



General Purposes Committee

Date: Monday, November 20, 2023

Place: Council Chambers
Richmond City Hall

Present: Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie, Chair
Councillor Chak Au
Councillor Carol Day
Councillor Laura Gillanders
Councillor Kash Heed
Councillor Andy Hobbs
Councillor Alexa Loo
Councillor Bill McNulty
Councillor Michael Wolfe

Call to Order: The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

MINUTES

It was moved and seconded

That the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on November 6, 2023, be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

PRESENTATION

1. Donald Trapp, Executive Project Director, and Dustin Bergstrom, Project Director, Transportation Investment Corporation (TI Corp), provided an update on the Fraser River Tunnel and Steveston Interchange Projects, referencing their submission (Copy on File, City Clerk's Office).

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In response to queries from Committee, representatives from TI Corp noted that (i) the temporary signalized intersection currently in place is for traffic heading eastbound on Steveston Highway to go northbound on Highway 99, (ii) there will be cycling and pedestrian lanes on the north and south side of the structure, (iii) the tunnel will have its own separate ventilation system, and (iv) the new Steveston Interchange Project design was based on feedback from stakeholders in the area to minimize impacts on adjacent properties, the visual appearance of the interchange, and traffic performance.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

2. **R7 RAPIDBUS UPDATE**

(File Ref. No. 10-6480-03-01) (REDMS No. 7422060)

Nathan Davidowicz, former Richmond resident, spoke to bus service and ridership in Richmond and the proposed R7 RapidBus route, referencing his submission (copy on file, City Clerk's Office).

Francis Leung, Richmond resident, discussed concerns with the R7 RapidBus update and referenced his submission (copy on file, City Clerk's Office).

Jesse Li, Vancouver resident, expressed his support of the staff recommendation and spoke to his experiences on riding the bus to his place of employment in Richmond, referencing his submission (copy on file, City Clerk's Office).

In response to queries from Committee, staff advised that (i) the details of the potential R7 RapidBus route would be brought forward for Council's consideration, (ii) Richmond Hospital as a terminus is not a strong connection to the Canada Line and major transit routes, and (iii) when infrastructure is required for transit projects, TransLink typically provides funding.

Discussion occurred regarding other municipalities' decisions and support for Bus Rapid Transit, as well as TransLink's announcement outlining three new rapid transit corridors.

It was moved and seconded

That staff continue to pursue the R7 RapidBus as presented in the staff report titled "R7 RapidBus Update" dated October 27, 2023, from the Director, Transportation.

The question on the motion was not called as discussion ensued regarding support of a RapidBus system, seeking improvements for the community, and the request for staff to take a comprehensive approach and look into what can be implemented, possible routes and impacts, and to continue to have discussions with TransLink.

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In response to queries from Committee, staff advised that (i) the potential bus travel time improvement statistics were generated by TransLink and take into account the number of jobs in the area and ridership, and (ii) TransLink's goals include getting buses to the bridges faster while not taking away lanes from bridges.

Discussion occurred regarding potential consequences of not endorsing the project and ensuring vehicle lanes will not be lost as a result.

The question on the motion was then called and it was **CARRIED**.

COMMUNITY SERVICES DIVISION

3. **PHOENIX NET LOFT PROGRAM**

(File Ref. No. 06-2052-25-PNET1) (REDMS No. 7386165)

James Donner, Richmond resident, spoke to concerns with the Phoenix Net Loft reconstruction project, including costs, existing functioning heritage buildings, and other uses of the funds.

Harold Steves, Chair, Britannia Heritage Shipyard Society, expressed support for the Phoenix Net Loft program. Mr. Steves shared details of a successful tour with the Minister of Tourism at the Gulf of Georgia Cannery and Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site.

Linda Barnes, Richmond resident, expressed support for the staff recommendation and the need for incorporating the arts into the Steveston area.

Staff provided an overview of the report, highlighting that the proposed future program for the Phoenix Net Loft is designed to compliment without duplicating what is already found at Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site and Steveston, and was developed based on existing Council referrals, best practices research, and input received through engagement done to date, including community stakeholder engagement in 2021.

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In response to queries from Committee, staff advised that (i) the history of the Phoenix Net Loft and land acquisition can be provided, (ii) following Council's endorsement, discussions will take place with the Province regarding the intentions of the space and the potential lease extension, (iii) the intention is to build one building with decking, (iv) the Council-approved reconstruction includes basic facility upgrades required for public occupancy on both levels, including raising the building 0.9 meters for flood protection, (v) staff explored the option of a marina facility as per the July 18, 2013 referral, but is not included in the recommended program, (vi) the estimated capital cost for the recommended option 1 is approximately \$52 million in 2026 dollars, (vii) at this time the City does not have commitments from other levels of government for funding, and this type of project could be eligible for the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund, (viii) the Richmond Arts Facilities Needs Assessment is underway concurrently and investigates the needs and opportunities for expanding the number and type of purpose-built arts spaces in Richmond, (ix) construction would commence in approximately 2.5 years, (x) Council's Long Term Financial Management Strategy allows for an additional 1.00% property tax increase annually to fund investment in community facilities infrastructure replacement needs, and (xi) there is a potential opportunity to offset costs with rental revenue.

It was moved and seconded

- (1) *That Option 1 – Arts, Culture and Heritage Multi-Use Space be endorsed in principle as the future program for the Phoenix Net Loft as detailed in the staff report titled “Phoenix Net Loft Program”, dated October 18, 2023, from the Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services; and*
- (2) *That staff report back with a detailed program plan, concept design, and proposed capital and operating budget, including the possibility of grant funding from senior levels of government.*

The question on the motion was not called as discussion ensued regarding grant funding and the commitment to and importance of preserving the arts and heritage.

The question on the motion was then called and it was **CARRIED**.

4. **CITY EVENTS PROGRAM 2024**

(File Ref. No. 11-7400-01) (REDMS No. 7412897)

Discussion occurred regarding the 2024 proposed City event program and budget, including Steveston Salmon Festival and Canada Day.

It was moved and seconded

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- (1) *That the City Events Program 2024, as outlined in Table 1 of the staff report titled “City Events Program 2024”, dated October 19, 2023, from the Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services, be endorsed for the following events and initiatives:*
- (a) *Children's Arts Festival;*
 - (b) *Richmond Cherry Blossom Festival;*
 - (c) *Doors Open Richmond;*
 - (d) *Community Celebration Grants Program;*
 - (e) *Neighbourhood Block Party Fund;*
 - (f) *Steveston Salmon Festival;*
 - (g) *Richmond Maritime Festival; and*
 - (h) *Supporting food security through community-driven events; and*
- (2) *That expenditures totalling \$810,000 for the City Events Program 2024 with funding from the Rate Stabilization Account be considered in the 2024 budget process.*

The question on the motion was not called as in response to queries from Committee, staff noted that (i) all events are scalable and additional grant funding could be used for program enhancements or to offset City costs, (ii) there are other grants applied for through the City’s partner Societies and Associations, and (iii) the potential return of Farm Fest is being explored through the 5 Year Events Plan.

The question on the motion was then called and it was **CARRIED**.

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PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

**5. RICHMOND RESPONSE: PROVINCIAL HOUSING LEGISLATION
(BILL 44, 46 & 47)**

(File Ref. No. 08-4040-01) (REDMS No. 7454433)

In response to queries from Committee, staff advised that (i) specific details will be outlined in an upcoming policy manual following royal assent, likely in December 2023 and the City has not yet been consulted on the forthcoming policy manuals, (ii) the change in Provincial regulations could increase the projections in the Metro Vancouver region's Regional Growth Strategy, (iii) the Provincial housing legislation may require additional units per lot and land use is regulated by municipalities, (iv) the Steveston Area Plan would have to be amended to align with the Provincial legislation, (v) effective when the bill is adopted, a local government cannot hold a public hearing on a proposed zoning bylaw if the zoning amendment is consistent with the Official Community Plan and for residential uses comprising of at least half of the overall floor area, and (vi) the legislation has the potential to compromise Richmond's low-end market rental (LEMR) program in the City Centre as LEMR units are achieved through density bonusing, and does not take into account Richmond's achievements in affordable housing (e.g., LEMR).

It was moved and seconded

- (1) That a meeting with the Minister of Housing, along with all local MLAs, be requested as soon as possible to discuss the implications of the proposed legislation; and*
- (2) That staff be directed to explore what UBCM is undertaking in regards to the Provincial housing legislation.*

CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting adjourn (5:47 p.m.).

CARRIED

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Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee of the Council of the City of Richmond held on Monday, November 20, 2023.

Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie
Chair

Shannon Unrau
Legislative Services Associate