



**IN CAMERA**

**ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**

Report Date: January 15, 2020  
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Meeting Date: January 21, 2020

TO: Vancouver City Council  
FROM: City Manager  
SUBJECT: Appointment of City Engineer/General Manager of Engineering Services

**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*:

(a) personal information about an identifiable individual who holds or is being considered for a position as an officer, employee or agent of the city or another position appointed by the city;

**RECOMMENDATION**

THAT Council confirm the appointment of Lon LaClaire as City Engineer/General Manager of Engineering Services.

**REPORT SUMMARY**

This report provides Council with a brief description of the impetus and rationale for Mr. LaClaire's appointment as City Engineer/General Manager of Engineering Services.

**COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS**

Under section 288 of the Vancouver Charter, the City Engineer is formally appointed by decision of Council. The City Manager is responsible to recommend the appointment or the removal of department heads, pursuant to the Board of Administration By-Law No. 4017 Section 6 (1) (c).

**CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS**

City Manager also concurs with this report.

## **REPORT**

### **Background/Context**

With Mr. Jerry Dobrovolny's announced resignation from employment with the City, the City undertook a comprehensive process for recruitment to replace the City Engineer. As that process extended beyond the conclusion of Mr. Dobrovolny's active employment with the City on October 4, 2019 Ms. Nelms was appointment into the acting role. The recruitment process has now concluded and a new City Engineer has been selected with the following recommendation to Council.

### **Strategic Analysis**

Pinton Forrest Madden (PFM) Executive Search, one of Canada's leading executive search firms, was retained to assist in the search and selection process for the General Manager, Engineering Services. They began their proactive search efforts in September, and reached out to approximately 150 professionals primarily across Canada but also internationally in some select markets. The target was leaders of large and complex engineering departments in the local and provincial government realm.

To ensure a fair, open and transparent process, a career advertisement was also posted across a variety of platforms.

There was significant interest in the role, with 80 people submitting their resume for consideration. PFM presented eight candidates on the long list including two internal candidates. After PFM conducted subsequent detailed interviews with those eight candidates, they presented five candidates to the Selection Committee and the Committee agreed to meet with all five. Two of the candidates were internal, one was from England and the other two were from major centres in Canada.

Prior to the Selection Committee's interviews, the candidate from England withdrew from the competition, as her family determined they weren't ready for an international assignment at this time.

The Committee met with each of the four remaining candidates for 1.5 hours. External candidates were met via videoconference, and internal candidates met the Committee in person. The Committee then deliberated and determined they wanted to bring all four candidates back for an in-person interview.

Prior to the second interview with the Committee, the candidate from one of Canada's major centres withdrew her candidacy, citing cost of living issues. One of the internal candidates also withdrew, as she accepted a role with another organization.

The Selection Committee along with two other members of CLT then met with the two finalist candidates. In addition, each candidate spent some one-on-one time with the City Manager, and they also met with two additional members of CLT in a more informal setting. The external candidate was also asked to spend some time with the Director's group within Engineering Services.

Feedback was collected from all involved parties and PFM conducted references on the external candidate. After looking at all of the information regarding the two candidates and keeping in mind the considerable task at hand for the General Manager moving forward, there was consensus that Lon LaClaire was the ideal candidate for the role.

Lon LaClaire brings many strengths to the General Manager role at the City of Vancouver. Having been with the City for over 20 years, he has been able to move Council's vision forward in a number of ways and understands the complexities of achieving results within an organization as large and complex as Vancouver. Lon is recognized internationally as a leading transportation engineer and has accomplished many firsts for the City, such as completing downtown's first separated bike lane, creating the first urban parklet and now spearheading the 2050 regional transportation strategy. Lon has also had significant major project experience, having been involved in the design of the Millennium Line and Canada Line, and more recently with the Burrard Bridge upgrades. Lon is a natural leader and an excellent relationship builder, and he has earned the respect of internal and external constituents alike. He is known as the "go to" person at the City for many of your external partners and has extensive experience consulting with citizens, business and industry on a wide range of projects and initiatives. Internally, he has revitalized the City's practice of hiring students; he has a coaching and mentoring style and has a good focus on succession planning, ensuring a strong pipeline of current and future leaders who can tackle the difficult and complex issues the department faces.

### ***Implications/Related Issues/Risk (if applicable)***

#### ***Financial***

The recommendation has no financial implications. Consistent with the City's salary administration policies, Mr. LaClaire's remuneration will align with the current annual salary and benefits associated with the position. This is a position already fully funded in the operation budget of Engineering Services.

#### ***Human Resources/Labour Relations***

The appointment of a City Engineer following the completion of a competitive recruitment process is consistent with the approach that the City has followed in similar circumstances in the past.

### ***CONCLUSION***

Council is requested to approve the appointment of Mr. LaClaire as City Engineer/General Manager Engineering Services.

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