

## 2023 Update on Town Roads

### **Background**

In 2020, the Select Board hired the Beta Group Engineering company to evaluate roads, which focused on our paved roads. In 2021 the Beta Group sent their analysis. They recommended Crack Sealing and Edging to help stabilize roads. They also provided list of roads to be reclaimed and repaved.

In March of 2022, seven (7) gravel roads became impassable and emergency repairs were conducted by three independent contractors. The total cost to the Town was \$463,000 that was funded from the unreserved fund balance. In response to this and consistent requests at Town Meetings, the Select Board decided to take a different approach to stabilizing our gravel roads. In April of 2022, the Board ordered a comprehensive gravel road study be conducted by HEB Engineering. HEB's gravel roads report included a rating of each road's condition, a recommendation on how to repair, an estimated cost for each road repair and recommendations on how to address the challenges. The financial challenges for bringing our gravel roads up to speed are great – potentially more than \$20 million.

In addition to the HEB and Beta Group reports, the Select Board has held weekly work sessions ahead of Town Meeting. During those work sessions, we solicited feedback from residents and business owners in attendance, including businesses that work in the roads business. We also consulted with other Highway Departments in the area to learn more about best practices and collaboration/support.

### **Gravel Roads Report Key Findings:**

- HEB performed visual assessments (Windshield Survey) of approximately 30 miles of gravel road including drainage, ditches and culverts and dug twelve (12) test pits.
- Of the 30 miles of roads analyzed, approximately
  - 1.7% of roads are in excellent condition,
  - 1.7% of roads are in good condition
  - 62.2% of roads are in fair condition
  - 32.1% of roads are in poor condition
  - 0.3% of roads failed.
- Based on the field observations and laboratory analyses, HEB believes that many of the gravel roads are constructed over poor, frost susceptible sub-grade and were not constructed with quality surface and base gravels to the appropriate depths. Frequent issues with gravel roads are generally due to weak sub-grade strength and inadequate depth of quality gravels, particularly during spring thaw and prolonged periods of wet weather. What does this mean for you? It means a lot more potholes, washouts and un-passable road if we don't address these challenges soon.

### **Gravel Road Recommendations – HEB:**

#### **Option 1 – Full-Depth Reconstruction for Entire Roadway Network**

- Due to the varying quality and depth of surface and base gravels throughout the community, as well as the observed poor sub-grade conditions, HEB believes that full-depth reconstruction of the gravel roadway network should be considered.
- HEB estimates it would cost the Town of Campton approximately \$21.1 million in current dollar value to fully reconstruct the entire gravel roadway network.

#### **Option 2 – Rehabilitation of Fair and Good Roads with Full Depth Reconstruction of Poor Roads**

1. **Rehabilitate** gravel roads rated Fair/Good/Excellent by installing 6-inch minimum depth of surface gravels and grade roads to provide 4% crown (1/2- inch per foot).
  - Construct vegetated and stone-lined ditches, drains and culverts where appropriate.
  - HEB estimates that rehabilitation cost of **\$6 million**.

## 2023 Update on Town Roads

2. **Full-Depth Reconstruction** of roadways in poor condition, which includes approximately 9.6 miles of roadway. HEB estimates that full-depth reconstruction of roads in poor condition will cost approximately **\$8.8 million**.
3. As such, the **total estimated cost for Option 2** for the rehabilitation of fair and good roads, as well as full-depth reconstruction of poor roads is approximately **\$14.8 million**.

## Paved Roads Recommendation - Beta Group

- As mentioned earlier, the Beta Group was hired in 2021 to evaluate roads.
- The pavement distresses are scored on a 0-100 scale. 0%-50% would be “poor”, 50%-80% would be “fair” and 80%-100% would be “good” condition. The overall average for the paved roads came in at 77.32%, which is slightly above average for New England paved roads.
- Crack Sealing and Edging will improve road stabilization.

## 2023 Select Board Beliefs:

- **Keeping fair rated gravel roads in good condition saves money long term.**
  - Adding quality gravel
  - Maintaining ditches/culverts and drains – emphasize this some more
  - Grading gravel roads at 4% grade and removing windrows
- **Gravel Road Reconstruction is needed on poor roads**
  - Can be done at different depths based on current base material of road
  - Geotextiles can significantly reduce reconstruction costs and improve gravel road quality
- **Reclaiming paved roads and maintaining all paved roads is critical to stabilizing all roads**
- **All construction to be conducted by contractors**
- **Maintenance to be evaluated to determine if in-house or contractor cost is more cost effective.**

## 2023 Select Board Goals:

1. **Increase Highway Department Budget from \$250,000 to \$750,000 for Year 1 (2023)**
  - **Planned use of \$750K**
  - \$250 K for Paving
  - \$250 K for Gravel Road Maintenance of Poor and Good Roads
    - Add 6” of gravel, grade, maintain ditches, culverts and drains. Repeat every 3-4 years.
  - \$250 K for Gravel Road Reconstruction
    - The board will monitor the status of the 7 roads repaired in March 2023.
    - The board will work with the Road Agent to understand of cost of Maintenance
  - Some money might be allotted to equipment rental or purchase
2. **Continued development of a 5 and 10 Year Road Plan, which may include increasing our road investment to more than \$750,000 a year**
3. **Determine highway department staffing needs**
4. **Determine total cost of road reconstruction and whether the town will approve a bond to do a major project or do smaller projects through CIP process.**

## How much will the increased \$500,000 cost you in taxes?

Every \$100,000 spent equals \$23 per \$100,000 in valuation.

## Where does the Select Board stand?

The Select Board voted a unanimous Yes to this plan.

## **2023 Update on Town Roads**

### **Want to learn more?**

- Go to [www.camptonnh.org](http://www.camptonnh.org) and look for executive summaries of the HEB and Beta Group reports. You can also download the entire reports which include the analysis and recommendation for every gravel road.
- Please sign up on the Town email list so you receive all updates from the Town Office.
- Please like the Town of Campton on Facebook.
- Please attend Select Board Meetings to raise your awareness of what the Select Board forms is for 2023.
- Attend Town Meeting on March 15, 6:30 p.m. at Campton Elementary School.