



IN CAMERA

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: November 6, 2019
Contact: Steve Brown
Contact No.: 604.873.7393
RTS No.: RTS 13492
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-21
Meeting Date: November 5, 2019

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: City Manager

SUBJECT: MOU among City of Vancouver ("COV"), University of British Columbia ("UBC") and MST Development Corporation ("MST-DC") to show senior government strong regional alignment and local support for the Arbutus Street to UBC SkyTrain extension

IN CAMERA RATIONALE

This report is recommended for consideration by Council on the In Camera agenda as it relates to Section 165.2(1) of the *Vancouver Charter*:

(k) negotiations and related discussions respecting the proposed provision of an activity, work or facility that are at their preliminary stages and that, in the view of the Council, could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the city if they were held in public;

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council authorize the City Manager to negotiate, approve and execute, on the City's behalf, a non-legally binding Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") with UBC and MST-DC to show senior government strong regional alignment and local support to enable the Arbutus Street to UBC SkyTrain extension (the "UBC Extension");
- B. THAT no legal rights or obligations will be created, and no commitment towards any specific City contribution will be made, by Council's approval of Recommendation A above until City staff present to Council, and Council approves, the terms of any specific legal agreements to be entered into, and the terms of any specific City contributions to be made, by the City to enable the UBC Extension.

COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

- 1997: Council approved the City Transportation Plan which includes a rapid transit line along the Broadway Corridor with possible extension to UBC. The line should serve the needs of city riders as well as other regional users, and should not result in a loss of local transit service.
- March 2000: (Phase II Commercial Drive West) Council recommended that the SkyTrain continue west from Vancouver Community College, via the False Creek Flats and Broadway to Granville Street, with consideration to Arbutus, as part of the Millennium Line Construction Program. A rapid bus extension would connect the terminus (Granville or Arbutus) to UBC.
- April 2002: (Vancouver Transit Strategy) Council re-affirmed its support for the Millennium Line extension as a subway serving the Central Broadway Corridor to Granville Street.
- January 2008: Council passed a motion that the City of Vancouver opposes cut and cover construction for the completion of the Millennium Line through commercial, congested or confined rights-of-way.
- April 2010: Council approved Vancouver's rapid transit principles for the Broadway Corridor to guide staff involvement in the TransLink-led UBC Line Rapid Transit Study. At this time, Council also requested that staff report back at key study milestones including after the development and public review of TransLink's rapid transit alternative shortlist.
- October 2012: Council approved Vancouver's Transportation 2040 Plan which includes "Action T 1.1.1 Work with partners to deliver an underground Millennium Line extension serving the Broadway Corridor as a top regional priority."
- June 2014: Regional Mayors' Council Vision was approved, which calls for rapid transit between Commercial Drive and UBC. As the first phase, the Millennium Line Broadway Extension of SkyTrain in a tunnel under Broadway to Arbutus Street was approved to be delivered within the first ten years of the Vision.
- November 2015: Council approved the Renewable City Strategy which includes priorities that shift Vancouver's transportation system towards renewable energy sources, including a Millennium Line extension under Broadway as a key priority.
- November 2017: Renewable City Action Plan approved by Council is based on assumptions of GHG reductions projected by the sustainable transportation actions from Transportation 2040, including a Millennium Line extension under Broadway.
- May 2018: Council endorsed the Broadway Subway, a primarily tunnelled Millennium Line SkyTrain extension from VCC- Clark to Arbutus; Council also endorsed a set of Principles and Strategies that identify the goals that the City will endeavour to achieve through the Broadway Subway Project and related City activities.
- January 2019: Council endorsed a SkyTrain extension from Arbutus Street to UBC and directed staff to work with partners to advance the design development and to write a letter to the Mayors' Council to inform of Council's support for the selection of SkyTrain technology and further design and consultation on alignment

CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager recommends approval of the recommendations.

REPORT

Background/Context

To help secure senior government funding for the UBC Extension, the City, UBC and MST-DC propose to enter into an MOU to show regional alignment and strong local support for the UBC Extension. This report seeks Council approval for the City to enter into the proposed MOU.

Rapid transit in the Broadway corridor is required to meet City, regional and provincial goals to accommodate the increased travel demands of a growing region, address climate change, and support housing affordability. The first phase of this rapid transit system from VCC Clark to Arbutus, known as the “Broadway Subway”, is funded jointly by the federal government, the Province, and the region (including a contribution from the City of Vancouver). The design and construction process is currently underway. City staff are currently finalizing the negotiation of an agreement called the “Vancouver Municipal Agreement” with the Province that sets out how the City will support and participate in the Broadway Subway project.

In January 2019 Council endorsed the UBC Extension from Arbutus Street to UBC and directed staff to work with partners to advance the design development including public consultation to determine station locations, vertical and horizontal alignment. Council also requested that staff write a letter to the Mayors’ Council on Regional Transportation (“Mayors’ Council”) to inform them of Council’s support for the selection of SkyTrain technology and further design and consultation on alignment. Work has now commenced on the design development but there are currently no funding commitments for business case development, final design or construction of the UBC Extension. The Mayors’ Council is currently developing a funding advocacy strategy to secure funding for the remaining projects in the Vision.

If funding is not secured soon the challenges described above will continue to grow. It is anticipated that on opening day of the Broadway Subway, the 99 B-line connecting from Arbutus to UBC will already be at capacity. In addition, overcrowding will continue to be a challenge on the other east west routes through the City. Currently the bus routes that serve UBC include 4 of the 5 highest ridership routes in the region, as well as the 5 most crowded bus services. This means that there is often no space for Vancouver residents to board these buses and they are passed up by multiple full buses before they are able to board. Recent technical studies have indicated that the only way to solve these capacity issues for regional and Vancouver transit users is to fund and proceed with the UBC Extension.

Strategic Analysis

The proposed MOU will include the following:

- the UBC Extension will be a SkyTrain extension from Arbutus Street to UBC in accordance with the choice of technology endorsed by Council in January 2019;
- strong willingness and alignment of the parties to work collaboratively to enable the UBC Extension;
- contributions towards the regional share of the project costs to be explored by each party (in the case of the City, staff will explore a contribution framework that is generally consistent with the framework used in the Broadway Subway and, once the framework is more advanced, will report back to Council for approval);

- a recognition of the benefit of coordinated and joint advocacy and communication efforts for the furtherance of the project; and
- exploring other areas for future collaboration.

Staff will model City inputs to these areas including any potential for contributions from past agreements and MOU's for rapid transit projects. Staff will seek Council approval before finalizing any contribution framework.

Further legal agreements will be required with the UBC Extension project owner and delivery agent once funding is confirmed and staff will continue to keep Council informed on the process.

Reason for Urgency

The reason for the urgency is the Mayor's pending visit to Ottawa (mid-November, 2019) to meet and engage with the newly elected Federal government. There is a small window of opportunity for the City to settle the proposed MOU with UBC and MST-DC. Equipping the Mayor with an MOU signed by all three parties will demonstrate to the Federal government that the region is aligned and prepared to work together to secure funding and commitment for the SkyTrain extension.

Financial

Any City contributions to support the UBC Extension, and the financial implications of such contributions, will be brought to Council for approval.

Legal

The Memorandum of Understanding described in this report will not be legally binding. City staff will seek Council approval on any future legal rights and obligations for securing any City contributions or agreements to enable the UBC Extension.

CONCLUSION

The UBC Extension from Arbutus Street to UBC is the only way to address the capacity challenges in the corridor for regional and Vancouver transit riders. Staff are seeking Council approval for the City to enter into the proposed MOU with UBC and MST-DC in an effort to establish an official partnership between the parties and secure senior government funding. The MOU will not be legally binding. No legal obligations of the City will be created, and no commitment towards any specific City contribution will be made, until City staff present to Council, and Council approves, any specific legal agreements to be entered into, and any specific contribution to be made, by the City to enable the UBC Extension.

* * * * *