

River Valley Alliance – Funding Distribution/ Parks Development Capital Priorities

Recommendation:

1. That the preliminary list of Edmonton-based River Valley projects, as outlined in Attachment 1 of the April 6, 2011, Asset Management and Public Works Department report 2011PW9668, be approved.
2. That the City commit to identifying up to \$20.3 million in the 2012-2014 Capital Budget for Edmonton-based River Valley projects, to be expended by the River Valley Alliance up to December 31, 2014.
3. That Administration return to City Council via Transportation and Public Works Committee for approval of a finalized list of River Valley projects for Edmonton, based on the outcome of negotiations with the River Valley Alliance regarding Edmonton's share of total funding and the River Valley Alliance's funding application to the Federal Government.

Report Summary

This report identifies potential options to address provincial and federal funding availability for river valley development consistent with the River Valley Alliance Plan of Action, and resulting in a more equitable distribution of funding among regional stakeholders.

Previous Council/Committee Action

- At the March 16, 2011, City Council meeting, the following motion was passed:

That Administration work with the River Valley Alliance to proceed with the application for federal funding on the basis that a report is brought to Transportation and Public Works Committee, as soon as possible, proposing a more equitable distribution of the funding among stakeholders, recognizing Edmonton represents the largest percentage of stakeholder population.

- At the March 8, 2011, Transportation and Public Works Committee meeting, the following motion was passed:

That Administration provide a report to Transportation and Public Works Committee, as soon as possible, on alignment and non-alignment between Parks Development capital priorities as they relate to the priorities identified in the River Valley Alliance's Connectivity and Access Report.

Report

In light of the Federal requirement for a commitment in principle by the end of May 2011, Administration recommends advancing this report to the April 6, 2011, City Council meeting. City Council's approval of Edmonton-based river valley projects will help to secure the Federal Government's commitment to the River Valley Alliance's funding request.

Alignment/Non Alignment

- There are 106 Component 1 capital projects within the River Valley Alliance Plan of Action with estimated budget requirements totalling \$412 million. Of these, 61

are located in Edmonton and represent approximately 49% (\$203 million) of the total funding.

- Given the significant dollars and development timing realities, the River Valley Alliance developed a set of priorities for the entire plan area for the first phase of work (i.e. connective infrastructure). The River Valley Alliance Board has adopted a list of 34 priority areas that support 64 capital projects across the region; 31 of which are projects within or touching Edmonton. Those projects total approximately \$124 million in Edmonton. Administration was consulted on the list and conceptually supported the 34 planned priority areas for eventual implementation.
- The recent federal funding announcement provides funding for 26 of the 64 capital projects across the region. Seven of those projects reside within or touch Edmonton's boundary within an estimated cost of approximately \$25 million, or 28% of total available funding (\$89 million Federal and Provincial). (See projects outlined in Attachment 1 in the shaded rows with ** in the source column).

Equitable Balance

- To restore a more equitable balance of funding in support of the broader regional plan, Administration recommends the following project priorities be forwarded to the River Valley Alliance Board for consideration/inclusion in the River Valley Alliance Plan of Action expenditures relating to Federal funding. See projects outlined in Attachment 1 in the shaded rows with * in the source column.

- Priority 1. Terwillegar - Centennial Bridge \$24 million (Valley Attractions)
- Priority 2. City Centre River Access Improvements (Rafters landing, Kinsmen and Government Hill) - \$1.5 million
- Priority 3. Hermitage Park Boat Launch/Marina - \$2.6 million (Valley Parks)
- Priority 4. A trail between Goldstick Park to Corporal Ainsworth Dyer Bridge \$1.2 million (Valley Parks)
- Priority 5. Terwillegar - E.L. Smith Bridge \$24.5 million (Valley Attractions)
- Inclusion of the new priorities provided in this report would impact the balance of funding support to Edmonton as follows:
 - Priority 1 - \$49.0 million or 55%
 - Priority 2 - \$50.5 million or 57%
 - Priority 3 - \$53.1 million or 60%
 - Priority 4 - \$54.3 million or 61%
 - Priority 5 - \$78.8 million or 89%
- Inclusion of the Priority 5, the Terwillegar/E.L. Smith Bridge, would bring the Edmonton proportion to beyond what is reasonable (89%). The Terwillegar/E.L. Bridge project has been included in the event that the Legends Bridge project (already included in the River Valley Alliance's priorities) is not supported by Strathcona County Council or Edmonton City Council. If the Legends Bridge project is not supported, the Terwillegar/E.L. Smith Bridge project could become the replacement and Edmonton could seek support for approximately 68% (\$60.9 million) of the \$89 million available.
- Parks has met with the Executive Director of the River Valley Alliance

to share project ideas to address funding equity concerns. Any changes to the Board's priorities list will require River Valley Alliance Board approval.

- Costs referenced are in 2010 dollars.
- In the event the City does not go ahead with one or more of the projects as finalized and approved by the River Valley Alliance and Transportation and Public Works Committee, the respective portion of matching funds from the Federal Government for such project(s) may be allocated to other River Valley Alliance projects in other jurisdictions, at the discretion of the River Valley Alliance.

Policy

The River Valley Alliance projects and plan are supported by many current planning and policy documents including:

- The Way Ahead
- Municipal Development Plan (The Way We Grow)
- North Saskatchewan River Valley Bylaw Area Redevelopment Plan – Bylaw 7188
- North Saskatchewan and Ravine System Protection Overlay Section 811 of the Zoning Bylaw 12800
- Floodplain Protection Overlay, Section 812 of the Zoning Bylaw 12800
- Urban Parks Management Plan
- Parkland Bylaw 2202
- Natural Connections Strategic Plan

Corporate Outcomes

- Transform Edmonton's Urban Form
- Improve Edmonton's Livability
- Preserve and Sustain Edmonton's Environment

Budget/Financial Implications

The City of Edmonton's one-third share of project costs could range from \$8.3 million (current proposal) to a possible \$20.3 million with the proposed replacement projects. No funding is currently available in the approved Capital Priorities Plan. The proposed source of funding is anticipated to be Municipal Sustainability Initiative funding and will require provincial approval for each of the City projects.

Justification of Recommendation

1. Approval of the preliminary list allows the River Valley Alliance to move ahead in accessing federal funding by the May 31, 2011, deadline.
2. Commitment of funding is required for the River Valley Alliance to move ahead in accessing federal funding by the May 31, 2011, deadline.
3. The opportunity to renegotiate Edmonton-based projects may secure a more equitable distribution of project funding across regional stakeholders.

Attachments

1. River Valley Projects List

Background Information Available on Request from the Department

1. Parks Capital Priorities List – River Valley Inclusive

Others Reviewing this Report

- R. G. Klassen, General Manager, Planning and Development Department
- L. Rosen, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer