

# Report

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Date July 17, 2024  
Subject Street Banners and Gateway Signage

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## **PURPOSE**

To provide an overview of North Cowichan's current street banner program and to explore whether Council wants to expand the program to include additional locations to display street banners, and to improve upon gateway and municipal hall signage.

## **BACKGROUND**

In spring 2023, North Cowichan celebrated its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary, which included community event celebrations as well as special branding. Part of the branding included incorporating street banners into existing and new spaces.

A total of 128 banner locations were identified in North Cowichan, of which 38 were made available to the municipality to use. This included 18 new banners added to the municipal hall and the Cowichan Aquatic Centre parking areas while the remaining 20 were allocated along Chemainus Road. The balance of the existing banner locations are in Chemainus (20 on Chemainus Road, 16 on Highway 1 at Henry Road) and Crofton (34 on Joan Avenue at Queen Street), which are managed by the area BIA or community association.

As the 150<sup>th</sup> celebrations have ended, there is an opportunity to replace the 38 celebratory banners with simple branded 'North Cowichan' banners that would be more timeless but still clearly represent the North Cowichan brand. There is a sufficient budget to replace these banners in the fall of 2024 and an opportunity to expand the program across the community in 2025.

Staff would like to explore the creation of 'gateway' signage for North Cowichan and the replacement of the existing highway sign at the municipal hall, which displays an older municipal logo featuring a mountain and lake scene with a barn and fish.

## **DISCUSSION**

### Expansion of the street banner program

Staff have identified several potential new locations for banner installations within Maple Bay and the South End, and adjacent to municipal facilities and parks. A street banner program could incorporate resourcing to maintain and change existing banners as needed and add new locations as feasible. Staff will further develop a street banner program for Council's consideration as part of the 2025 business planning and budget discussions.

### Gateway signage

The existing gateway highway signs are modest and simply announce the boundary between North Cowichan and its neighbouring jurisdiction (CVRD, City of Duncan).

Should Council wish to further expand the brand of North Cowichan, there is an opportunity to explore options for more prominent gateway signage and to develop a cohesive branded look for gateway and municipal hall signage.

The options could include new signage installed near Panorama Ridge Road on the Trans-Canada Highway and at the planned pedestrian overpass at the highway and James Street as design for that infrastructure is underway.

Should Council wish to explore the gateway signage opportunity, staff will engage the services of a consultant to develop concept plans, options, and initial costings for Council's consideration as part of the 2025 business planning and budget discussions.

## **OPTIONS**

(1) **(Recommended Option)** THAT Council direct staff to:

- (1) develop a street banner program that includes themed banner options and expanded locations, and bring back to Council as part of the 2025 business planning process, and
  - (2) engage the services of a consultant to identify locations, scope, and potential costs associated with updating the municipal hall highway sign and the existing North Cowichan gateway signs, and to bring back to Council as part of the 2025 business planning process.
- The street banner program would be included in the 2025 Business Planning and Budget process, including costs associated with themed banners and expansion of locations.

(2) THAT Council deny the request to expand the street banner program and explore gateway signage.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

Updating street banners, highway, and gateway signs will improve North Cowichan's brand recognition which aims to differentiate the municipality from the surrounding communities. New infrastructure such as the hospital, RCMP detachment, secondary school, and new housing, particularly in the Berkey's Corner and Bell McKinnon areas, are an opportunity to showcase North Cowichan as a forward-thinking and progressive community.

Costs to print and replace existing '150' banners can be covered under existing budgets for approximately \$6,000. Additional costs associated with an expanded street banner program and signage consultant for improved highway and gateway signage would be brought forward to Council as part of the 2025 Business Planning and Budget process later this fall.

The cost of contracting a consultant to review and make recommendations on an improved highway and gateway sign program is expected to be approximately \$25,000, which can be funded through existing budgets.

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**RECOMMENDATION**

THAT Council direct staff to:

- (1) develop a street banner program that includes themed banner options and expanded locations, and bring back to Council as part of the 2025 business planning process, and
- (2) engage the services of a consultant to identify locations, scope, and potential costs associated with updating the municipal hall highway sign and the existing North Cowichan gateway signs, and to bring back to Council as part of the 2025 business planning process.

Report prepared by:



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**Approved to be forwarded to Council:**



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