

**REPORT TO REGIONAL PARKS COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26, 2024**

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

ISSUE SUMMARY

To provide an update on the Regional Trestles Renewal, Trails Widening and Lighting Project.

BACKGROUND

The Capital Regional District's (CRD) 2016 Regional Trails Management Plan identified the need for trail widening, user separation and lighting on the busiest sections of the Galloping Goose and Lochside trails. These sections include a total of 6 km of trail spanning from the Selkirk trestle to McKenzie Road on both the Galloping Goose and Lochside Regional Trails (Appendix A). Following the CRD Regional Trails Widening Study presented in February 2021, the CRD Board directed public engagement and expedited detailed designs for a 6.5 m separated-use pathway with lighting.

On August 9, 2023, the CRD Board approved that the Regional Trestles Renewal, Trails Widening and Lighting 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 kilometers of separated-use pathway design with lighting.

Trestle Renewals Update

Staff have made progress on trestle renewals, including engaging a structural consulting firm to complete a design options analysis for the rehabilitation of Brett and Swan Lake trestles. The options analysis focusses on identifying the necessary structural replacements to ensure the safety, longevity and capacity of the trestles to support a widened and lit deck. Recommendations with cost estimates for renewal of these trestles are expected this summer.

A 2021 condition assessment report for the Selkirk trestle found that one-third of its key structural components are in very poor condition, with advanced deterioration and decay. Structural rehabilitation of the piles has been chosen as the most cost-effective method to extend the trestle's life, avoiding the much higher cost and lengthy permitting process of complete replacement. A multi-phase approach has been developed to rehabilitate the trestle, prioritizing structural integrity, and accommodating trail use with a widened and lit deck within the project timeline. Phase 0 of the rehabilitation work was completed in 2023, with the trial of a fiber reinforced polymer jacket and epoxy grout technique on four deteriorating piles. The technique has been successfully used in Canada to repair and extend the operational life of aging timber structures in marine environments. The scope of Phase 1 will use the same technique to repair 60 piles that require structural reinforcement along with some critical bracing. Phase 1 work is scheduled to be tendered in late June 2024, with construction starting in August and will not require a closure of the trestle. Phase 2 will include widening, lighting and resurfacing of the trestle.

Trails Widening and Lighting Update

For the second half of 2024, staff will engage with consulting firms to finalize the detailed design for widening and lighting in all three project areas with the expectation that construction will start in 2025 and finish by 2028. Detailed design and construction will consider accessibility, environmental impacts and opportunities for First Nations engagement, as well as AAA facility criteria based on BC Active Transportation Guidelines. During trail closures, AAA detours will be implemented and staff will work with City of Victoria and District of Saanich to establish detour routes and provide communications to impacted parties. The construction sequencing plan will follow the implementation priorities identified at the August 2023 CRD Board meeting, starting at Selkirk trestle and extending to the Switch Bridge. Staff will work with municipalities and third parties such as BC Hydro, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, and BC Transit to coordinate construction schedules to minimize trail closures and impacts to users. The design will also review the use of bollards on the trail.

IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

Following the Board approval in August of 2023 to accelerate the project, the approval process for the loan authorization bylaw was initiated and, as of June 13, 2024, 12 of the 16 participants have supported the bylaw. Next, the bylaw will require approval of the Inspector Municipalities and will then return to the Board for final bylaw reading before the borrowing can proceed.

To date, the CRD has been successful in the application of two grants. In September 2023, \$1.9 million was secured through the provincial Growing Communities Fund. In March of 2024, \$500,000 was secured through the provincial Active Transportation Infrastructure Grants Program.

At this point, the project is deemed to be on budget.

First Nations Reconciliation

The project involves hiring a four-year term position that will be responsible for coordinating all consultation and engagement with the impacted First Nations.

CONCLUSION

In August 2023, the CRD Board approved the Regional 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. To date, two grants amounting to \$2.4 million have been secured, detailed design for the below-deck structural rehabilitation of the Selkirk trestle has been completed, and conceptual design for the renewal of the Swan and Brett trestles is underway. This summer, ongoing structural rehabilitation of the Selkirk trestle will continue and the procurement process to engage a consultant for the detailed design of the widening and lighting of the trail will be initiated in preparation to start construction in 2025 and finish by 2028.

RECOMMENDATION

There is no recommendation. This report is for information only.

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ATTACHMENT

Appendix A: Regional Trail Widening and Lighting Project Area – Map