



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: December 4, 2008
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Meeting Date: February 3, 2009

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: General Manager of Engineering Services
Manager of Supply Management

SUBJECT: Streets Operations Fleet Addition - Salt Spreaders

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council approve the allocation of \$149,605 from the Truck and Equipment Plant Account to add five (5) salt spreaders to the Streets Operations fleet.
- B. THAT the capital and operating costs be repaid to the Truck and Plant Account through annual charges of \$33,350, funding to be added to the Streets Operations Operating Budget.
- C. THAT Council waive the normal bidding process and authorize the General Manager of Engineering Services and the Manager of Supply Management to acquire by direct purchase, five (5) Swenson Model EV-100 slip-in salters from Del Equipment at a total cost of \$149,605 plus applicable taxes (less any municipal rebate received); source of funding to be the Truck and Equipment Plant Account.
- D. THAT, no legal rights or obligations will be created by Council's adoption of Recommendation C above unless and until such purchase orders are executed and delivered by the Manager of Supply Management.

COUNCIL POLICY

Council approves expenditures from Reserves, including the Truck and Equipment Plant Account.

Council approves all increases in service levels, including the addition of vehicles and equipment to the fleet.

The policy of Council is to secure contracts for the purchase of equipment, supplies and services that will give the best value, based on quality, service and price.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to request Council approval to add five (5) salt spreaders (salters) to the Streets Operations fleet. Furthermore, this report seeks authority from Council to maintain a standardized salter fleet by waiving the normal bidding process and purchase directly Swenson Model EV-100 salters from Del Equipment.

BACKGROUND

The Streets Operations Branch (Streets) provides snow and ice removal services during the winter season. Removing snow and ice from roadways reduces vehicular accidents, allows emergency vehicles to move throughout the city, and minimizes lost productivity and income due to inaccessible roads. Snow removal is considered to be an emergency situation, and therefore all snow fighting equipment must be ready and available for crews to be able to respond quickly and efficiently during the snow season.

The City's snow fighting equipment consists primarily of salters and plows mounted on City dump trucks. The plows are mounted on the front of the dump trucks and remove snow from the road path. A salter "slips-in" to the back of dump trucks and spreads salt on the road that helps melt snow and ice for the purposes of improving vehicle traction.

DISCUSSION

Fleet Addition

There are currently 46 trucks, comprised of 25 single-axle and 21 tandem axle trucks, in the snow fight fleet that are fitted with both a salter and a plow. The single-axle trucks each carry a 6 yd³ salter, and the tandem axle trucks carry salters with a 10 yd³ capacity.

However, there are an additional four (4) single-axle trucks and one (1) tandem-axle truck and that have only a plow, but no salter attachment. These trucks are essentially an incomplete truck for snow fighting. Four (4) additional salters with 6 yd³ capacity are required and one (1) additional 10 yd³ salter is required to complete the trucks that currently only have plows. With these extra salters, there will be a total of 51 trucks equipped with the salter and plow combination that will be available for snow removal.

This recommendation was developed prior to the extreme weather events experienced from December 13, 2008 to January 10, 2009. A review of the City's snow and ice management procedures is currently underway and will be reported in the spring of 2009. The purchase of these five salters is expected to support the outcome of the review as service levels are likely to be increased.

Salter Standardization

In 1996, through a public tender process, the City replaced six (6) salters with the Swenson Model EV-100 slip-in salters. An additional four (4) units were replaced with the same make and model in 2001. Council approved the standardization of salters with Swenson EV-100

through report RTS 03345 in 2003, and authorized the direct purchase of 24 EV-100 salters in the same report. In 2005, eight (8) EV-100 salters were purchased as well. There are also four (4) salters in the fleet that are not EV-100 model salters because the trucks required a salter smaller than the EV-100 model could offer. All these salters bring the current total number of salters in the snow fight fleet to 46, 42 of which are EV-100. As the salters have a life expectancy of 20 years, it would be beneficial to keep the same make and model for this generation of salters. Some of the additional benefits of maintaining the same make and model include:

- a) Parts Inventory - The City is only required to stock one make of parts and the parts are interchangeable;
- b) Staff familiarity - Maintenance technicians have extensive knowledge and experience with the EV-100 model salters;
- c) Operator familiarity - Operators do not require additional training to operate these spreaders. The cost of maintaining the salters is reduced by minimizing repairs due to error and mis-use of equipment since the operators are comfortable with this model of salter.

The EV-100 has proven to be a reliable spreader throughout the City's years of use of this model. Del Equipment is the sole distributor of the Swenson make of salters in British Columbia, hence no requirement for a request for proposals (RFP).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Del Equipment has provided a quotation to supply five (5) Swenson Model EV-100 salters at a cost of \$30,940 each for the 6 yd³ salters and \$25,845 for the 10 yd³ salter, plus applicable taxes (less municipal rebate) and the Provincial Environmental Levy. Four (4) of the salters will be of the 6 yd³ capacity for the single-axle trucks, and one (1) salter will have a 10 yd³ capacity suitable for the tandem-axle truck. Staff has reviewed the quoted price of the EV-100 salters relative to the cost of the same salters in 2003, and determined that this purchase represents best value to the City when taking into consideration inflation and the currency rate.

The purchase of the five (5) salters will require an allocation of \$149,605 from the Truck and Equipment Plant Account, which will be repaid by Streets over the 20 year life of the salters through internal rental rate charges of approximately \$2,700 each for the smaller salters and \$2,500 for the larger salter, for a total charge of \$33,350; funding to be added to the Streets Operating budget.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The City of Vancouver uses salt to de-ice City streets. Salt has proven to be an effective de-icing material for the ice and snow conditions experienced in Vancouver. The City conducts an annual environmental monitoring program ("Sodium Chloride Monitoring Program") at six locations of five separate fresh water ponds and creeks within the City.

In 2005, the City had an independent environmental assessment of its road salting operations completed by Gordon Berezay, MSC RP Bio, of Stantec Consulting Limited. The report,

entitled "Biological Evaluation of the City of Vancouver Road Salting Operations on Receiving Waters" noted that, based on the test results from our the City's Sodium Chloride Monitoring Program (initiated by the City in 2002), "There is no indication that chloride levels from Road Salt Operations will exceed the guidelines for British Columbia or the United States and do not persist in any of the receiving waters."

CONCLUSION

It is recommended that Council authorize the addition of five (5) salters to the Streets fleet. Accordingly, we recommend that Council authorize the standardization of Swenson EV-100 for this generation of salters, and that the normal bidding process be waived and that Council authorize the direct purchase of five (5) Swenson Model EV100 salters at a cost of \$149,605 plus applicable taxes (less municipal rebate) and the Provincial Environmental Levy.

The funds for the purchase will be allocated from the Truck and Equipment Plant Account and repaid through annual internal rental rates of approximately \$33,350, funding to be added to the Streets Operating Budget without offset.

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