



REPORT TO COUNCIL

DATE: November 5, 2024

REPORT: DEV 24-059

FROM: Mark Allen, Director of Development Services

FILE: 5330-20/24-06

SUBJECT: Active Transportation Options for Princess Street Re-design

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council approve Option 3: separated multi-use pathway (MUP) with one lane on-street parking, for Princess Street re-design between Fulton Ave - Main St MUP and Sixteenth Avenue.

BACKGROUND:

In February 2024, the Town awarded Contract 2024-06 Princess Street Upgrades Design to WSP Canada Inc. engineering consultants. At the time, the design concept assumed the Town's standard residential area/local road cross-section would be built along Princess Street between Fulton Walkway and Fifteenth Avenue.

As design progressed, it became apparent the required full reconstruction of Princess Street presented an opportunity to consider adding new Active Transportation elements to the proposed design.

On September 10th, 2024, Development Services received Approval in Principle from Council to proceed with a Public Engagement process to gather feedback from residents, property owners, and other stakeholders on four possible road cross-section configurations. Refer to **Attachment 1** for descriptions of the 4 options.

The public engagement process was undertaken between September 10th, 2024, and October 22nd. The process included direct letters sent to 26 Princess Street residents, website and newspaper advertisements, and a 2-hour public engagement session at Town hall. Participants had the opportunity to review four options, including the Town's standard road detail.

CAO ☐	Dir/FIN ☐	PCSO ☐	Agenda Date: November 12 th , 2024
Dir/CS ☐	Dir/DS ☐	EC/DEV ☐	Closed Agenda Date:
EXEC. ASST ☐	Dir/OPS ☐	REC ☐	Agenda Placement: Staff 'A'
HR ☐	Dir/COM ☐	BLDG INS ☐	Other:
MAYOR ☐	AIRPORT ☐	PLANNER ☐	
COUNCIL ☐	FIRE ☐	WEBSITE ☐	

The outcome of the engagement indicated that there is strong public support for Option 3, preferred by over half of participants. (See **Attachment 1**, pages 5 and 8)

WSP attended the October 22nd, 2024, Regular Meeting as a delegation and presented to Town Council the 4 options with the results of the public engagement.

In this report, staff present a final summary of the feedback received and recommends that Council approve the Option 3 cross-section as the basis for the Princess Street re-design and construction cost estimating for consideration during 2025 budget discussions. In addition, approval is requested to extend the current project extents from Fifteenth Avenue to Sixteenth Avenue.

DISCUSSION:

Summary of Public Feedback:

- A total of 46 respondents participated in the feedback process.
- Option 3 emerged as the most popular, receiving support from 24 respondents. An additional four respondents expressed preference for either Option 3 or 4, bringing total support for the option to 28 out of 46.

Option 3 offers a compromise between maintaining some on-street parking and adding a safer, separated multi-use pathway for pedestrians and cyclists. It was favored for its potential to support active transportation without significantly impacting parking availability.

- Option 4, supported by 8 respondents, was mainly favored for its focus on safety through reduced vehicle-pedestrian interactions. This option does not balance parking needs as well as Option 3.

Option 4 respondents show support for MUP construction, bringing total support for a MUP (Options 3 and 4 combined) to 36 out of 46.

- Option 1, the Town's standard local/residential road detail, was supported by 5 respondents, who emphasized the need for on-street parking as opposed to bike lanes. These respondents expressed opposition to bike lanes citing low cyclist numbers and/or concerns about funding priorities.
- An additional 5 respondents had no preference stated. They may have been aligned with Option 1 or wished to see the funds diverted elsewhere.

Recurring Themes in the Feedback:

1. Balance Parking and Active Transportation:
 - Residents valued Option 3 for preserving parking while adding a safe path for non-motorized road users. Parking concerns were particularly important for community services, such as churches and daycares.
2. Focus on Safety and Accessibility:

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- There was significant support for improving safety, particularly for children and cyclists. A common theme was the desire for physical separation between vehicles and pedestrians/cyclists.
3. Extension to Sixteenth Avenue:
- Multiple respondents advocated for extending the proposed improvements to Sixteenth Avenue, and even adjacent to Ranger Park, to enhance the Town's active transportation network.
 - The concrete sidewalk between Fifteenth Avenue and Sixteenth Avenue was replaced in 2019; therefore, that block was not included in the original project scope -- thus the request to approve extending the project to Sixteenth Avenue as a MUP by replacing the sidewalk.
4. Environmental and Aesthetic Benefits:
- Respondents emphasized the importance of tree preservation and enhancing the aesthetics of Princess Street. Some Princess Street property owners supported Option 3 only on the condition that no trees would be cut down.
5. Active Transportation Advocacy:
- Residents highlighted the health and environmental benefits of active transportation, noting the benefits of reduced emissions and better air quality.

The survey results are illustrated graphically in **Attachment 1 page 8**.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Option 3 has broad support and provides a balance of active transportation infrastructure with the need to maintain parking availability for residents and visitors. Given the strong community support for a MUP, it presents an excellent choice for the Princess Street project. Construction of a Princess Street multi-use path will further enhance the connectivity of the Town's active transportation network in alignment with Smithers' Active Transportation Plan.

Moreover, extending the project to Sixteenth Avenue would provide a complete route connecting the Fulton-Main MUP with Ranger Park.

SUMMARY OF NEXT STEPS:

1. Final review and adjustments to cross-section Option 3: MUP with one lane of street parking. (Late Fall, 2024)
2. Undertake survey and design of section between Sixteenth Avenue and Fifteenth Avenue. (Late Fall, 2024).
3. Commence bylaw amendment process – revised road cross-section detail amended to Bylaw 1800. (Winter, 2025).
4. Attain 2025 capital budget approval (Winter 2024-25)

5. Prepare and issue construction tender. (Winter to Spring, 2025).
6. Finalize Bylaw 1800 amendment. (Early Spring, 2025).
7. Award construction contract. (Award dependent on completion of Step 5).
8. Amend Active Transportation Plan to include Princess Street MUP. (Spring or Summer, 2025).

RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS:

Design revisions to incorporate Option 3 Active Transportation elements and to extend the proposed MUP path to Sixteenth Avenue are anticipated to add the following costs to the current project:

- Design changes to Fifteenth Avenue: \$5,959.00 (quote)
- Extend topographic survey to Sixteenth Avenue: \$3,000 (approximate)
- Extend design scope to Sixteenth Avenue: \$5,000 (approximate)

The second two values are approximate based on extrapolation from the Town's current Agreement with WSP. The Development Services Contracted Services operating budget can accommodate the additional design fees.

A detailed 2025 construction cost estimate will be calculated, including both asphalt and concrete options. If the MUP is constructed in asphalt, the additional cost (over and above standard cross-section construction) is expected to be marginal, whereas a concrete MUP would add approximately \$180,000.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:

- Bylaw No. 1800 Subdivision Servicing and Development Standards
- Active Transportation Plan (2019).

ATTACHMENTS:

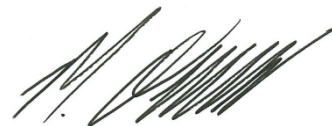
1. WSP Slide Package

Respectfully submitted:



Mark Allen, P.Eng.
Director of Development Services

Approved for Submission:



Michael Dewar
Chief Administrative Officer

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