



Staff Report

Administration

Report To: Committee of The Whole
Meeting Date: September 16, 2019
Report Number: FAF.19.169
Subject: Downtown Thornbury Free Public Wifi Project
Prepared by: Tim Hendry, Communications and Economic Development Coordinator

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report FAF.19.169, entitled "Downtown Thornbury Wifi Project";

AND THAT Council approves the Downtown Thornbury Wi-Fi project by Bruce Street Technologies Limited pending the approval of Municipal Consent by the Operations Department.

B. Overview

This report seeks Council endorsement for Bruce Street Technologies Limited to provide free public Wifi in Thornbury's downtown core.

C. Background

Earlier in the year, staff were contacted by representatives from Bruce Street Technologies Limited regarding their interest in offering free public Wifi in downtown Thornbury.

The request was for Bruce Street Technologies Limited to install Wifi transmitters onto municipal-owned light standards on Bruce Street North, Bruce Street South, King Street East and Arthur Street West.

D. Analysis

Upon receiving the request, staff conducted an internal review to determine if giving access to the light standards was possible and feasible. Pending Council approval and support of the project, Bruce Street Technologies Limited will be required to work with the Towns Operations Department to receive Municipal Consent.

The Municipal Consent is an internal process to ensure that the proper installation process and materials will be used in the installation of the Wifi transmitters onto the light standards.

In addition, to determine support for the project, Staff encouraged Bruce Street Technologies Limited to consult the Thornbury BIA and The Blue Mountains Chamber of Commerce. Bruce Street Technologies Limited has secured letters of support for the downtown Wifi project from both organizations. The letters of support have been attached to this report for reference.

Proposed Wifi Coverage

If approved, the proposed Wifi coverage will extend throughout the primary Thornbury BIA boundary. Below is a summary of the coverage area:

- King Street East from the Thornbury Home Hardware to the Thornbury Fishway
- Arthur Street West from the Bruce Street intersection to the Thornbury Foodland
- Bruce Street North from the Thornbury Harbour to Bruce Street South to approximately The Dam Pub area

Access to Light Standards

To achieve the proposed Wifi coverage as described above, Bruce Street Technologies Limited will need to install Wifi transmitters on approximately 8 - 10 light standards. The Wifi transmitters are a rectangular box approximately 7" tall x 3" wide x 2" deep that will be affixed to the top portion of the light standard. The boxes will be painted black to match the colour of the light standards.

In the event that the project ends, the Wifi transmitters can be easily removed. In addition, staff have confirmed that the Wifi transmitters will not interfere with the Christmas decorations that are affixed to the light standards.

Free Public Wifi

Town staff have confirmed that the Wifi will be free of charge for the general public. Bruce Street Technologies Limited will place protective measures to ensure reasonable Wifi use and to deter everyday heavy use.

In exchange for offering free public Wifi, Bruce Street Technologies Limited will advertise their brand and services through the connection and welcome screen when users initially connect to Wifi.

Once connected, users will have full regular access to the internet without further advertising by Bruce Street Technologies Limited. When a user connects to the free public Wifi, they will be directed to a landing page similar to www.brucestreet.com/meaford-hospot

E. The Blue Mountains Strategic Plan

- Goal #1: Create Opportunities for Sustainability
Objective #1 Retain Existing Business
Objective #2 Attract New Business

Goal #2: Engage Our Communities & Partners
Objective #2 Use Technology to Advance Engagement
Objective #3 Strengthen Partnerships

F. Environmental Impacts

No environmental impacts are anticipated within the scope of this project.

G. Financial Impact

All costs, with the exception of hydro, associated with the installation, maintenance and operations of the Downtown Thornbury Free Public Wifi Project will be covered by Bruce Street Technologies Limited.

The cost of the hydro to operate the units will be absorbed by the Operations Department operating budget. The estimated annual hydro cost is \$150.

H. In consultation with

Jim McCannell, Manager of Roads and Drainage

Shawn Everitt, Chief Administrative Officer

I. Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report has not been subject to a Public Meeting and/or a Public Information Centre as neither a Public Meeting nor a Public Information Centre are required. However, any comments regarding this report should be submitted to Tim Hendry, Communications and Economic Development Coordinator, communications@thebluemountains.ca.

J. Attached

N/A

Respectfully Submitted,

Tim Hendry
Communications and Economic Development Coordinator

This document can be made available in other accessible formats as soon as practicable and upon request

Shawn Everitt
Chief Administrative Officer

For more information, please contact:

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