

Report to Council

Report Title: Disaster Mitigation Fund Valleyside Cliff Erosion Grant Application

Prepared By: Fiona Hamilton, Director of Legislative and Legal Services (Clerk)

Department: Clerk's

Date: July 11, 2023

Report Number: CLK2023-15

File Number: C11CL, D03

Attachments:

Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby approves Report Number CLK2023-15 – Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Valleyside Cliff Erosion Grant Application, prepared by Fiona Hamilton Director of Legislative and Legal Services (Clerk) and in doing so authorizes applying for the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund for work protecting the toe and cutting back the slope along the valleyside cliff in Walkerton at an estimated total project cost of \$8,500,000.00 plus HST;

And further authorizes staff to obtain a secondary opinion by a geotechnical engineer of the existing information;

And further authorizes staff to seek letters of support from the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority, and other interested agencies;

And to apply to the Bruce Power Environment and Sustainability Fund;

And to undertake more detailed consultation with the local Indigenous communities.

Report:

Background:

At the meeting on January 10, 2023, Council received a delegation from BM Ross with information about the Environmental Assessment process associated with addressing the erosion along the cliff face at Valleyside Drive in Walkerton. At the meeting, 5 alternatives were presented:

1. Protect the toe and regrade the slope by cutting (\$7,820,000 + HST)
2. Realign the river, protect the toe and regrade the slope by filling (\$>7,820,000 + HST)
3. Realign the river, protect the toe, complete filling and cutting (\$>7,820,000 + HST)
4. Protect the toe of the slope – leave bank (\$3,100,000 +HST)
5. Do nothing (which would still have included ongoing monitoring and other actions).

At the meeting, the recommended approach was Alternative 4, as it was the most cost-effective solution that addressed the problem, minimized impacts to adjacent properties and was supported by the fluvial geomorphology review. For these reasons, Council endorsed proceeding with Alternative 4 as the Preferred Alternative.

At the meeting, however, BM Ross indicated that some additional feedback and comments were required before the Environmental Assessment could be completed, including feedback from the geotechnical engineers (engineers that specifically study of soils under the influence of loading forces and soil-water interactions).

After the meeting, the geotechnical engineers (“WSP”) expressed concerns with the Preferred Alternative that was selected. WSP was instructed to complete a more detailed analysis and provide a report for consideration through the Environmental Assessment process.

While a final report has not yet been provided, WSP has suggested that protecting the toe may not protect from slippages from the slope up above, resulting in two issues – 1) the difficulty in protecting the workers during construction of the proposed toe protection given the unstable slopes above them; and 2) that the toe protection may be damaged by slippages from the slope above. As a result, WSP is in support of Alternative 1, protecting the toe and cutting the slope above.

Analysis:

There is a significant increase in the cost associated with Alternative 4 and Alternative 1. Given the significant jump in cost, the proposal at this time is to obtain a secondary opinion by a geotechnical engineer of the existing information. This information is not expected to be completed until September of 2023.

In the meantime, however, staff have started researching potential applicable grant applications to support the project. The largest and most promising funding stream is the [Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund](#) through the federal government. This fund is aimed at projects that protect against the impacts of climate change, including natural hazards like erosion and flooding. The proposed projects must be a minimum of \$1 million in total eligible costs and the fund will pay for 40% of the total eligible costs. Generally speaking, the projects funded through this program are upwards of \$8 million.

The recommendation at this time is to apply for the grant based on Alternative 1, which would include both protecting the toe and cutting back the slope to allow for the greatest possible project costs. If it is determined in the future that Alternative 4 is still viable, the project scope could potentially be amended at that time. The deadline to apply for the fund is July 19, 2023. While it was initially expected the cost would be \$7,820,000, the recommendation from BM Ross is to increase this to \$8.5 million plus HST due to inflation.

Along with the application, Brockton should attempt to obtain letters of support and/or consider strategic partnerships with organizations such as the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority, and the Lake Huron Fishing Club (as a previous successful partnership for the removal of the Truax Dam). Further, given the more intrusive recommendations made by WSP, staff suggest reaching out for more detailed consultation with local Indigenous communities.

In addition to seeking out letters of support as above, staff are seeking Council’s authorization to also apply to the Bruce Power Environment and Sustainability Fund, along with any other potential third party funding sources.

Strategic Action Plan Checklist:

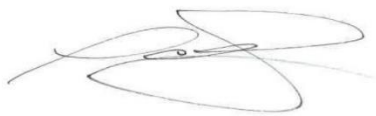
What aspect of the Brockton Strategic Action Plan does the content/recommendations in this report help advance?		
• Recommendations help move the Municipality closer to its Vision		Yes
• Recommendations contribute to achieving Heritage, Culture, and Community		Yes
• Recommendations contribute to achieving Quality of Life		Yes
• Recommendations contribute to achieving Land Use Planning and the Natural Environment		Yes
• Recommendations contribute to achieving Economic Development		Yes
• Recommendations contribute to achieving Municipal Governance		Yes

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding:

- Do the recommendations represent a sound financial investment from a sustainability perspective? Yes

The Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund is one of the granting streams with a funding envelope large enough for the scope of the proposed project, however it still provides funding for only 40% of the total eligible project costs. As a result, staff will need to continue to seek external funding partners and other grant opportunities.

Reviewed By:



Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer

Respectfully Submitted by:



Director of Legislative and Legal Services (Clerk)

Reviewed By:



Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer