



CITY OF VANCOUVER

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Date: July 7, 2004
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TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: Co-Directors of Planning and the General Manager of Engineering Services

SUBJECT: Work Program, Staffing and Budget for False Creek Flats Planning

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council instruct staff to begin organizing the False Creek Flats Study within existing budgets and that the total budget of \$691,800 for Phase 1 and Phase 2, as outlined in this report, be approved in advance of the 2005-06 Operating Budgets (\$482,028 for 2005 and \$209,772 for 2006) without offset.
- B. THAT any costs associated with 2004 "start-up" activities be funded from the \$41,000 previously approved Flats program funding in the Community Services 2004 Operating Budget.
- C. THAT Staff report back on a detailed long range visioning work program (Phase 2) for the False Creek Flats after the Phase 1 scoping.

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager of Community Services and the General Manager of Engineering Services recommend approval of the foregoing. This Study was initially planned to start in 2004. However, other demands on the 2004 Contingency Reserve mean that if this study is approved to commence in 2004 it will deplete the 2004 Contingency Reserve. Consequently, we are recommending that staffing and other "start up" activities be undertaken in 2004 with Phase 1 of the Program starting in January 2005.

COUNCIL POLICY

In March, 1995, Council approved the *Industrial Lands Strategy*, which included False Creek Flats as an area to be retained for transportation related and downtown serving industrial uses;

In June, 1996, Council adopted the *False Creek Flats Preliminary Concept Plan* which identified locations for high technology industry and commercial uses while preserving the majority of the Flats for city-serving and transportation uses;

In July, 1999, Council rezoned 103 acres of the western portion of the Flats to I-3 to accommodate high technology uses;

In September, 1999, Council rezoned 26 acres along Great Northern Way to facilitate the development of the Great Northern Way Technology Park;

In March, 2001, Council approved, in principle, the *False Creek Flats Structure Plan* and called for Transportation and Rail studies for the Flats to be undertaken;

In July 2003, Council approved the City's participation and cost-sharing of a regional rail transportation study, including the False Creek Flats;

In October 2003, Council approved a terms of reference for a transportation study of the False Creek Flats with a report back on funding; and

In October 2003, Council approved a process to undertake a planning program for the False Creek Flats starting in early 2004, and asked staff to report back on resources and timing.

In addition:

Council has adopted the Transport 2021 Regional Transportation Plan (1993), Vancouver Transportation Plan (1997), Downtown Vancouver Transportation Plan (2002) and Vancouver Transit Strategy (2002).

In May, 2002, Council unanimously carried the motion, proposed by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, to support the Canadian Government's ratification of the Kyoto Protocol.

In May, 2004, Council approved undertaking public consultation of the Cool Vancouver's Task Force's Draft Community Climate Change Action Plan for the City of Vancouver which identifies an emissions reduction target of 6% from 1990 levels by 2021 for the City of Vancouver.

PURPOSE

This report seeks approval of a general work approach, staffing, and budget for the False Creek Flats planning program and transportation study.

BACKGROUND

In October 2003, Council approved undertaking additional planning for the False Creek Flats, including a transportation study that would proceed in tandem, subject to further report back. Specifically, the planning was to:

- Take advantage of a number of opportunities to better integrate the I-3 area in the western and southern Flats into the urban fabric of the city;
- Articulate long-range land use and transportation directions for the False Creek Flats and provide an overall economic development perspective; and,
- Maintain and strengthen the role of the I-2 area in the eastern Flats in servicing the Port and Downtown. Council re-affirmed the city-serving, employment and transportation roles of the easterly I- 2 area of the Flats.

DISCUSSION

Prior to outlining a proposed approach to Flats planning, the major current land use and transportation initiatives are described below.

Rail Study:

A rail study is already underway which is larger in scope than the Flats, but will identify a core rail network for the Flats to meet long term passenger, freight, and Port operations. The cost of the rail corridor study is over \$250,000 which is being cost-shared with project partners Transport Canada, TransLink, Port of Vancouver, Gateway Council, and the Class 1 railways. Council has already approved a \$50,000 City contribution.

Providence Health Care:

The Providence Health Group, in conjunction with the Federal and Provincial governments has purchased an 18 acre site adjacent to Station Street, formerly owned by Schroeder Properties Ltd. and ING Real Estate. Proposed is a multi-disciplinary medical centre, incorporating acute care, associated services, teaching, research and residences. A business case is now being developed which, if approved by the Province in the fall 2004, could lead to a rezoning process which would be cost-recovered from the proponent. This possible cost-recovery initiative would be linked to the overall Flats long-range visioning process.

Academic Consortium/Finning Lands:

The Academic Consortium is located on the former Finning site. While the proponent (Great Northern Campus Trust) is generally satisfied with the site zoning and form of development, they may wish to pursue changes, one idea being to increase the residential component as a means of generating funds for the construction of educational facilities. Depending on the scope of these changes, a cost recovery approach may be employed.

Whitecaps Stadium/Casino Site Inquiries:

The City currently owns 7.5 acres adjacent to Main Street and Terminal Avenue. This area houses a mix of city-serving industrial uses in mostly dilapidated buildings on short term leases, and two Class B heritage building listed on the Vancouver Heritage Register. City staff have received several inquiries on this land, including from casino proponents and from the Whitecaps Football Club. The casino wants a permanent downtown location for their temporary home at the Plaza of Nations. The Whitecaps hope to develop a 15,000 seat

outdoor stadium for soccer and concert performances. If either inquiry emerges as a serious proposal for the City's land, the Director of Real Estate will seek Council approval to proceed with negotiations, and they will be evaluated in the context of this work program.

PROGRAM RATIONALE

The False Creek Flats faces a number of challenges and opportunities that require a creative approach to long-range planning for this area and, within this framework, developing short- and medium-term strategies. The issues at play in the Flats include the following:

- Major initiatives (noted above) are in formative stages. If they are to proceed, these developments need to be integrated with the long term vision for the area and with surrounding neighbourhoods;
- Other proposals in the area could affect future land use, such as retaining the Brussels Chocolate Building (formerly Canada Packers), a Class A heritage building listed on the Vancouver Heritage Register, which should be included in the long term vision;
- Existing transportation facilities and connections are inadequate to serve current initiatives for more intensive land uses within the Flats which will generate significant transportation service demands;
- There is a need to better understand the transportation demand and supply impacts in evaluating any future land uses, including the potential impacts on surrounding established communities;
- Port activity is growing with greater dependence on rail transport; yet land speculation may create pressure to convert industrial rail lands. A better understanding of rail demands is needed and will be forthcoming through the rail study;
- City population and employment continue to grow, especially in the downtown area, and at the same time land for city services is decreasing. How much of the Flats is vital for these services?
- Downtown residential and office development are moving eastward with implications for the Flats; should the Flats provide a new home to some of this growth and/or provide services to these new residential/office areas?
- What role can the Flats play in an economic development strategy for the City? How might the City evaluate the many interesting ideas of high-technology, incubator, mixed use, artist live/work uses etc.?
- How might the Flats build and utilize social capital as part of community and local economic development?
- Opportunities exist to provide better interfaces and linkages to adjacent communities, including the new developments in Northeast and Southeast False Creek;

- There is a rationale to re-examine public amenity levels in the Flats having regard to perceived deficiencies in surrounding neighbourhoods relative to other downtown communities, and to develop an area-wide public amenity strategy that works while planning interfaces and linkages;
- There is an idea emerging for the Flats to become a sustainable precinct which will extend and integrate with Northeast and Southeast False Creek. How might sustainable development objectives be incorporated in the Flats, building on the lessons that are being learned in the Southeast False Creek planning process?
- Heritage resources, additional to the Brussels Chocolate Building, such as the two Class B buildings on the City Lands adjacent to Main Street and Terminal Avenue will have to be considered in the planning process.

PROPOSED PLANNING PROCESS

The Flats Planning process will be undertaken in three steps.

Pre-Planning Process

During 2004 the program will involve a variety of “start up” activities including hiring staff to commence work on the Program in January 2005. The Pre-Planning process will also include an opportunity to consider timing for related projects (See section on Specific Projects and/or Rezoning) to coordinate other initiatives with the Flats Program.

Phase 1 (4 months starting in January 2005)

The challenge to furthering land use and transportation planning in the Flats is the need to consider long range future visions, while recognizing city-serving and transportation needs including the uncertainty regarding further rail rationalization, and responding in a timely way to current major initiatives. There are many interested parties who have varied and potentially conflicting expectations and timelines.

Staff believe that we need a first phase to define the scope and process for both the long range vision and short to medium range projects and related planning work. This phase will provide the opportunity for various interests to articulate their goals, objectives, and issues and understand how they will fit within the planning process. This Phase includes:

- a. Developing Consensus on Scope and Process
- b. Research and Data Collection
- c. Background Transportation Study Work

In this phase it is critical to agree on what will be addressed in the long range visioning process, and how the short and medium term proposals can be handled in this context. Staff faced a similar situation at the outset of the East Port Lands Study. With the help of a well-articulated public consultation process, including a facilitator, we were able to scope and agree on an approach.

In this phase staff will undertake an inclusive scoping exercise to assist the various interests in developing a common understanding of the current situation, constraints, needs, and objectives in the Flats. The first step will be a discussion, with facilitation, with all parties including: business and property owners in the Flats, the eight neighbourhoods that surround the Flats, the Port and rail industry, Translink, the development and business communities, the Economic Development Commission, the Vancouver City Planning Commission (VCPC), and City Council and staff.

The second step will bring the stakeholders together to develop a consensus on the key issues:

- What will the scope of a long range vision be?
- How will it be developed?
- Which short and medium term proposals can be pursued, and how will they relate to the long range process?
- How will the transportation study link with both the long range and the short and medium term processes, including the Vancouver Area Transit Plan?

Through this phase, staff will proceed with a policy review and necessary research and updating of data, including mapping, economic and job analyses, and the preparation of other materials. Staff and the Vancouver City Planning Commission (VCPC) will work to detail an approach to both the long range vision, and short to medium range development, including public participation. This will be reported out to City Council as a detailed work program for Phase 2.

Background transportation work required for the Phase 2 transportation study will also be completed during this phase. This includes developing and calibrating a transportation model of the existing infrastructure and land use for the entire False Creek Flats area and to generate a future model scenario for 2021 using the existing approved high-technology, commercial, and industrial zoning. Previous traffic impact studies for the CN, Finning, and Southeast False Creek lands will be reviewed and incorporated into the overall False Creek Flats baseline transportation model.

Phase 2 Up to 14 months

- a. Long-range Vision Development
- b. Completion of Transportation Study
- c. Specific Projects and Rezoning and Related Planning Work

Further work on the long term vision will continue with on-going involvement of the VCPC. Based on past experience, 14 months should be adequate for Phase 2. However, if Phase 1 results in a different scope and timeline than anticipated, adjustments will be reported to Council.

A transportation planning study on the implications for the proposed structure of streets, transit routes, bikeways and pedestrian connections will be completed in parallel with the long range and project planning of the Flats. The sensitivity of the transportation demand and supply impacts of alternate land use scenarios and transportation network options will be

tested and an overall long term transportation plan and network needed to serve redevelopment of the Flats will be recommended.

Staff are seeking funding for Phases 1 and 2 now at an amount we believe will cover its costs. Providing the budget allocation now will help ensure the Program can commence in January 2005 and a smooth transition from Phase 1 to 2 without delay, allowing us to retain consultants across the phases, providing continuity for participants, and indicating Council's commitment from the outset that a long range vision for the Flats will be completed.

Specific Projects and/or Rezoning

The Pre-Planning and Phase 1 activities will identify which projects and related planning work (e.g. Providence, Academic Consortium) could proceed to a more specific level of analysis to deal with site planning questions simultaneously with the long-range planning work in Phase 2. These projects will likely be handled on a cost recovery basis. As additional resources will be required they will be reported separately to Council and are not included in the budget request in this report.

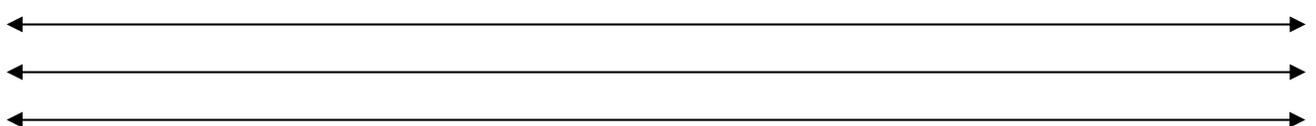
There will need to be continuous communication between the long term vision work and the individual projects. The structure for this will be determined in Phase 1.

WORK PROGRAM

Staff recommend an 18-month planning program that will be fully defined upon completion of the scoping work of Phase 1. It is generally set out in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Work Program

Work Program	2005						2006											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
PHASE 1 Scoping				☆														
Planning	←→																	
Transportation	←→																	
PHASE 2 Long Range Vision																		
Planning					←→													
Transportation					←→													
Consultancies																		



Public Cons/Facilitation																		
Other Planning																		
Transportation																		

☆ Detailed Work Program Report to Council

Staffing: To complete the planning work outlined above a team comprised of a Planner II and a Planning Analyst is required, with management by existing senior staff. The staff team will be assembled during 2004. The Planner II will begin in 2005 with Phase 1 and continue on through Phase 2, with support from the Planning Analyst who will assist and coordinate the public consultation program. Funding for assistance with social and economic impact analysis is being sought to augment Social Planning and other staff resources to help assess and analyze information as to impacts on the various stakeholders which will be important in Phase 1 work.

The transportation work outlined above will also begin in Phase 1 in tandem with the land use planning and continue through the end of Phase 2. The transportation study, including a consultancy, will be managed by a Civil Engineer II from the Transportation Division, who will work with existing staff from the Projects Branch to deal with general major project development and site servicing issues. When necessary, the Planning Analyst will assist Engineering staff in preparing presentation materials for the public consultation process.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The total cost of the work of Phase 1 and Phase 2 including salaries and benefits for four temporary positions, computers, consultancies, and the public program totals \$691,800 as outlined in Appendix B. In developing this proposal staff considered two timing/funding options. One option was to commence work in 2004. Under this option, Phase 1 and part of Phase 2 costs totalling \$295,000 would need to be requested from 2004 Contingency Reserve (\$41,000 is available from previously approved Flats program funding and the remaining \$254,000 would be required from the 2004 Contingency Reserve for the work to be undertaken in 2004). The balance of Phase 2, representing about 12 months of planning and transportation work, is for a total of \$396,800. This amount would be added to the 2005 Operating Budget, without offset.

On advice from the City Manager concerning other demands on the 2004 Contingency Reserve, this report proposes that Phase 1 start in January 2005 and that the total budget of \$691,800 for Phase 1 and Phase 2 be approved in advance of the 2005/06 Operating Budgets without offset.

During 2004 the staff team will be assembled and preparations made for the start of the Flats Program in 2005. Any costs associated with start-up activities will be funded through the 2004 Community Services Operating Budget (\$41,000 is available from previously approved Flats program funding). To the extent that these funds are used to purchase computers and other supplies required for Phase 1 it may reduce funding required from the 2005 budget.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommend that Council approve the general work program, budget and staffing, as outlined in this report to complete the work in False Creek Flats that was approved by Council in October 2003. This work is timely, given the emerging initiatives in the area and the opportunities presented.

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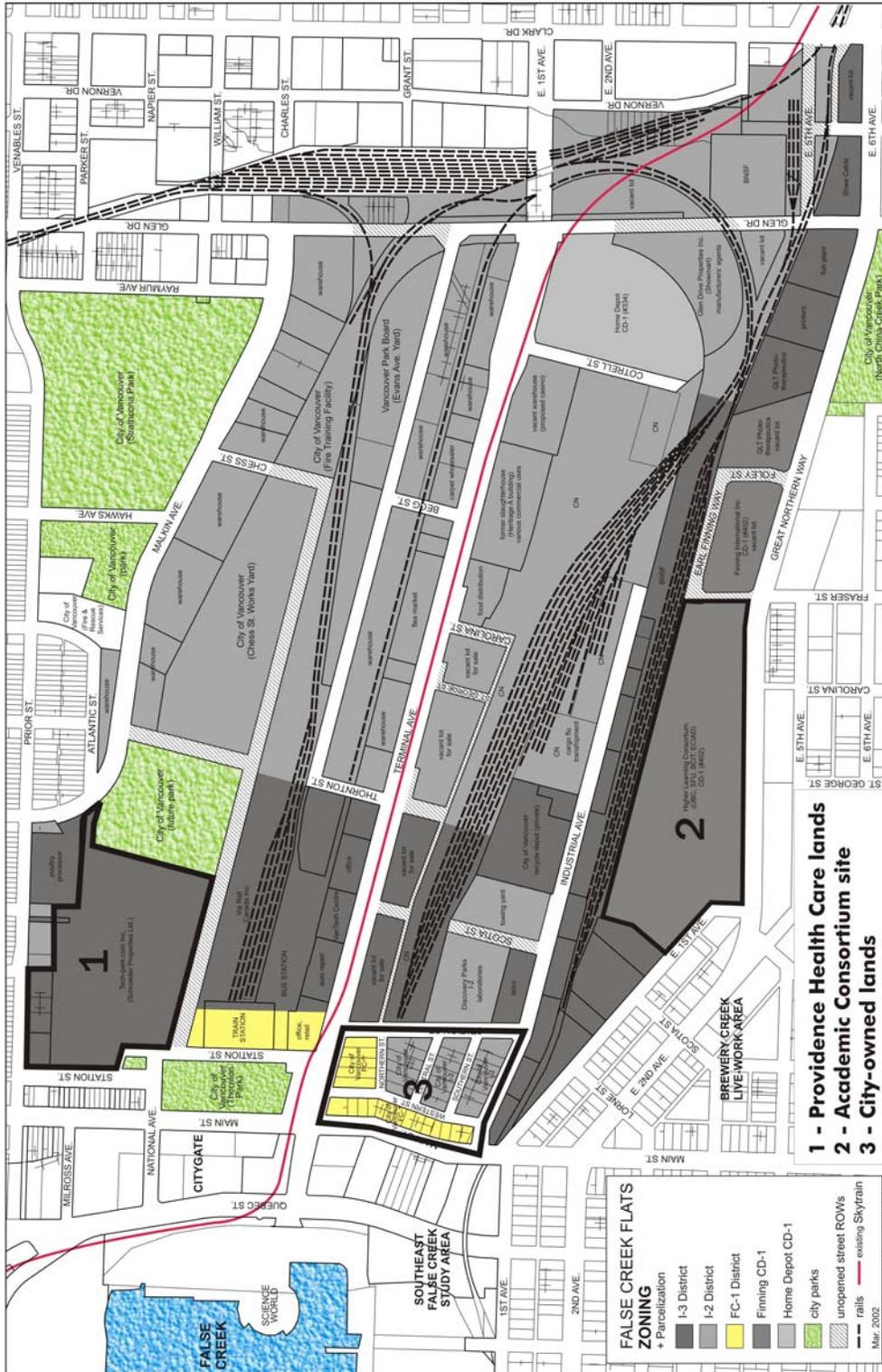


Table 2 - Break-down of Budget (by Phase 1 and 2)

Item	Phase 1 (4 mo.)	Phase 2 (14 mo.)
Staffing (salary, benefits)		
Temporary Planner II	\$25,900	\$ 92,500
Temporary Planning Analyst	\$20,100	\$ 71,900
Temporary Civil Engineer II	\$29,400	\$105,100
Computers, supplies, overtime (planning)	\$ 5,000	\$ 15,000
Computer (engineering)	\$ 5,000	
Public Consultation (facilitator, venues, advertising)	\$15,000	\$ 35,000
Planning consultants/staff (social and economic impacts, design)	\$ 51,900	\$ 70,000
Engineering consultants (transportation)	\$ 50,000	\$100,000
Total	\$202,300	\$489,500

Table 3 - Expenses/Source of Funds (by Fiscal Year)

Item	2005 Budget	2006 Budget
Planning staff (salary, benefits)	\$ 139,948	\$ 70,452
Engineering staff (salary, benefits)	\$ 89,458	\$ 45,042
Computers, office, overtime (planning)	\$ 13,574	\$ 6,426
Computer (engineering)	\$ 5,000	
Public Consultation (facilitator, venues, advertising)	\$ 35,000	\$ 15,000
Planning consultants/staff (social/economic impacts, design)	\$ 91,900	\$ 30,000
Engineering consultants (transportation)	\$ 107,148	\$ 42,852
Total	\$ 482,028	\$ 209,772
Source of Funds		
Add to 2005 Operating Budget	\$ 482,028 *	\$ 209,772
Add to 2006 Operating Budget -		

NEW FUNDING REQUESTED FOR PHASE 1 and PHASE 2

\$ 691, 800

* AVAILABLE FUNDING FROM 2004 CSG BUDGET \$ 41,000
USE OF THIS MONEY TO ACQUIRE PROGRAM SUPPLIES/
SERVICES DURING 2004 MAY REDUCE 2005/06 FUNDING REQUIREMENTS.