

**REPORT TO REGIONAL PARKS COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2024**

SUBJECT **Regional Trestles Renewal, Trails Widening and Lighting Project Update
– November 2024**

ISSUE SUMMARY

To provide the semi-annual update on the Regional Trestles Renewal, Trails Widening and Lighting Project and the Multi-Use Trail Safety Enhancement Study.

BACKGROUND

On August 9, 2023, the CRD Board approved that the Regional Trestles Renewal, Trails Widening and Lighting Project (the Project) be accelerated by the inclusion of the Project in the 2024-2028 Financial Plan, that project funds (\$53.5 million) be secured by way of debt, and that staff continue to develop partnerships, pursue grant opportunities and investigate options to generate additional funds through non-tax revenue. The scope of the Project includes critical infrastructure renewal for the Selkirk, Swan Lake and Brett Avenue Trestles, and six kilometres of separated-use, widened pathway design with lighting on the Galloping Goose Regional Trail (GGRT) and Lochside Regional Trail (LRT). Staff were directed to report on progress with the Project through bi-annual updates to the Regional Parks Committee.

Trestle Renewals Update

Selkirk Trestle

Through an invitation to tender, a contract was awarded in September 2024 to complete the Selkirk Phase 1 below deck critical repairs. The repairs are required to support a widened and lit deck. The work is not anticipated to close the trail and will be completed by Q2 of 2025. BC Transportation Financing Authority (BCTFA) will be paying for the portion of work associated with the elements of the Selkirk Trestle under BCTFA responsibility, per the BCTFA/CRD agreement.

Planning for Selkirk Phase 2, which includes widening, lighting, resurfacing and separating use, will start in 2025. The timing for completing Phase 2 will be coordinated with BCTFA and BC Hydro. BCTFA is currently exploring an application to Transport Canada to leave the bascule (lifting portion of the Selkirk Trestle) in the down position permanently, which may impact the design of the above-deck improvements. BC Hydro is planning to excavate within sections of the GGRT on the north end of the Selkirk Trestle, starting in 2026, to install a new high-voltage transmission line and remove an old line, as part of the BC Hydro Cable Replacement Project. CRD staff will aim to coordinate construction schedules so that closures of the Selkirk Trestle will align with closures of the GGRT caused by BC Hydro, to minimize the duration of trail closure.

Swan Lake Trestle and Brett Avenue Trestle

The Swan Lake and Brett Ave Trestles, constructed circa 1915-1917, are part of the National Historical Register and are both in deteriorating condition, with many of their structural components nearing the end of their service life. Staff retained the services of a structural engineering firm to identify options with concept designs to rehabilitate or replace the structures so that they can accommodate a widened and lit deck and achieve an extended service life.

Four options were identified for the Swan Lake Trestle and two options for the Brett Ave Trestle. Options were evaluated and ranked using weighted criteria, including remaining service life of existing timber components, impacts to historical preservation of the construction and style of the trestles, constructability, cost (Class D estimates excluding O&M costs), environmental impacts, maintenance and lifecycle costing. Profile views of each of the options are included in Appendix A. Results are summarized below:

Swan Lake Trestle Options		Cost	Ranking
Option 1	Rehabilitate existing structure, add 30-span steel trestle system using top-down construction; 75-year design life	\$7.94M	1
Option 2	Rehabilitate existing structure, add 16-span steel trestle system using ground-up construction; 75-year design	\$8.56M	3
Option 3	Remove existing structure and build new four span steel “I” girder bridge with concrete deck; 75-year design life	\$8.98M	2
Option 4	Rehabilitate existing structure by pairing new steel elements adjacent to rehabilitated existing timber elements; 30-year design life	\$9.34M	4

Brett Avenue Trestle Options		Cost	Ranking
Option 1	Add a reinforced soil integrated bridge with concrete footings and stringers with 20m span. Potential to leave some timber pier bents for aesthetics; 75-year design life	\$1.39M	1
Option 2	Remove existing structure and replace with a multi-plate arch structure; 75-year design life	\$1.79M	2

Based on the draft weighted evaluation criteria, the current best scoring option for the Swan Lake Trestle is Option 1, rehabilitation of the existing structure by constructing a 145.8 m long, 30-span steel trestle system matching a similar layout to the current timber trestle. Existing timber caps and piles can remain to maintain aesthetics. The top-down construction reduces the environmental impacts associated with ground disturbance below the trestle for access to the site. CRD staff are exploring opportunities with the Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary to coordinate construction with a potential future Blenkinsop Creek Restoration project. If the restoration project moves forward, Option 2 becomes the top-ranked option because the impacts of ground disturbance and environmental impacts on the scoring are reduced.

Next steps include engaging with District of Saanich staff to discuss the preferred options and implications of proceeding with work based on the terms of the existing District of Saanich/CRD agreement. Staff will also initiate the process for securing Heritage Alteration Permits, which will be needed for both trestles. Staff plan to return to Regional Parks Committee with recommended options for approval in 2025 before detailed design begins.

Trails Widening and Lighting Update

The procurement process to engage with a consulting firm with active transportation expertise to complete detailed design and construction administration for the Project is nearing completion. Over the summer, staff issued a request for qualifications to shortlist consulting firms to invite to submit detailed proposals for detailed design and construction administration services. An offer for contract is expected to be issued to the successful proponent by the end of 2024, and detailed

design will start in 2025. The consulting firm will support the CRD project team with detour planning and coordinating construction sequencing with third-party projects happening within the Project corridor between 2025 and 2028. A final construction sequencing plan will be established in 2025 when timelines for third-party projects in the corridor are confirmed. The initial construction sequencing, with anticipated third-party project timing, is illustrated in Appendix B.

Staff have begun initial engagement with special interest groups, municipal and provincial staff and First Nations. Input from initial engagement will be carried forward to the detailed design stage of the Project, and staff have plans to complete further engagement under a comprehensive Engagement Plan starting in 2025.

Recruitment for two new four-year term positions will begin in November 2024, with the intention that staff will start in early 2025 to support project delivery, including engagement with special interest groups and First Nations.

A summary of key 2025 activities, with anticipated timeline for completion, is found in the table below. The first section of trail to undergo construction will be a 300 m section of the GGRT between Gorge Road and Cecelia Road, starting in summer 2025 due to City of Victoria plans for a sewer replacement project. Staff are working with City of Victoria and District of Saanich staff on a design for the AAA detour, which is anticipated to be needed for at least four months starting in late spring 2025.

2025 Key Activities		
Phase	Key Activity	Completion
Planning	Engagement Plan (First Nations & Special Interest Groups)	Q1
	Detour planning for entire Project corridor	Q2
	Design & Construction Sequencing Plan	Q2
	Swan Lake & Brett Ave Trestles: final options selected	Q2
	Selkirk Trestle – Phase 2 above deck improvements	Q4
	Environmental Impact Assessments for 2025, 2026 construction	Q4
Design	Detailed design for GGRT near Tillicum Rd	Q3*
	Detailed design for sections planned for 2026 construction	Q4
	Swan Lake & Brett Ave Trestles: initiate detailed design and heritage alteration permit process	Q4
Procurement	Tender for GGRT Section A Phase B Cecelia Rd to Dupplin Rd	Q3
	Tender for GGRT near Tillicum Rd	Q4
Construction	Selkirk Trestle – Phase 1 below deck critical repairs	Q1
	GGRT Section A Phase A Gorge Rd to Cecelia Rd (~300 m section of trail initiated by City of Victoria sewer replacement project)	Q3
	TENTATIVE - GGRT Section A Phase B Cecelia Rd to Dupplin Rd (~400 m section of trail)	Q4

* to be coordinated with Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure’s Tillicum Active Transportation Bridge Project schedule

CRD Multi-Use Trails Safety Enhancement Study

At its September 2024 meeting, the Regional Parks Committee directed staff to engage a consultant to develop a study to build on previous efforts and to provide recommendations to further enhance safety on the CRD's multi-use trails, in light of the evolving characteristics of trail users, including the increasing prevalence of motorized personal mobility devices, such as e-bikes. Additionally, staff were directed to report back to the Regional Parks Committee on the findings of the safety study through bi-annual Regional Trestles Renewal, Trail Widening and Lighting Project updates. Staff have procured the services of a consulting firm with active transportation expertise to complete the study. The focus of the remainder of 2024 will be on data collection and interpretation and engagement planning to solicit qualitative input on trail user experience and comfort. Deliverables for Q1 of 2025 include a draft summary of review of use of rigid bollards. Staff anticipate having a draft study for presentation at the next bi-annual Regional Trestles Renewal, Trails Widening and Lighting Project Update Project update in spring 2025.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

The Regional Parks Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board: That the Regional Trestles Renewal, Trails Widening and Lighting Project Update – November 2024 be forwarded to the Transportation Committee for information.

Alternative 2

That this report be referred back to staff for additional information.

IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

Loan Authorization Bylaw No. 4588 was adopted in September 2024. Staff will continue to monitor for applicable grant opportunities and will apply for grants as they become available. At this point, the estimates for the Swan and Brett trestle projects are within budget and the overall project is deemed to be on budget.

First Nations Reconciliation

CRD staff are working with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure on a coordinated consultation for the Project. The Ministry, as the landowner, has a duty to consult with First Nations for projects on their lands, and the CRD, as a proponent, will work with its Indigenous Relations team to fulfill engagement responsibilities. CRD staff will present updates on the Project to First Nations on a quarterly basis. Staff will also engage with environmental consultants to complete environmental impact assessments and management plans for the Project corridor.

CONCLUSION

In August 2023, the CRD Board approved the Regional Trestles Renewal Trails Widening and Lighting Project, encompassing critical infrastructure renewal for 3 trestles and 6 km of separated-use pathway design with lighting, with funds to be secured by way of debt, grants and revenue-generating non-tax funding. Construction on Selkirk Phase 1 below-deck repairs is underway, as are planning and procurement activities for detailed design, construction administration and the trail safety enhancement study. Staff are working with municipal and

provincial partners, special interest groups and First Nations to prepare for summer 2025 construction activities, including detour planning for up to two sections of trail. Recommended options for the Swan Lake and Brett Avenue trestles will be brought to the Regional Parks Committee in spring 2025 for approval, after which staff will move forward with detailed design and permitting.

RECOMMENDATION

The Regional Parks Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:
That the Regional Trestles Renewal, Trails Widening and Lighting Project Update – November 2024 be forwarded to the Transportation Committee for information.

Submitted by:	Steve May, P.Eng., Senior Manager, Facilities Management & Engineering Services
Concurrence:	Glenn Harris, Ph.D., R.P.Bio., Acting General Manager, Parks, Recreation & Environmental Services
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ATTACHMENTS

- Appendix A: Swan Lake and Brett Avenue Trestles: Profile Views of Options
- Appendix B: Initial Construction Sequencing Map