



CITY OF VANCOUVER

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: November 29, 2005
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TO: Standing Committee on Planning and Environment
FROM: General Manager of Engineering Services
SUBJECT: Central Valley Greenway Section 1 - Detailed Design

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. THAT Council approve the detailed design of Section 1 of the Central Valley Greenway, and staff report back on the awarding of the construction contract, using funding for the project approved in 2004.
- B. THAT Council approve the following increases to the Operating Budget, without offset, beginning in 2007 and subject to an annual review:
 - \$42,660 to the Streets Operating Budget for horticultural maintenance;
 - \$12,350 to the Traffic Operating Budget for sign and paint maintenance;
 - \$5,300 to the Sanitation Operating Budget for litter collection and street sweeping; and
 - \$5,940 to the Electrical Operating Budget for street lighting maintenance.

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager of Engineering Services RECOMMENDS approval of A and B.

COUNCIL POLICY

On July 18, 1995, Council adopted the Vancouver Greenways Plan. The Central Valley Greenway was one of fourteen citywide greenways identified in the Plan.

On March 27 2001, Council approved, in principle, the False Creek Flats Urban Structure Plan which included development of the Central Valley Greenway. This plan is currently under review.

On June 13, 2002, Council approved the Great Northern Way Lands Public Realm Plan which included development of a multi-use path along Great Northern Way.

On February 24, 2004 Council approved \$4.63 million for the Federal Government's Urban Transportation Showcase Program (Showcase), including the design and construction of the Central Valley Greenway.

On July 19, 2005 Council adopted the South East False Creek (SEFC) Official Development Plan. The plan envisioned the Central Valley Greenway providing a cycling connection with the False Creek Flats, in addition to the primary east/west commuting cyclist route on 1st Avenue in bicycle lanes.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to obtain Council approval of the detailed design and an increase to the Operating Budget, and to report back on the awarding of the construction contract for Section 1 of the Central Valley Greenway.

BACKGROUND

The Central Valley Greenway (Greenway)

The CVG is one of the fourteen greenways identified in the 1995 Vancouver Greenways Plan, and is an integral part of the Greater Vancouver Regional Greenway Vision. When complete the Greenway will provide residents of Greater Vancouver with a virtually flat, continuous 25 kilometre route linking key residential, employment and shopping areas, schools and post-secondary institutions in Vancouver, Burnaby and New Westminister.

The Vancouver portion of the Central Valley Greenway is divided into three sections:

- Section 1: Science World to Clark Drive
- Section 2: Clark Drive to Commercial Drive
- Section 3: Slocan Street to Boundary Road
- The portion of the Greenway between Sections 2 and 3, Commercial Drive to Slocan Street, was completed in 2002.

Early in 2006, staff will report to Council on the detailed Design of Sections 2 and 3 of the Central Valley Greenway.

Urban Transportation Showcase Program (Showcase)

On November 26, 2003, Transport Canada announced that the Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority (TransLink) had been awarded up to \$8.8 million under Transport

Canada's Urban Transportation Showcase Program. The City of Vancouver and TransLink are collaborating on six projects under the Showcase, the Central Valley Greenway being one project. The funding agreement with TransLink and Transport Canada requires that the Greenway, including Section 1 between Science World and the intersection of Clark Drive and Grandview Highway North, be complete by March 2007.

Great Northern Way Lands Public Realm Plan

In 2001, Finning International Inc. donated 7.6 hectare of their site on Great Northern Way to establish the Great Northern Way Campus. The Campus is a collaboration of the four major post-secondary institutions in the lower mainland: The British Columbia Institute of Technology, the Emily Carr Institute, Simon Fraser University and the University of British Columbia.

In 2002, Council adopted the Great Northern Way Lands Public Realm Plan to shape the development of the lands formerly owned by Finning. The plan includes a long term vision for Great Northern Way that includes treed and landscaped medians, and a multi-use path on the north side of Great Northern Way. In order to make room for the new medians, the curb on the north side of the street will be re-located to the existing property line and the multi-use path will be developed within a wide landscaped setback between the street and the Campus. Funding for these improvements will be provided by Great Northern Way Campus and will be implemented when the Campus is developed in the future. The multi-use path proposed in this report is considered an interim measure that will eventually be replaced by the new path.

False Creek Flats (FCF or Flats) Planning Process

In 2001, Council adopted an urban structure plan for the Flats which included the Greenway between Clark Drive and Science World. The 2001 False Creek Flats plan was a long term vision predicated on the current rail uses moving out of the Flats. The decision to phase out rail operations in the Flats was based on a perceived decline in demand. In 2004, a study was done of the rail uses in the Flats and it concluded that rail use would increase due to increasing Port demand and suggests that a 'without rail' scenario in the Flats is no longer applicable, even in the long term. In 2005, Council directed staff to begin a planning process to develop a new plan for the Flats. The process includes a visioning phase to explore possibilities for re-configuring the existing rail footprint, as well as the future alignment of the Central Valley Greenway. The visioning plan for the Flats is expected to be complete by 2007.

DISCUSSION

Central Valley Greenway in the Flats

Originally, Section 1 of the Central Valley Greenway was located in the Flats and included a pedestrian and cyclist bridge linking to Clark Drive. Three factors have serious implications for this portion of the Greenway: the new False Creek Flats planning initiative, the rail study and the timing requirements of the Showcase Program grant.

One requirement of the Federal grant is that the projects be completed by 2007. Successful completion of the Central Valley Greenway within the Showcase Program schedule is important to ensure continued funding for all six Showcase projects in Vancouver. Therefore, to take advantage of the Federal grant, and provide maximum flexibility for the future

development of the Greenway in the Flats, staff in conjunction with the public and various interest groups developed an alternative route for Section 1 of the Central Valley Greenway, which avoids the central rail area of the Flats. It was decided to proceed with the construction of the Greenway using existing street rights-of-way along the southern border of the Flats, instead of building the bridge at this time. Once the planning process for the Flats is completed and the long term land use plan is determined, the feasibility of a pedestrian and cyclist bridge will be re-evaluated.

Knowing that the rail yards will remain in the Flats for some time, staff reviewed alternative alignments north and south of the Flats. A natural alignment was to connect the multi use path approved as part of the Great Northern Way Lands Public Realm Plan and the bike lanes approved for 1st Avenue in SEFC. The new alignment will complete the connection between Clark Drive and Science World, generally following GNW and 1st Avenue to Ontario Street, and linking Great Northern Way Campus, Vancouver Community College, VCC SkyTrain Station and SEFC.

The Design

The major components of the greenway include: (Refer to Appendix A - limited distribution)

- Ontario Street: Seaside Greenway to 1st Avenue - the use of existing off-street facilities until SEFC is developed;
- 1st Avenue: Ontario Street to Prince Edward Street - construction of a widened sidewalk along the north side of the street for inexperienced or recreational cyclists and the potential for on street bike lanes for more experienced cyclists;
- Prince Edward: 1st Avenue to Great Northern Way - construction of a widened sidewalk along the north side of the street for inexperienced or recreational cyclists and the potential for on street bike lanes for more experienced cyclists;
- Great Northern Way: Prince Edward to Glen Drive - construction of an off street multi-use path on the north side of Great Northern Way;
- 6th Avenue: Glen Drive to Clark Drive - construction of off street multi-use paths on both the north and south sides of 6th Avenue;
- Clark Drive Bridge: 6th Avenue to Great Northern Way - construction of an off street widened sidewalk along the east side of the bridge.

The project includes the installation of new traffic signals on 1st Avenue at both Quebec and Main Streets. In addition, continuous tree planting, improved lighting, rest areas and landscape are proposed throughout the route. Public art is not included in the project at this time due of lack of funding. Staff proposes to incorporate public art into this section of the route in the future.

The City and TransLink are collaborating with PWL Partnership Landscape Architects, Earth Tech Engineering, and CitySpaces Planning to develop the design, manage the construction and conduct public consultation.

The Public Consultation Process

Three open houses were held, two to review the concept design, and one to review the detailed design. Five hundred invitations to the open houses were delivered to residents, businesses, and property owners in the area. Information about the open houses was also distributed through posters, newspaper ads and the City website.

Public consultation is typically not conducted during the months of July and August because of the summer holidays. The Showcase funding agreement requires that the Central Valley Greenway be completed by 2007; therefore it was decided to proceed with the public process during the summer months in order to complete construction on time. In order to maximize the public opportunity to participate in the process, two open houses were held in August.

The first open house was Tuesday August 16, 2005, from 3:30 to 7:30 pm at the Science World outdoor bandstand. The bandstand is located on the Seaside Greenway along the False Creek Seawall. Seventy people attended the open house and fifty-five completed the questionnaire and provided input on the concept design. Forty percent of those who attended the open house were cyclists, in-line skaters and people walking by. The second open house was on Wednesday August 17, 2005, from 3:30 to 7:30 pm at the Great Northern Way Campus Conference Centre located on the proposed greenway route. Twenty people completed the questionnaire and provided input on the concept design. Ninety-five percent of the people at the open houses expressed support for the greenway.

The detailed design was developed based on the input received from the public at the first two open houses in August. The third open house, to review the detailed design, was held on Tuesday November 8, 2005, 3:30 to 7:30 at the Great Northern Way Campus Conference Centre. A newsletter and survey (Appendix A) were delivered to residents, businesses and property owners, as well as those who attended the first open houses. Thirty-five people attended the open house and provided input on the concept design. Forty four people returned a completed survey by mail, fax, and at the open house. In response to the survey question "Are you supportive of the plans for the Central Valley Greenway - Section 1 as proposed?" 69 % said yes, 21 % said no and 10 % were neutral. Generally people were very positive about the changes the greenway would bring to their neighbourhood.

The design has been reviewed by the Bicycle Advisory Committee, the Urban Transportation Showcase Steering Committee, the Central Valley Greenway Working Committee and TransLink.

The Challenges

In addition to the challenge of responding to the new planning initiative for the Flats described above, two other significant challenges involved in developing Section 1 of the Central Valley Greenway were raised during the public consultation process. These challenges are getting between Clark Drive and Glen Drive, and parking on 1st Avenue. Each challenge is discussed below.

Getting between Clark Drive and Glen Drive

Following the decision not to proceed with the pedestrian and cyclist bridge staff reviewed a number of design options for getting between Clark Drive and Glen Drive along 6th Avenue. The proposed design, which utilizes off street paths on both the north and south side of 6th Avenue between Clark and Glen Drives, was developed from comments received from the public at the open houses and from members of the Bicycle Advisory Committee. The proposed alignment meets the Central Valley Greenway requirements and can be completed within the prescribed time frame.

The existing intersection of 6th Avenue and Clark Drive provides a series of challenges for the development of the Central Valley Greenway. Staff has determined that this intersection is critical for the movement of goods to and from the Port. In response to questions from

residents, the addition of another crossing on the north side of 6th Avenue and Clark Drive was reviewed. It was determined that major modifications such as this would be detrimental to the movement of transport vehicles and would likely increase conflicts between pedestrians and motorists given the complex vehicle movements. However, other modifications to improve the pedestrian and cyclist crossing such as “no right turn on a red” will be reviewed. In order to simplify the crossing of the 6th Avenue and Clark Drive intersection, the Central Valley Greenway is located on both sides of 6th Avenue. This provides more choice for users, who have the opportunity to either cross 6th Avenue at Clark Drive or at the bottom of the hill at Keith or Glen Drives where there are fewer traffic movements.

Parking on 1st Avenue

To make the new alignment safe and accessible for cyclists of all ages and abilities, bike lanes are proposed for consideration along 1st Avenue. These bike lanes would connect with those already approved for 1st Avenue west of Quebec Street. To accommodate the bike lanes on the street, one lane of parking would need to be removed. The remaining on street parking would be located primarily on the north side of the street. The existing on street parking was reviewed, and every attempt was made to retain the maximum amount of on street parking while providing space for the bike lanes. Now there are approximately 144 on street parking spaces and after the development of the bike lanes there would be 74 spaces.

1st Avenue is primarily light industrial, and some people with businesses located on the south side of the street expressed concern about the proposed changes. Currently some of the businesses utilize commercial loading zones on the street. Should the bike lanes proceed, these businesses would continue to be able to stop and load on the south side of the street.

There is one residential artist live/work building on 1st Avenue. There are 40 on site parking spaces for the 67 suites in the building. At the time of development the parking requirement was relaxed and therefore available parking is less than typical for this type of building. Generally residents support the greenway but are concerned about the reduction of on street parking. In response, the City would work with residents to develop a resident permit parking zone on 1st Avenue adjacent to their building.

Further review of the tradeoffs between the parking and the proposed bike lanes is required during the next phase of the design, and will include additional consultation with interested members of the community.

In addition, some residents and business people have expressed concerns about the current lack of parking regulations. In response to these concerns, the City will work with the residents and businesses to provide better access, and parking turnover.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Funding for the design and development of the Central Valley Greenway under the Showcase Program was approved by Council in 2004. The total project budget is \$6.765 million, including planning, design and construction. The project funding is being shared by the City, TransLink and Transport Canada. The Showcase cost sharing agreement requires that the Greenway be completed by March 2007. The share of the funding is divided as follows:

Funding Partner	Share of Capital Funding
City of Vancouver	\$2.13 million
TransLink	\$2.76 million
Transport Canada	\$1.875 million
Total Project Budget	\$6.765 million

The City share of the funding for the project has been allocated from the 2004 Capital Budget under order group CB2EA6D. The City will be reporting to TransLink on a quarterly basis during the life of the project to recover Capital costs.

The long term success of the Greenway will require annual maintenance and a corresponding increase to the Operating Budget. Funding increases, without offset, are recommended to the following Operating Budgets beginning in 2007 and subject to an annual review.

Operating Budget	Cost Centre/ Cost Element	Function	Funding Increase
Streets	37190/713103	Horticultural maintenance	\$42,660
Traffic	32700/709608	Sign and paint maintenance	\$12,350
Sanitation	35040/706000	Litter collection and street sweeping	\$5,300
Electrical	33090/707000	Street lighting maintenance	\$5,940

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Urban Transportation Showcase Program is a key component of the Federal Government's *Action Plan of Climate Change*. The program calls for the creation of community showcase programs to demonstrate and evaluate ways of reducing greenhouse emissions from transportation and to address other urban challenges, such as air quality, congestion, safety and rising operating costs. The Central Valley Greenway addresses these challenges by providing alternate non motorized ways for people to travel around the city to work, shop, and recreate. The Greenway provides places for people to meet and socialize, improves air quality and provides wildlife habitat through increased plant diversity. Safety is improved through the use of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles such as lighting.

CONCLUSION

Section 1 of the Central Valley Greenway is the first step in developing a regional greenway system through the region's designated Growth Concentration Area. Based on the directive of the Council approved Vancouver Greenways Plan and the support of the residents for this design staff recommend that the proposed measures for the Central Valley Greenway, as outlined in this report, be approved by Council for construction.

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