



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF COURTENAY

BRIEFING NOTE TO COUNCIL

To: Council
From: Chief Administrative Officer
Subject: 5th Street Bridge Rehabilitation Update

File No.: 5335-20 / 5400-02

Date: May 11, 2020

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this briefing note is to provide an update on the status of the 5th Street Bridge Rehabilitation project and the upcoming steps to move the project forward to completion in 2021.

BACKGROUND:

The following Council resolutions regarding the 5th Street Bridge Project have provided direction to staff.

June 24th, 2019

That based on the June 24th, 2019 staff report “5th Street Bridge Rehabilitation Project” Council approve OPTION 2 that Council direct staff to proceed with the associated next steps to rehabilitate the 5th Street Bridge, including the upgrade of adding cantilevered multi-use pathways plus development of detailed traffic management and public engagement plans, and report back to Council no later than September 16, 2019; and

That staff simultaneously prepare a supporting draft Borrowing Bylaw for Council consideration.

Following a period of extensive community and stakeholder engagement and the refinement of project options, Council passed the following subsequent motion.

February 3rd, 2020

That Council direct staff not to include cantilevers in the final design of the 5th Street Bridge Rehabilitation Project; and,

That based on the January 27th, 2020 staff report “5th Street Bridge Rehabilitation” that Council direct staff to obtain elector approval for a loan authorization bylaw for the 5th Street Bridge Rehabilitation Project through the Alternate Approval Process.

The 5th Street Bridge plays an important role in the entire Comox Valley transportation network serving 20,000 vehicles, 650 pedestrians and 500 cyclists each day. Completed in 1957, the 72-metre steel truss bridge has two vehicle lanes and 1.5 metre sidewalks on both sides of the bridge.

The City was successful in receiving \$1.96 million in funding from the New Building Canada – Small Communities Fund, which requires rehabilitation of the bridge to occur by March 31, 2022. This was an extension from the original March 2020 deadline, and we have previously been advised that no further extensions will be provided. Construction is planned for 2021.

To address the structural condition and safety of the current bridge, the original scope of the 5th St Bridge Rehabilitation Project includes:

- Bridge deck replacement and cathodic protection systems,
- Structural repairs to the steel bridge structure,
- New handrails,
- Removal of rust and existing lead-based coating, and
- Recoating of all steel to prevent corrosion

Recognizing the important role the bridge plays in the City's transportation network, there are several elements to consider when planning how best to safely rehabilitate the bridge in a timely manner while maintaining access for all modes of traffic.

UPDATE AND NEXT STEPS:

1. BORROWING BYLAW

- a. With the first three readings of the bylaw on Monday April 20th, the borrowing process is now underway.
- b. The Inspector of Municipalities has already provided statutory approval on May 5th allowing this bylaw to proceed to electoral approval when necessary. This is the fastest turnaround on a borrowing bylaw the City has ever experienced.
- c. Electoral approval, in the form of an Alternate Approval Process, is scheduled to advance this summer. Council will have an opportunity to establish the number of electors and deadline prior to commencing this process

2. TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PLAN AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The City appreciates the concerns of the business community, particularly in the downtown core, over the impacts of bridge maintenance. These concerns have been heightened by the COVID-19 pandemic which has dealt an unprecedented blow to many businesses who have been forced to close or limit services, with no clear end in sight. At the same time this necessary maintenance on the 5th Street Bridge must be completed to protect this essential infrastructure which plays an important part in the community's traffic network. The project team is keenly aware of these concerns and will make every effort to maintain the highest possible level of traffic flow while protecting workers and the public.

- a. The draft Traffic Management Plan (TMP) is currently being developed by the City’s consulting Engineers and City Staff with the goal of being reviewed with key stakeholders (BC Transit, DCBIA, MoTI and others) this summer. The intent is to consensus-build with stakeholders to help mitigate the potential impacts of the project while ensuring the City receives the best value for construction.
- b. The TMP will define how best to manage the planned single-lane alternating traffic, with the goal of minimizing the impact to businesses, other stakeholders and the community as much as possible.
- c. Some innovative strategies that will be evaluated include:
 - i. Slip/priority lane potential for transit and emergency vehicles,
 - ii. Reduction of single-lane alternating traffic where possible,
 - iii. Optimized traffic signal timing for downtown access,
 - iv. Shuttle services or park and ride,
 - v. Relaxed parking options

3. DETAILED DESIGN/TENDER PACKAGE DEVELOPMENT

- a. Detailed design is continuing to advance. Both design and tender package are on schedule to be ready for an early fall procurement process.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

The project is progressing as per the below schedule. While the on-going COVID pandemic has delayed some items by a few months, overall the project is still on track to meet the original schedule for procurement and construction.

City of Courtenay Fifth Street Bridge - Summary Schedule								
	2020			2021			2022	
	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar
Communications and Public Consultation								
Complete Traffic Management Plan								
Complete Design								
Borrowing Bylaw								
Procurement								
Contractor Submittals								
Construction								
Project Close-out								

PROJECT BUDGET

Project Element	Estimated Cost
Outcome	Rehabilitated crossing with 20-year updated useful service life with full utilization of the grant and cathodic protection versus deck replacement.
Bridge Recoating & Deck Renewal	\$4.1 million
Structural and Traffic	\$2.2 million
Total	\$6.3 million
Fed/Provincial Grant	\$1.96 million
Reserves	\$0.94 million
City Borrowing Amount	\$3.4 million
Tax Implications (based on 2019 assessments and tax rates)	<p>Average residential property \$13 per year</p> <p>Average commercial property \$82 per year</p>

Engineers have determined that the 5th Street Bridge has not reached the end of its useful life, and it would be premature and costly to consider replacing it at this time. Rehabilitation is required to maximize the life of the 5th Street Bridge, and it is one of the City’s fundamental responsibilities to maintain the integrity of our infrastructure assets for the benefit of our community as per the City’s Asset Management Plan. It is estimated that the current rehabilitation work will result in at least 20 years of extended life before additional bridge refurbishment is required. In addition, the visual appearance will be improved once painting is complete.

Engineers specializing in new bridge construction have estimated replacement costs to be in the \$25 - \$30 million for a new structure and abutments. This amount does not include significant additional costs surrounding the relocation of utilities (City water, CVRD water, sewer, gas, fiber optics) that are affixed to the underside of the existing bridge.

Furthermore, a full replacement bridge project would require a complete closure of 5th Street for approximately one full year.

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