Minutes– Council – December 12, 2024

Minute No. 68
Report – Standing Policy Committee on Public Works – November 29, 2024

Item No. 3 Omand Park Pedestrian Bridge Replacement

COUNCIL DECISION:

Council concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Public Works and adopted the following:

1. That the Public Service be directed to proceed with the planning and design of the replacement of the Omand Park Pedestrian Bridge to be constructed no later than 2029.

2. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

Report – Standing Policy Committee on Public Works – November 29, 2024

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Lukes,

That the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Public Works be adopted by consent.

Carried

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On December 4, 2024, the Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Public Works and submitted the matter to Council.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On November 29, 2024, the Standing Policy Committee on Public Works concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and submitted the matter to the Executive Policy Committee and Council.

The following persons submitted communications:

- Laura MacDonald, in opposition to the matter
- David Firman and Gail Perry, in opposition to the matter
- Carol Friesen, in opposition to the matter
- Mark Cohoe, Executive Director, Bike Winnipeg, in support of the matter

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: Omand Park Pedestrian Bridge Replacement

Critical Path: Standing Policy Committee on Public Works - Executive Policy Committee - Council

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
B. Neirinck, P.Eng.	J. Berezowsky	T. Graham	S. Armbruster, Interim CAO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This bridge over Omand's Creek is located in Omand Park, immediately upstream of the confluence with the Assiniboine River. It is near the Park entrance at the intersection of Wolseley Avenue and Raglan Road.

In 2010, as part of a larger Active Transportation improvement project, replacement of the pedestrian bridge over Omand's Creek, in Omand Park was considered. Conceptual alternatives were prepared and presented to the Public through an engagement process. These concepts were not positively received by the Public at the time and the bridge replacement did not proceed.

The Omand Park pedestrian bridge over Omand's Creek is in poor condition and will soon need to be replaced or permanently removed. In addition to age-related deterioration, the bridge is also frequently closed due to flood. Adjacent pathways are steep and do not meet accessibility guidelines.

This time around, the Public Service conducted pre-design public engagement, appended to this report, to foster conversation with the community and come to common ground in advance of preliminary design. This program intended to help staff better understand:

- Key areas of park use and value
- Opportunities to improve pathways around the bridge
- What the community wants to see in a potential future bridge
- A vision for a future river access point
- Whether feedback from the 2010 design and public engagement was properly interpreted and/or is still relevant

Key feedback themes included a desire for accessibility improvements while also balancing the natural environment, and recognition of the requirement to mitigate flood concerns.

At this time, the Public Service is seeking direction to proceed with a preliminary design study to replace the pedestrian bridge and adjoining pathways.

The new bridge would be approximately 2.8 metres higher than the existing bridge to avoid seasonal flooding. The adjoining pathways would be designed to meet currently accessibility standards.

The parameters for the study would consider what the Public Service heard in the pre-design engagement; the study itself would include further public engagement on location and concepts.

The preliminary design would be funded from the Waterway Crossing and Grade Separations – Annual Program. A Class 3 estimate would be prepared suitable for budgeting purposes to schedule detailed design and construction. The total project value is expected to be in the $3 million to $5 million range, and would also be funded through the Waterway Crossing and Grade Separations – Annual Program. Currently, it is projected that the bridge should be replaced no later than 2029.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Public Service be directed to proceed with the planning and design of the replacement of the Omand Park Pedestrian Bridge to be constructed no later than 2029.

2. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

REASON FOR THE REPORT

Council endorsement is being sought prior to the Public Service moving forward with planning and design of a replacement pedestrian bridge and associated accessible pathways. The Public Service desires formal direction from Council due to the community sensitivities surrounding the project and past attempts to replace the bridge.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

If the recommendations are concurred with, the Public Service will issue a Request for Proposals and award a contract for professional consulting services for preliminary design of the replacement of the Omand Park Pedestrian Bridge including additional public engagement. A Class 3 estimate would be prepared based on the recommended preliminary design.

The preliminary design would be funded from the Waterway Crossing and Grade Separations – Annual Program. Subject to confirmed funding sources, the project would proceed to detailed design followed by construction before 2029. The total project value is expected to be in the $3 million to $5 million range, and would also be funded through the Waterway Crossing and Grade Separations – Annual Program.

As the existing bridge is in poor condition, it may be permanently closed at any time without warning when it is no longer considered safe for public use.

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

The existing Omand Park Pedestrian Bridge is in poor condition and requires renewal no later than 2029.

There are three main problems with the bridge:

- It is at the end of its service life. That means the City has repaired and maintained the bridge as best it can, but it will soon no longer be safe or fit for use;
- It doesn't meet modern accessibility standards for users of all ages and abilities; and,
- It is frequently submerged in flood waters - no other pedestrian bridges in the City regularly have this problem.

It is not possible to continue maintaining the bridge; the bridge will need to be replaced within the next five years.
The Omand's Creek Pedestrian Bridge has been covered in water for more than 600 days over the last 10 years. The bridge is unusable when flooded. Flood waters also degrade the bridge and lead to more required maintenance.

Flood impacts on Omand's Creek Pedestrian Bridge Source: Historical date from Assiniboine River water gauge located at the St. James Bridge		
Flood Event(s)	Peak water level above the bridge deck (m)	Days bridge submerged (estimated)
Spring to Fall 2014 *	2.3	171
Spring to Summer 2015 *	1	79
Spring 2016	1.4	13
Spring 2017	2.2	51
Spring 2018	1.1	11
Spring and Fall 2019 *	2.7	96
Spring to Summer 2020	2.3	50
2021	0	0
Spring to Summer 2022 *	2.2	101
Spring 2023	1.6	38
		Total number of days: 610

*Table 1 *Flood date covers more than on season*

Therefore, the Public Service is recommending a bridge replacement at a higher elevation. The proposed new bridge deck height is estimated to be approximately 2.8 metres above the existing bridge deck to avoid seasonal flooding. The exact elevation of the new bridge is to be determined during the design phase of the project. The pathways on either side of the bridge will also need to be replaced to meet accessibility standards.

Some of the indications the bridge is at the end of its service life include:

- Deep cracks in the bridge deck;
- Open/exposed areas; and,
- Damaged bearings that connect the bridge deck to the supporting structure.

The bridge began to show signs of deterioration in 2010, which led to yearly inspections. The following has been observed in these inspections:

- **2010** - Signs of deck deterioration, wide cracks, and open areas on the bridge itself.
- **2017** – Cracking on the underside of the deck and early signs of deck failure.
- **2019** – Full-depth cracking.
- **2021** – Deformed and bulging bearings that prevents the bridge from functioning as intended.

Temporary repairs were made in 2022; these aren't enough to keep the bridge usable. If additional cracking or other warning signs (such as sagging) occur, the bridge would be permanently closed without warning.

Some of these issues are because the bridge was built using atypical materials meant for indoor construction. The bridge was made using hollow core concrete slabs on the bridge deck. Hollow core concrete slabs aren't meant to withstand the excessive freeze-thaw bridge conditions and repeated deicing and flooding. Bridge construction more often uses solid deck material.

Pre-design engagement

The Public Service previously studied replacing the bridge in 2010. Options presented to the community at that time included:

- Three variations of a bridge;
- One design that focused on upgrading the park; and
- One design that solely upgraded the existing bridge.

At that time, the public told us the designs would negatively impact how community members use the park. The City also heard that the designs did not match the look and feel of the park and that preserving park assets is a priority for the community.

This time around, it was important to involve the community before starting design.

The community was invited to participate in public engagement in May and June 2024; the Public Service set out to listen, confirm what was heard in the past, learn what's changed, and determine best steps forward. An engagement summary report is appended to this report. The pre-design engagement process was developed to help better understand:

- Key areas of park use and value
  - Opportunities to improve pathways around the bridge
  - What the community wants to see in a potential future bridge
  - A vision for a future river access point
  - Whether feedback from the 2010 design and public engagement was properly interpreted and/or is still relevant

The community was invited to provide feedback via an online mapping tool and online survey with 1,570 respondents. The Public Service also talked with people in-person at an in-park

event and nearby community pop-up as well as at two stakeholder meetings for key organizations.

Most overall participants and 81 percent of survey respondents agreed with the statement: *It is important to reduce the impacts of flooding and ensure the bridge is usable year-round*. Two key areas of common ground for all participants were support for accessibility and maintaining the natural character of Omand Park.

The project's stakeholder group noted flood mitigation should not affect naturalized spaces, accessibility, or aesthetics. A future design with less steep and more accessible pathways was a key priority among stakeholders.

Results from pre-design engagement confirmed earlier assertions that existing paths are too steep resulting to access concerns for all ages and abilities, particularly in the winter. Further concerns on the paths include conflicts or near misses between cyclists and pedestrians.

Data analysis

A Pedestrian and Cyclist Traffic Count was conducted at Omand Park. Two 24-hour counts were completed; one weekday and one weekend. The counts were done on July 19 and 20, 2024 (a Friday and a Saturday). The counts show slightly more users on the Friday than the Saturday. They average just below 1,000 users per day. The mode split is approximately 60% bike and 40% pedestrian.

River access

The study would also look at how people could access the Assiniboine River via Omand Park. In 2022, Council accepted for information a report on river access in the area. The report evaluated eight riverbank properties as access points. It determined Omand Park was the best option for a non-motorized river access but that an access here would only work if the Public Service monitored ice levels and winter safety. A citywide river access study is being conducted by the Parks Department in 2025.

Funding sources

The preliminary design study would be funded from the Waterway Crossing and Grade Separations – Annual Program which is meant for major maintenance and minor replacements of bridge infrastructure. The design study would help us determine a Class 3 estimate and schedule for construction. Pending concurrence with recommendations, the City would plan to start construction no later than 2029. Building a non-motorized river access point would require additional budget in the future.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement

Date: October 8, 2024

Project Name: **First Year of Program** **2024**

Omand Park Pedestrian Bridge Replacement

	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Capital					
Capital Expenditures Required	$ 262,500	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Existing Budgeted Costs	262,500	-	-	-	-
Additional Capital Budget Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Funding Sources:					
Debt - Internal	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
External	-	-	-	-	-
Grants (Identify)	-	-	-	-	-
Reserves, Equity, Surplus, Other	-	-	-	-	-
Total Funding	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Total Additional Capital Budget Required	$ -				
Total Additional Debt Required	$ -				
Current Expenditures/Revenues					
Direct Costs	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Incremental Revenue/Recovery	12,500	-	-	-	-
Net Cost/(Benefit)	$ (12,500)	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Existing Budget Amounts	(12,500)	-	-	-	-
Net Budget Adjustment Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -

Additional Comments: Subject to Council approval of Reccomendation1, the Public Service will issue a Request for Proposals and award of a contract for preliminary design of the replacement of the Omand Park Pedestrian Bridge. The preliminary design would be funded by the adopted Waterway Crossing & Grade Separations - Annual Program budget with an estimated cost of $262,500.00 (the preliminary design cost is an estimate and may vary at the time RFPs are received). Incremental Revenue/Recovery represents the Departmental Engineering overheads.

J. Ruby, 2024-10-10

J. Ruby, CPA, CA
Manager of Finance & Administration

CONSULTATION

This Report has been prepared in consultation with: N/A

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

Goal: Environmental Resilience
2.1 Climate Action Targets – Meet and exceed greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets of 20 percent by 2030, relative to 2011, and net zero by 2050, by working towards partnerships with the community, businesses, and government bodies including Indigenous, Federal and Provincial governments.

Goal: Economic Prosperity
3.17 Sustainable Transportation Connectivity – Prioritize enhancements to the integrated and sustainable transportation system that improve its viability and access to places such as educational institutions, employment opportunities, recreation and library facilities, providers of essential goods and services and health providers, especially for children, and for neighbourhoods most impacted by poverty.

Goal: Good Health and Well-Being
4.10 Transportation Safety – Design, construct, maintain, and regulate and integrated and sustainable transportation system and related infrastructure that optimize safe, connected and reliable mobility, and minimize severe injuries and fatalities for all road users.

Transportation Master Plan
Section 5.2 Active Transportation
Enabling strategies

n) Seek innovative and new partnerships to support AT programs and facilities.

WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

Strategic Opportunity #3 Advancing Sustainable Transportation 3.4 Increase Active Transportation Rates

WINNIPEG POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY ALIGNMENT

This project aligns with the following policies from Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy:

- *Goal 5 – Transportation System Equity is Enhanced*. People living in poverty often travel daily to various locations to access services that help meet their basic needs. The proposed design features significant improvements for low-cost alternative modes of travel, including walking and biking, and will improve the overall reliability of the active transportation network.

SUBMITTED BY

Department: Public Works
Division: Engineering
Prepared by: J. Matthew Hildebrand, P.Eng.
Date: October 10, 2024

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Pre-Design Public Engagement Summary