



To: Mayor and Council

From: W. Troy Dunlop, Director of Public Works and Utilities

Date: October 22, 2020

Committee of the Whole Date: October 26, 2020

Title: Connecting Links Program Intake 6 2021/2022 –Project Selection

For Direction

For Information

For Adoption

Attachment _ pages

Recommendation:

THAT Council of the Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls approve Option 1 – Beckwith Street Renewal Phase 2 (Russell to Elmsley) as the priority for funding under the Province’s Connecting Links Program (2021 - 2022);

AND THAT Council authorize the CAO to submit an application to the Ministry of Transportation for funding for all eligible works estimated at \$2,105,964 (net of HST).

AND FURTHERMORE THAT the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls pass a by-law supporting the referenced application under the Connecting Links Program (2021 - 2022).

Purpose: The purpose of this report is to obtain support from Town Council for project selection for funding consideration under intake 6 of the MTO Connecting Links Program 2021/2022.

Background: On August 14th, 2020, the Ministry of Transportation announced the launch of the next intake of the Connecting Links Program. This program includes \$30M in funding support for over 350km of roads and 70 bridges along connecting links in 77 municipalities across Ontario. The intent of this program is to support municipalities with the construction and repair of roads and bridges on connecting links. Eligible costs may include aspects such as: environmental assessments, detailed design, construction, and contract administration activities in support of the renewal, rehabilitation and replacement of connecting link infrastructure.

Funding under the program will be considered for up to 90% of total eligible project costs. The maximum amount of funding for any single project will otherwise be capped at \$3 million for roads projects and \$5 million for bridge projects. All projects included in the program must be substantially complete on or before December 31, 2023. Final reporting on the projects must also take place on or before March 8th, 2024.

Applications must be submitted to the province on or before the deadline of November 6th, 2020. Final funding announcements are otherwise expected to be released in the first quarter of 2021. Once successful applicants have been notified, they may then begin tendering processes and start incurring project costs effective April 1, 2021. All successful municipalities must also award the first contract against the grant on or before June 30th, 2021.

Analysis and Options: In order to be eligible for funding, the municipality must have an approved asset management plan (AMP), a connecting link maintenance plan/strategy, and a by-law passed by Council supporting the application. Projects submitted for consideration under the program must furthermore align with the community's priorities as identified within the comprehensive asset management strategy.

When reviewing project eligibility locally, there are currently two priority areas of investment identified on the Connecting Link in the near term (1-5 years). A review of each of the items are included below:

Option 1 - Lombard / Abbott Intersection Modifications – The Lombard / Abbott signalized intersection project would include the rehabilitation of the intersection to include new traffic signal lights and hardware, LED lighting, accessibility upgrades and improved truck turning movements. The upgrades would also include the construction of a new southbound auxiliary right turn lane on Abbott Street that would serve traffic westbound turning onto Lombard Street. Excavation activities would be minimal and would be limited to the relocation of catchbasins and new curb lines. The majority of pavement on the intersection would be milled and paved with two lifts (total 120mm) of performance graded asphalts. Milling and paving efforts would also extend two blocks up Lombard Street to Ferrara Drive. Sidewalk upgrades and relocations associated with accessibility upgrades at the signals would be grant eligible, however sidewalk upgrades outside of the intersection would not.

The completion of the Lombard / Abbott Intersection project has been delayed in 2020 due to a combination of factors that include the impact of the lock downs (pandemic) along with scope changes arising from the acquisition of 54 Lombard Street. Under the terms of the Connecting Link Program, the construction and contract administration costs for this intersection would only be eligible if the works are tendered after April 1st and are completed within the program timelines. The estimated value of eligible construction works would be \$600,000 and the corresponding grant eligibility (90%) would be \$540,000. These numbers also factor in the non-recoverable portion of the HST.

Option 2 – Construction of Phase 2 Beckwith Street Renewal (Russell to Elmsley) – Option 2 would involve the submission of an application for the construction and contract administration costs for the Phase 2 Beckwith Street Renewal project. Although future road works, signalization and road drainage fit program eligibility, the municipality does not have detailed designs complete at this time. Morrison Hershfield is currently working on the project designs for these components and their assignment is partially funded with \$98,178 under the previous round (Intake 5 - 2020/2021). These design works are expected to be complete by end of March in 2021.

Class D estimates for the Phase 2 project have been developed based with consideration for the pre-engineering work for Phase 1 project along with the known costs incurred in the Phase 1 project nearing completion. The forecasted costs of eligible engineering and construction works would be \$2,105,964 and the corresponding grant eligibility (90%) would be \$1,895,367. These numbers also factor in the non-recoverable portion of the HST.

NOTE: This estimate does not include non-eligible components such as water, sanitary sewers, sidewalks, cycle tracks, landscaping elements or illumination outside of signalized intersections.

Based on the above findings it is staff's recommendation that the Town proceed with Option 2 – Construction of Phase 2 Beckwith Street Renewal under the 2021/2022 Connecting Links Program. This option is otherwise fully aligned with the 2019-2022 Strategic Plan. If Council supports this Option it is important to understand that the subject works would likely be initiated in winter of 2021/2022 to advance the underground utility program outside of peak seasons (traffic/tourism).

Budget/Financial Implications: The estimated cost of eligible construction work in the second phase of the downtown core would be \$2,105,964 (net of HST). If the Town were to be successful in the application, up to 90% of this amount, or \$1,895,367 would be funded by the province. The remaining balance of \$210,597 would be funded by the municipality.

Links to Strategic Plan:

Strategic Priority # 3 – Transportation Networks

Initiative 3.7 – Complete Beckwith Street Redevelopment – Phase 2

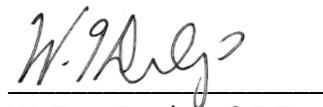
Consultations: Engineering Technologist and Treasurer.

Existing Policy:

- Asset Management Plan
- Strategic Plan 2019-2022

Notes/Action (space for Council Member's notes):

Respectfully Submitted:



W. Troy Dunlop, C.E.T.
Director of Public Works and Utilities

Approved for agenda by:

Malcolm Morris, CMO
CAO