

City seeks input ahead of bridge removal

(Penticton, BC – January 6, 2021) – The City of Penticton is seeking the public’s input on future options prior to the July 2021 removal of the Nanaimo Avenue Bridge, located at Nanaimo Avenue East and Van Horne Street. The bridge, which is nearing the end of its lifespan, poses a flood risk during high water events along Penticton Creek and must be taken down.

“In 2017, the City commissioned a study to examine the health of Penticton Creek in terms of the condition of the existing channel, including its capacity to convey high freshet water flows and facilitate the passage of fish,” said Penticton’s City Engineer, Ian Chapman. “The plan identified the Nanaimo Avenue Bridge as having limited clearance, leading to challenges in terms of capacity and debris accumulation, both of which could cause flooding and threaten properties.”

A 2020 traffic impact study reviewed the surrounding area for access points, collected data on traffic volumes, pedestrian use, and evaluated the impact on emergency response times and potential risks to the community if the bridge were removed. The engineer concluded there would not be a significant adverse impact if the bridge was taken down because alternative routes exist in and out of the area for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians.

The necessity to remove the Nanaimo Avenue Bridge was originally flagged on July 7, 2020 in a report presented to Council which recommended Council authorize staff to design Penticton Creek Reach 3A Upper / 3B with the existing Nanaimo Avenue Bridge removed to allow for the passage of the 1:200 Year Design Flow.

Once the bridge is removed, there are currently no plans to replace it. The City of Penticton is interested in receiving comments about the bridge’s removal and suggestions for the future, including options to restore and naturalize the area.

Residents are encouraged to visit shapeyourcitypenticton.ca to comment in a feedback form and review additional information. Those who prefer to fill out a paper copy can email getconnected@penticton.ca to request the form. Individuals with properties located near the bridge, and who may frequently use the bridge, will receive a letter containing further details along with directions on how to supply feedback. All feedback will be collected until January 31, 2021. City staff will review the comments to determine if any further action is required.

“The City recognises that this decision will present inconveniences to some residents and hopes the engagement process will provide a forum for concerns to be heard, while also providing greater awareness around the flood risk associated with the current bridge,” said Chapman.

Contact:

Ian Chapman
City Engineer
City of Penticton
250-490-2532

Philip Cooper
Communication Manager
City of Penticton
250-490-2583