

## **MEDIA BACKGROUNDER: Traffic Bridge Decisions**

The City Centre Plan, a report received by City Council late last year, sets a new population growth target of 15,000 people downtown. Such a plan to curtail urban sprawl must also consider a plan that accommodates all forms of travel.

The City' Growing Forward! Growth Plan to 500,000 is looking for ways to bolster environmental leadership and sustainable growth. Part of the plan will be to consider how to cross the river with rapid buses. It's quite possible the plan will have a recommendation using the Traffic Bridge for rapid buses. All options will be explored.

The Growth Plan stresses the need to design the City for "complete streets" – roadways for cars, trucks, pedestrians and bicycles.

However, as Saskatoon continues to grow to half a million, the city will require more river crossing capacity for motorized vehicles.

The Traffic Bridge Needs Assessment and Functional Planning Study Final Report delivered in January 2012 highlighted the following:

Traffic Bridge Closed to Vehicles – Traffic conditions at the intersection of Broadway Avenue/12th Street experience increased delays and queue lengths with some movements operating at an unstable/low level of service. During periods when movements on other bridges are restricted for maintenance unstable traffic flow may occur (p. iv).

### **Public Consultation Results**

#### June 22, 2010

Approximately 250 to 300 people attended the first open house.

- 545 people provided input. Approximately 125 persons attending the open house completed comment forms, and another 420 people responded to the survey at the online community forum open until mid July.
- Nearly all wanted to maintain a river crossing at this location.
- The majority of respondents wanted to see the Traffic Bridge rehabilitated.
- Opinions were split in terms of whether it should be a pedestrian/cyclist-only bridge or a bridge for vehicular traffic as well as pedestrian and cyclists.

#### August 24th 2010

Because of structural concerns the Traffic Bridge was closed. At the same time the Buckwold Bridge had limited capacity because of maintenance work. This culmination

of events reinforced the significance and value of the Traffic Bridge for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists.

As a result, the only options Council considered were options that included all modes of transportation -- cars, bicycles and pedestrians.

### September 15, 2010

More than 400 people attended this open house. The public was asked to provide input on the four remaining options:

- rehabilitation of the existing bridge
- replacement with a modern steel truss bridge;
- replacement with a conventional bridge;
- replacement with a signature bridge.
- Nearly 1000 people provided input.
  - Comment forms were filled out by 360 of those who attended the open house.
  - Over 600 people responded to the online survey.

After this open house the signature bridge option was dropped.

### October 20, 2010

150 people attended the open house:

- 285 people provided input.
  - 105 completed comment forms
  - 180 people completed the on-line survey

### December 20, 2010

City Council approved the recommendation from Administration that the width of the driving lanes on the new, modern steel truss bridge should be 3.7 meters, and that a 3m-wide multi-use pathway to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists be on both sides of the bridge.

Council also approved that each driving lane on the new bridge be painted with 'sharrows' to encourage cyclists to use the bridge deck rather than the shared-use pathway and to advise motorists that bicycles are allowed.

At the time the report estimated that the construction time will be 18 to 24 months, and that the cost to replace the Traffic Bridge with a modern steel truss bridge will be between \$27,000,000 and \$34,000,000.

Currently, the project manager places a replacement value of \$35,000,000 for the Traffic Bridge.

August 14, 2013

City Council is informed the Administration has commenced the procurement for the P3 business case for the North Commuter Parkway project, and provided expected project timelines. The proposal included the Traffic Bridge replacement as a 'bundled' project with the North Commuter Parkway Bridge project.

November 28, 2013

A briefing note to City Council explains a complete Business Case for the Round 5 intake must be submitted no later than March 31, 2014. The brief says the City is finalizing the complete Business Case and will be submitting to PPP Canada before March 31, 2014.

March 31, 2014

City Council approves the North Commuter Parkway & Traffic Bridge Replacement project use a P3 delivery model; and when a successful funding application is received from PPP Canada, the Administration present a final funding plan.

June 9, 2014

Council approves the funding plan for the project clearing the way for the Administration to proceed with a Request for Qualification process.

October 3, 2014

Three proponents are shortlisted for the Request for Proposal stage.

October 14, 2014

City Council approves a four-step de-scoping ladder to for, part of the RFP to address project affordability.

December 23, 2014

The RFP is issued to the shortlisted proponents.

June 22, 2015

City council approves a plan to give bidding contractors more flexibility on how many Parker truss spans can cross the river. This move could save as much as \$15 million.