



City of Port Moody

Report/Recommendation to Council

Date: September 9, 2022
Submitted by: Community Services Department – Environment Division
Subject: Grant Application to Infrastructure Canada for Lower Suter Brook Creek Enhancement

Purpose

To seek Council approval for a project proposal and submission of a grant application to Infrastructure Canada's Natural Infrastructure Fund to support the enhancement of City-owned natural assets in Lower Suter Brook Creek.

Recommended Resolution(s)

THAT the Lower Suter Brook Creek Enhancement project proposal be approved and that the project be designated as Priority Level 3 in the Council Strategic Plan; AND

THAT staff apply to Infrastructure Canada's Natural Infrastructure Fund to seek funding to support this project as recommended in the report dated September 9, 2022 from Community Services Department regarding Grant Application to Infrastructure Canada for Lower Suter Brook Creek Enhancement.

Background

Infrastructure Canada's \$200 million Natural Infrastructure Fund (NIF) Small Projects Stream was established to build awareness of the value of natural infrastructure and deliver benefits to communities by improving access to nature, providing cleaner air and water, protecting and preserving biodiversity and wildlife habitats, and mitigating carbon emissions. Infrastructure projects that involve the creation, expansion, restoration, improvement, or enhancement of tangible natural or hybrid infrastructure are eligible. Projects must be primarily for public use and/or benefit, and reflect at least one of the following categories:

- Planting and restoring green space;
- Construction or restoration of naturalized water retention or detention systems;
- Naturalized water diversion and infiltration; or
- Natural or hybrid infrastructure that supports biodiversity and connectivity.

The NIF will provide financial support up to 80% of total eligible costs. The deadline for application is September 27, 2022. Projects must be completed by December 31, 2024.

Discussion

Although Suter Brook Creek is a highly urbanized watershed bisected by major transportation corridors, the watercourse is largely open, flows through intact riparian forest and retains a semi-natural estuary – a rarity among Burrard Inlet streams. Greenway protection and habitat compensation was achieved through adjacent development at Suterbrook Village, and the mouth of the creek is protected as park land.

Lower Suter Brook Creek, between Shoreline Park and Murray Street (part of which was daylighted in the 1990s), is a pocket of green space immediately adjacent to the civic complex that provides valuable fish and wildlife habitat, ecosystem services such as stormwater detention and urban cooling, and trail connections with access to nature for residents living in high density areas. An average of 2,000 people per week are estimated to use this trail. Habitat improvement work in this area was proposed during the new Fire Hall construction but never implemented. Minor invasive plant removal, planting and trail maintenance are included in operational work plans, but major improvements have been limited.

In support of goals to restore/strengthen the natural environment under the Climate Action Plan, a project was included in the 2021 Capital Plan to consider enhancement opportunities in this high biodiversity area, and to develop an overall plan that would improve ecological resiliency in light of climate change impacts and balance all needs and uses. A conceptual plan has been drafted based on a technical assessment by City consultant KWL of current conditions and limiting factors, and early stakeholder discussions (staff units and stewardship groups).

Proposed works would:

- a) enhance ecosystem processes, complexity and connectivity in instream, wetland, riparian and forest habitat;
- b) strengthen resilience of natural infrastructure (e.g., impacts from climate change, increased users, etc.); and
- c) improve pedestrian connections and access to nature around the civic complex.

Details are provided in the project proposal (**Attachment 1**) and final draft of the conceptual plan (**Attachment 2**). Works align with previous concepts proposed for this area and will not affect any potential changes in land use on adjacent City-owned lands in the future.

Staff recommend applying to the NIF Small Projects Stream given the significant financial contribution available (80% of eligible costs). Next steps for this project will be the development of detailed designs and stakeholder input and consultation, which are eligible costs under the grant.

Other Option(s)

THAT the report dated September 9, 2022 from the Community Services Department – Environment Division regarding Grant Application to Infrastructure Canada for Lower Suter Brook Creek Enhancement be received for information.

Financial Implications

A budget of \$225,000 for developing detailed designs will be requested in the 2023 Capital Plan. Project costs are conservatively estimated to range from \$750,000 up to \$1.3 million; detailed designs are expected to refine these estimates. If the NIF grant is successful, the 2023

Capital Plan budget would be used as the City's contribution to the funding. If the NIF grant is not successful, additional grant opportunities will be sought to support this work in a phased approach.

Communications and Civic Engagement Initiatives

Additional consultation with stakeholders and interested parties will be done during the development of the detailed design for this project.

Council Strategic Plan Objectives

This project supports the Council Strategic Plan Objectives for Environmental Leadership – Expand and make the most of our parks and green spaces and design them to create positive and diverse experiences throughout the community; maintain and enhance Port Moody's natural and built assets while reducing the impact on our planet

Implementation of the Climate Action Plan was ranked as a Level 1 priority in the Council Strategic Plan. This project will help support the Climate Action Plan goal to restore and strengthen our natural environment so that ecosystems and species are more likely to adapt to the effects of a warming climate and help buffer the impacts, and the Phase 1 Climate.

Attachment(s)

1. Council Strategic Plan Project Proposal – Lower Suter Brook Creek Enhancement
2. Lower Suter Brook Conceptual Enhancement Plan, final draft (KWL)

Report Author

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Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Grant Application to Infrastructure Canada for Lower Suter Brook Creek Enhancement.docx
Attachments:	- Attachment 1 Council Strategic Plan Project Proposal Lower Suter Brook Creek Enhancement.docx - Attachment 2 Lower Suter Brook Conceptual Enhancement Plan final draft (KWL).pdf
Final Approval Date:	Sep 13, 2022

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Julie Pavey-Tomlinson, Director of Environment and Parks - Sep 11, 2022 - 10:37 AM

Anna Mathewson, General Manager of Community Services - Sep 12, 2022 - 8:57 AM

Rosemary Lodge, Manager of Communications and Engagement - Sep 12, 2022 - 11:27 AM

Paul Rockwood, General Manager of Finance and Technology - Sep 12, 2022 - 2:51 PM

Tim Savoie, City Manager - Sep 13, 2022 - 2:11 PM