



## CITY OF VANCOUVER

# A15

### Administrative Report

Date: December 1, 2005  
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Meeting Date: December 13, 2005

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: Director of Current Planning

SUBJECT: Register Update and Statements of Significance (SOS) for Schools - Award of Contract

#### RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council approve the initial phase of the Vancouver Heritage Register (Register) Update and Statements of Significance project for Vancouver School Board schools with an estimated cost of up to \$75,000 for:
- i) historical context statement;
  - ii) themes/criteria for school Register additions;
  - iii) shortlist and prioritizing of possible Register candidates; and
  - iv) Statements of Significance (i.e. community heritage register records consistent with B.C. Register of Historic Places documentation standards) for a first set of 17 sites (from the short-list).

The source of funding is \$40,000 from the Provincial Government and \$35,000 from the Vancouver School Board.

- B. THAT Council authorize the Director of Legal Services to enter into a service contract with the Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services to receive up to \$40,000 towards this project. This contract shall be on terms and conditions acceptable to the Director of

Legal Services in consultation with the Director of Current Planning and may include an indemnity from the City to the Province for any additional costs incurred.

- C. THAT Council authorise the Director of Legal Services to enter into a contract with Commonwealth Historic Resource Management Limited on terms and conditions acceptable to the Director of Legal Services in consultation with the Director of Current Planning, at a total cost up to \$75,000 including GST and disbursements to complete the initial phase of the Register update and Statements of Significance for Vancouver School Board schools.
- D. THAT upon completion of the Register records, Council direct staff to report back with recommendations for Register additions and updates.

#### **GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS**

The General Manager of Community Services RECOMMENDS approval of the foregoing.

#### **COUNCIL POLICY**

Council approval is required to enter into contracts which are not covered by departmental standing authority. Council approval is also required in order to grant indemnities to third parties.

#### **PURPOSE**

This report seeks Council approval for an initial phase of the Vancouver Heritage Register (Register) Update and Statements of Significance project for Vancouver School Board sites at an estimated cost of up to \$75,000. To achieve this, Council is asked to enter into a contract with the Province and the recommended consultant for the delivery of the Register Update and Statement of Significance project. The standard agreement documents proposed by the Province includes an indemnification of the Province for any additional costs incurred.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Provincial Government has granted the Vancouver School Board (VSB) approximately \$400 million to seismically up-grade schools in Vancouver. Of the 109 VSB schools in the city, 35 school sites are on the Vancouver Heritage Register. Through a very preliminary estimate, it appears there may be another 35 schools that could have heritage value. However, this last estimate is based on the age of the building only and not a thorough analysis of heritage value. Given the Province's funding formula for upgrading costs, as many as 20 of these potential heritage schools could be at risk of demolition and replacement. For those sites that have sufficient value to merit inclusion on the Register, the City and the VSB have agreed to explore retention options through an integrated, cooperative planning process.

To this end, on July 21, 2005 Council directed staff to "consult with the Vancouver School Board and Provincial Ministry of Education regarding their Seismic Mitigation Program for schools to achieve the following: establish an interest based planning process to develop

creative solutions that meet the interests of the Provincial Ministry of Education, the Vancouver School Board and the City's goals of heritage preservation."

A related, but separate development is the establishment of the new Federal Historic Places Initiative in 2003. This initiative has introduced a valuable set of heritage planning tools relevant in the Canadian context with ongoing funding to support its implementation at the provincial and municipal levels. A Statement of Significance (SOS) is one of the key planning tools that contribute to interest based planning. It summarizes the core heritage values of a heritage site and is developed through detailed research. The Provincial Government has mandated that all new municipal Heritage Register records include an SOS. Statements of Significance achieve the following:

- explain what is formally recognized on a Vancouver Heritage Register site;
- describe the core heritage values to a wide range of audiences;
- identify the key character-defining elements;
- provide a values-based vision for property owners, planners, developers, architects, Council and others involved in the conservation and revitalising of heritage site as a guide to understanding where significance lies;
- assist in decision-making by broadly outlining what needs to be preserved and where changes are appropriate; and
- serve as a reference document for applications to the Federal Commercial Heritage Property Incentive Fund.

In 2003 and 2004, Council approved Statements of Significance consultancy projects for buildings in Gastown, Chinatown, Hastings Street and Victory Square using municipal funding and leveraged senior government funding.

## DISCUSSION

The primary objective of the recommended consultancy is to review all VSB school sites not on the Vancouver Heritage Register, group them according to levels of heritage merit and determine which warrant addition to the Register. Funds in the consultancy will also be used to produce SOSs for an initial subset of 17 sites. Highest priority will be given to sites currently identified for demolition and replacement. The SOS will ensure informed conservation decision-making in the Seismic Mitigation Program planning. This consultancy will address the first phase of the VSB Seismic Mitigation project. Further phases will be reported back to Council with funding requests for contributions from senior governments and the School Board.

For 2005/2006, the third year of SOS funding, the Federal and B.C. Provincial Governments are prepared to contribute \$40,000 to the City of Vancouver. The remaining funding for the school consultancy is \$35,000 from the Vancouver School, for a total of \$75,000.

The Expressions of Interest (EOI) was advertised in the Vancouver Sun on Friday, November 18, 2005. A total of seventy firms and individuals were sent information on the proposal call. The four respondents to the EOI were asked to submit a proposal. Three submissions to the Request for Proposals were received and evaluated by City and Vancouver School Board staff based on the consultants' approach and ability to undertake the work, and the number of SOSs they are committing to complete. Based on this evaluation, staff recommend the contract be awarded Commonwealth Historic Resource Management Limited for up to \$75,000. This firm meets all City risk management requirements.

At its November 28, 2005 meeting, the Vancouver Heritage Commission supported the recommended Register Update and Statements of Significance consultancy for the Vancouver School Board schools.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

All funding for the recommended consultancy comes from senior levels of government and the Vancouver School Board. The City of Vancouver's contribution is an in-kind contribution of staff time from existing budgets for project management and reviewing the deliverables.

### **CONCLUSION**

This report recommends Council approve a project budget of up to \$75,000 for the initial phase of the Vancouver Heritage Register Update and Statements of Significance project for Vancouver School Board schools. This work will ensure informed conservation decision-making in the Seismic Mitigation Program for VSB schools. The source of funding is senior levels of government and the Vancouver School Board. Council authority is sought to enter into the contracts with the Province and the recommended consultant.

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