

Kinsol Trestle, Archie Browning Centre to be funded

By Jeff Bell, Times Colonist
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Funding was announced yesterday for 174 infrastructure projects across the province with a combined value of \$719 million. Costs are being shared among federal, provincial and local governments. Both the federal Infrastructure Stimulus Fund and the Communities Component of the Building Canada Fund -- a federal-provincial partnership -- are part of the funding. The federal government is contributing \$244 million for the projects and the province \$233 million, with the rest coming from local government sources.

On southern Vancouver Island, projects range from \$5.7 million for restoring the Cowichan Valley's historic Kinsol Trestle to just under \$2 million for an upgrade to Esquimalt's Archie Browning Sports Centre. The towering trestle, which crosses the Koksilah River at the south end of the Cowichan Valley, has long been the object of preservation efforts and calls to replace damaged and unsound timbers. The almost 90-year-old structure, last crossed by a train in 1979, is considered a vital link in the Trans Canada Trail.

The venerable Archie Browning Sports Centre became an issue in last year's municipal elections after the then-council first voted to close the complex and then decided against it. The prospect of the facility being shut down generated considerable negative response from the community, and was considered a factor in the successful run for mayor by Barb Desjardins.

Other funded projects include:

- Saanich -- \$4 million for the David Foster Arts Centre, a project announced by Saanich in June for the Cedar Hill Recreation Centre. The 7,500-square-foot arts facility will be located in new and renovated space.
- Oak Bay -- \$7.65 million for a low-pressure sewer system in the Uplands area.
- Victoria -- \$2.7 million for an upgrade to First Peoples Gallery at the Royal B.C. Museum (federal and provincial contributions only) that will improve the heating, ventilation and air-conditioning -- essential elements when dealing with artifacts; \$5 million for work on a steel watermain.
- Central Saanich -- \$2 million for expansion of Boulders Climbing Gym at Stelly's Secondary School. The start of the climbing gym dates back to 1993 and comes from a concept championed by now-retired teacher Peter Mason. It has since evolved into a community facility run by a not-for-profit society.
- North Saanich -- \$3.6 million for wastewater treatment at Swartz Bay.
- Sidney -- \$1.1 million for the Sidney-Lochside Waterfront Trail; \$2.3 million for improvements to Iroquois Park, a 2.8-hectare green space. The concept for the project includes general upgrades and the addition of such facilities as a water park and a multi-sport court area.
- Langford -- \$13.4 million for a sportsplex at City Centre Park; \$1.8 million for stormwater flood protection.
- Sooke -- \$909,000 for work on a waterfront recreation area; \$1.2 million for Sooke and Electoral Area Parks and Recreation Commission to do an arena upgrade and addition.
- Galiano Island -- \$1.35 million for road resurfacing (federal and provincial contributions only).
- Saltspring Island -- through the Capital Regional District, \$238,000 for a water-system upgrade at Mount Belcher; \$6.8 million for a new library building for the Saltspring Island Public Library Association.
- Mayne Island -- through the Capital Regional District, \$4.5 million for a wastewater and water-system upgrade at Village Point.