



CITY OF VANCOUVER

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: January 2, 2007
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TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: General Manager of Engineering Services
SUBJECT: Expo Boulevard North Sidewalk North of BC Place

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council allocate \$300,000 from the GreenLinks fund for the construction of a sidewalk on the north side of Expo Boulevard, north of BC Place (Expo Boulevard Sidewalk).

COUNCIL POLICY

- o False Creek North Official Development Plan (FCN ODP), By-Law No. 6650, approved April 10, 1990 and last amended in July 2001
- o Vancouver Transportation Plan (1997)
- o Downtown Transportation Plan (2002)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval for funding from the GreenLinks fund for the construction of a sidewalk on the north side of Expo Boulevard north of BC Place.

BACKGROUND

Section 3.3 of the False Creek North Official Development Plan (FCN ODP) requires that "a variety of means of moving through the area be provided, including streets, walkways, bicycles routes, transit and ferries", as illustrated in Figure 9b of the FCN ODP.

The 1997 Vancouver Transportation Plan and 2002 Downtown Transportation Plan investigated transportation modes in the downtown core and recommended initiatives for improvement. Key elements within each study included creating pedestrian priority areas in commercial centres, providing additional facilities to improve pedestrian comfort and safety and to promote a walkable downtown.

A 2001-2002 Pedestrian Study completed by the City of Vancouver indicated that walking activity is the highest in the downtown, where high employment and residential densities, regional shopping and educational destinations, and an efficient street grid, help make walking an attractive mode. Pedestrian volumes recorded during the study indicated that the annual pedestrian growth rate between 1991 and 2002 was 1.4% (9,400 pedestrians per year), which is almost triple the annual growth rate of 0.5% for the previous study period of 1977 to 1991.

The GreenLinks fund originated from a letter of agreement with Concord Pacific dated April 3, 1990, in which City Council agreed to reduce the number of parking spaces to be built around BC Place Stadium. The established GreenLinks fund represents an equivalent cash payment in lieu for reduced parking spaces and is to be applied to integrate pedestrian/bicycle/transit networks with the downtown area.

DISCUSSION

As part of the rezoning conditions of the Concord Area 7B site (Costco site between the Georgia and Dunsmuir Viaducts) a Pedestrian Circulation Study in the vicinity was completed. The study identified that the poorest pedestrian linkages in the area are the sub-standard sidewalks in the tunnel section of the Expo Boulevard between Griffiths Way and Terry Fox Way. Improvements to the sidewalks would improve pedestrian safety and allow for an increase in the volume of pedestrians using Expo Boulevard to access the False Creek waterfront.

To address the poor pedestrian linkage along Expo Boulevard north of BC Place, it is proposed to construct a sidewalk on the north side of Expo Boulevard to connect the existing sidewalks of the Costco Wholesale store at 651 Expo Boulevard and the Pivotal building at 858 Beatty Street (corner of Smithe St. and Beatty Street). The existing condition along Expo Boulevard is a south sidewalk, three vehicle travel lanes, an oversized 3.8 m bicycle lane and a north curb and gutter. The south sidewalk wraps around existing BC Place columns and in some sections narrows to 0.85 m in travel width. This is not conducive to safe wheelchair access and general pedestrian travel. A north sidewalk does not exist.

The recent grand opening of the Costco Wholesale store on November 10, 2006, north of Expo Boulevard between the Georgia Viaduct and Dunsmuir Viaduct, will increase pedestrian usage of Expo Boulevard in this area. The existing conditions on the north side of Expo Boulevard do not lend themselves to pedestrian accessibility and safety due to the uneven travel surface, a number of vehicle crossings and the unsightly conditions.

It is proposed to construct a 2.0 m wide, approximately 260 m long sidewalk on the north side of Expo Boulevard between Griffith Way and 70 m east of Terry Fox Way. The construction of the sidewalk will reduce the oversized bicycle lane on the north side of Expo Boulevard from

3.8 m to 1.8 m, and construct the 2 m wide sidewalk in its place. The existing lighting conditions for both vehicle and pedestrian travel through this corridor are adequate and will not be upgraded.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Funding for the construction of the Expo Boulevard Sidewalk would be allocated from the GreenLinks fund (Capital Budget order group CB3EA6I) in the amount of \$300,000.

CONCLUSION

The Expo Boulevard Sidewalk will provide better pedestrian routing and safety along the north side of Expo Boulevard, which will see increased pedestrian usage with the opening of the Costco Wholesale store and the BC Place and GM Place stadium events. The construction of the Expo Boulevard Sidewalk will increase pedestrian accessibility and safety in the North False Creek area.

Staff recommends Council approve GreenLinks funds for the construction of the Expo Boulevard Sidewalk.

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