

THE CORPORATION OF THE
CITY OF WHITE ROCK
CORPORATE REPORT



DATE: January 25, 2021

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Jim Gordon, P.Eng., Director, Engineering & Municipal Operations
Edward Wolfe, Fire Chief

SUBJECT: Antique Fire Truck Options

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council directs staff to request the White Rock Firefighters' Union to relocate the antique fire truck from the Parks Yard.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An antique fire truck owned by the White Rock Firefighters' Union (the "Union") has been temporarily stored in the Parks Maintenance Yard for approx. seven (7) years. Unfortunately, this location is not optimal or environmentally controlled, and the truck is suffering ongoing deterioration. Additionally, the truck takes up much needed covered storage space and provides no viewing benefit for those interested in antique vehicles.

This report discusses options for the antique fire truck.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION

Staff is not aware of any previous Council direction.

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

History

The fire truck is a 1925 Studebaker that apparently came to White Rock as one of two sister vehicles in the late twenties after a large fire destroyed a block of Marine Drive on west beach. The vehicles were purchased as surplus Studebaker sedan chassis' and, under the supervision of Mr. W.J. McIlwain (the owner of a gas station on Marine Drive.), were converted to fire trucks with parts donated from both Vancouver and New Westminster Fire Departments. Mr. McIlwain became the first unofficial Fire Chief in the community and his gas station on Marine Drive became the makeshift fire hall.

The fate of one truck is unknown. The other truck was decommissioned in 1948 and ended up at Murchie's Tea Company in Vancouver. The truck was later returned to the White Rock Firefighters in the late seventies and was operational for the Sea Festival parade in 1980. Eventually, due to lack of interest and storage, the truck was given away. The new owner parked it for years before eventually donating it to the Shriners of BC and Yukon in 2005. In 2008, the Union was contacted by a Shriners member advising they had the truck and were in the process of

restoring it, however, did not have the funds to complete the restoration and inquiring if the Union would be interested in a partnership. The Union agreed and funded the remainder of the restoration. Several White Rock Firefighter members took on significant roles volunteering their time and expertise to complete the restoration work.

On September 26, 2010, the truck was donated back to the White Rock Firefighters by the Shriners Association at a ceremony held at the Shrine Center.

Current Situation

The truck has been stored in the Parks Maintenance Yard for the last several years. While the truck was previously restored, it is now in a state of neglect and deteriorating. The moist environment of the storage shed in the Parks Yard is contributing to the deterioration of the truck.

Covered storage space for parks supplies including seeds, fertilizers and equipment is in short supply. Working around the truck and storing weather vulnerable Parks supplies outdoors under tarps is awkward and inefficient.

There is no opportunity for history buffs to view and enjoy this piece of White Rock history.

One resolution to the currently untenable situation is to construct a prominent, environmentally controlled display for the truck. A second option is to request the Union to relocate the truck from the Parks Yard and the Union may wish to consider another storage location or gifting the fire truck to a museum.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

A preliminary estimate for an enclosed display adjacent to the south side of the White Rock Fire Hall is 350K. This amount is included in the 2021 Financial Plan submission for Council's consideration.

Alternatively, if an option is chosen to seek rental space, there would be storage costs associated with this option.

There are no financial implications to the City for the other options noted.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The antique fire truck has significant heritage value for the community of White Rock and is an important historic asset for the Union.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL INVOLVEMENT/IMPLICATIONS

The Engineering and Municipal Operations Department and the Fire Department worked together to explore options for resolution in consultation with the Finance Department with respect to Financial Plan submission.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Relocation of the antique fire truck from the Parks Yard is an unaligned Strategic Priority.

OPTIONS / RISKS / ALTERNATIVES

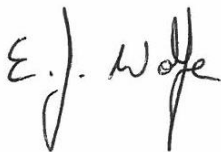
The following options are available for Council's consideration:

1. Approve \$350K in the 2021 Financial Plan for construction of an environmentally controlled antique fire truck display south of the Fire Hall;
2. Request the Firefighters Union to relocate the antique fire truck from the Parks Yard. Options for the union to consider would include renting a storage facility, gifting the truck to a museum, or working with a private collector potentially resulting in the loss of a significant historical asset.

CONCLUSION

The antique fire truck temporarily stored in the Parks Maintenance Yard is deteriorating due to moist conditions, provides no viewing amenity for residents and is taking up needed Parks storage space. Options include funding and constructing an environmentally controlled viewing structure south of the Fire Hall or requesting the Firefighters Union to relocate the truck.

Respectfully submitted,



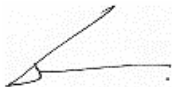
Ed Wolfe,
Fire Chief, Fire Services



Jim Gordon, P.Eng.
Director, Engineering & Municipal
Operations

Comments from the Chief Administrative Officer

I concur with the recommendation of this corporate report.



Guillermo Ferrero
Chief Administrative Officer