

**REPORT TO PARKS & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26, 2019**

SUBJECT E&N Rail Trail – Humpback Connector

ISSUE

To provide an update on the ongoing development of the E&N Rail Trail and an E&N Phase 1/Phase 2 completion celebration and grantor recognition event planned for July 2019.

BACKGROUND

In October 2006, the Capital Regional District (CRD) Board initiated a project to develop a 17 km-long new regional trail, largely within the E&N railway corridor beside the existing tracks. In 2007, due to the anticipated cost to develop the trail, a decision was made to undertake the project in a phased approach (Attachment 1). Construction was initiated in 2009.

Approximately 12 of the 17 kms are currently complete. This bike and pedestrian trail links the City of Langford, Town of View Royal, Esquimalt Nation, Songhees Nation, Township of Esquimalt and City of Victoria. The trail provides both recreation and active transportation opportunities. To date, \$20 million has been provided from federal and provincial grant programs to assist in the development of the first three phases of the trail.

Phase 1 – Completed December 2018

The initial phase was split into seven different project areas. Construction began in 2009 and was completed in 2018, creating just over 9 km of trail spread over each of the communities, as follows:

- City of Langford: nearly 2 km of new trail.
- Town of View Royal: approximately 3 km of new trail, paving of approximately 1.6 km of the E&N/Galloping Goose segment, and development of two bridges (Helmcken Road and Island Highway/4 Mile (trail and rail)).
- Esquimalt Nation: approximately 0.85 km of new trail along Hallowell Road and Admirals Road.
- Songhees Nation: approximately 0.15 km of new trail between the Songhees/Esquimalt Nation boundary and Maplebank Road.
- Township of Esquimalt: approximately 3 km of new trail from Maplebank Road to the Esquimalt/Victoria boundary by Hereward Road.
- City of Victoria: approximately 0.6 km from Esquimalt/Victoria boundary to Esquimalt Road and the development of the Hereward Road trail bridge.

The cost of developing this phase of the trail was \$18.8 million, which was covered through a mix of grants (\$15 million) and CRD funding.

Phase 2 – Completed June 2015

This phase was initiated in 2013, with construction over 2014 and 2015. This phase added 2 km of new trail in the Town of View Royal, between Island Highway/Burnside Road West and Island Highway/4 Mile Bridge and links to the existing Phase 1 trail sections on either end. Phase 2 cost \$4.3 million and was funded through a UBCM Gas Tax grant (\$4 million) and CRD funding.

Phase 3 – In Progress

Planning for the current phase began in 2018. In considering environmental aspects, privacy for neighbours, technical aspects and costs, several design options were reviewed. This trail section is unique in that it will include two underpasses.

Construction will begin by fall 2019 and is expected to be completed by the end of 2020. This 1 km section will connect existing sections of trail, creating a continuous 13 km linking all of the communities with no gaps.

Costs for Phase 3 are expected to be in the range of \$4 million and are being covered through CRD borrowing and a Bike BC grant for \$1 million.

Phase 4 – In Progress

CRD and City of Victoria staff are working together in the initial planning stage of this phase, located between Esquimalt Road and the Johnson Street Bridge in the City of Victoria.

At this time, Phase 4 is expected to be in the range of \$2 million and all costs for the CRD's portion of Phase 4 are being covered through CRD borrowing.

Phase 5 – Not Funded or Scheduled

The last segment of trail is not yet scheduled or funded. It will create approximately 3.5 km of new trail, between Jacklin Road and Humpback Road in Langford.

Future Phase – Not Funded or Scheduled

Through the Regional Trails Management Plan (2016), the CRD Board supported extending the trail to link with Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park and the Sooke Hills Wilderness Trail, which provides part of the route for The Great Trail in the CRD. The City of Langford has also noted, through its local trail planning initiative, the need for a trail along Humpback Road to connect the E&N Rail Trail – Humpback Connector with the route of The Great Trail along Irwin Road.

Since the CRD received \$19 million in grant funding toward the development of Phases 1 and 2 of the E&N Rail Trail project, a Phase 1/Phase 2 completion celebration and grantor recognition event is being planned. At present, an outdoor event tentatively scheduled for July 23 at the regional trail rest stop at Portage Park (View Royal) is being proposed.

Representatives from the federal, provincial and local governments, First Nations, the CRD Board, the Parks & Environment Committee, the grant programs/organizations, and others connected to the project, will be invited to attend. Area newspaper and TV media will also be invited.

CONCLUSION

Phases 1 and 2 of the E&N Rail Trail have been completed and approximately 12 km of the 17-km regional trail now exist. The CRD received \$19 million in grants toward the development of these first two phases. A Phase 1/Phase 2 completion celebration and grantor recognition event is being planned for late July 2019.

Work on Phase 3 and 4 is now underway and their construction is expected to be completed in 2020/2021. Additional phases will be scheduled and undertaken in the future, subject to funding availability.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Parks & Environment Committee recommend to the Capital Regional District Board:

That the E&N Rail Trail – Humpback Connector update report be received for information.

Submitted by:	Jeff Leahy, RPF, Senior Manager, Regional Parks
Concurrence:	Larisa Hutcheson, P.Eng., General Manager, Parks & Environmental Services
Concurrence:	Robert Lapham, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

CS:km

Attachment: Attachment 1 – Map: E&N Rail Trail – Humpback Connector Development Phasing Plan