

MOTION

7. Centering Community Facilities and Infrastructure in 2023-2026 Capital Plan (Member's Motion B.8)

At the Council meeting on March 1, 2022, Council referred the following motion to the Standing Committee on Policy and Strategic Priorities meeting on March 2, 2022, in order to hear from speakers.

MOVED by Councillor Kirby-Yung

WHEREAS

1. The City of Vancouver Capital Plan is a four-year financial plan for investments in the City's infrastructure and amenities such as water and sewer pipes, roads, sidewalks, curb cuts, traffic signals and bikeways, community centres and recreational facilities, arts and culture spaces, parks and open spaces, fire halls, and libraries;
2. Vancouver's 2023-2026 Capital Plan is currently being developed and is slated for Council review and approval by July of this year;
3. Vancouver's population is expected to grow by approximately 70,000 people in the next 14 years and 188,000 in the next 39 years;
4. Vancouver has an existing infrastructure deficit that is significant and growing. It includes the need for new and upgraded public-serving community facilities, as well as utility upgrades and replacement of core City infrastructure that is at or nearing the end of its life;
5. Aging infrastructure in the City includes water and sewer pipes that date from 1886 to the early 1960s, as well as community centres and recreational facilities that were built between the 1940s and early 1980s;
6. There is also a need to address disparities between "have" and "have not" neighbourhoods with respect to community and public safety facilities such as community centres, ice rinks, and fire halls; ⁱ
7. There is also a growing demand from residents for improved streets and street safety infrastructure such as pedestrian signals and flashing beacons, bike routes, and lighting that support denser neighbourhoods and safely moving about without the use of a vehicle;
8. Community facilities and infrastructure are key to livability in an increasingly dense and unaffordable city. Vancouver's pace has fallen behind in renewing existing facilities and delivering new amenities to serve its current population let alone a growing one. For example, it has taken decades to move forward with renewal of the Marpole Community Centre that was built in 1949;
9. Likewise, the Kerrisdale Arena which dates back to 1949 also needs attention, while at the same time the West End Plan amenities remain outstanding, the Hastings Community Centre renewal has been shelved, and newly-established

and now populated neighbourhoods like the East Fraser Lands do not have a community centre at all;

10. Significantly, the Gastown Complete Street project to protect this historic neighbourhood and unlock its pedestrian potential has not been moved forward;
11. Recently, in response to a Council motion, staff have begun to quantify the downloading of costs by senior levels of government, including spheres of federal and/or provincial government jurisdictional responsibility such as housing and childcare where the City has stepped in to deliver those services to meet community needs;
12. Vancouver also experiences cost pressures and pressures on City operations due to the impacts of the homelessness and mental health and addictions crises. Without the requisite senior government support, these are rapidly eroding Vancouver's ability to deliver on civic and community facilities and infrastructure;
13. A recent staff report estimates the shortfall in senior government capital funding due to cuts and/or reductions in funding – or where funding has not kept pace with cost increases – to be in the order of ~\$230.1 million, with an ~\$158 million shortfall that largely pertains to affordable housing needs and an ~\$50 million shortfall in funding support for the City's Climate Emergency Response;
14. In response to COVID-19 related revenue shortfalls, staff sought and Council approved a reduction of ~\$254 million to the 2019-2022 Capital Plan, as well as an allocation of ~\$65 million of Emerging Priorities funding to support Council priorities on climate emergency response, equity, and resilience. This recalibration of the 2019-2022 Capital Plan was based on a comprehensive review of major programs/projects across all service areas. Projects that were determined could be de-scoped and/or deferred to future capital plans in whole or in part due to the recalibration were largely centred on core infrastructure such as:
 - the installation and/or refurbishment of curb ramps at intersections,
 - the installation of new traffic signals where none currently exist,
 - new street lighting,
 - the Gastown Complete Street project,
 - renewal and expansion of the West End community centre,
 - upgrading of existing sewer mains to meet growth-related demands,
 - and projects to ensure water system resilience among many others; ⁱⁱ
15. Community facilities and core infrastructure, in addition to being a core civic responsibility, are also climate infrastructure. During extreme weather events due to climate change, the city's community centres become cooling and warming centers and gathering spaces where the community comes together. Aging and unseparated sewer pipes can result in overflows and flooding due to extreme weather and degrade our environment;
16. The City's transportation infrastructure, which includes new sidewalks, curb cuts, and traffic lights, also plays a vital role in supporting climate resiliency. Being able to walk and ride safely in your neighbourhood gives people greener alternatives and supports health and livability;

17. On February 9, 2022, Council unanimously supported a motion to align Vancouver's 2023-2026 Capital Plan with increased climate emergency action. The motion directed staff to report back early in the 2023-2026 capital budget planning process with a list of potential capital projects, with associated costs, benefits and estimated GHG reductions, to achieve – among other things – the necessary reductions in the city's GHG emissions to reach, at minimum, the stated goal of 50% reductions in GHG emissions below 2007 levels by 2030;
18. An amendment to the February 9, 2022, motion added direction to staff to also report back with a list of potential capital projects intended to address Vancouver's combined sewer overflows as part of the City's commitment to accelerate action on overflow reduction using a "One Water" integrated approach, including associated costs and environmental benefits; and
19. Having renewed and new community facilities and core infrastructure is essential to residents' quality of life and helps to create equity and ensure climate resiliency. As Vancouver's population continues to grow, and the city's already aging infrastructure and amenities continue to degrade, the City needs to make sufficient, strategic investments to maintain livability and to enhance the sustainability and resilience of our city.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- A. THAT Council direct staff to report back early in the 2023-2026 capital budget planning process with a list of potential capital projects that centers community facilities and aging infrastructure to address the City's significant infrastructure deficit, including utility upgrades and core infrastructure at the end of its duty cycle which needs to be replaced.
- B. THAT the list of potential capital projects include community facilities such as the new East Fraser Lands Community Centre, the renewal and expansion of the West End Community Centre, streets initiatives like the Gastown Complete Street Project, new and improved sidewalks and walking paths, curb ramps at intersections, pedestrian signals and beacons, the installation of new traffic signals where none currently exist to address identified safety considerations, park, green spaces and natural area improvements, as well as priority fire hall renewals.
- C. THAT the report back includes a list of Vancouver's community facilities and core infrastructure including their age, expected useful lifespan and current asset condition.

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ⁱ In developing the current 2019-2022 Capital Plan, a key consideration was to address the City's growing portfolio of aging infrastructure and amenities in a financially sustainable and resilient manner; <https://council.vancouver.ca/20200916/documents/cfsc1.pdf>

ⁱⁱ In July 2018, Council approved the 2019-2022 Capital Plan totalling \$2.8 billion, including \$2.2 billion of City-led capital investments and \$0.6 billion of in-kind contributions achieved through development.