

DATE OF MEETING    OCTOBER 18, 2023

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**SUBJECT             DESIGN COMMERCIAL PROJECT UPDATE**

## **OVERVIEW**

### **Purpose of Report:**

To provide Council with an update on the timing, phasing, and cost of the Design Commercial Project.

## **BACKGROUND**

In September 2021 Council directed Staff to engage the services of a consultant to assist with developing a new vision for Commercial Street. This conceptual design was completed in the Spring of 2022 and is detailed in the Design Commercial Downtown Reimagined Report.

In June of 2022 Council endorsed the concept plans and directed Staff to include the implementation in the 2023 - 2027 budget deliberations.

The project is integrated into City Plan as Priority Action Number 57:

*“Design Commercial - Complete a conceptual design from Commercial / Wallace / Albert Street and Victoria Crescent intersection to Front Street.”*

The project, as well as other infrastructure projects in the downtown, is supported in the 2023 -2026 Council Strategic Framework.

*“Significant downtown capital investments to support continued redevelopment of the heart of the city.”*

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Design Development**

Following on the completion of the concept design, work has been ongoing in order to advance the concept developed, into detailed engineering drawings for construction. This work has included specific and targeted engagement and has been ongoing during the design process with City (City of Nanaimo) staff meeting directly with businesses directly impacted by this project to listen to any concerns and adapt the design where possible to reflect those concerns. A functional design of the Commercial Street portion of the project has been completed and is shown in Attachment B.

Design for the Diana Krall Plaza portion of the project will occur in early 2024 and involve engagement with the Re-Envision Diana Krall Plaza team. Further design development of Dallas Square Park will occur closer to the implementation date of that portion of the project.

The design process for the streetscape has been careful to respect the nine design principles established in the original design document. Each principle plays a role in informing the approach, materials, treatments, and overall look and feel of the area. These design principles are:

1. Connected – Commercial Street must be well connected to the adjacent streets and public spaces in a mindful way.
2. Convenient – Visiting downtown needs to remain convenient and inviting to remove any barriers that could dissuade people from visiting and spending time on the Commercial Street corridor.
3. Comfortable – Providing ample room for walking, traffic calming, and spaces for people to stay and play will enhance the comfort of Commercial Street.
4. Engaging – Commercial Street needs to inspire people to come and spend time downtown.
5. Accessible – There should be as few barriers as possible to come and enjoy Commercial Street. Wider sidewalks, continuous crossings, and public spaces combined with places to sit, play, or relax create a downtown for all ages and abilities.
6. Legible – It is important that it remains clear to users how to behave in the space to ensure the enjoyment of everyone.
7. Safe – It is imperative that users feel safe when moving along Commercial Street. Reduce or eliminate conflicts between road users, dark spaces, and increased visibility.
8. Equitable – Commercial Street must be a welcome space for all members of Nanaimo’s community.

### Project Phasing

The overall project phasing has been updated to reflect the timing at which the phases were included in the draft 2024 - 2028 Financial Plan.

Phase	Extents	Budget Year
Phase 1	Commercial Street from Bastion Street to Chapel Street	2023
Phase 2	Commercial Street from Skinner Street to Bastion Street	2025
Phase 2	Diana Krall Plaza (front portion)	2026
Phase 3	Commercial Street from Albert Street to Terminal Avenue	2028
Phase 4	Commercial Street from Terminal Avenue to Skinner Street	2029
Phase 5	Commercial Street from Chapel Street to Front Street + Dallas Square Park	2030

A map of the phasing is shown in Attachment C.

An option available to Council is to accelerate the Commercial Street portion of Phase 2 (Skinner Street to Bastion Street) to be completed with Phase 1 by June of 2024. The design is completed; if accelerated, a larger project could have a bigger impact on downtown Nanaimo.

### Estimated Cost

Updated cost estimates were developed during the design process for Phase 1 of the project and the Commercial Street portion of Phase 2. Cost estimates for the remainder of the phases will be refined as the design development of those phases of the project progress.

The estimate for Phase 1 of the project is \$3,639,022 and the estimate for the Phase 2 section on Commercial Street is \$2,180,237.

The current budget for Phase 1 is \$1,834,259 which means an additional \$1,804,763 is required to complete Phase 1 of the project. If Council elects to accelerate the Commercial Street portion of Phase 2 an additional \$2,180,237 would be required for a total of \$3,985,000.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Commercial Street Project is a significant project within the downtown core that is supported by City Plan and the 2023 - 2026 Strategic Priorities. Phase 1 could start construction in early 2024 and be completed by June of 2024. Should Council wish to proceed with this project, additional funding is required.

## **SUMMARY POINTS**

- Phase 1 and the Commercial Street Portion of the Commercial Street Upgrades Project is complete and ready for construction.
- An additional \$1,834,259 is required to complete Phase 1.
- An additional \$3,985,000 is required to complete Phase 1 and the Commercial Street portion of Phase 2.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A – Powerpoint Presentation  
Attachment B – Draft Functional Design Poster  
Attachment C – Process Poster

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