

REQUEST FOR DECISION 030-2023

Title: ICIP Application: Active Transportation Network

Date: 2023-06-14

Departments: Planning & Development, Engineering & Public Works



SUMMARY

ICIP APPLICATION: Active Transportation (AT) Network Implementation

The Town has been successful in submitting an Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) application for the implementation of our active transportation network. The Green Infrastructure – Climate Mitigation sub-stream of the ICIP program focuses on accelerating emissions reductions, consistent with the Town’s Climate Action Plan. Although the formal announcement for this funding has not yet taken place, the Town has confirmed with our funding partners that we can take steps with Council to begin moving this project forward.

The Town’s existing approved 2023/24 budget for AT (\$50,000) can now be leveraged to a total 2023/24 project spending of \$187,500 without any negative impact on the overall capital budget. The additional \$137,500 would come from the ICIP grant program as contemplated through the funding opportunity approved by Council in June 2022 (RFD 036-2022).

Under this program, the Federal Government contributes 40% funding and the Province contributes 33.33% funding towards approved projects, leaving 26.67% for the individual municipal units.

Staff are now seeking Council’s approval to move forward with approval of the spending authority for the 2023/24 budget year as it did not originally include the impact of the grant funding. The balance of the AT Projects will be incorporated into the details of next year’s Ten Year Capital Investment Plan as part of the 2024/25 budget. Overall, this grant provides the opportunity to implement approximately \$3,000,000 in AT investment (26% from us, 74% from the Province and Federal Government).

A presentation outlining the approved projects is attached to this report for more information.

DRAFT MOTION:

That Council;

- Approve an amended 2023/24 AT project spending level of \$187,500 with the increased spending (\$137,500 more than approved budget of \$50,000 in Year 1) to be funded by way of the ICIP grant program
- Direct staff to incorporate the remaining program spending into the 2024/25 ten year capital improvement plan as part of the 2024/25 budget process.

REQUEST FOR DECISION 030-2023

Title: ICIP Application: Active Transportation Network

Date: 2023-06-14

Departments: Planning & Development, Engineering & Public Works



CAO COMMENTS

The CAO supports the recommendations of staff.

1) LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

- Municipal Government Act

2) STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommend that Council approve the motions as outlined.

1) REFERENCES AND ATTACHMENTS

1. AT Network Investment Strategy (May 2022)
2. RFD 036-2022

2) DISCUSSION

Background

In 2020, Council directed Staff to bring forward meaningful active transportation (AT) improvements that could be integrated into our budget process. In April of 2021 this grant opportunity was presented to Council – outlining the Active Transportation network that Staff had been working on since 2020 and building on the 2015 AT plan by WSP Engineering (see attached for more context). At the time, it was determined our readiness was not where it needed to be. In June of 2021, Staff brought an information report to Council outlining the ongoing network analysis, costing, and functional design that was taking place - supported by a grant from the Province to improve our investment readiness. In June of 2022, RFD 036-2022 outlined the ask, and Council passed the following motion to move forward formally with our application:

That Council approves applying for the Investing in Canada Infrastructure (ICIP) and if that if the ICIP application is to be successful, the Town of Wolfville:

- supports the ICIP-CCM application and commits to the municipal contributions for the outlined projects (26.67%)
- finances the total project costs upfront (including any borrowing required and submits claims throughout the year)
- commits to any land purchases or easements to implement the project (these costs are not eligible under the ICIP program)

REQUEST FOR DECISION 030-2023

Title: ICIP Application: Active Transportation Network

Date: 2023-06-14

Departments: Planning & Development, Engineering & Public Works



The attached AT Network Investment Strategy has accompanied our application and has been presented to Council in the past (through RFD 036-2022). It provides an overview of the approved projects.

The projects must be completed by 2027. Staff are working on a more detailed, multi-year work-plan (see all projects in the attached) but for year 1, Staff are working on executing:

- Harvest Moon Trail from Harbourside to Farmer's Market:** Refurbished multi-use path on existing trail corridor, 470m long by 3.2m wide of new asphalt surface.
- Highland to Harvest Moon Trail** –Multi-use connector path, 130m long by 3m wide section and approximately 100m of paint, signage, and surface refurbishment.
- Front St & Harbourside:** New 40m long 2m wide concrete sidewalk and associated trail connecting area at crossing.

The above scope includes engaging one of our standing offer engineering consultants for detailed design and tender package preparation.

3) FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The approved 2023/24 Budget included \$50,000 towards the AT Plan, as part of a multi-year \$800,000 allocation to improve AT service in Town. With the successful application for ICIP funding, these dollars can now be leveraged to more than \$3 million in spending.

For 2023/24, the grant effectively provides the Town the opportunity to spend up to \$187,500 this year without any additional Town resources (i.e. use of reserves or debt). The ICIP grant will come from the grant program.

Staff require Council approval to increase the 2023/24 spending up to the \$187,500.

Staff will also begin working on incorporating the increased scope of work afforded by the grant, into the 2024/25 budget process.

4) REFERENCES TO COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN AND TOWN REPORTS

The attached AT Network Investment Strategy outlines relevant policy and strategy.

This application supports the 2021-2025 Council Strategic Plan in the following areas:

- Economic sector growth
- Climate action

REQUEST FOR DECISION 030-2023

Title: ICIP Application: Active Transportation Network

Date: 2023-06-14

Departments: Planning & Development, Engineering & Public Works



- Environmental protection

5) COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS

It should be noted that no formal communication to the public will be made on this initiative (aside from this RFD being in the public domain) until the official funding announcement is made.

With tremendous support from the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program, the Town will be developing an Active Transportation Network throughout the community.

As we develop the physical infrastructure to get people safely moving with their own power, to get from one place to another, we will also need to socialize the significant benefits of active transportation.

Active transportation provides health, social, environmental, and economic benefits. It will also help the Town of Wolfville reduce frustrating traffic congestion and harmful greenhouse gas emissions.

A Wolfville Blooms page is being built to engage the community, providing ways to message out to network users while also collecting feedback from stakeholders. This will help community members feel like they have a role to play in developing the new network that will connect people to resources in a novel way.

The Blooms page is also a starting point for developing a culture of activity around the new infrastructure.

With Wolfville Blooms as the communications and engagement hub for this project, we will also use our traditional channels (web and social) to increase awareness and push digital users to the site.

6) ALTERNATIVES

No real alternatives as Council previously committed to moving forward with the grant application with the view of implementing the AT network as presented.