

TO: CITY MANAGER **DATE:** 2004 02 10
FROM: DIRECTOR ENGINEERING **FILE:** 37500-15
SUBJECT: WINTER ROAD MAINTENANCE STRATEGY - MAJOR ROAD NETWORK
PURPOSE: To present to Council for consideration a recommended winter road maintenance strategy for Burnaby's devolved Major Road Network.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** Council approve the winter road maintenance strategy for the devolved Major Road Network as presented in Section 3.0 in this report.

REPORT

1.0 BACKGROUND

At the Regular Council Meeting of 2003 May 12, Council received a staff report on road maintenance service delivery strategy for the devolved Major Road Network (MRN) in Burnaby. Arising from the discussion of the report, Council authorized staff to expand the City's current road maintenance work plan to incorporate all maintenance functions except winter road maintenance for the devolved MRN and to undertake an evaluation of options for the winter road maintenance component for the devolved MRN.

Since the devolution of a portion of the highway system to local municipalities by the Province for maintenance and operation in April 1999, Translink has created a regional MRN which included all devolved former provincial highways and several highways uploaded from municipalities. Several municipalities have also jointly entered into an agreement with the Ministry of Highways to retain the Ministry's maintenance contractor, Mainroad Contracting Ltd. (MCL) to perform maintenance services on the devolved major roads. The current contract between the Province and MCL is due to expire on March 15, 2004. At the present time, Burnaby is in a position to incorporate all maintenance functions except winter road maintenance for the devolved MRN as approved by Council in May 2003.

The purpose of this report is to present Council with a recommended strategy on the winter road maintenance component for the devolved portion of the MRN in Burnaby upon the expiration of the current contract on 2004 March 15.

2.0 POSSIBLE WINTER ROAD MAINTENANCE SERVICE DELIVERY MODELS

The devolved MRN winter road maintenance component consists primarily of ice patrol and snow removal tasks for a total of approximately 210 lane-km of the devolved MRN that includes arterial streets such as Hastings Street, Barnet Highway, Gagliardi Way, Kingsway, Lougheed Highway, Marine Way. The need to maintain safe passage on these streets for the general public especially during adverse weather conditions is of paramount importance. The yearly demand for the snow and ice control work varies and is largely dependent on winter weather conditions. However, an adequate level of equipment and manpower resources must be established in order to provide a suitable response plan for snow and ice control.

There are two possible service models for the devolved MRN winter road maintenance that may be considered by Burnaby. These options were evaluated with respect to projected staff and equipment resource needs and the short/long term operational strategic plan. The result of the assessment is briefly discussed as follows:

Model A - Expand Existing In-house Resources

For many years, Burnaby has provided in-house winter road maintenance service to Burnaby streets including the uploaded MRN streets. The in-house service model provides excellent flexibility and adaptability to meet the service demand levels that vary with the winter weather conditions. The existing fleet of City equipment and pool of trained staff are adequate to meet the current service demand level. However, expansion to include the additional 210 lane-km of devolved MRN roads would require a significant addition of equipment, salt storage facilities, trained drivers, support staff and shop/storage space.

The City's Works Yard is currently experiencing overcrowding of both its site and building facilities due to a spatial shortfall and outdated facilities. The current Yard is unable to accommodate any expansion of services without negatively affecting other existing functions. Council recently approved, in principle, the implementation of the Works Yard redevelopment plan and it would be appropriate to include the additional facility and site area needs for the expanded MRN winter road maintenance service as part of the overall consideration for the Works Yard strategic plan.

From a strategic view point, an expansion of the in-house service model will best be examined as part of the Works Yard redevelopment planning process. Although the additional facility and equipment acquisition for the in-house option will require initial capital investment, the incremental cost may be minimized if the additions are implemented as part of the Works Yard redevelopment plan. Analysis and recommendations will be developed in the overall Works Yard strategic plan and presented to Council where appropriate for consideration.

Model B - Contract Service

MCL recently has been awarded a road maintenance contract by the Ministry of Highways to continue providing maintenance services (including winter maintenance) for the provincial highways within the Greater Vancouver area. A similar contract model for the winter maintenance component only could be adopted for use by Burnaby for its devolved MRN roads. One main advantage of the contract model is the avoidance of any required site area expansion and the deferral of the initial start-up capital investment in equipment and facilities typically associated with the in-house service model.

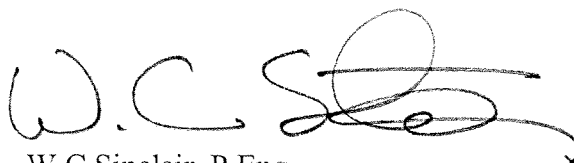
Within the Greater Vancouver region, there is a sufficient number of experienced contractors and contract resources that could be employed by the City for its devolved MRN winter road maintenance service. In order to obtain the best possible contract price and resource stability, a contract term of three to five years would be desirable and would give the City an appropriate time line to evaluate the feasibility of the Service Model A as described above in the context of the Works Yard redevelopment plan and schedule.

3.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In 1999, the Province devolved a network of major roads to local municipalities for operation and maintenance and consequently Burnaby received approximately 210 lane-km of the Major Road Network. The current road maintenance contract for these devolved MRN roads is due to expire on March 15, 2004 and Burnaby has taken steps to assume full responsibility of all road maintenance functions except the winter road maintenance component.

This report identified two possible service models to address the winter road maintenance needs for the devolved MRN roads. Service Model A - In-house Service would require equipment and facilities expansion that can not be readily accommodated within the existing City operations without negatively affecting other existing operation functions. However, in the longer term and in the context of the Works Yard redevelopment plan recently approved by Council, it may be feasible to expand the existing in-house operation structure to include the devolved MRN winter road maintenance component in a cost effective and work efficient manner. Service Model B - Contract Service would provide a short term solution to the winter road maintenance needs and allow the City to defer the initial start-up capital and facility investment while planning for possible future expansion. We are of the opinion that there are sufficient contract resources within the Greater Vancouver region to provide a competitive rate schedule for Burnaby's portion of the work.

Having conducted a review of the winter road maintenance alternatives for the devolved MRN roads, it is recommended that the contract service model continue to be used by the City for the next 3 to 5 years while allowing the City to examine the additional facility requirements and capital cost ramifications as part of the Works Yard redevelopment plan and to evaluate the feasibility of expanding the in-house winter road maintenance service to include the devolved MRN roads.



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