

From: ["Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>](mailto:Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca)

To: ["Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"](#)

Date: 5/16/2022 9:49:47 AM

Subject: Council Memo - Prior /Venables Underpass Project Update - RTS 12872

Attachments: ENG - Council Memo - RTS - 12872 - Prior Venables Underpass – Project Update.pdf

Dear Mayor and Council,

Please see the attached memo from Lon LaClaire regarding Prior/Venables Underpass Project Update. A short summary of the memo is as follows:

- In 2019, following five years of comprehensive study and engagement by staff, Vancouver City Council approved a route alignment for grade separation of the Burrard Inlet Rail Line (BI Line) with an underpass along the Prior/Venables Street.
- Working with the Port of Vancouver, the City submitted an expression-of-interest (EOI) for federal funding for the design of the underpass, which was accepted. Staff, however, were not successful to secure full funding from project partners and could not submit a Comprehensive Project Proposal (CPP) by the deadline of January 31, 2022.
- The City will continue to seek opportunities for partnerships with senior levels of government and partners who will benefit from a grade-separated corridor along Prior/Venables Street.
- Staff will submit a new funding application once partnership opportunities are clearly established.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Lon LaClaire at 604-873-7336 or lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca.

Best,
Paul

Paul Mochrie (he/him)
City Manager
City of Vancouver
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The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

MEMORANDUM

May 12, 2022

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Paul Mochrie, City Manager
Armin Amrolia, Deputy City Manager
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk
Lynda Graves, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Maria Pontikis, Chief Communications Officer, CEC
Anita Zaenker, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Neil Monckton, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Alvin Singh, Communications Director, Mayor's Office
Paul Storer, Director, Transportation

FROM: Lon LaClaire
General Manager, Engineering Services

SUBJECT: Prior/Venables Underpass – Project Update

RTS #: 12872

This memo provides an update on the Prior/Venables Underpass project as part of RTS 12872 False Creek Flats Grade-Separated Road Alignment that was brought to Council October 2019.

Since 2019, staff have been working to advance the project through discussions with stakeholders, including senior levels of government, the Port of Vancouver, and railways.

Unfortunately, there does not appear to be sufficient interest from funding partners to advance the project at this point. Staff plan to pause work on the project until more funding partners come to the table.

Project history and benefits

In 2019, following five years of comprehensive study and engagement by staff, Vancouver City Council approved a route alignment for grade separation of the Burrard Inlet Rail Line (BI Line) with an underpass along the Prior/Venables Street alignment. Council directed staff to work with partners to advance the project. In addition, Council directed staff to downgrade Prior/Venables Street to a collector with a 30km/h speed limit near Strathcona Park and to pilot several changes to inform the future design of the street and underpass. The pilot included all-day

parking on both sides of the street and temporary curb bulges to reduce Prior/Venables Street to one lane in each direction. Council will be updated on the pilot through a separate memo.

The Prior/Venables Underpass Project aims to improve reliability of the transportation network, enhance liveability and support economic development for residents, businesses and commuters. The project also supports economic development and trade for the Region, Province and across Canada. Ideally, this project would be completed in advance of the New St. Paul's Hospital and Health Campus opening.

Once fully complete, the Project will provide the following benefits:

- Improve safety and comfort for all road users (including drivers, transit, trucks, pedestrians and cyclists) by reducing conflicts between road and rail traffic.
- Improve travel time reliability on Prior/Venables Street for local truck access and transit vehicles
- Improve emergency responder access to new St Paul's Hospital and Health Campus.
- Enable a more resilient transportation network that supports economic development and jobs
- Improve rail efficiency, reliability and enable increased capacity to the Port to reduce the environmental impacts of trade along the corridor and in the region
- Reduce impacts of the rail corridor on the neighbourhood including to disadvantaged populations in social housing and adjacent communities in Downtown Eastside and Strathcona
- Allow for improvement of Prior Street with great street treatments including wider sidewalks, green infrastructure, street trees, curb bulges, etc.)

Recent work

Working with the Port of Vancouver, the City submitted an expression-of-interest (EOI) for federal funding for the design of the underpass, which was accepted and the City and its project partners were invited to submit a Comprehensive Project Proposal (CPP) in the next stage of the funding application process, which was due for final submission by January 31, 2022.

The first phase of design work was expected to cost \$4M, half of which (\$2M) was expected to be federal government trade corridor funding. The Port of Vancouver and City had each agreed to fund \$500k which left a gap of \$1M.

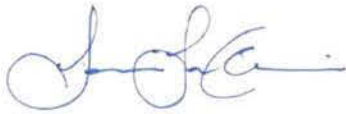
Staff have not been able to secure funding from other project partners, including CN Rail who operates the BI Line. Without full partner investments the City was not able to progress the CPP application to Transport Canada.

Given that design funding was not achieved, construction funding (over \$100M) will be more of a challenge.

Next Steps

The City will continue to seek opportunities for partnerships with senior levels of government and other partners who will benefit from a grade-separated corridor along Prior/Venables Street.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me directly.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lon LaClaire'.

Lon LaClaire, M.Eng., P.Eng.
General Manager, Engineering Services

604.873.7336 | lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca