



The Corporation of the City of Courtenay

# Briefing Note

**To:** Council

**File No.:** 5335-20

**From:** Director of Infrastructure and Environmental Engineering Services **Date:** July 16, 2025

**Subject:** Braidwood Road infrastructure upgrades /Ryan Road Sidewalk Project Update

## PURPOSE:

The purpose of this staff report is to update Council on the current status of two key infrastructure projects: the Ryan Road pedestrian improvements and the Braidwood Road infrastructure upgrades. This update provides an overview of each project's scope and design progress, outlines the intent to combine both initiatives into a single construction tender to enhance delivery efficiency and coordination, and summarizes the associated financial implications.

## BACKGROUND:

Ryan Road and Braidwood Road are both identified as high-priority transportation corridors in the City of Courtenay's Transportation Master Plan and Cycling Network Plan, supporting the City's commitment to active transportation principles.

- Ryan Road pedestrian improvements: The project addresses a 400-metre pedestrian gap on the north side of Ryan Road between Sandwich Road and Back Road. A concept design was completed in April 2024, which includes a protected bike lane, floating bus stop, drainage improvements, and boulevard enhancements.
- Braidwood Road upgrades: This corridor spans from Back Road to the Island Highway and features full roadway and utility reconstruction. The design for this project was completed in 2021 but never advanced to construction. The design includes upgrades to water, storm, and sanitary infrastructure alongside transportation, drainage, and streetscape improvements.

The Ryan Road Sidewalk project originally was designed to improve pedestrian safety by adding a sidewalk between Back Road and Sandwich Road and an expanded bus pull-out. At the October 25th, 2021 Council meeting, Council resolved the following:

*"THAT based on the October 25th, 2021 staff report "Ryan Road Sidewalk (Back Road to Sandwich Road) Project Update" Council approve OPTION 1 and direct staff to:*

- 1. Advance permitting in 2021, supporting the design of a sidewalk and expanded bus pull-out, based on MoTI's [Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure] feedback.*
- 2. Pending budget and funding approval, through the 2022-2026 financial planning process, proceed into detailed design and construction in 2022.*

## DISCUSSION:

### Ryan Road Sidewalk:

The Ryan Road Pedestrian Improvements project addresses a critical 400-metre gap in pedestrian and cycling infrastructure on the north side of Ryan Road, between Sandwich Road and Back Road. This section of Ryan Road is a four-lane arterial with high vehicle volumes and limited pedestrian amenities—particularly on the

north side, where there is currently no sidewalk, and pedestrians walk adjacent to open ditches and traffic lanes.

The Transportation Master Plan and Cycling Network Plan identify this corridor as a priority for investment, citing its role in connecting residential neighbourhoods to transit routes, schools, and commercial areas. In addition, the OCP (2022) designates Ryan Road as a key east-west spine for active transportation connectivity.

In April 2024, ISL Engineering completed a concept design that proposes the following improvements:

- A 2.0 metre concrete sidewalk on the north side of Ryan Road to fill the missing pedestrian link.
- A 1.8 metre protected cycling lane designed to physically separate cyclists from vehicular traffic, improving comfort and safety.
- A 0.7 metre utility strip or boulevard buffer, which enhances separation and may include signage or low landscaping.
- A floating transit stop, located mid-block, designed to meet universal accessibility standards and accommodate existing BC Transit service.
- Storm drainage improvements, including ditch infill, and installation of new storm mains, manholes, and catch basins to manage surface runoff and enhance long-term resilience.
- Minor utility adjustments, such as relocation of existing gas infrastructure, streetlights, and signage to accommodate the new active transportation corridor.

The proposed design was shared with the Ministry of Transportation and Transit (MOTT) in May of 2024 and comments were received in September of 2024 that required additional correspondence and meetings with MOTT staff. A meeting was held in February of 2025 to discuss the project further. In late April, 2025, a response was received from MOTT stating they are generally supportive of cycling infrastructure in this corridor. A follow up meeting is planned with MOTT once design restarts to discuss further approvals and permitting.

The Ryan Road Sidewalk project originally approved by the Council on October 25, 2021, was designed to improve pedestrian safety by adding a sidewalk and an expanded bus pull-out based on feedback from the Ministry of Transportation and Transit. Following Council's approval, community feedback highlighted a strong demand for incorporating a bike lane to promote safer and more comprehensive active transportation. Additionally, the 2023 Cycling Network Plan update which has been endorsed by Council, identifies the long term build out for this corridor as a Protected Bike Lane - AAA Facility. In response, the concept design scope was expanded to include a protected bike lane adjacent to the sidewalk.

The Class D cost estimate for this work is \$1.98 million (2024 dollars), inclusive of a 40% contingency and 10% engineering allowance. Design is currently at the conceptual stage and is proposed to be advanced to detailed design as part of the combined contract, pending direction from Council.

This project addresses both safety and accessibility concerns on a high-volume corridor and is expected to deliver immediate benefits for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users once completed.

### **Braidwood Road**

The Braidwood Road project includes the full renewal and redesign of the corridor between Back Road and the Island Highway. Braidwood Road functions as a local collector serving a mix of multi-family residential housing, commercial areas, and community amenities. The corridor has long-standing deficiencies in both underground utilities and active transportation infrastructure. The project was taken to 100% detailed design in 2021, with final documentation to be completed prior to tendering.

This project was initiated based on priorities identified through the City's infrastructure planning program, which identified the existing water, sanitary, and storm systems as nearing end-of-life and in need of capacity upgrades—particularly for fire flow and climate resilience.

- The scope includes full roadway reconstruction and complete utility replacement:
  - Watermain upgrades to address capacity and fire flow deficiencies identified in the City's Water Master Plan.
  - Full sanitary sewer reconstruction, including new mains, manholes, and service laterals.
  - Stormwater system renewal with new mains and catch basins to improve drainage performance.
- Surface-level transportation and streetscape improvements include:
  - Cycling facilities coordinated with the Cycling Network Plan.
  - Curb extensions at intersections for traffic calming and pedestrian safety.
  - Landscaped boulevards, street trees, and enhanced intersection geometry at Braidwood and Back Road.

The original design was finalized in 2022, prior to several significant policy changes that directly affect land use and servicing assumptions. Since that time, both the City of Courtenay and the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) have advanced regional planning initiatives to guide coordinated growth, housing, and infrastructure delivery across the region. In parallel, the City's Official Community Plan (OCP) has been updated, introducing new growth management priorities and revised transportation and land use objectives. More notably, recent provincial legislation enabling small-scale multi-unit housing (SSMUH) across the City has been introduced. This change is expected to increase population density and utility demand in the project area, requiring a re-evaluation of underground infrastructure capacity by both the City and CVRD, curbside uses, and active transportation elements to ensure the corridor can support increased demands.

A key component of this project is the upsizing of the water main along Braidwood Road to support future development, including the supportive housing at 925 Braidwood. The upgraded main is required to meet fire flow requirements for the proposed facility and will also result in a significant improvement in firefighting capacity for existing properties along the corridor. Additionally, servicing and access considerations for 925 Braidwood will be incorporated into the detailed design to ensure long-term viability and performance of the corridor's infrastructure.

### **Combined Delivery Approach**

To maximize efficiency and ensure construction occurs in a coordinated effort, the Ryan Road improvements and Braidwood Road projects design will be delivered through a single contract for professional consulting services. The intent of this combined procurement is to:

- Update and finalize detailed designs for both corridors;
- Prepare a consolidated, tender-ready construction package; and
- Facilitate construction to be completed in 2026, in support of 925 Braidwood servicing requirements.

This integrated approach offers several key advantages:

- Promotes consistency in design standards across two adjacent and functionally related corridors;
- Improves project management efficiency by reducing administrative overhead and consultant duplication;

- Enables coordinated construction staging and traffic management;
- Supports cost-effective procurement and mobilization, improving overall value to the City.

By bundling the projects under a single contract, the City can streamline the capital delivery process while aligning both initiatives with broader transportation, infrastructure, and asset management strategies.

#### **POLICY ANALYSIS:**

The Ryan Road and Braidwood Road upgrades strongly align with the City of Courtenay's 2022 Official Community Plan (OCP), advancing strategic goals in transportation, infrastructure renewal, and compact growth.

##### **1. Streets & Transportation – Functional, Low-Carbon Mobility**

- Projects support OCP goals to increase active transportation to 30% of all trips by 2030.
- Integrated design includes bike lanes, sidewalks, and improved transit stops, in line with ST 4, ST 5, ST 6, and ST 8(c).
- Ryan Road improvements enhance school travel safety; both corridors fill critical active transportation gaps identified in the Transportation Master Plan.

##### **3. Growth Management & Livability**

- Align with LU 2 and LU 3 by supporting infill and higher-density development in East Courtenay.
- Enhanced multimodal access fosters the 10-minute neighbourhood model, improving connections to schools, shops, and transit.

The Ryan Road pedestrian improvements and Braidwood Road upgrades align with several Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) policy goals, particularly those promoting compact growth, integrated transportation systems, infrastructure efficiency, and climate adaptation.

##### **Goal 4 – Multi-Modal Transportation**

- RGS Intent: Build an accessible, efficient transportation network.
- Project Alignment:
  - Projects incorporate protected bike lanes, barrier-free sidewalks, and transit stops, advancing Objective 4-B.
  - Support for transit-oriented design reflects Policy 4A-1, integrating land use with mobility planning.

##### **Goal 5 – Infrastructure Efficiency**

- RGS Intent: Deliver cost-effective, sustainable urban infrastructure.
- Project Alignment:
  - Braidwood renews aging water, sanitary, and storm systems, fulfilling Objective 5-D to optimize use of existing systems and reduce capital redundancy.
  - Projects demonstrate integrated capital planning and lifecycle asset management.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The current budgets included in the financial plan are shown in the table below, and are inclusive of general, water, and sewer budget components:

<b>Project Description</b>	<b>2025 Budget</b>	<b>2026 Budget</b>	<b>Project Totals</b>
Ryan Road Pedestrian Improvements	\$220,000	\$2,558,500	<b>\$2,778,500</b>
Braidwood Road Infrastructure Upgrades	\$58,000	\$4,330,000	<b>\$4,388,000</b>
Total Budget Available	\$278,000	\$6,888,500	<b>\$7,166,500</b>

At this time, it is not anticipated that the existing Braidwood Road project budget includes sufficient funding to proceed with detailed design within the 2025 financial plan. However, there is potential capacity within the Ryan Road sidewalk project budget to support detailed design for both projects if they are combined under a single scope.

Staff plan to proceed with a combined design approach for the Ryan Road and Braidwood Road improvements. This would enable staff to award the design contract and initiate work efficiently within the current budget framework. If additional funding is required to complete the design, staff will return to Council requesting a budget reallocation.

The following summarizes the most recent available construction cost estimates for both projects:

<b>Project</b>	<b>Estimate</b>	<b>Cost Estimate</b>
Ryan Road Pedestrian Improvements	Class D Estimate (2024)	\$1,977,750
Braidwood Road Complete Streets	100% Detailed Design (2022)	\$3,800,000
	Total	\$5,777,750

The Ryan Road cost estimate was prepared in April 2024. It includes design, construction, and a 40% contingency, allowance.

The Braidwood Road project cost estimate was prepared in May 2022, based on 100% detailed design drawings. The estimate includes all major components such as roadworks, underground utilities, drainage improvements, concrete infrastructure, landscaping, contract administration/inspection and a 10% contingency. The total estimated cost is approximately \$4.3 million. While comprehensive at the time of preparation, this estimate will require updating, especially in light of the significant amount of construction cost escalation over the past few years.

The table below summarize the current capital budgets and identified funding sources for the Ryan Road pedestrian improvements and Braidwood Road upgrades.

	Reserves General	Reserves Sanitary	Reserves Water	Debt & Other	DCC	Project Totals
Ryan Rd	\$620,000	\$0	\$0	\$2,000,000	\$158,500	<b>\$2,778,500</b>
Braidwood Rd	\$284,800	\$551,600	\$551,600	\$3,000,000	\$0	<b>\$4,388,000</b>
<b>Funding Source Totals</b>	<b>\$904,800</b>	<b>\$551,600</b>	<b>\$551,600</b>	<b>\$5,000,000</b>	<b>\$158,500</b>	<b>\$7,166,500</b>

**ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS:**

The project will be led by the City's Infrastructure and Environmental Engineering Services department, with interdepartmental coordination and consultant engagement to finalize detailed design, specifications, and tender documents. The approach reduces duplication and project overhead by delivering both projects under one contract.

**STRATEGIC PRIORITIES REFERENCE:**

Importantly, 925 Braidwood Road is the site of a supportive housing development delivered in partnership with BC Housing. Ensuring sufficient utility servicing capacity for this location is essential to support the long-term viability and operations of this facility, which provides critical shelter and support services to vulnerable members of the community. Upgrading water and sanitary infrastructure in this area aligns with the City's broader social responsibility goals and supports provincial and regional investment in affordable housing solutions.

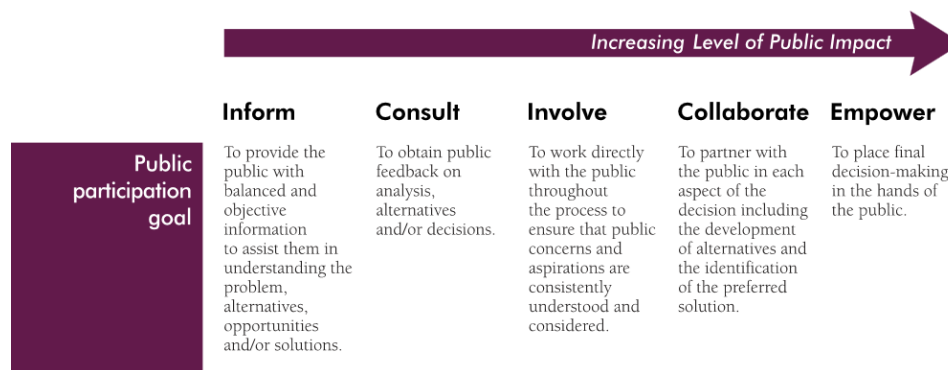
Although these projects are not specifically identified as Council priorities, the upgrades required on Braidwood Road are necessary due to the utilities reaching the end of their useful service life. Moreover, they are nearing capacity and should be upgraded to meet future needs.

Ryan Road and Braidwood Road are both identified as high-priority transportation corridors in the City of Courtenay's Transportation Master Plan and Cycling Network Plan, supporting the City's commitment to active transportation principles.

The watermain upgrades will address capacity and fire flow deficiencies identified in the City's Water Master Plan.

**PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:**

Staff would inform the public based on the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation:



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Should borrowing be required to fund the project, the decision may be subject to public approval, potentially placing final decision-making in the hands of the public consistent with the “Empower” level of the IAP2 public participation framework.

**RECOMMENDATION:** THAT Council receive the “Braidwood Road infrastructure upgrades /Ryan Road Sidewalk Project Update” briefing note.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Ryan Road Transportation Improvements – Conceptual Design Report, Dated April 26, 2024
2. Braidwood Road Corridor Improvements – Detailed Design, Dated May 16, 2022

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