



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: July 7, 2014
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Meeting Date: July 22, 2014

TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: General Manager of Engineering Services
SUBJECT: Upgrading of Chinatown Dragon Fixtures to Improve Energy Efficiency

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the City participates in a cost-sharing arrangement with the Vancouver Chinatown Merchants Association (VCMA) to renew and improve the energy efficiency of the Chinatown dragon fixture lighting for a total shared budget of up to \$600,000 as follows:

- 1/3 of the budget contributed by the VCMA (up to \$200,000); and
- 2/3 of the budget by City of Vancouver (up to \$400,000, split equally from the Engineering Capital Funds and Downtown East Side (DTES) Capital Funds), subject to the VCMA raising their 1/3 portion of funding required.

REPORT SUMMARY

The VCMA has approached the City to upgrade the Chinatown dragon fixtures to energy efficient LED technology and to repaint the faded fixtures. These fixtures were originally installed approximately 30 years ago as part of a local improvement initiative cost-shared with the city. The proposal is that one third (\$200,000) be funded by the VCMA and two thirds be funded by the City through capital spending (\$400,000).

COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

On July 25, 2012, Council approved the *Chinatown Neighbourhood Plan and Economic Revitalization Strategy*, which identified the enhancement of the public realm, for

both day and night-time users, improves Chinatown's appeal for both residents and visitors, and provides a venue for community programming and special events.

On March 15, 2014, Council adopted the DTES Plan which includes policies to support strategic public realm improvements to enhance and improve public realm quality and create vibrant public places, and to accelerate the implementation of the Chinatown Economic Revitalization Strategy.

CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager of Engineering Services recommends approval of the foregoing.

REPORT

Background/Context

Approximately 30 years ago, the VCMA and the City installed Chinatown Dragon fixtures under a cost-shared local improvement. These fixtures are a recognizable feature that helps define the neighbourhood. These fixtures are in need of a refresh to keep the fixtures well maintained and visually pleasing.

There are 336 dragon fixtures in the Chinatown area. These dragon fixtures are decorative lighting (in addition to the regular street lighting) and are composed of an enclosed frosted screen with compact fluorescent lighting inside (simulating a lantern). An image of the dragon fixture is available in the attached appendix A.

The recently approved DTES Plan supports the directions from the Chinatown Neighbourhood Plan, namely actions that focus on supporting the business community, and developing diversified retail mix, recognition of the area's history, and targeted public realm improvements.

Strategic Analysis

Asset Management

The Chinatown Dragon fixtures are currently based on custom compact fluorescent technology, which is time consuming to service. By switching to LED technology, the ease of maintaining the units will improve (easier to access and replace the burned out lamp) and the frequency of the lamp replacement will be reduced. LED lamps typically will last twice as long as compact fluorescent lamps subject to the operating environment.

Greenest City

The use of LED technology reduces the amount of electrical consumption as well as eliminating mercury which is found in Compact Fluorescent bulbs.

Revitalization of Chinatown

Prior to the approvals of the DTES Plan and the Chinatown Plan, the City has worked with the Chinatown community on revitalization and neighbourhood issues since the early 2000s. It was acknowledged that clear way-finding and better pedestrian amenities are part of the comprehensive transportation strategy to make Chinatown more convenient and accessible. Working with the community, new directional signage was added to bring more people into Chinatown, street signs are now in English and Chinese, and a prominent five-storey neon sign was installed.

One of the key strategies in the Chinatown Plan is to create a vibrant public space and a key policy in the DTES plan is to support strategic public realm improvements to enhance and improve public realm quality and create vibrant public places; the refurbishing and upgrade of the dragon fixtures supports these strategies.

Information about the refurbishing and upgrade of the Chinatown Dragon fixtures was shared with the Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee and the Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee.

Implications/Related Issues/Risk (if applicable)

Financial

The proposal is to cost share the upgrades: 1/3 by the VCMA (\$200,000); 2/3 by the City (\$400,000) split between Engineering and DTES Capital. Engineering and DTES Capital funds have been set aside for this expense in 2014. Any excess costs above a total of \$600,000 would be the responsibility of the VCMA.

Proceeding with this recommendation is contingent on the VCMA raising their 1/3 share of the total capital expense from the community.

As per policy, the City would follow procurement processes to identify and select a vendor for development and installation of the dragon fixtures.

CONCLUSION

It is recommended that the City participate in the cost-sharing agreement to upgrade the Chinatown Dragon fixtures.

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Chinatown Dragon Fixture

