

September 19, 2019

To: Members
Public Works and Infrastructure Committee

Re: Multi-Use Pathway Project – East Courtney Street, Connecting Rink Avenue to Whelan Drive

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) That Administration proceed with plans to implement a permanent multi-use pathway on the east side of Courtney Street from Rink Avenue to Whelan Drive, pending 2020 budget approval.
- 2) That all excess funding from the Northwest Link Multi-Use Pathway Canadian National Rail Crossing Project, including the *Rail Safety Improvement Grant*, be transferred to the On-Street Bikeways and Multi-Use Pathways Program to partially fund the Multi-Use Pathway Project – East Courtney Street, Connecting Rink Avenue to Whelan Drive.
- 3) That City Council Motion MN18-13 be removed from the List of Outstanding Items.
- 4) That this report be forwarded to the August 26, 2019 City Council meeting for approval.

CONCLUSION

Administration is proposing a 1.43km multi-use pathway to be constructed along Courtney Street from Rink Avenue to Whelan Drive, as shown in Appendix A. This multi-use pathway would provide a safe pedestrian and multi-modal transportation option, connecting the northwest neighbourhoods to the new school site, as well as to other areas of the city. Administration recommends that the multi-use pathway include a paved surface. The cost to implement is approximately \$700,000. The multi-use pathway connection would be designed in 2019 and constructed in 2020, pending budget approval and any major coordination issues with the pipeline companies.

BACKGROUND

At the November 11, 2018, meeting of City Council, Councillor Jason Mancinelli made the following motion (MN18-13):

‘Funding for planning a temporary pathway system running parallel to Courtney Street on the east side, connecting Rink Avenue to Whelan Street (Drive), be provided in the upcoming 2019 budget and Administration bring a report outlining its implementation to Public Works and Infrastructure Committee in Q2 of 2019’.

In preparation for this report, Administration evaluated the benefits and drawbacks of a temporary pathway as compared to a permanent pathway. To meet the service level expectations of residents that will use the multi-use pathway, Administration is recommending that it be permanent rather than temporary, as described in this report.

DISCUSSION

Current State

As shown in Appendix A, Courtney Street is a north to south two-lane arterial roadway, with a speed limit of 50km/hr. Courtney Street has a gravel road north of the intersection of Mapleford Boulevard. Courtney Street has a rural cross section and sidewalks are not present on either side. Along the west side of Courtney Street is the Rosewood Park Alliance Church, Plainsview Elementary School and St. Nicholas Elementary School, which are only accessible by Mapleford Gate. All other lands on the west side are undeveloped.

The Northwest Link Multi-Use Pathway (NW Link) is a multi-use pathway system that provides a north to south connection to the Devonian Pathway (the city's major east to west pathway system), which acts as a recreation activity route, as well as a transportation route for access to Downtown with connection to the Wascana Centre. The NW Link runs parallel to Courtney Street on the east side and terminates at Rink Avenue. The NW Link is a paved 3.66m pathway with a painted centreline.

The City of Regina (City) required the developer of Plainsview Elementary School and St. Nicholas Elementary School to install a temporary (granular surface) pathway along the east side of Courtney Street, commencing at Whelan Drive and terminating at Mapleford Gate. This section of pathway is adjacent to, but across the street from, the developer's property. The City also installed a signalized pedestrian crossing at the intersection of Mapleford Gate and Courtney Street to provide improved pedestrian access from the east side of Courtney Street, where there is residential development.

In the future, the City would also require the developer to install a paved multi-use pathway on the west side of Courtney Street in accordance with the Coopertown Neighbourhood Plan.

There is also a pipeline corridor running east to west across Courtney Street mid-way between Rink Avenue and Whelan Drive, indicated in Appendix A. The pipeline corridor contains eight pipelines controlled by three different companies. The City must work in cooperation with the pipeline companies when designing a connection to the pathway to ensure compliance is met and appropriate safety precautions are taken at the time of construction.

Administration has been in preliminary discussions with the pipelines and anticipates the City will need to enter into a crossing agreement with each company, which could affect the timeline of the multi-use pathway. The Argyle Street extension from Sangster Boulevard to Rochdale Boulevard crossed the same pipelines and it took approximately six months to reach agreements with all the pipeline companies for that project.

Proposed Project

Administration has commenced the planning for implementation of the multi-use pathway. Given the current pace of development, it is possible that the proposed pathway connection could be the only option along Courtney Street for several years, thus making a temporary pathway more permanent in nature. This warranted an evaluation of various options.

Status Quo Option

The City could opt to wait for the future development to install a permanent pathway on the west side of Courtney Street. The timing of that development is unknown; therefore, maintaining status quo could result in criticism from the public and a continued low level of service for the existing residents on the east side of Courtney Street.

Temporary Granular Option (Motion Option)

A temporary granular surface pathway would include only a pathway structure itself, with no other amenities. The order of magnitude capital cost for a temporary pathway at this location is \$380,000. The primary advantage of a granular pathway is that it has lower capital cost to implement. Typical life span of a granular pathway is dependent on maintenance. If the granular pathway is treated for weed removal and topped up with granular material on a yearly and as needed basis, the pathway can last as long as it is required; however, if maintenance is not performed regularly, then within a few years the pathway may be compromised due to shifting from plant material and soil debris.

The City's granular pathways receive summer herbicide applications, require annual shaping and extra material added in bare spots. Granular pathways do not receive winter maintenance and are not cleared of snow, which would result in a seasonal level of service reduction. This may not meet service level expectations if the intent is to provide access to the schools and the pathway may be inaccessible for three to six months out of the school year, depending on weather.

Granular pathways cost on average \$2.23/m per year for operation and maintenance. At 1.43km, the proposed pathway would have a maintenance cost of just over \$3,000 per year. The total life-cycle cost for the temporary pathway option, assuming the pathway is in place for 20 years, is the initial capital of \$380,000 plus 20 times \$3,000 for a total of \$440,000.

If the decision is to proceed with the temporary granular option, it would most likely remain after development to the west has installed a permanent multi-use pathway. This would result in higher ongoing maintenance costs or it could result in an unkempt pathway. Alternatively, the pathway would need to be removed, which would add additional costs for removal and restoration of the grass.

Permanent Paved Option (Recommended Option)

Permanent paved pathways are comprised of an asphalt surface, garbage bins with concrete pads, swing gates, which prevent automobiles from entering the pathway and way-finding towers. The estimated cost for a permanent pathway at this location is approximately \$700,000. The primary advantages of a paved pathway are improved user-experience and increased accessibility to users.

Paved pathways require little maintenance during the summer months. Some portions receive a spring sweep if they were sanded the previous winter. Paved pathways are cleared of snow in the winter by truck with a blade attachment by the City's Winter Maintenance crew. They are cleared after any accumulation of snow or if they are blown in. Paved pathways cost on average \$1.15/m per year for operation and maintenance

At 1.43km, a paved pathway would have a maintenance cost of just over \$1,500 per year. The total life-cycle cost for the permanent pathway option, assuming the pathway is in place for 20 years, is the initial capital of \$650,000 plus 20 times \$1,500 for a total of \$680,000.

The permanent paved option is Administration's recommendation. It would provide a higher level of service with year-round accessibility and is consistent with the existing connection of the NW Link. Courtney Street is prone to snow drifts during the winter months; therefore, a plowable pathway would be beneficial.

Proceeding with an asphalt pathway would fulfill two needs:

- 1) Connection of the existing pathway system.
- 2) Access to the nearby schools.

Construction of a permanent pathway on the east side would not preclude a pathway being constructed and paid for by the developer on the west side to provide service to the Coopertown neighbourhood which, at full build-out, could be home to over 30,000 residents.

Hybrid Option

There is a potential option that would be a hybrid between the City's temporary and permanent pathway standards. This would be the option to build the pathway to a paved surface with swing gates but no garbage bins or wayfinding towers. This would reduce the permanent option cost by approximately \$40,000. The primary advantage of this option is the functionality of the permanent paved option with a lower capital construction cost.

Phased Option

There is an option to install a granular pathway and pave it in the future if it is well-used or if development of Coopertown is slower than anticipated. Constructing a granular pathway with the intent of paving the pathway in the future may not meet immediate needs and could limit its use.

Administration has commenced the pre-design for the multi-use pathway connection, including utility locates, field survey and preliminary discussions with the pipeline companies and anticipates the detailed design of the pathway to be complete in Q4 of 2019. Tendering of the construction is expected in Q1 2020, with construction to start in the early part of the 2020 construction season. It is expected that the multi-use pathway would be open prior to the start of the 2020-2021 school year.

While the impetus for this multi-use pathway relates to school access, the pathway would provide a fast, convenient and safe corridor for the community when moving between neighbourhoods as part of their daily travel needs. It would also provide a new recreational and commuter opportunity for northwest Regina. The location and design of the pathway are

congruent with the policies of the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) and support the objectives related to sustainable and active transportation in *Design Regina: The Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2013-48* (OCP).

RECOMMENDATION IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

Funding for the pathway system was not included in the 2019 budget as requested through the Councilor's motion since the motion was made in November of 2018, which was too late to be incorporated into the 2019 budget.

In 2018, the City received approval for a grant for the NW Link Canadian National Rail Crossing Project. Prior to commencing the work, the City had allocated full funding to the project in order to award the contract. Administration anticipates approximately \$350,000 of excess funding from that project that could be reallocated to this project.

Additional funding for the multi-use pathway is subject to the 2020 capital budget approval, wherein the funding request of \$250,000 for the "On Street Bike Lanes and Multi-Use Pathways Program" was increased by \$278,000 to \$528,000.

Administration would tender the project with the option to remove the garbage bins and wayfinding towers if budget is sufficient for only the Hybrid Option described in this report.

In accordance with the City's *Administration of Servicing Agreement and Development Levy Agreement Policy*, 70 per cent of the funding for multi-use pathways comes from general revenue and 30 per cent comes from Servicing Agreement Fees.

Environmental Implications

Active transportation modes are important for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution. The multi-use pathway would support many active transportation modes, such as running, walking and cycling.

Policy and/or Strategic Implications

OCP:

This project is consistent with the policies contained within *Part A* of the OCP Section D3 Transportation – Goal 5 – Active Transportation, as well as Section D7 Parks, Recreation and Open Space - Goal 1 Open Space and Recreation Principles.

Open Space Management Strategy (OSMS) (2007):

As the OSMS provides theme work to coordinate and link components of Regina's open space system into a cohesive and interconnected system in order to maximize its benefits to the public, this project aligns with the OSMS.

TMP (2017):

The TMP is a comprehensive transportation policy and planning document that guides how the City will address its future transportation needs. The TMP establishes goals and policies to achieve a city-wide transportation system that is safe, affordable and compatible with all four seasons. The TMP identifies improvements and upgrades to the Multi-Use Pathway Program, the proposed connection to the NW Link would meet the policy direction of the TMP.

Other Implications

None with respect to this report.

Accessibility Implications

Administration's recommended pathway is the most accessible option as intersections with the multi-use pathway have pedestrian ramps to increase accessibility.

Communication Implications

Pending approval of this report, work will commence with the Citizen Experience Department to ensure public communication with residents and surrounding neighbourhoods.

DELEGATED AUTHORITY

The recommendations contained in this report requires City Council approval.

Respectfully submitted,



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Respectfully submitted,



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