



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: May 27, 2009
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VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20
Meeting Date: June 16, 2009

TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: General Manager of Engineering Services
SUBJECT: Automated Public Toilet Installation

RECOMMENDATION

- A. That Automated Public Toilets be installed on Bute Street north of Davie, and on Robson Street west of Granville, as outlined in this report.
- B. That additional funding of \$135,000 for installation of the City's eight Automated Public Toilets be provided from the 2006-08 Streets Capital Budget, and that this funding be subsequently reimbursed from increased revenue from the 2010 Street Furniture Program.

COUNCIL POLICY

There is no applicable Council Policy.

SUMMARY

In September, 2006, City Council approved the installation of the first eight of sixteen Automated Public Toilets at selected sites around the Downtown area as part of the City's Street Furniture Contract. To date, five of these toilets have been installed as originally described; alterations are now proposed for the remaining three locations.

PURPOSE

To obtain Council approval of the Bute & Davie, and Robson & Granville sites for the installation of two Automated Public Toilets (one small, one large), and to advise Council of the change in the installation at Pigeon Park from a large to a small toilet.

BACKGROUND

The City is currently in the sixth year of a twenty year contract with CBS/JCDecaux to implement a co-ordinated suite of street furniture. Under this contract CBS/JCDecaux provide, install, service and maintain a number of elements, including bus shelters, litter containers, benches, bike racks, multiple publication newsboxes, and Automated Public Toilets. This furniture is provided at no cost to the City (in fact the City receives a revenue stream), and CBS/JCDecaux provide the furniture in return for the exclusive right to sell advertising space on designated street furniture. Through the contract, the City is slated to receive sixteen Automated Public Toilets over a graduated roll-out.

Automated Public Toilets offer an innovative approach to providing public restrooms. Each toilet is self-contained, and following each use, is automatically sprayed, disinfected and dried over a seventy second cleaning cycle. Under Provincial law, these public toilets must be available for use free of charge.

On September 12, 2006, Council approved installation of eight of the Automated Public Toilets at selected locations around the Downtown area. These units were intended to assist with the problems of urination/defecation in public areas in the Downtown Eastside and the Granville Mall entertainment area, to help provide for the need of the significant homeless population throughout the Downtown area, and as well, to generally improve amenities for tourists and shoppers. All of the toilets were sited on City sidewalk except for one large unit designated to be placed in Pigeon Park. Part of one of the recommendations approved by Council included the following: "that the Park Board be requested to approve installation of an Automated Public Toilet on Pigeon Park."

Since that time, five of the units have been installed at the designated locations. Utility connections are currently being completed on the last of these (Robson at Richards). Installation of the sixth unit, approved for Pigeon Park, is to be coordinated with the Park Board's upcoming renovation of that park. Placement of the remaining two units (West side of Homer, South of Dunsmuir and North side of Davie, West of Thurlow), have not been completed due to utility issues.

Provision of these first eight toilets brought this program into alignment with the toilet rollout schedule. Experience to this point indicates that the toilets are generally working well, and that they have been a public benefit. Average use is as shown on the following table. The first unit was placed into service at Thornton Park (Main & Terminal) two years ago.

LOCATION	Avg. Daily use	Max. daily use
Main & Terminal	62	189
Richards & Davie	22	83
Nelson & Howe	18	63
Main & Powell	22	60
Robson & Richards*	n/a	n/a

* Robson & Richards to commence operation within the next few weeks

No complaints have been received regarding the appearance of the toilets. CBS/JCDecaux have experienced some vandalism, and there have been some issues with needles found at the Powell Street location, but so far nothing that has been unmanageable. At present the intent is to report to Council with a review of the operation of the toilets later in 2010. This report will summarise our experience with all units, provide information on usage, comments from Business Improvement Associations and other stakeholders, and recommend a course of action for the remaining eight toilets. Under the terms of the Street Furniture contract, these remaining units are scheduled to be rolled out gradually (approximately one per year), with all units to be in place by the year 2016.

DISCUSSION

Pigeon Park

On March 2, 2009, the Park Board approved the concept plan for improvements at Pigeon Park, as well as the following recommendation related to the automated public toilet:

THAT the Board approve the installation of a public toilet in Pigeon Park by the City's Engineering Services, with final arrangements to the satisfaction of the General Manager of Parks and Recreation in consultation with the General Manager of Engineering Services.

Renovations to the park are expected to proceed this summer, along with construction of the adjacent Carrall Greenway. Installation of the toilet will be coordinated with this work. During redesign of the park, installation of a small toilet was felt to better fit with the small area of the park, as well as be a more practical arrangement for the area. A location has been determined that is satisfactory to both Park Board and Engineering staff. It is proposed that a small unit now be installed rather than the large as originally contemplated.

Additional Locations

Installation of an Automated Public Toilet requires sewer, water, electrical and phone connections for each unit. Detailed utility design at the Homer and Davie Street locations mentioned above, indicated that these sites were not practical to service. Existing duct banks and utility lines interfered with providing a direct sewer connection.

Alternate locations were sought which would be effective in providing a public amenity, which would not unduly impact adjacent business, and which had the necessary sidewalk area and utility services available.

Two locations have been identified, and are proposed as follows:

north side of Robson, west of Granville



It is proposed that a large toilet be located on the north side of Robson, just west of Granville. This is one of the busiest pedestrian areas in the city, and the toilet will provide added convenience for shoppers and tourists. Also, this location will help with the ongoing public urination and defecation problems around the entertainment area. The location is supported by the Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association (DVBIA). Installation of the toilet will be coordinated with upcoming roadway work on the northern curb of Robson Street in this block.

east side of Bute, north of Davie



A small toilet is proposed on the east side of Bute Street, just north of Davie. This location will help provide public facilities for the large number of pedestrians in this area. Pedestrian volumes are generally high, and particularly so during events such as the fireworks and pride parade etc. This location is close enough (two blocks) to be of some use to patrons in Nelson Park, where public toilets are no longer available. The location is supported by the West End BIA, and the Community Policing Office.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There is no direct cost to the City for purchase, maintenance and operation of the toilets - they are funded by CBS/JCDecaux as part of the Street Furniture program. However, the City does have obligations for some of the utility connection costs. The commitment of CBS/JCDecaux for APT installation and utility connection is limited to \$40,000 plus CPI per location. For all eight locations, currently this amounts to approximately \$345,000.

In 2006, the total cost for installing the eight toilets was estimated at approximately \$520,000. The contribution from CBS/JCDecaux was estimated to be approximately \$340,000, and City funding of \$180,000 was provided for the balance. Installation of the toilets has proven more expensive than anticipated, due largely to the high traffic work areas, the challenges of providing electrical power under changing BCHydro rules, and the competition of other projects in the very active construction industry over the last two years. These were the first automated toilets in Canada, and there was no previous experience to guide their installation.

The total cost of installation and utility connection for all units is now estimated to be \$660,000 - an average per unit of \$82,500, broken down approximately as follows:

Sewer	\$15,000
Water	\$5,000
Electrical	\$30,000
Pad	\$20,000
Finishing	\$10,000
Other	\$2,500

With the \$180,000 previously provided, and the CBS/JCDecaux contribution now at approximately \$345,000, further City funding of \$135,000 is required to complete the project. It is proposed this funding be provided from the projected increased revenues from the 2010 Street Furniture program. Under the Street Furniture Contract, the City receives 20% of the gross revenue generated by the street furniture advertising sold by CBS/JCDecaux; they have advised that because of the Olympics in 2010, advertising sales have increased above normal levels for the first quarter of that year. For 2010, the City's share of street furniture revenue is projected to be in excess of \$135,000 above the current budgeted yearly income. As an interim measure, it is recommended the funding be provided from the 2006-08 Streets Capital Budget. This funding is available as some work in this area has been delayed due to construction priorities. It is anticipated the Streets Capital Budget will be fully reimbursed by the 1st quarter in 2010 from the Street Furniture Program revenue.

PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct personnel implications as the toilets are operated and maintained by CBS/JCDecaux.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Experience gained with the first five toilets indicates that these additional units will help in reducing the public urination/defecation problems in the Downtown Eastside and Downtown entertainment areas.

CBS/JCDecaux have indicated they use "green" cleaning products and supplies as well as low-flow water fixtures, energy saving light fixtures etc. where possible within the constraints of the toilet designs.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

These units will provide additional toilet facilities for those people in the Downtown area who may be homeless, or who otherwise cannot find accessible toilets. As mentioned, this will help in reducing the public urination/defecation problems in the Downtown Eastside and Downtown entertainment areas.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Pigeon Park toilet will be installed along with park improvements and construction of the Carrall Street Greenway scheduled for the summer this year. The Robson unit will be installed at the same time as roadway improvements on Robson between Granville and Howe, also planned around the middle of this year. This coordination with other construction requires that these two units be given a higher priority, however it is anticipated that installation of the Bute Street toilet will follow shortly after.

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

These three new Automated Public Toilets will be added to the locations shown on the Public Toilet map on the City website, as well as included in the upcoming City Wayfinding system displays.

CONCLUSION

Installation of these three Automated Public Toilets will complete the pilot program to improve the availability of public washroom facilities in Downtown Vancouver, at minimal cost to Vancouver citizens, and with minimum impact on adjacent development. Completion of the program will aid in providing public facilities around the Downtown during the 2010 Olympics.

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