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To: ["Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"](#)
Date: 7/25/2023 4:18:48 PM
Subject: Response to Questions regarding Growing Communities Fund - Standing Committee July 26, 2023

Dear Mayor and Council,

We have received a number of questions from Councillors regarding the Growing Communities Fund report on the Standing Committee Agenda for Wednesday.

Below are answers to those questions:

1. What more could be done if more of the unallocated \$ was allocated toward transportation safety?

- a. For traffic safety funding, we've looked at our capacity to deliver in the next 2-3 years– the recommendation in the report maximizes what staff feel confident in being able to deliver in that timeframe. If more funding were allocated we would look at options to deliver more, but there is risk that it wouldn't all get delivered during this capital plan period, in which case allocating to other projects that can meet the timeline would be a higher priority.*

2. What more could be done if more of the unallocated \$ was allocated toward public washrooms?

- a. Response in progress*

3. Regarding the Transportation safety & accessibility improvements:

- a. How specifically will the additional slow zones be implemented? Through the use of signs, yellow barriers or other means?
 - i. The slow zones will be implemented with the use of gateway speed limit signage and paint stencils. This is separate from the Slow Streets initiative which introduced the yellow barriers on some streets.*
- b. What is included in the \$450k for the 9 Rapid Flashing Beacons (\$50k each)
 - i. Each intersection will have installed a set of flashing beacons, solar panel, batteries and minor sign/paint changes as needed.*
- c. About the scramble crossing: my understanding from staff when the motion was pass is that the cost is very minimal, but why it increases significantly to half a million? What is included?
 - i. The cost of a pedestrian scramble can vary widely depending on the intersection selected and its not necessarily minimal, as opposed to treatments such as Leading Pedestrian Intervals, where the costs are mostly staff time. Adding a pedestrian scramble requires physical upgrades to the signal in order to support the signal timing changes. The cost is mostly tied to the age of the signal - older signals would be more costly to modify. The cost in the worst case scenario includes signal timing modifications to*

add the scramble phase, moving/upgrading signal poles/heads, addition of new signal heads to accommodate a diagonal crossing, wiring upgrades and adding accessible pedestrian signal infrastructure to ensure blind/low vision users can get the proper indication of when they can cross. Changes to curb ramps and sidewalks may also be required. If the cost of the pedestrian scramble is lower than \$500k, staff would repurpose the excess funds to increase improvements under other categories under the Transportation safety & accessibility (e.g. additional flashing beacons, slow zones, etc).

4. Regarding the Downtown Eastside FireHall # 2 Temporary Annex:

a. Does this investment support a long-standing need or has it become necessary due to additional teams supporting the hall recently?

i. The addition of staff and apparatus to the hall has made this necessary - FH #2 is the busiest FH in the City. The current facility is unable to respond to the level of response required in the neighbourhood and staff are working in over crowded conditions which Vancouver Fire would like to alleviate.

- 1. Fire Hall 2 was originally built to accommodate a crew of 8 and 3 fire vehicles*
- 2. In 2020, Council approved funding for an additional rescue unit to specifically address response issues in the DTES.*

	Usage before 2020	Current usage
Crew	8	14
Fire Apparatus	2	4

b. Furthermore, what investments will Firehall 2 need in the long-term? And would a long-term solution be better in this circumstance?

i. Currently staff are working on a temporary solution to the pressures and a more long term strategy will be considered in the future to redevelop the hall to meet the needs. As this would likely happen on the same property this Temp hall would still be needed to execute this redevelopment.

5. Is Council able to expand the funding envelope for this initial allocation and support further projects?

a. As noted in the report, staff have reviewed the current Capital plan and the criteria for the fund and, and are bringing forward projects that meet the criteria and are ready to move forward with Council approval of budget. A number of other projects have been considered, but are not yet ready to be initiated until more information on scope and delivery is ready. Additional projects will be brought forward as part of our regular Capital approval processes, including the September Capital budget update. Should Council wish to have staff look at other potential projects, they may provide direction for a report back on options, with scope and budget considerations

6. I noted that the Beatty bike lane enhanced implementation is earmarked in the Growing Communities Fund, from Smithe to Georgia. Supportive of this, but wondering if the rest of the lane (Georgia to Pender) is being considered as well, and what the cost of that would be?

- Staff have considered upgrading additional blocks of Beatty St. to a permanent condition (currently, the interim condition is in place between Nelson St and Pender St 25 blocks). However, we are recommending that the smaller scope (Smithe to Georgia) be pursued to:

 - mitigate the risk of not completing this project prior to the FIFA 2026 World Cup;*
 - recognize a limited amount of cost-sharing funding that can be obtained from TransLink; and**

- *balance the amount of funding dedicated to this project with other City needs (i.e. the other projects seeking GCF funding).*
- *Should Council wish to fully build out Beatty, we would recommend allocating a total of \$5M (and staff would seek additional \$5M cost-sharing). Some blocks would be anticipated to be built through adjacent development (eg. Vancouver Art Gallery), and it is likely a large amount of construction would need to be planned to be delivered post-FIFA in 2026.*

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Patrice Impey.

Best,
Paul

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The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̅əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.