

REPORT
*Engineering Services &
Parks and Recreation Department*

To: Mayor Côté and Members of Council **Date:** March 11, 2019
Regular Council Meeting

From: Jim Lowrie **File:** 05.1040.10
Director of Engineering Services (Doc#1379077v1)

Dean Gibson **Item:** 124/2019
Director of Parks & Recreation

Subject: Sixth Street Pedestrian Overpass – Update on Construction

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council receive this report for information.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the anticipated construction schedule for the proposed Sixth Street Pedestrian Overpass, extending from the Sixth Street to Westminster Pier Park. Site preparation within the footprint of the proposed accessible overpass, including removals of the existing playground, landscape elements and lighting, is expected to commence in mid-March with construction of the overpass and ramp anticipated for mid-April, 2019.

BACKGROUND

Westminster Pier Park (WPP) is an integral part of the Downtown, providing open green space, areas for recreation and sport, and overall enjoyment for both residents and visitors. The park is also an area for mass gatherings such as events and festivals, adding to the vitality of the City. As such, accessibility to WPP and measures to ensure the safety of those using the park are of key importance to the City.

The planning of the downtown waterfront, as part of the comprehensive Riverfront Vision, identifies the need for an accessible pedestrian connection across the railway corridor along the Sixth Street alignment. The proposed Sixth Street connection, along with the existing Fourth Street crossing, will provide two direct access points to WPP. In addition, the new connection will be critical for pedestrian access during the construction of the underground parkade as part of the Pier West Development as periodic closures of pedestrian access at Begbie Street are anticipated.

As per the Pier West Development Agreement, the developer is required to construct the pedestrian overpass over the rail corridor and the City is to contribute toward an enhanced accessible ramp connection within WPP.

DISCUSSION

The design of the Sixth Street Pedestrian Overpass with an accessible connection considers objectives such as integration with the Westminster Pier Park, safety, reliability, continuity of services, maintenance, and full life cycle cost. Input from civic advisory committees, including AAAC and ACTBiPed and the Mayor's Task Force on the Riverfront and Public Realm has been integrated into the design of the new accessible connection.

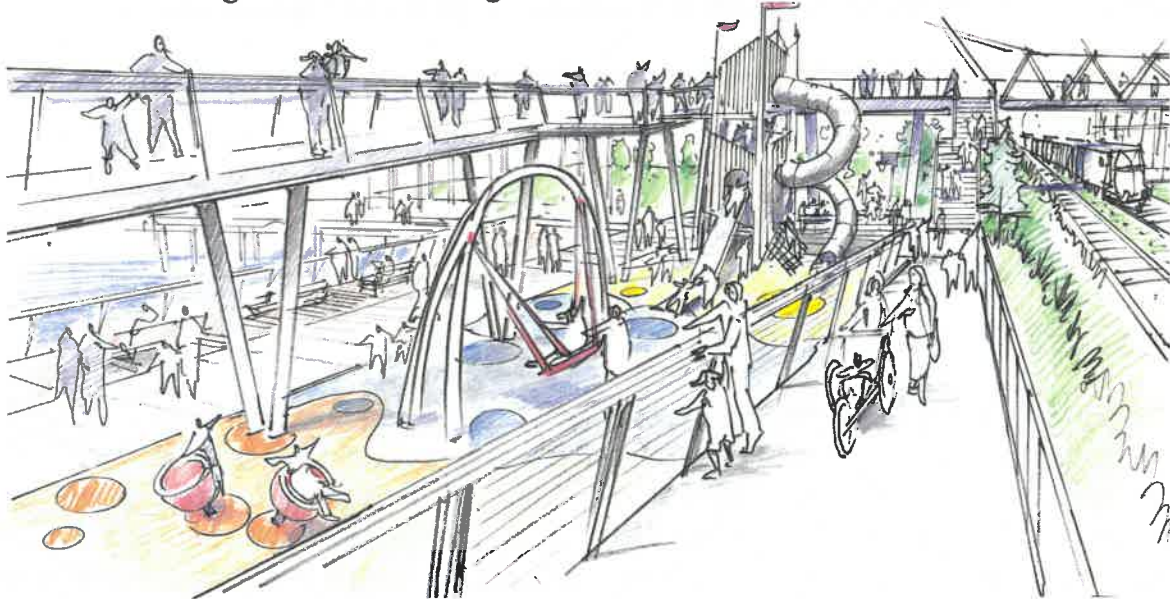


Figure 1. Artistic sketch rendering of the proposed overpass, ramp structure and renewed adventure playground conceptual design.

The overall objective of the project is to provide an environment that promotes walking, cycling, playing, recreating, gathering and social interaction. To achieve this objective, the following design principles were considered in the planning and design of the overpass and ramp structure (Figure 1):

- a) **Options** - In addition to the elevator/ stair connection at Fourth Street and the at-grade connection at Begbie Street, the proposed ramp/stair at Sixth Street offers a third accessible option for walking or cycling to WPP;

- b) Accessibility - Maximum of 5% slope and minimum 3.2m clear width for accommodating pedestrians and cyclists;
- c) Safety and Comfort - Well-designed railings and resting areas with seating opportunities;
- d) Experience - Providing platforms with views of the river and as well as opportunities to spectate park activity from above;
- e) Appearance - Architecturally designed to “fit” with the aesthetic and character of the existing WPP and the proposed westward expansion of the park; and
- f) Shade/ Weather Protection- Including recreational space between the two lengths of ramp, providing access to both sun and shade in the play area as well as comfortable areas for parents/ caregivers to spectate and socialize.

Construction Schedule

Bosa Development has secured a contractor and construction of the Sixth Street accessible crossing (pedestrian overpass and ramp) is anticipated to commence in mid-April with completion in Fall 2019. The overpass structure that extends over the rail tracks will be assembled off-site and delivered as a complete unit (excluding flares). To minimize disruptions, the overpass will be installed over the rail tracks using a mobile crane during the midnight hours.

As per the contractor’s current schedule, construction will span over the next 7 months, not including the recreational play area below the ramp structure. Staff will continue to develop the design of the new and enhanced play area with installation commencing after the ramp structure is complete. In the interim, the remainder of WPP will remain open to the public as well as nearby playgrounds at Quayside Park and Saint Mary’s Park. In addition, the planning for the the proposed westward expansion of WPP is currently underway and through that planning process, additional opportunities for play features at WPP may be identified that can also augment the play experiences currently provided in WPP.



Figure 2. Diagram highlighting (in yellow) the portion of WPP that will be closed to the public during construction.

FINANCIAL

The City's portion of the accessible connection within the park is approximately \$1.9 million.

OPTIONS

The following options are presented for Council's consideration:

1. THAT Council receive this report for information;
2. THAT Council provide alternate direction to staff.

Staff recommend Options 1.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL LIAISON

This report was collaboratively prepared by the Engineering and Parks & Recreation Departments in consultation with the office of the Chief Administrative Officer.

CONCLUSION

The proposed Sixth Street Pedestrian Overpass and accessible ramp is designed to provide an environment that promotes walking, cycling, playing, recreating, gathering and social interaction. Site preparation for construction of the overpass and ramp will begin in mid-March and will ultimately provide the community, from both an accessibility and park programming perspective, an extraordinary public space on the Riverfront.

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