

**DATE:** July 7, 2022

**FILE:** 5330-20/SSCP

**TO:** Chair and Members  
Sewage Commission

**FROM:** Russell Dyson  
Chief Administrative Officer

Supported by Russell Dyson  
Chief Administrative Officer

*R. Dyson*

**RE: Sewer System Conveyance Project – Traffic Management Strategy**

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### **Purpose**

To provide a summary of the proposed path forward to address traffic impacts as part of the Sewer System Conveyance Project (SSCP).

### **Recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer:**

For information purposes only.

### **Executive Summary**

Due to the extent and anticipated duration of construction for the SSCP, the project will have significant impacts to traffic throughout the course of construction. As such, traffic impacts have been identified as a key project risk and the project team has developed a number of mitigation measures looking to address and manage the traffic impacts of the project as best as possible. These include:

- Establishment of the intergovernmental Conveyance Project Traffic Mitigation Working Group: The working group includes representatives from the Town of Comox, City of Courtenay, K'ómoks First Nation and Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI). The key objective for the group is to identify projects and coordinate works as best as possible.
- Targeted stakeholder engagement: Meeting invites, presentation requests and surveys have been sent out to varying stakeholder groups to provide an overview of the project, discuss traffic impacts and solicit feedback. Engagement includes meetings with key stakeholder groups such as emergency services, BC Transit and the School District, presentations to Town and City Councils and downtown business associations, and engagement through a survey for other private utilities and stakeholders.
- Completion of a traffic management strategy, further described below, that will become a guiding document for development of the traffic management plans by the contractors for the design-build and design-bid-build construction components.

Urban Systems has been engaged to complete development of the traffic management strategy. Working with the City of Courtenay, Urban Systems has completed similar work as part of the 5<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge project and Comox Valley Regional District and City staff have met to discuss lessons learned as part of that project. Urban Systems has also supported the Comox Valley transit service in recent years and has an excellent understanding of transportation needs within the Comox Valley. The goal of the strategy is to identify the recommended lane closures and detour routes throughout that have the least traffic network impacts. The approach for the development of the strategy is summarized as follows:

- Compiling and analyzing existing traffic pattern data to understand annual, seasonal and hourly traffic distributions and patterns, including input and feedback received from stakeholders through the engagement process currently underway.
- Review of the construction impacts and expectations throughout construction, i.e. what is possible from a construction perspective.
- From the existing conditions and the construction impact expectations, a review of impacts from potential lane closures will be completed. This will include review of single lane alternating closures, full closures, and hybrid time of day directional closures and associated impacts on traffic. These impacts will also be reviewed from a time of day and time of year perspective.
- Options to prioritize and/or designate portions of roadways for transit and non-vehicular transportation will be considered as part of the modelling.
- Based on the findings from the traffic analysis, feedback from stakeholders and lane closure scenarios, potential detour routes or lane closure options will be identified for vehicles, transit, pedestrians, cyclists and major truck movements.

The draft traffic management strategy will outline the proposed traffic management strategies for each portion of the project that result in the least disturbance. The strategy will be presented to the Sewage Commission in September. For the design-build contract, the final strategy will be provided via addendum during the request for proposal (RFP) process that will begin in August, which will provide sufficient time for the design-build teams to incorporate the strategy into their proposals before closing of the RFP. For the design-bid-build, the strategy will be included as part of the tender package. This means that both the design-bid and the design-bid-build contractors will be guided and constrained by the same strategy document when developing their traffic management plans.

The Comox Valley Regional District understands that keeping the public properly informed about traffic impacts will be key to managing traffic flows during the project and to maintaining public trust in the process. The project team is committed to keeping the public informed about this project and is starting the recruitment process for a term position to lead the development and execution of a public engagement strategy. A dedicated role for the Sewer Conveyance Project will ensure open and consistent communications with partners, stakeholders and the public leading up to and during project construction.

Open houses are planned for early November to present the project to the community and share information about traffic management planning and construction impacts. These sessions will review the route, share the traffic strategy and explain how stakeholder input will be reflected in the construction planning process. Public sessions will be communicated via direct mail to homes and businesses along the route and through a comprehensive advertising plan for other Comox Valley residents, understanding that this construction will have a valley-wide impact.

In summary, next steps include:

- **June 20-July 8:** Survey live and meetings with stakeholders held.
- **End of July:** Summary of feedback provided to Urban Systems, who will develop the traffic management strategy.
- **September 2022:** Traffic management strategy inputted into the procurement processes.
- **Later October 2022:** Advertising campaign for pre-construction planning community open houses and webinars.
- **November 2022:** Community open houses and webinars to communicate construction impacts and traffic management strategy. Feedback to be provided to contractors for development of traffic management plans.

- **Winter 2023:** Public information campaign developed and launched.
- **Spring 2023:** Construction begins.
- **Spring 2023 to project completion:** Public information campaign ongoing.

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Attachments: Appendix A – Conveyance Project Partners and Stakeholders

**Conveyance Project Partners and Stakeholders**

- Province of British Columbia Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
- K'ómoks First Nation
- Town of Comox
- City of Courtenay
- Comox Business Improvement Association
- BC Transit
- The Downtown Courtenay Business Improvement Association
- Comox Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Village of Cumberland
- CFB 19 Wing Comox
- Courtenay Fire Department
- Comox Fire Department
- RCMP
- BC Ambulance
- North Island College
- School District 71
- Comox Valley Cycling Coalition
- Comox Valley Accessibility Committee (Comox Valley Social Planning Society)
- BC Hydro
- Fortis BC
- Shaw
- Telus
- Berwick House
- The Views at St. Joseph's
- Comox Valley Harbour Authority
- Comox Municipal Marina
- Comox Valley Marina
- Harbour Air Seaplanes