the evaluation process, the preferred alternative is **Alternative two (2)** to close a portion of Salt Springs Church Road and construct a new access for affected properties. A municipally maintained access road would be constructed to maintain access to the impacted residential properties. This alternative will require a property acquisition or easement to construct the road and access lane outside of the erosion hazard limit. The road would be abandoned within the closed section with permanent signage indicating ‘No Through Traffic’.

## Summary and Recommendations

The Site Characterization and Alternative Assessment Report for the Salt Springs Church Road Slope Rehabilitation has been completed in accordance with the Municipal Class EA process. Staff have met the consultation requirements of the Class EA process by completing the PIC on January 2025. The presented Preferred Alternative (Alternative 2– Close Road with New Municipal Access Road) anticipates that Schedule B Class EA would be required as land will need to be purchased to complete the associated works. During review of all alternatives, it was determined that a low-cost interim solution, Alternative 2B – Interim Driveway, be implemented to address accessibility to 82 and 86 Salt Springs Church Road ahead of the preferred alternative being fully developed. This would provide access to 82 and 86 Salt Springs Church Road as the deteriorating slope directly affects the existing access to these properties.

The majority of comments received from the January 2025 public meeting opposes the closing of Salt Springs Church Road and would prefer that Alternative 4: Retain and Protect Road be considered for detailed design. This option would require a comprehensive Class EA to be completed and has the highest construction cost (approx. \$5,720,000).

Staff recommend proceeding to detailed design of Alternative 2B – Similar to Alternative 2, but with a shorter section of re-aligned road to provide access to affected properties.

## **Attachments**

---

1. Attachment 1 – Map of Slope Failure Location and Detour Route
2. Attachment 2 – Map of 100 Year Erosion Hazard Limit
3. Attachment 3 – Alternative Solutions

## **Reviewed By**

---

M. Maxwell, Director of Engineering and Infrastructure Planning

## **Copied To**

---

1. D. Mellor, General Manager of Operations
2. H. Mifflin, Director of Finance, Treasurer
3. H. Bailey, Manager of Budgets & Long-Term Financial Planning/Deputy Treasurer
4. G. Demers, Director of Roads
5. L.L. Rouse, Purchaser

## **By-law and/or Agreement**

---

By-law Required	No
Agreement(s) or other documents to be signed by Mayor and /or Clerk	No