



Corporate Report

NO: R215

COUNCIL DATE: November 3, 2008

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: Mayor & Council

DATE: October 30, 2008

FROM: General Manager, Engineering

FILE: 5500-10-01

SUBJECT: Telus Utility Pole Relocation Status

RECOMMENDATION

The Engineering Department recommends that Council receive this report as information.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to inform Council about the current status of B.C. Hydro and Telus joint use utility pole relocations in relation to City road widening projects.

BACKGROUND

Historically the relocation of Hydro/Telus utility poles related to City roadway widening projects was coordinated by the City and the respective utility companies, and the work was carried out in a timely and coordinated manner in conjunction with the road construction work. However, for the last several years, Telus was unable to keep up with the demand for pole removal/relocations and poles remained when the remainder of the widening project was complete. The Telus labour dispute in 2005 created an additional backlog of works that exacerbated this delay, in many cases, by a further year. Consequently, Council authorized staff (Corporate Report C026, October 30, 2006) to make a formal application to the Canadian Radio and Telecommunications Commission (the CRTC) for an Order directing Telus to relocate and/or remove its poles and facilities in a timely manner. As a first step alternative to the issuing of an Order, the CRTC requested and, with the agreement of the City and Telus, subsequently mediated a dispute resolution process between the City and Telus resulting in the development and adoption of an Agreement on the process and timeline for utility pole relocations.

DISCUSSION

A component of the agreement with Telus was that the City would prioritize pole relocations for Telus and then Telus would apply its resources in the order of the City's

priorities. Along with an apparent higher level of attention to Surrey works following the involvement of the CRTC, this prioritization process has been relatively successful. Many of the high priority projects, such as the Fraser Highway widening, have received more timely attention and, although there have still been some delays mainly due to the large scope of works required on the part of Telus, pole removals and relocations on Fraser Highway are now current with the City's construction progress.

During the course of the 2008 construction season, the number of projects waiting for utility pole relocation and removal has decreased by one-third and currently, from a list of fourteen active projects, only two projects have utility poles within the widened roadway. These projects are 24 Avenue between King George Highway and 152 Street, and 128 Street between Highway 10 and 64 Avenue, where poles have remained following the completion of the roadway widening.

On 24 Avenue the pole removal delays have been primarily due to delays in B.C. Hydro design works. Telus works can only follow Hydro. Hydro has recently completed their relocation works and, as such, Telus is only now able to commence relocation of their facilities. The work is estimated to take four months and removal of the poles on 24 Avenue is now scheduled to be complete by February 2009.

On 128 Street, the delays have been due to Telus scheduling; however, they are now actively working on the relocation of their facilities on 128 Street. A very substantial amount of line splicing and cutover is required along the 128 Street system and, consequently, completion of this work and removal of the poles is scheduled to be complete by April 2009.

CONCLUSION

Although delays in utility pole removal/relocation by Telus are still being experienced on a few City roadway-widening projects, the number of these cases has been steadily decreasing. With the completion of pole removals on 24 Avenue and on 128 Street, scheduled for February and April 2009, respectively, Telus will have eliminated its backlog of works on City roadway widening projects. Engineering Department staff will continue to coordinate meetings with Telus and other utility companies to facilitate and expedite the process.

Vincent Lalonde, P.Eng.
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