



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF COURTENAY

STAFF REPORT

To: Council

File No.: 5335-20/5400-02

From: Chief Administrative Officer

Date: March 28, 2022

Subject: 6th Street Active Transportation Bridge – Grant Application

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is for Council to provide approval for staff to submit an application for grant funding for the 6th Street Active Transportation Bridge project through the Infrastructure Canada's Active Transportation Fund.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Infrastructure Canada's Active Transportation Fund will provide \$400 million over five years to support a modal shift away from cars and toward active transportation, in support of Canada's National Active Transportation Strategy. The Active Transportation Fund will invest in projects that build new and expanded networks of pathways, bike lanes, trails and pedestrian bridges, in addition to supporting active transportation planning and stakeholder engagement activities. Pending council resolution, staff will submit grant application to fund construction of the 6th Street Active Transportation Bridge.

CAO RECOMMENDATIONS:

THAT based on the March 28, 2022 staff report "6th Street Active Transportation Bridge – Grant Application", Council approve OPTION 1 and direct Staff to:

1. Submit an application for grant funding for the 6th Street Active Transportation Bridge project through Infrastructure Canada's Active Transportation Fund.

Respectfully submitted,

Geoff Garbutt, MCIP, RPP
Chief Administrative Officer

BACKGROUND:

A 6th Street Active Transportation Bridge Bridge would provide a dedicated cycling and pedestrian connection between downtown Courtenay and Simms Millennium Park as well as a connection to the future cycling network along 6th Street and Anderton Avenue, the Courtenay Riverway Trail, and the Lewis Park pathway connection to the Lewis Centre.

A 6th Street Active Transportation Bridge is included in the recently completed Parks & Recreation Master Plan and referenced in the Transportation Master Plan for the City of Courtenay. The bridge is listed as a long-term improvement in the Parks and Trails Master Plan. In addition, the Downtown Courtenay Playbook also notes an additional crossing at 6th Street should be explored further.

DISCUSSION:

Infrastructure Canada's Active Transportation Fund – Grant Application:

Infrastructure Canada's Active Transportation Fund will provide \$400 million over five years to support a modal shift away from cars and toward active transportation, in support of Canada's National Active Transportation Strategy. The Active Transportation Fund will invest in projects that build new and expanded networks of pathways, bike lanes, trails and pedestrian bridges, in addition to supporting active transportation planning and stakeholder engagement activities.

The Active Transportation Fund will contribute 60% of eligible project's costs that build new or enhance existing active transportation infrastructure. Projects are assessed and will be evaluated against the following criteria:

- Improved community connectivity and accessibility
- Economic benefits
- Environmental and climate benefits
- Improved user mobility, safety and security
- Project viability

Funding decisions will be merit-based; final project selection will be undertaken with a view to balancing funding support by taking into consideration such factors as regional distribution, the type of project, and equitable access.

At this time, the fund has not given additional details on the timing of funding decisions. Typical funding decisions for grants of this nature are made within 6 to 12 months.

Project Update:

Detailed design has advanced to the 50% design stage. Reaching this milestone has allowed the design to be shared with our project stakeholders and to hear their feedback and comments. Once all comments and feedback are received, the design team will review and address the comments as needed, and report to Council on findings. Detailed design is expected to be complete in summer of 2022. Advancing the project to construction would be subject to Council's approval, and availability of funding from grants and/or borrowing.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

A Class C cost estimate was prepared as part of the detailed options analysis presented to council in 2020 and is appended to this staff report. This estimate included costs for detailed design and contract administration as well as the costs for the bridge construction and associated optional items. As detailed

design has progressed, one of the optional items, lighting the second side of the bridge, has been included in the recommended scope. Further analysis during detailed design revealed that lighting only one side of the bridge would not meet requirements and that the second side would need lighting as well. Lighting only one side of the bridge was previously proposed as a way to lower construction costs for the project.

The detailed design phase has also incurred some additional costs during the design phase. Additional geotechnical work was required to support the design. Additional communications support was also added for stakeholder meetings and grant support. The estimated cost for this project has increased by approximately \$227,000 and is now estimated at \$4,651,525. A table showing the estimated costs for the project is shown below.

Total Estimated Project Cost – March 2022	\$4,651,525
Total Estimated Project Cost – December 2020	\$4,424,000
Difference	\$227,525

If the grant is approved, 60% of eligible project costs could be covered by the funding. Based on our most recent Class C cost estimate, the grant would fund approximately \$2.5M of eligible expenditures. Costs for detailed design that were incurred before the grant is approved are not eligible. If the grant is approved, the project must be completed by March 31, 2026.

Item	Estimated Cost
Estimated remaining project cost (Construction, Contract Administration, Inspection, Communications)	\$4,170,385
Estimated Grant Share (60%)	\$2,502,231
Estimated City Share (40%)	\$1,668,154

A detailed cost estimate is not required to be submitted at the time of the application. If the grant is approved, a detailed cost estimate will need to be submitted and included in the finalized agreement. It's expected that this timeline will allow the detailed design to be completed and develop more accurate cost estimates.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS:

The 6th St Active Transportation Bridge Project will be led by Engineering Services, with support from most other City Departments. Consultants with technical knowledge specific to this work will be utilized to develop and implement detailed designs and processes. Estimated costs associated with external consultants are included in the project capital budget.

ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS:

City of Courtenay practices advanced asset management principles and is recognised as a leader in the field. Within this context, the 6th St Active Transportation Bridge would become one of the City's most

valuable assets providing a critical service of connecting the east and west parts of the community for active transportation users.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES REFERENCE:

As part of the Strategic Priorities for 2019 – 2022 the following are relevant to the 6th Street Bridge Project:

We proactively plan and invest in our natural and built environment

- Focus on asset management for sustainable service delivery
- ▲ Look for regional infrastructure solutions for shared services
- ▲ Advocate, collaborate and act to reduce air quality contaminants
- ▲ Support social, economic and environmental sustainability solutions

We plan and invest in methods of multi-modal transportation

- Move forward with implementing the City's Transportation Master Plan
- ▲■ Collaborate with regional and senior government partners to provide cost-effective transportation solutions

The Strategic Priorities for 2021-2022 list the 6th Street Bridge as a priority project for Engineering Services.

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN REFERENCE:

The OCP sets out the following policies in Part 4 Land Use Designations and Part 5 Transportation:

4.6.6.3 Policies

1. Wherever possible, the walkway portion of the Riverway system will be adjacent to the foreshore of the Courtenay River, slough and estuary. Where necessary or desirable, land acquisitions or easements will be sought to accomplish this objective while considering the integrity of these areas.
2. Council will investigate the feasibility of a pedestrian/bicycle bridge crossing of the Courtenay River, to link the west bank downtown with Lewis Park and/or Simms Millennium Park (for example, a suggested pedestrian/bicycle bridge from 6th Street to the east bank).

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. The Bicycle Planning Strategy adopted in 1995 will be reviewed and updated.

REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY REFERENCE:

The 6th St Bridge Project is aligned with “Goal 4: TRANSPORTATION” of the RGS:

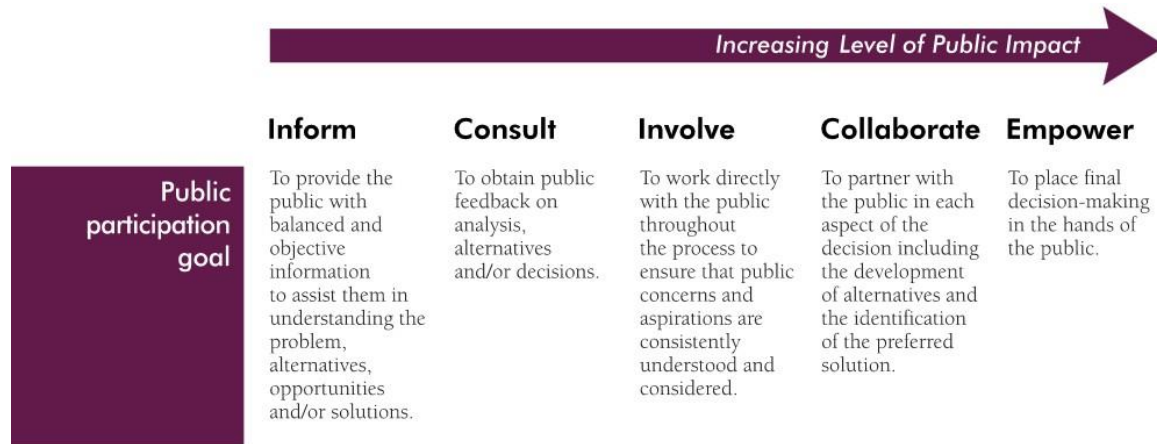
Supporting Policies:

- 4B-1 Promote and encourage cycling plans and programs through ongoing local and regional initiatives and actions.
- 4B-4 OCPs should identify regionally important, priority street connections for pedestrian and cycling improvements and require that connections be established as a condition of redevelopment.

CITIZEN/PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Public engagement has been a priority throughout the project. As staff finalizes detailed design, meetings with key stakeholders will occur to share the design and seek feedback.

Staff recommend to **Inform** the public and key stakeholder groups 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 based on the March 28, 2022 staff report "6th Street Active Transportation Bridge – Grant Application", Council approve OPTION 1 and direct Staff to:

1. Submit an application for grant funding for the 6th Street Active Transportation Bridge project through Infrastructure Canada's Active Transportation Fund.

Option 2: Refer back to Staff for further review.

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Reviewed by:

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Concurrence By:

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Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. 6th St Bridge Detailed Options Analysis – Class C Cost Estimate-