



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF COURTENAY

STAFF REPORT

To: Council

File No.: 8620-01; 16009

From: Chief Administrative Officer

Date: October 3rd, 2016

**Subject: Complete Street Pilot Project - Cross Section Options and Public Engagement Next Steps
(Presentation by Urban Systems Ltd.)**

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to present Council with road cross-section design options for 5th Street between Fitzgerald Avenue and Menzies Avenue developed through the public and key stakeholder engagement process.

CAO RECOMMENDATIONS:

That based on the October 3rd, 2016 staff report entitled "*Complete Street Pilot Project – Cross-Section Options and Public Engagement Next Steps,*" and presentation, Council approve option 1 and direct staff to complete the second phase of public engagement based on presented design options.

Respectfully submitted,

David Allen, BES, CLGEM, SCLGM
Chief Administrative Officer

BACKGROUND:

The City of Courtenay, through the Multi-modal Transportation Strategy (2014), adopted the following vision: "The City of Courtenay supports a transportation network that prioritizes connectivity and access to daily destinations and, through a balanced approach to transportation planning, provides all road users safe choices in their mode of transportation."

At the April 4, 2016 Regular Council Meeting, Council resolved that:

Moved by Hillian and seconded by Wells that based on the April 4, 2016 staff report entitled "5th Street Complete Streets Pilot Project – Update and Presentation from Urban Systems Ltd," and presentation, Council approve Option 1 and direct staff to proceed with public engagement as described in this report.

City staff and project team members from Urban Systems Ltd met with key stakeholders groups over the course of May 5 and 6, 2016 to identify interests and aspirations for the project area. Comments were collected from the following key stakeholders:

- Comox Valley Cycling Coalition
- Comox Valley Accessibility Committee

- School District #71 (Active Travel)
- Comox Valley Regional District (Transit), and Watson & Ash
- Comox Valley Conservation Strategy Community Partnership

A Public Information Session was held in the evening of Thursday May 5th, and an online public survey was available between May 5th and 31st for information and feedback. The Public Information Session was attended by approximately 60 people, and the survey received 560 responses, 408 of which were fully completed.

The priorities identified by the public through this engagement process have been used to inform the design of five surface treatment options for 5th Street between Fitzgerald Avenue and Menzies Avenue. The most common theme expressed by the public for the future look/feel of 5th Street was “greener/lush”; the top ranked priority out of a score of 7 for the use of the roadway was “walking” (6.5/7) followed by “cycling” (4.9/7) and “landscaping” (4.5/7).

At the public information session and during the stakeholder meetings, participants were invited to design their own ideal road cross section for 5th Street. This activity involved placing different street components onto a representative road width. All components were to scale, requiring participants to make trade-offs as to what they wanted to include on the street.

Three different groups of participants completed the exercise: the public at the information session, key stakeholders, and members of Council. In total there were 40 cross sections completed: 26 at the public information session, 13 by the key stakeholders, and 1 by Council.

A review of the completed cross sections demonstrated the following preferences:

- Enhanced width sidewalks,
- Protected/separated bicycle lanes (separated from vehicle traffic by landscaping or vehicle parking),
- 2-way vehicle traffic, and,
- Landscaping on both sides.

There was also support for a centre landscaped median and alternating boulevards with parking or street furniture, including bus shelters.

DISCUSSION:

5th Street from Fitzgerald Avenue to Menzies Avenue is a 530m corridor that connects to downtown Courtenay. The road was originally designed primarily for vehicles, with wide lanes and parking on both sides of the street. Sidewalks are provided on both sides of the road and cycling is integrated the vehicle traffic through shared lanes.

The Complete Streets enhancements include expanding sidewalk width, providing bike lanes, curb extensions, and new pavement markings. The renovation of the street will also include all renewal of underground utilities, including replacing all storm and sanitary sewer and water pipes.

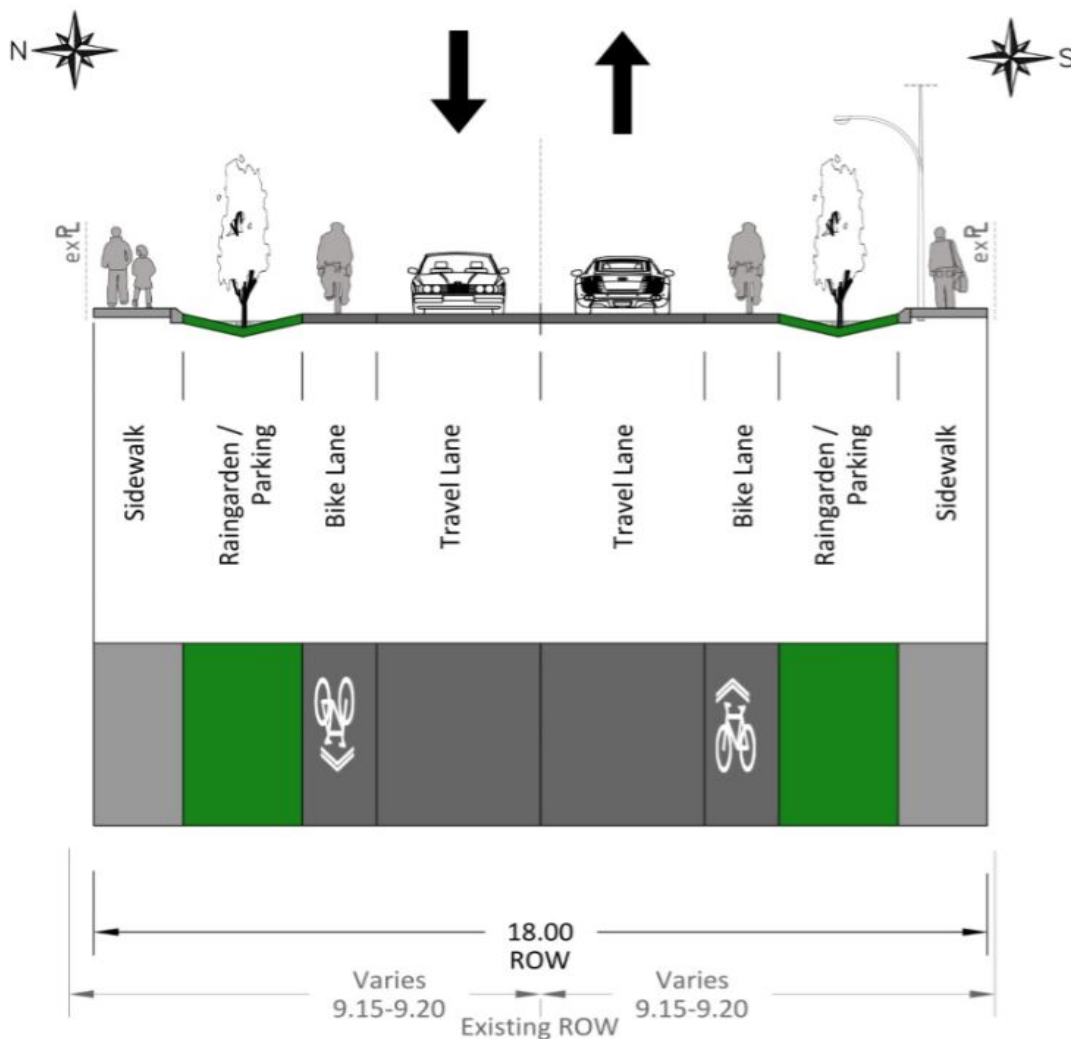
Based on the public and stakeholder engagement sessions undertaken earlier in the year, five surface treatment options have been prepared for Council’s consideration and further public engagement. Each option is summarized in Table 1 below, and sketches are attached to this report to help visualize each cross-section. Option 1 most closely resembles the conceptual cross-section described in the grant application that was the basis for the City obtaining \$3.25million in funding for this project.

Table 1

	Travel Lane	Enhanced Sidewalk	Standard Bike Lane	Enhanced Bike Lane	Raingarden	Parking Lane
Option 1	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓
Option 2	✓	✓	✓	x	x	✓
Option 3	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x
Option 4	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓
Option 5	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x

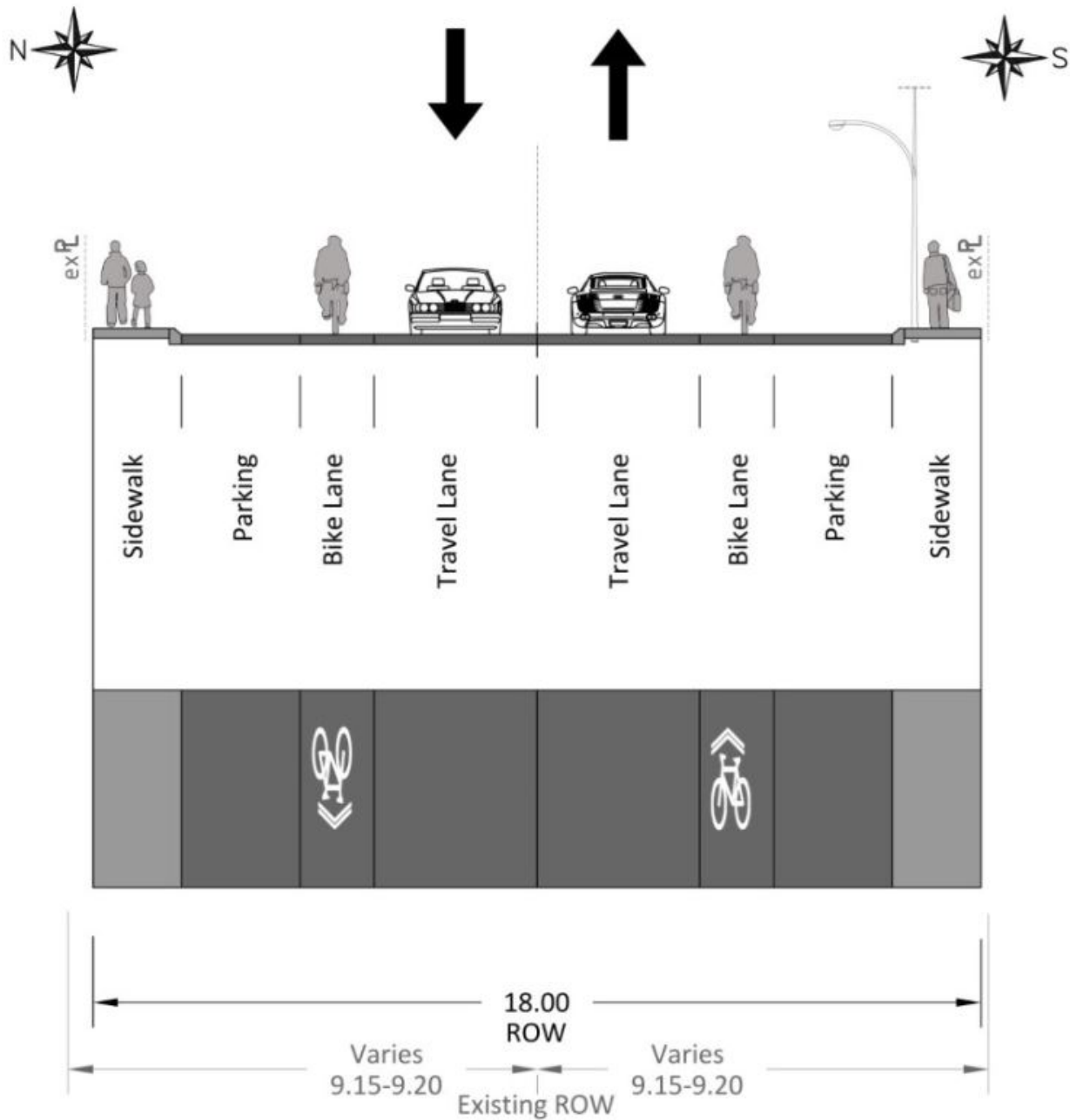
Option 1 – Dedicated Bike Lanes and Parking Alternating with Rain Gardens

This option most resembles the proposed design submitted with the Strategic Priorities fund under the Federal Gas Tax Fund Grant application, and includes two vehicle travel lanes, dedicated bike lanes, parking on both sides alternating with rain gardens, and sidewalks at the property line. This option was used as a baseline for discussions with the community, and to build upon those conversations to design alternative cross-sections accordingly.



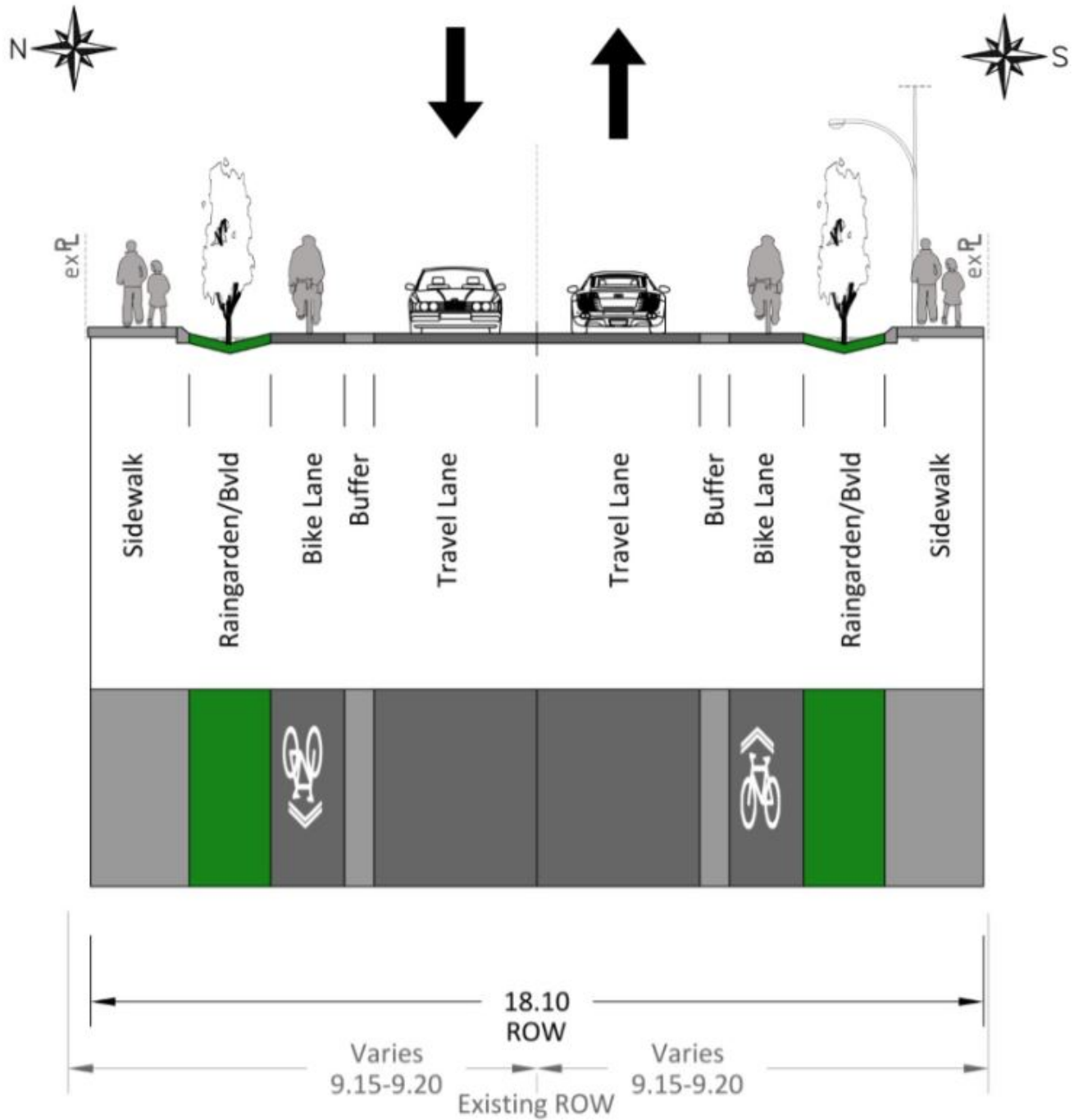
Option 2 – Dedicated Bike Lanes with Parking throughout the Entire Section

This option includes two vehicle travel lanes, dedicated bike lanes, parking on both sides throughout the entire section, as well as sidewalks at the property line. This option can be considered on those blocks where parking is considered important to service fronting commercial properties (e.g. the block between Fitzgerald and Harmston).



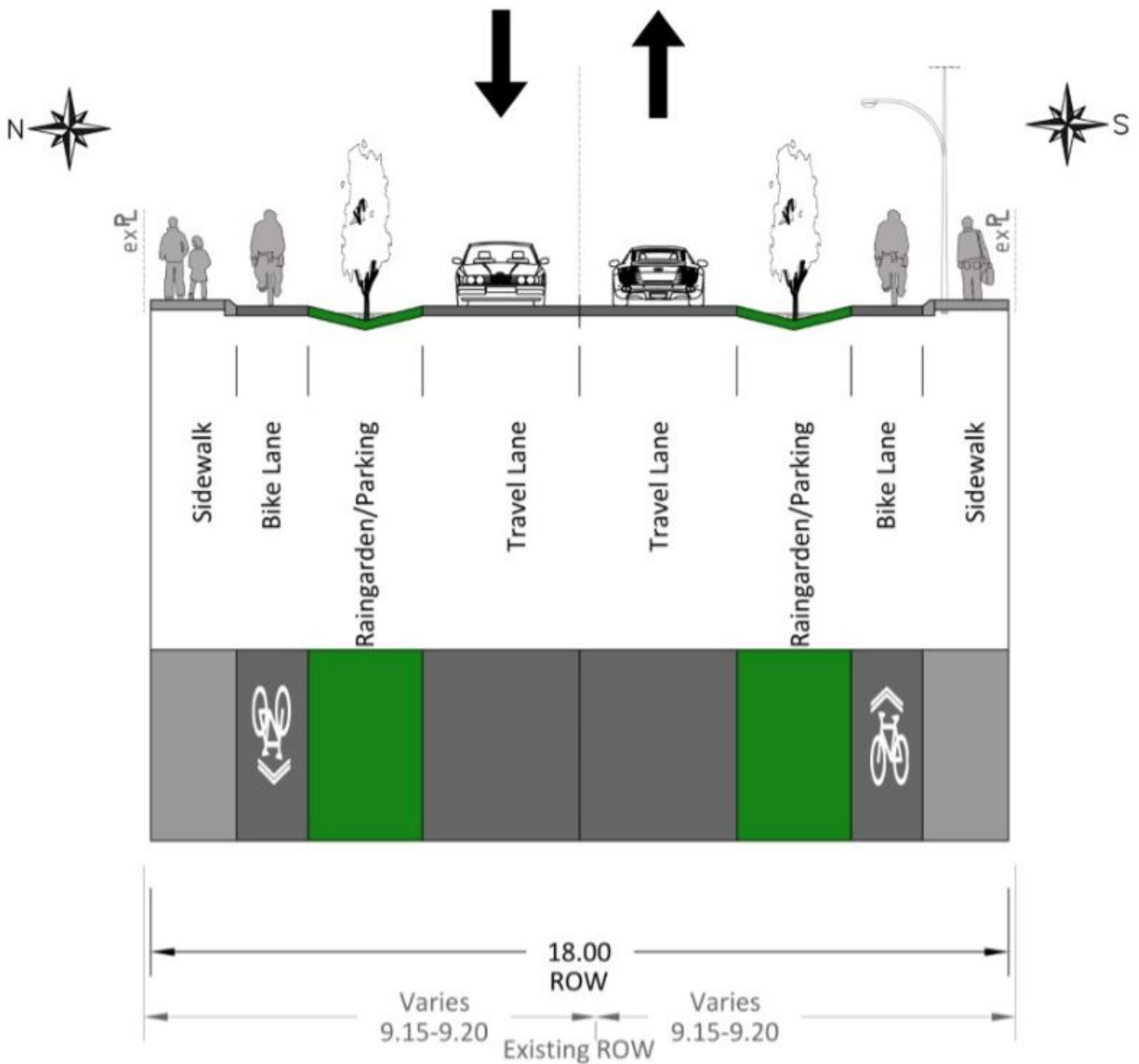
Option 3 – Buffered Bike Lanes with Rain Garden Boulevard and No Parking

This option includes two vehicle travel lanes, bike lanes with a painted buffer, rain garden boulevards, no parking and wider enhanced sidewalks at the property line.



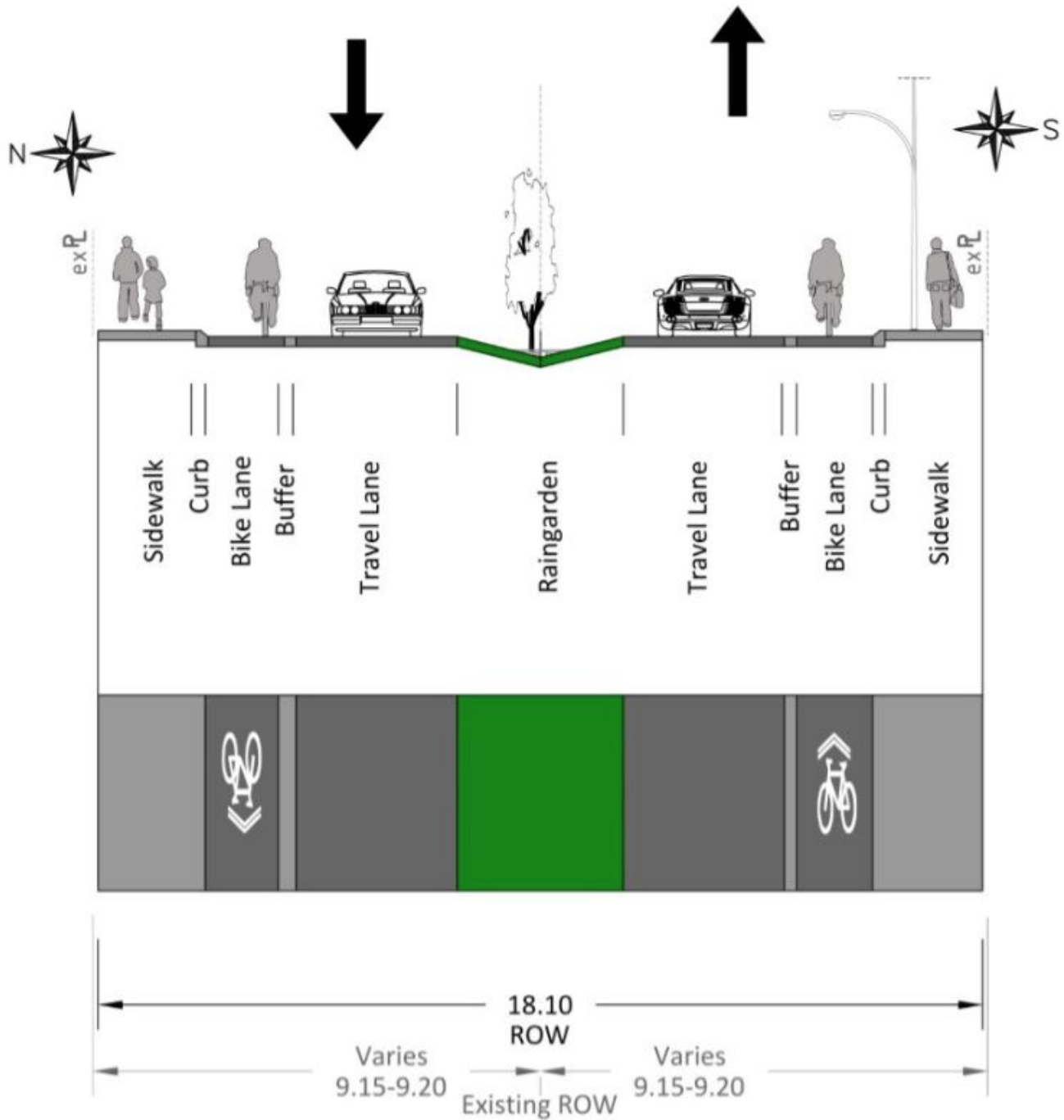
Option 4 – Separated Bike Lanes with Rain Garden Boulevard and Alternating Parking

This option includes two vehicle travel lanes, bike lanes separated from vehicle traffic by rain gardens or parking, and sidewalks at the property line.



Option 5 – Buffered Bike Lanes with Rain Garden Centre Median and No Parking

This option includes two vehicle travel lanes, bike lanes with a painted buffer, a rain garden centre median, no parking, and wider enhanced sidewalks at the property line.



When considering each option in further detail as we work toward the design phase, it should be noted that options with physically separated bike lanes would pose a maintenance challenge for the City. Currently, all street sweeping operations are conducted by one machine designed to manoeuvre in standard roadway lane widths. Special equipment may be required to be purchased to maintain isolated bike lanes on this 500 metre stretch of roadway. Snow clearing operations would require the same consideration.

Parking is another “trade-off” for discussion with Council. Some cross-sections maintain a level of service for parking whether that is parking permitted along the full length of road or partially interspersed, while others remove parking completely in favour of other uses or features.

Dan Huang and Greg Smith from Urban Systems Ltd will be at the October 3rd, 2016 council meeting to review the cross-section options for the project, facilitate discussion with Council regarding the trade-offs for the project conceptual design, and outline project next steps. Urban Systems will also review the project constraints and opportunities shared with those members of Council able to attend the September 22, 2016 project site briefing.

With Council’s support of the presented options, staff will proceed with the second round of public engagement to obtain public feedback on the options based on the following schedule and as established in the April 4th staff report and Council resolution:

Event	Date	Activity
Council	October 3 rd , 2016	A presentation to Council of the Complete Streets conceptual design cross-section options and discussion of trade-offs. This will be an opportunity for Council to ask questions and provide initial input into the concept design.
Public Open House #2	October 2016	Open house with display boards of the 5 conceptual design options for the corridor.
On-line Public Consultation	October - November 2016	Complete Streets conceptual design cross-section options posted on the City of Courtenay website with opportunity to provide feedback.
Council	December 2016	Presentation to Council of top 2 conceptual design options for the corridor and a recommendation.

Council may also elect to direct staff to proceed immediately to detailed design based on one or more of the options provided or an alternate option that best meets their goals for this project.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

On February 12, 2016 the City of Courtenay was awarded \$3.253 million in funding to construct a Complete Streets Pilot Project on a section of 5th Street. This funding is from the Strategic Priorities fund under the Federal Gas Tax Fund. This grant provides 100% funding for all eligible costs related to the infrastructure project.

At this conceptual level of design, the five options presented above are variations on the same components of infrastructure and therefore their relative costs are similar. Variations to the cost will occur with buffered bike lanes (i.e. more paint); extents of raingardens (i.e. planting requirements) or “enhanced” sidewalks where more concrete is necessary. Staff will work with whichever option Council selects to manage the project budget within the funding provided.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS:

This project is part of Staff’s 2016 work plan, and as such the project work is already accounted for.

ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS:

This project will result in the renewal of infrastructure assets including 530 metres of road, sidewalk, drainage system, sewer system and watermain. Condition assessments and a risk analysis workshop have been completed with Urban Systems and City representatives from Engineering and Public Works Departments for the underground utilities. This process has determined that the existing underground assets are near their end of life and/or have capacity constraints necessitating replacement. The existing sidewalk infrastructure is sufficient, however it does not meet current City standards; the asphalt road surface is several years old and considered in satisfactory condition.

STRATEGIC PLAN REFERENCE:

The Complete Streets Pilot Project is a Council priority and supports the 2016-2018 Strategic Priority.

We value multi-modal transportation in our community

- We support developing multi-modal transportation network plans
- As we build new or replace existing transportation infrastructure, we are consistent with what we learn from our Complete Streets Pilot Project
- △ Support our regional transit service while balancing service improvements with costs

● Area of Control
The policy, works and programming matters that fall within Council's jurisdictional authority to act.

▲ Area of Influence
Matters that fall within shared or agreed jurisdiction between Council and another government or party.

■ Area of Concern
Matters of interest outside Council's jurisdictional authority to act.

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN REFERENCE:

1. The Downtown

Maintain a pedestrian orientation in downtown and integrated transportation planning (i.e., taking all modes of movement into account). (pg 11)

Work with School District 71 to encourage more walking and biking to school, through proper siting and planning of new facilities, provision of necessary facilities on school sites, and through educational efforts. (pg 13)

Transportation

5.2 Goals

2. Development of a transportation system that provides choices for different modes of travel including vehicle, transit, pedestrian, cycling and people with mobility impairments. (pg. 59)

5.3 Policies

7. The City will continue to pursue the development of a continuous, integrated bicycle network in order to promote and encourage cycling as a commuting alternative to the automobile and as a means of active recreation. (pg 60)

REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY REFERENCE:

Goal 4 – Transportation (pg 49, 50)

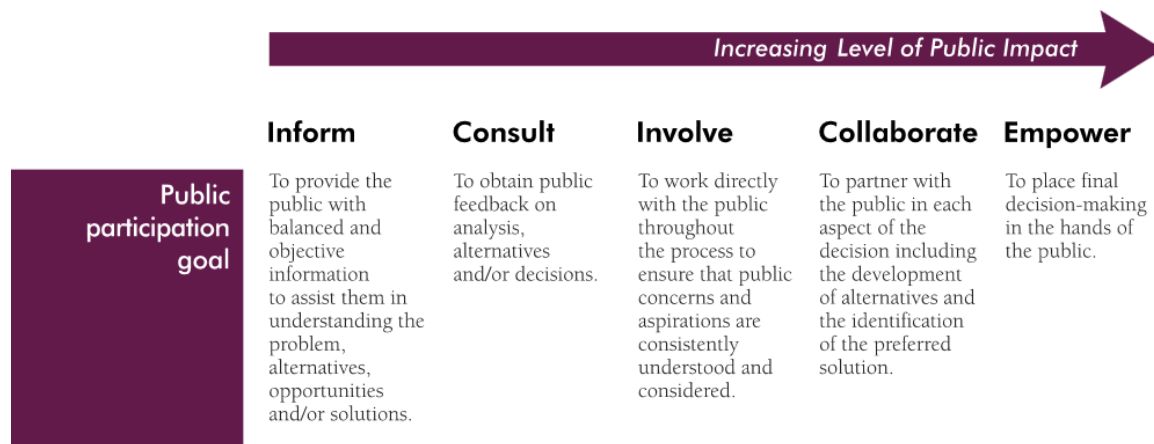
Objective 4-B: Improve bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to increase the use of active transportation options.

Targets: 20% bicycle and pedestrian commuters by 2030

CITIZEN/PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Staff held key stakeholder meetings, a public information session, and provided an online survey for the public to comment on their aspirations for the Complete Street Pilot Project. Staff will continue to consult with and involve key stakeholders and the public based on the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation:

http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/imported/IAP2%20Spectrum_vertical.pdf



OPTIONS:

Option 1: That Council approve the proposed cross-sections as presented and directs staff to proceed to the second phase of public engagement as described in the report (**Recommended**)

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- Option 2: That Council direct staff to provide revised or additional cross-section options for Council consideration prior to undertaking the second phase of public engagement.
- Option 3: That Council direct staff to proceed to detailed design based on one (or more) of the proposed cross-sections.
- Option 4: That Council direct staff to proceed to detailed design based on an alternate proposed cross-section of their choosing.

Prepared by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. Hatch". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lesley Hatch, P.Eng.,
Director of Engineering Services