

Here are the highlights from the regular Lanark County Council meeting held Wednesday, Feb. 6.

- **Vegetation Management 2019 Activities Approved:** Council has authorized staff to proceed with the activities outlined for 2019 as part of the county's Vegetation Management Plan. This follows a comprehensive presentation by Janet Tysick, business manager, at the public works committee of the whole meeting last week. Ms. Tysick provided an overview of reasons to control invasive roadside vegetation, including human safety, environmental benefits (protecting conservation areas, reducing damage to adjacent crops and establishing pollinator habits), as well as infrastructure preservation (maintaining sight lines, preventing road surface erosion and promoting proper drainage). She outlined the reduced prevalence of wild parsnip on road allowances between 2016 and 2018. "Successes have been measurable and significant," she said. "While infestation levels have decreased, significant risks remain. Seeds can stay viable in the soil for up to four years, and not continuing with the control program would allow wild parsnip to re-infest quickly." Control methods include boom and spot spraying, as well as hand removal. Since spraying began in 2015, the county has reduced the amount of herbicide used by 66 per cent. Ms. Tysick noted the Vegetation Management Plan also includes plans for controlling other invasive weeds, such as phragmites and Japanese knotweed, and it highlights site restoration (pollinator habitat) and public awareness/education. "We're working to create diverse roadside vegetation and establish pollinator habitats," Ms. Tysick said. "Targeted spraying leaves wildflowers intact and 520 native plants were planted in the road allowance in 2018." The county is working to create "pollinator patches" by replanting roadsides with native wildflowers and seeding following construction disturbance. "We have a trial to over-seed grass-dominated road allowances, and we are reseeding after hand removals of wild parsnip." The county is part of a partnership with the Canadian Wildlife Federation for a Monarch butterfly recovery project in eastern Ontario. With funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, they are testing whether the creation of native meadows along roadsides and rights-of-way could successfully control wild parsnip, restore Monarch butterfly habitat and reduce management costs. In 2019, the county plans to increase hand removal of wild parsnip in very light regions (110 km), boom spray 25 km and spot spray 350 km. The remaining 76 km of the road system are areas where the county hopes Adopt-a-Road program volunteers will continue their efforts and areas where spraying is not a consideration. A new Adopt-a-Bridge program will be introduced to help maintain wild parsnip around bridges and culverts. Wild parsnip flower clipping is planned for late summer, with a fall spraying trial planned for 5 to 10 km. An information session for local municipalities on addressing municipal roads and private lands is planned. Ms. Tysick also outlined asset maintenance strategies, noting guiderails will not be sprayed this year. Councillors congratulated staff on the work done as part of the Vegetation Management Plan, which has become a positive example for other municipalities. "There is proof the plan is working," said Warden Richard Kidd (Beckwith Reeve). "We've done it, and it's done right." For more information, contact Janet Tysick, Business Manager at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 3110.

- **Intersection Improvements Approved:** Council has supported the completion of the Pakenham pedestrian crossovers project, which was presented to the public works committee of the whole last week by Guy Bourgon, Mississippi Mills' director of public works. He outlined concerns for pedestrians crossing at the two uncontrolled intersections of County Road 29 in Pakenham: Jeanie Street and Waba Road. The project would include controlled pedestrian crossings, a narrowed cross-section, better visibility, traffic calming, improved safety and full accessibility. Mr. Bourgon outlined the proposed designs, which maintain truck-turning radii and do not impede winter plowing

operations, accommodate drainage and cause no loss of parking. Mississippi Mills is covering the design and the installation of bump-outs (traffic-calming devices), and the county is covering the pedestrian crossover installations (signals). Council also authorized the warden and clerk/deputy CAO to execute the necessary documents associated with the county purchasing property at the intersection of County Road 43 and Port Elmsley Road at Port Elmsley with funds from any 2019 surplus or from the public works roads reserve. Staff were also directed to include intersection improvements at that location in the 2020 construction capital budget. For more information, contact Terry McCann, Director of Public Works, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 3190.

- **Upcoming Meetings: County Council, Wednesday, Feb. 20, 5 p.m.;** Public Works, Feb. 20 (following County Council); Economic Development, Feb. 20 (following Public Works). **County Council, Wednesday, March 13, 5 p.m.;** Community Services, March 13 (following County Council); Corporate Services, March 13 (following Community Services). All meetings are in Council Chambers unless otherwise noted. For more information, contact 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1502. Like "LanarkCounty1" on Facebook and follow "@LanarkCounty1" on Twitter!