

CROWCHILD TRAIL STUDY – PROJECT UPDATE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is an update to Council on the achievements of the Crowchild Trail Study, and contains recommendations to advance the design and construction of short-term improvements to the corridor, beginning Q4 2016.

Since the last project update, Phase 3: Concept Identification of the study concluded with a set of ideas and concepts developed and evaluated with Calgarians for possible short-, medium-, and long-term changes and upgrades to Crowchild Trail. Throughout late-October and November 2015, Calgarians shared over 500 unique ideas for possible changes to Crowchild Trail, from over 400 participants that attended ten in-person events, and over 1,900 online submissions. Ideas **gathered** ranged from short-term, “quick-fix” optimization and local improvement ideas, through to ideas that could support continued growth and development of the City for the years and decades to come. Throughout February and March 2016, Calgarians had an opportunity to see how the ideas look when applied to the Crowchild Trail corridor. They also had an opportunity to evaluate and **refine** a group of ideas against the project’s three key principles, learn about why some of the ideas did not move forward for further consideration, and see which ideas would be explored in Phase 4: Concept Evaluation. Ideas evaluated and **confirmed** by Calgarians and the project team were used to develop preliminary concepts for evaluation and feedback in Phase 4.

Phase 4 of the study launched in May 2016. Throughout late-May and June 2016, the project team engaged Calgarians through a series of workshops, drop-in sessions, walking tours, and attended community events to **gather** feedback and evaluate the preliminary concepts against the project goals established in Phase 2. An online review and evaluation tool was available for Calgarians to provide their feedback and evaluate the concepts. Over 500 participants attended 13 in-person events throughout May and June 2016, and the online review and evaluation tool logged over 11,000 sessions, from over 8,000 users and received over 1,300 submissions. The project team will use these evaluations as input to **refine** and identify a set of draft recommendations in Phase 5: Concept Selection and Recommendation scheduled for Fall 2016, with final **confirmed** recommendations presented to Council in Phase 6: Reporting and Completion.

Administration is bringing forward several short-term recommendations to advance work on Crowchild Trail. The recommendations leverage Administration’s combined efforts and resources, combined with extensive work with Calgarians throughout the study to improve traffic flow along the corridor, as well as improve mobility and access along and across the corridor in the near term. Recommendations include widening of the bridges across the Bow River (and ancillary works), as well as several optimization projects that could be implemented as early as Q4 2016. These recommendations align with the project’s key principles, reflect the feedback received from Calgarians over the last year, and provide Calgarians immediate benefit and investment value over the coming years. Funding has not been secured for the proposed improvements and will be a key topic emerging from this update.

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ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATIONS

That the SPC of Transportation and Transit recommends that Council:

1. Receive this report for information;
2. Accept the process outlined for Phases 5 and 6 of this study to refine and confirm recommendations for short-, medium-, and long-term changes and upgrades to Crowchild Trail, in accordance with the Council approved Transportation Corridor Study Policy;
3. Accept Administration's recommendations to proceed with planning and design of short-term improvements to Crowchild Trail that align with the Bow River and Memorial Drive bridges rehabilitation work currently underway;
4. Accept Administration's recommendations to proceed with short-term optimization projects along the Crowchild Trail corridor, within the study area; and
5. Direct Administration to report back to Council with proposed budget adjustments, including cash flows and funding sources, by 2016 November. If approved by Council at that time, the Bow River Bridge widening project can be "shovel ready" for construction in 2017, Transportation will include this as a candidate project as part of the capital budget recast and reprioritization work.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE SPC ON TRANSPORTATION AND TRANSIT, DATED 2016 JULY 20:

That the Administration Recommendations contained in Report TT2016-0599 be approved.

Excerpts from the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the SPC on Transportation and Transit,
Held 2016 July 20:

"And further, that Report TT2016-0599 be forwarded to the 2016 July 25 Regular Meeting of Council."

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

At the July 28, 2014 Regular Council meeting, Council adopted the Transportation Corridor Study Policy as presented in report TT2014-0400. Council further directed Administration to restart the Crowchild Trail Study in Q3, 2014.

At the July 22, 2015 SPC on Transportation and Transit meeting, Council accepted Administration's recommendation to report back to Committee with an update on the Crowchild Trail Study no later than January 2016, as presented in report TT2015-0409.

At the January 20, 2016 SPC on Transportation and Transit meeting, Council accepted Administration's recommendations to accept the process outlined in Phase 3 and 4 of this study to develop and refine short-, medium-, and long-term options for Crowchild Trail, in accordance with the Council approved Transportation Corridor Study Policy. Council further accepted Administration's recommendation to report back to Committee with an update on the Crowchild Trail Study no later than July 2016, as presented in report TT2016-0012.

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BACKGROUND

Crowchild Trail is a critical part of Calgary’s transportation network. More than 100,000 Calgarians rely on Crowchild Trail to get to their destinations each day, functioning as the main north-south link across the west side of Calgary, and connecting to major destinations including the University of Calgary and Foothills Medical Campus, downtown, as well as local and regional destinations. Crowchild Trail will continue to be a critical link in the Transportation network, accommodating opportunities for Calgary’s continued growth in the coming decades, facilitating the redevelopment of the inner-city and established communities, and supporting the development of vibrant activity and neighbourhood corridors through key planning initiatives such as the Main Streets program.

The primary objective of this study is to develop short-, medium-, and long-term plans for Crowchild Trail, from 17 Avenue SW to 24 Avenue NW, inclusive. A six-phase study process was developed by the study team to deliver recommended plans for changes and upgrades to Crowchild Trail, and is outlined in Figure 1, below:

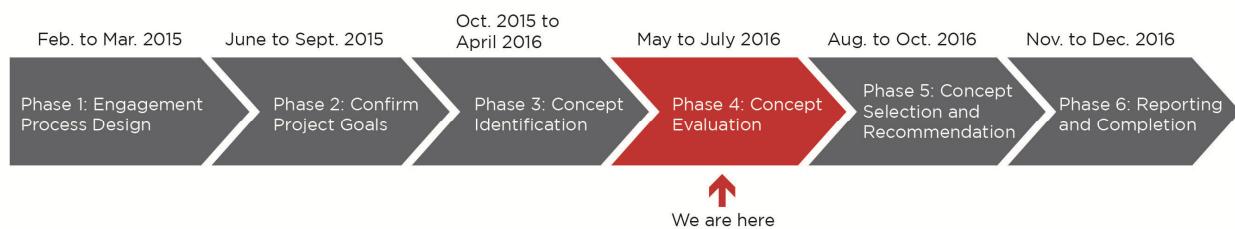


Figure 1: Crowchild Trail Study Phases

The outcome of Phase 1 was a set of tools that provide Calgarians with multiple opportunities to participate throughout the entire study, that maximizes outreach and awareness of the study, and that confirms report-back processes and methodology. A targeted and broad-based engagement methodology provides a forum for residents immediately bordering Crowchild Trail, Community Associations, business owners, large institutions, and stakeholder groups ensures meaningful engagement to inform the corridor planning process throughout the course of the study.

Phase 2 established the project goals of the Crowchild Trail study. The project goals are based on three key principles of the Transportation Corridor Policy, as follows:

- Maintain and enhance bordering communities;
- Improve travel along the corridor; and
- Improve mobility across the corridor.

The project’s key principles and goals will be used to guide the development and evaluation of preliminary ideas and concepts throughout Phases 3 and 4 of the study, and establish a set of criteria against which study recommendations will be measured. The project goals were developed with Calgarians through multiple rounds of stakeholder and citizen engagement, **gathering** ideas throughout June and early-July 2015, and **refining** those ideas with Calgarians throughout late-August and September 2015. The project goals were **confirmed** by the project

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team, and endorsed by the Project Steering Committee October 9, 2015. The project goals, as well as a summary of the process used to establish the project goals are included in **Attachment 1** of this report.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

Phase 3: Concept Identification – Gather

Phase 3 of the study launched in late-October 2015. The objective of this phase was to **gather** ideas, concepts, and options for short-, medium-, and long-term changes to Crowchild Trail. Ideas gathered throughout Phase 3 would form the basis of preliminary concepts and options for consideration in Phase 4 of the study.

Throughout October and November 2015, Calgarians were invited to share their ideas and feedback, and to explore the possible benefits, constraints, impacts, and trade-offs of those ideas. Calgarians shared their ideas through a series of workshops, drop-in sessions, and sounding boards located along the corridor, as well as online using an idea-gathering web-tool. Over 500 unique ideas for possible changes and upgrades to Crowchild Trail were gathered by the project team, from over 400 participants that attended ten in-person events, and over 1,900 online submissions. Ideas gathered ranged from short-term, “quick-fix” optimization and local improvement ideas, through to ideas that could support continued growth and development of the City for the years and decades to come.

Between November 2015 and February 2016, the project team completed an initial review of the ideas and concepts gathered from Calgarians, and consolidated the ideas into 25 idea sets that could be applied to the Crowchild Trail corridor. The 25 idea sets were themed into three general categories, as follows:

1. Ideas and concepts that will move directly to Phase 4: Concept Evaluation – This group consists of ideas including enhanced pedestrian and active modes connections along and across the corridor, improvements to transit service along the corridor, noise attenuation, as well as improvements to parks and green-spaces. These ideas are not stand-alone concepts, but are ideas and concepts that supplement or complement short, medium, and long-term plans for the Crowchild Trail corridor.
2. Ideas not moving forward for further consideration beyond Phase 3 – This group consists of ideas that such as construction of cloverleaf interchanges, a tunnel under the Bow River, a viaduct carrying vehicular traffic above Crowchild Trail, and new connections across the Bow River west of Crowchild Trail, among others. In general terms, the initial review completed by the project team concluded that anticipated impacts to the adjacent communities, as well as the limited benefits of the ideas did not meet the project’s key principles and did not provide positive overall value.
3. Ideas for further review and evaluation in Phase 3 – This group consists of 17 general ideas (and variants to the ideas) and concepts that can be applied to the Crowchild Trail corridor. These 17 ideas were shared with Calgarians in February and March 2016.

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Phase 3: Concept Identification – Refine & Confirm

Throughout late-February and March 2016, the project team hosted a series of drop-in sessions to share the collated results of the ideas gathered in October and November 2015. Calgarians were invited to see what these ideas look like when applied to the Crowchild Trail corridor. Calgarians also learned more about why some ideas did not move forward for further consideration, as well as to see the ideas that moved forward to Phase 4. An online review and evaluation tool that mirrored the drop-in sessions was also available for Calgarians to learn about the ideas, and provide feedback to the project team.

Calgarians were asked to help the project team **refine and confirm** ideas that would move forward to Phase 4 of the study by evaluating how well the group of 17 ideas met the project's three key principles. The study team received feedback from over 500 participants who attended nine in-person events, and over 3,000 responses submitted using the online evaluation tool.

The project team also completed a technical review and evaluation of the 17 ideas to determine anticipated effort required to implement the 17 ideas. The ideas that Calgarians said met or somewhat met the key principles well, and met the criteria of the project team's technical assessment moved forward to Phase 4 of the study. Ideas that Calgarians said did not meet the key principles did not move forward to Phase 4. However, the benefits and intent of the ideas not moving forward to Phase 3 were captured, and were incorporated into the concepts to be developed in Phase 4, where possible. Twelve of the 17 ideas evaluated in Phase 3 moved forward to Phase 4 of the study. A summary of the Phase 3 evaluation is attached in **Attachment 2** of this report.

Ideas moving forward to Phase 4: Concept Evaluation was finalized by the project team, and endorsed by the Project Steering Committee April 13, 2016 concluding Phase 3 of the study.

Phase 4: Concept Evaluation – Gather

Phase 4 of the study launched in May 2016. The objective of this phase is to evaluate short-, medium-, and long-term preliminary concepts developed from Phase 3, against the project's study goals. The project team will use these evaluations as input to refine and identify a set of draft recommendations in Phase 5: Concept Selection and Recommendation.

Seven preliminary concepts were developed and presented in Phase 4, and are attached in **Attachment 3** of this report. The preliminary concepts are a reflection of many of the ideas and feedback received from Calgarians throughout Phase 3, coupled with the application of the project team's technical review and analysis of the ideas applied to the Crowchild Trail corridor.

Throughout late-May and June 2016, the project team engaged Calgarians through a series of workshops, drop-in sessions, and attended community events to **gather** Calgarians' feedback and evaluate the preliminary concepts against the project goals. Walking tours were also organized to help participants visualize and understand the scope and breadth of the preliminary concepts in the field. An online review and evaluation tool was available for Calgarians to provide their feedback and evaluate the concepts. At the time of writing this report, the project team was collating all the evaluations completed by Calgarians at the in-person events and from the online feedback and evaluation tool. Over 500 participants

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attended 13 in-person events throughout May and June 2016, and the online review and evaluation tool logged over 11,000 sessions, from over 8,000 users and received over 1,300 submissions. Opportunities for Calgarians to evaluate the preliminary concepts online concluded June 30, 2016.

The medium- and long-term preliminary design options which may result in impact to private properties bordering Crowchild Trail are identified on the preliminary concepts. Out of respect to the impacted residents and businesses, the project team engaged the affected property owners prior to release of the preliminary concept plans to the bordering communities and the general public. The project team met with many of the property owners one-on-one and in group settings to inform and explain how the preliminary concepts were developed, as well as defined the extent of the possible impacts for each of the medium- and long-term preliminary concepts, and will continue to do so throughout the course of the study.

Look Ahead to Phase 5 & 6 – Refine & Confirm

Phase 5 of the study is scheduled to begin in fall 2016. In-person and online engagement opportunities will be provided to share and receive feedback on the draft recommendations for short-, medium-, and long-term changes and upgrades to Crowchild Trail. The feedback will be used as input to **refine** the draft recommendations into final **confirmed** recommendations moving to Phase 6, with final project reporting and presentation to Council expected Q1 2017.

Preliminary concepts – Guiding Principles

The preliminary concepts for short-, medium-, and long-term changes and upgrades to Crowchild Trail reflect the outcomes of the iterative engagement outcomes of Phase 3 of the study. The concepts align with City policies, and with technical design standards and guidelines for a skeletal roadway.

The short-term concepts reflect changes and upgrades to segments of Crowchild Trail that leverage resources and expertise, and align with feedback received throughout the course of the study from Calgarians. The concepts are expected to improve traffic flow and operations along Crowchild Trail over the next several years, and also provide some improvements to access and mobility for transit and active modes in the near term. *Short-term options were developed such that no private property is required.*

The medium- and long-term preliminary concepts identify possible impact to private properties along Crowchild Trail. Every effort was made to limit the impact to private properties. Design parameters such as operating and design speeds in areas with private property impacts was assessed throughout the project team's technical review and analysis, providing a balance between technical requirements and non-technical priorities. As an example, the design concepts between Memorial Drive NW and 16 Avenue NW are anticipated to operate at 60kph, allowing for an optimization of roadway geometry to better align with the context of the roadway with bordering communities, and minimizing impact to private properties. Impact to private properties varies along the length of Crowchild Trail, from partial impact to property access, to impact to property parcels that do not impact the physical structures, to impact to entire property.

Crowchild Trail – Bow Trail – Memorial Drive Interchange

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Structural rehabilitation of the bridges within the Crowchild Trail – Bow Trail – Memorial Drive interchange area began in March 2016, starting with the bridges across the Bow River, and the Crowchild Trail bridge over eastbound Memorial Drive NW. The bridge rehabilitation is expected to add an additional 35 years of life to the structures. Work underway in 2016 is predominantly substructure work, and does not materially affect the possible outcomes of the Crowchild Trail Study. This was intentionally planning knowing this study was underway.

The Crowchild Trail Study project team has been working in close consultation and coordination with the Roads division to align the corridor study with the structural maintenance work required along Crowchild Trail. Together, the teams have advanced structural planning and design of the bridges to determine if the bridges can be widened to accommodate additional lanes along Crowchild Trail, and developed plans to integrate widening of the bridges with the rehabilitation work currently underway.

The City has determined that the bridge across the Bow River can be widened to accommodate one additional lane in each direction (two lanes total). An opportunity exists to undertake this widening by the end of 2018 (2016, 2017, and 2018 construction seasons) in conjunction with the bridge rehabilitation schedule of work. The Bow River bridge widening project would also include:

- A realignment of the westbound to northbound Bow Trail and 10 Avenue SW ramps that enter Crowchild Trail from the median (inside) lane to the outside lane across the Bow River;
- A shift of the northbound to eastbound exit ramp to Memorial Drive NW approximately 100 meters to the north;
- Three continuous northbound lanes from Glenmore Trail SW through to University Drive NW. Structural rehabilitation and strengthening of the northbound Crowchild Trail bridge over Bow Trail would be required, and is tentatively scheduled for the 2017 and 2018 construction seasons. Life cycle rehabilitation of this bridge structure is required independent of the outcome of the Crowchild Trail study, but can be planned and designed to align with the recommendations listed herein.
- Three continuous southbound lanes from University Drive NW to Bow Trail SW;
- Removal of forced lane drop at the northbound to eastbound Bow Trail ramp, providing instead for a typical exit lane;
- Four northbound lanes along Crowchild Trail between Memorial Drive and 5 Avenue NW (three continuous lanes + an auxiliary lane from the westbound Memorial Drive to northbound Crowchild Trail on-ramp);

Three roadway optimization projects are also proposed, and are detailed in **Attachment 4** of this report. In general terms, the optimization projects recommend left-turn restrictions during peak traffic hours at selected intersections, restricting several unsignalized all-movement intersections between 16 Avenue NW and 24 Avenue NW to right-in right-out movements only, and some enhancements to pedestrian and active modes access and crossings.

The outcome of this plan leverages Administration's combined efforts and resources, combined with extensive work with Calgarians throughout the study, to improve traffic flow along the corridor, as well as provide some active modes and transit improvements to mobility and access along and across the corridor in the near term. The plan aligns with the project's key principles,

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reflects the feedback received from Calgarians over the last year, and provides Calgarians immediate benefit and investment value for the coming years.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

Engagement Strategy

A foundational element of the Crowchild Trail Study process is that it ties engagement to the entire planning and design process, whereby discussion with Calgarians drives the course of the study. Phase 1 employed a collaborative process whereby an engagement design team (EDT) worked with the project team to develop the engagement process for the corridor study. Phases 2 through 6 employ an iterative engagement process, whereby stakeholders and the public are provided opportunities for both **gathering** ideas, and then **refining** those ideas into final **confirmed** output, directly linking engagement to the planning and design process.

Engagement techniques are selected to allow stakeholders to interact with each other, as well as with the project team, to further understanding of how multiple perspectives can be accommodated within the study. Selected techniques expose stakeholders to the diversity of feedback received and collated by the project team, balance the needs of stakeholders and the public, and provide a forum for all Calgarians to participate and contribute towards the study's final outcomes.

Engagement Approach

Throughout each phase of the study, City expertise and stakeholder lived experience will form a combined input towards the subsequent study phase, as summarized in Table 1, below:

Table 1: Engagement Approach

Phase 1	City engagement plan straw model	+	EDT refined methods and approaches
Phase 2	City policy: 2 goals and 3 Key Principles	+	11 Stakeholder developed goals
Phase 3	Stakeholder provided ideas	+	City technical and effort-to-implement review
Phase 4	City developed concepts	+	Stakeholder evaluation
Phase 5	City recommendations	+	Stakeholder refinement
Phase 6	City report-back on process and outcomes	+	Stakeholder evaluation of process

Reporting & Evaluation

An integral element inherent in the iterative engagement strategy is regular reporting back to stakeholders and the public on what was heard, as well as reporting on how feedback from engagement was used to inform the next phase of the study. "What-We-Heard" reports, by engagement session or activity, inclusive of verbatim comments received are posted to the Project Library. High-level summaries of the results of each phase are also posted on the Project Library. Each phase of engagement incorporates into its activities and communications materials how input from the preceding project phase was integrated into the current phase.

Engagement Implementation – Phases 3 & 4

Consistent with the study's targeted and broad-based engagement strategy, The City first hosted several workshops and drop-in sessions for residents bordering Crowchild Trail, as well as for emergency response agencies, business owners, and major institutions along Crowchild Trail, followed by workshops for the general public. Participants at every workshop were asked

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to share their ideas and thoughts on possible changes to Crowchild Trail. Technical and discussion facilitators worked with participants to further expand on ideas brought forward, and worked together to explore the benefits, constraints, trade-offs, and implications or impacts of ideas presented. This facilitated approach allowed the technical specialists to share their knowledge and expertise with participants, and provided participants an opportunity to better understand the benefits, constraints, trade-offs, and implications of their ideas.

As the project transitioned to Phase 4, the project team met with many of the property owners and businesses along Crowchild Trail that were identified as potentially impacted by medium- or long-term preliminary concepts for Crowchild Trail. These meetings occurred prior to adjacent residents and public release of the Phase 4 preliminary concepts. The project team is committed to continue working with this group of residents and businesses throughout the course of the study, ensuring open, transparent, and comprehensive dialogue and discussions about the options and recommendations for the Crowchild Trail Study.

Strategic Alignment

The Crowchild Trail Study aligns with the transportation goals identified in the 60-year Calgary Transportation Plan (CTP), the Calgary Municipal Development Plan (MDP), and the 2020 Sustainability Direction, including:

- CTP Goal No. 1: Align transportation planning and infrastructure investment with the city and regional land use directions and implementation strategies;
- CTP Goal No. 2: Promote safety for all transportation system users;
- CTP Goal No. 5: Promote economic development by ensuring the efficient movement of workers and goods;
- CTP Policy 3.1: Maintain automobile, commercial goods and emergency vehicle mobility in Calgary while placing increased emphasis on sustainable modes of transportation (walking, cycling, and transit).
- Sustainability Principle for Land Use and Mobility No. 4: Provide a variety of transportation options; and
- MDP Key Direction for Land Use and Mobility No. 5: Increase mobility choices.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

This report was reviewed for alignment with The City of Calgary's Triple Bottom Line (TBL) Policy Framework. The following implications were identified to date:

Social: Recommendations of the study will be measured against the three key principles of the study, two policy goals, and eleven project goals developed with Calgarians in Phase 2. Recommendations will align with the MDP, CTP, and the Transportation Corridor Policy.

Environmental: Recommendations of the study will be measured against the three key principles of the study, two policy goals, and eleven project goals developed with Calgarians in Phase 2. Opportunities to improve travel and mobility along and across the corridor will for all travel modes will be considered, as well as opportunities to improve park and gathering spaces, and the Bow River environment.

Economic (external): The City is working with area businesses, stakeholders, and institutions along the corridor to identify issues and concerns. The study will develop recommendations to

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preserve economic vitality and goods movement along the corridor, while developing opportunities for land redevelopment and renewal.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget:

Funding for the Crowchild Trail Study is contained within Transportation Planning's Functional Studies budget under program 617-OB1. No changes to current or future operating budgets will occur as a result of this report.

Current and Future Capital Budget:

Recommendations outlined in this report will require allocation of capital funding for short-term changes and upgrades to Crowchild Trail. Class 4 construction cost estimates have been prepared at the time of this report. Approximately \$10M of the required cost is currently funded under Program 128-885: Bridge Rehabilitation and Protection, for the Bow River and Memorial Drive bridges. Approximately \$50-85M of additional funding will be required in 2017 and 2018.

Crowchild Trail improvements are identified in Investing in Mobility 2015-2024 as a high-priority unfunded project. Funding was not allocated for this project for 2015-2024 because a new plan was required that identifies future improvements for the corridor. One Hundred and fifty million dollars was identified as a placeholder amount to reflect the need to invest in the corridor in the short-term, pending completion of a plan and additional funding identified. There is now sufficient information to guide funding towards the recommended short-term improvements as part of this study.

It is necessary to review existing funding commitments to make available the funding needed to implement the short-term improvements. If Council desires that this work should proceed, Transportation will include this as a candidate project as part of the capital budget recast and reprioritization work planned to be considered in September 2016.

Risk Assessment

The key risk to the success of the study was to address the legacy of a strong, negative perception from the 2012 study. A fundamental shift in The City's approach to corridor planning, guided by the Transportation Corridor Study Policy, and integration of an engagement and communications strategy focused on addressing the legacy issues on Crowchild Trail into the project process, has helped move the project forward.

Engagement and communications tactics and techniques that offer Calgarians opportunities to interact with each other and with the project team, as well as providing Calgarians multiple opportunities to participate throughout the entire study through several mediums, has also helped to rebuild relationships with stakeholders.

As the study proceeds through to completion, the study team will continue to work with Calgarians to develop of short-, medium-, and long-term solutions for the Crowchild Trail corridor.

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REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The new six-phase process developed for the Crowchild Trail Study ties corridor planning and design directly to engagement, provides project information, and maintains clear, consistent and transparent communication.

The opportunity exists to implement short-term changes and upgrades to Crowchild Trail, leveraging Administration's combined efforts and resources, combined with extensive work with Calgarians throughout the study, to improve traffic flow along the corridor, as well as provide some active modes and transit improvements to mobility and access along and across the corridor in the near term. The plan aligns with the project's key principles, reflects the feedback received from Calgarians over the last year, and provides Calgarians immediate benefit and investment value for the coming years.

A December 2016 project update is planned to inform Council of the study's final recommendations.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Phase 2: Project Goals Engagement Process Summary;
2. Phase 3: Evaluation Summary;
3. Phase 4: Short-, medium-, and long-term preliminary concepts;
4. Recommended Crowchild Trail Study optimization projects.