

DAYLIGHTING STREAMS:

That Council direct staff to report back as part of the 2020, 2021 and 2022 budget process with opportunities for daylighting streams.

BACKGROUND:

Identifying opportunities to daylight and celebrate culverted streams is identified as a priority action in the 2017 Parks and Open Spaces Master Plan. Daylighting streams that have previously been confined to underground pipes offers opportunities in improved water quality, flooding reduction, new aquatic and natural habitat as well as community revitalization. The technical and financial feasibility of daylighting streams is often challenging in an urban environment.

Fully daylighting a stream is costly and requires a long-term strategy to identify priorities, opportunities, constraints and costs.

The Capital Regional District coordinates the Bowker Creek Urban Watershed Renewal Initiative (the BCI) with the City of Victoria, District of Saanich and District of Oak Bay as municipal partners. In 2017, the City was awarded an infrastructure planning grant to undertake a Daylighting Feasibility Study, in partnership with the other members of the BCI.

The Daylighting Feasibility Study was completed in Spring 2020 and incorporates a range of technical considerations, including existing land uses, parks and trails, topography, land acquisition plus creek and system hydraulics. The final report summarizes the existing conditions, opportunities and constraints and daylighting routes including preferred and alternate corridors for the creek and proposed creek cross sections.

Staff will be bringing forward a report to Council in Q1 2021 that will include details of the study and recommended next steps which is expected to include recommendations to commence the development of an implementation plan, based on the opportunities and risks outlined in the 2020 feasibility study.

An update to the Stormwater Master Plan is also scheduled for 2021. A component of this work will be to consider further assessment of the opportunities, constraints, priorities and costs for daylighting other creeks in the City.

FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

Development of the Bowker Creek Daylighting Implementation Strategy can be undertaken within existing staffing resources. Priorities and detailed assessments of specific projects, timelines and costs would be brought forward upon completion of the plan and included in future year budget considerations.