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MANAGER'S REPORT NO.	6
COUNCIL MEETING	94/02/07

TO: CITY MANAGER 1994 FEBRUARY 02

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING OUR FILE: 08.640 "C"

SUBJECT: **CANADA WAY/EDMONDS PROJECT:**
TREE PLANTING ON EDMONDS SCHOOL PROPERTY

PURPOSE: To advise Council on the maintenance and expense of replacing the chestnut trees on Canada Way with chestnut trees on the Edmonds School property.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. THAT Council receive this report for information.

REPORT

1.0 BACKGROUND

At its regular meeting of 1993 November 29 Council received a report from staff regarding the proposal by the Ministry of Transportation and Highways to plant trees on the Edmonds School property to replace the chestnut trees removed as a result of the Canada Way/Edmonds Project. Arising from the discussion Council requested staff provide information on the difference in maintenance and expense if Chestnut trees were planted in this area. The Ministry has advised that it would like to proceed with planting of replacement trees as soon as possible within the next two to three weeks.

This report responds to the questions raised by Council.

2.0 PLANTING OF HORSE CHESTNUT TREES

The replacement trees on the Edmonds School site would be planted along Canada Way approximately 4m inside the property line of the Edmonds School site. In response to queries regarding the suitability of the Horse Chestnut tree for street-side planting Parks staff have advised that although the Horse Chestnut is an attractive specimen tree for open wild spaces and large parks, it cannot be considered a good choice for locations with vertical or horizontal space restrictions or for places frequented by the public. Specific reasons which disfavour the Horse Chestnut tree for street-side plantings include the following:

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- large mature dimensions; capable of attaining a height of 25m (80 ft.) and a width of 15m (50 ft.) in an urban setting. Failure to provide adequate soil volume and mature crown space place Horse Chestnuts under stress predisposing these trees to insect and disease conditions.
- does not respond favourably to pruning. Pruning generally results in a loss of natural form and profusion of weakly attached water sprouts. These water sprouts increase crown density and increase hazard through storm damage.
- the large spiny fruit, often up to 3" in diameter, are a nuisance and a hazard to pedestrians and vehicles.
- the tree produce large quantities of leaf litter and fall which again can be hazardous for pedestrians - particularly in the rain.
- the fruits (nuts) and bark of the Horse Chestnut contain a poisonous narcotic glucoside.
- as a fast growing tree, the Horse Chestnut produces somewhat weaker wood than in a slower growing species and has a recognized tendency for dropping large branches in even calm conditions. Storm damage can be significant.

Due to the disadvantages of Horse Chestnut trees in street-side applications, staff have recommended the planting of Oak or Maple trees.

3.0 EXPENSE OF PLANTING HORSE CHESTNUT TREES

3.1 Capital Costs

The replacement of street trees on the Edmonds School property will be funded and undertaken by the Ministry of Transportation and Highways in advance of the Canada Way/Edmonds intersection project. The Ministry has requested a letter of consent from the City of Burnaby to undertake the planting program on the Edmonds School site and a landscaping plan showing locations and tree types. Upon receipt of this correspondence from the City of Burnaby the Ministry is prepared to undertake the tree planting program at their expense and subject to direction of the City of Burnaby.


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3.2 Maintenance Costs

In response to Council's inquiry with regard to the expense of planting Chestnut trees, staff are not aware of comparative studies of the maintenance costs of Horse Chestnut trees relative to other varieties such as Oak or Maple. While detailed maintenance costs are not available, staff would advise that maintenance costs of Horse Chestnut trees would be somewhat higher due to the greater volume of debris produced by these trees relative to other varieties. Over the life of a row of large trees these costs of cleanup could be significant.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The Ministry of Transportation and Highways wishes to proceed with the planting of replacement trees on the Edmonds School property within the next two weeks. This timing would permit the replacement trees to be established during the Spring prior to the more difficult climatic conditions of Summer. With regard to tree species, staff would advise against the planting of Horse Chestnut trees due to their lack of suitability for street-side planting and resulting higher maintenance. Instead the Ministry has advised the City of its willingness to plant Maple trees as a preferred variety for street-side locations.



D.G. Stenson, Director
PLANNING AND BUILDING



RG/db

cc: Director Engineering
Director Recreation & Cultural Services

