



City of New Westminster

Report to Council

To: New Westminster City Council
in Workshop

Meeting Date: November 10, 2025

From: Lisa Leblanc, Director, Engineering
& Deputy Chief Administrative
Officer

Report No.: 2025-320

Blair Fryer, Director, Community
Services

**Re: Massey Victory Heights Streetlight Retention Options Subsequent To The
Heritage Values Assessment Report**

Staff Recommendation

1. *THAT the report titled “Massey Victory Heights Streetlight Retention Options Subsequent to the Heritage Values Assessment Report” dated November 10, 2025 from the Director, Engineering and Director, Community Services be received for information; and*
2. *THAT Option _____ be endorsed as the next steps for the Massey Victory Heights streetlight replacement project.*

Purpose

To seek direction on the next steps for the Massey Victory Heights streetlight replacement project based on the findings and conclusions from the heritage values assessment report.

Summary

This report provides Council with the findings and conclusions from the heritage values assessment of the streetlights in the Massey Victory Heights neighbourhood. This report provides Council with options for next steps to direct the Massey Victory Heights street light replacement project.

Background

The streetlights in Massey Victory Heights are at least 25 years beyond their useful service life and are in very poor condition. Significant staff effort is required to develop solutions for obsolete assets and parts that are no longer available for purchase, compounded by the elevated levels of reactive and emergency work needed to maintain the aging streetlights in an operational state on an annual basis. A complete infrastructure replacement is required due to critical safety concerns. Full replacement of the light standard includes all electrical conduit, streetlight bases, poles, and fixtures.

In early 2024, the City initiated a project to replace the streetlights in the Massey Victory Heights (MVH) neighbourhood. The replacement project was to be staged and take place across six areas within the neighbourhood. That year a design consultant was engaged to develop drawings for tender. In May 2025, a contract was awarded for the construction of areas 1 and 2, with work planned to begin that spring. These areas include all the streets between McBride & Chilliwack Streets and between East Tenth Ave and East Eighth Ave.

On May 26, 2025, Engineering staff received a petition from Heritage New West, containing 153 signatures. The petition requested that the City review options to preserve and retain some or all of the street lights within MVH. Signatories to the petition felt the lights were of a distinct design and contributed to the historical character and unique charm of the MVH neighbourhood. Following this petition, the city received several additional messages from residents expressing the same feelings. In addition, several residents expressed concern about the disruption that will be required to landscape features that have encroached onto City street right of way for many years.

The heritage values of the streetlights were not considered during the initial phases of this project because they were not listed on the city's Heritage Register. The Register is an official listing of properties and city features deemed to have heritage value. The presence of an asset on the Register will trigger greater scrutiny during City project planning or permitting review.

On June 23, 2025, Council directed Community Services staff to undertake a heritage values assessment of the streetlights in the Massey Victory Heights Neighbourhood. Specifically, Council directed that staff "conduct research and community consultations to complete a heritage assessment of the existing streetlight standards in Massey Victory Heights. The findings will be shared with Council and the community." The learnings from the heritage assessment report are meant to support Council in making a decision on the retention or replacement of the poles as part of the current Massey Victory Heights Streetlight Replacement project for areas one and two with the learnings and direction applied to the remaining areas. A link to the June 23, 2025 report can be found [here](#).

On October 1, 2025, the Community Heritage Commission (CHC) accepted and received the Massey Victory Heights Heritage Values Assessment. In doing so, the CHC also recommended that the light standards be added to the New Westminster Heritage Register. The CHC has not yet approved the minutes of this meeting.

Analysis

Heritage Values Assessment

A heritage values assessment is an unbiased study conducted by an objective third party that evaluates the cultural, historical and/or architectural importance of an object or place. It identifies a subject's physical attributes, cultural associations and historic connections to inform decisions about its preservation or alteration. The "Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada" are used to guide the assessment process. The "Standards" are based on internationally recognized criteria used to describe the values associated with, or expressed by, the object or place for past, present and future generations. These criteria are:

- Aesthetic qualities (how it looks, feels or smells)
- Cultural qualities
- Historic qualities
- Scientific qualities
- Social qualities
- Spiritual qualities

Heritage values-whether physical or non-physical-are shown through character-defining elements. These elements can include things like the materials used, the shape or design, the location, how spaces are arranged, how the place is used, and the cultural connections or meanings it holds.

Schueck Heritage Consulting was hired to undertake the Heritage Values Assessment. Extensive research was conducted using the New Westminster Archives and online sources. Local historian Jim Wolf also contributed research inputs towards the assessment. Site visits were conducted on July 25 and August 12, 2025, to assess the streetlights and take photographs. A City-led community meeting was held on September 3, 2025, to discuss heritage values with members of the Massey Victory Heights neighbourhood and other interested City residents.

The heritage values assessment has concluded that the historic streetlights have significant heritage value. They have been identified as important place-making elements of the neighbourhood that help define its character. This assessment is grounded in a determination that the streetlights hold values that align with five of the six criteria used to undertake a heritage values assessment (Aesthetic, Cultural Historic, Scientific, and Social). The report further advises that: *"Every effort should be made to retain them. If the material cannot be retained due to poor condition, consideration should be given to replacing them with replicas that match not only the design, material and height, but also the warm, soft, yellow/orange glow of today's lamps. It would be reasonable to consider installing new replica streetlights closer together than they are now in order to meet today's standards of providing adequate lighting of the streets and sidewalks."*

The full report can be found in Attachment 1 of this report.

Streetlight Replacement Project – Options and Analysis

The construction of the streetlight replacement project for areas 1 & 2 is currently on hold to allow the City time to determine the next course of action. Staff have requested that the project design consultant investigate four scenarios in response to the findings of the heritage values assessment report, to determine viable next steps for the project. In each scenario, the consultant was directed to include the following:

- Cost implications and changes relative to the current contract;
- Estimates of re-design/contract change costs;
- A standalone cost estimate to fully hand-salvage and rebuild one existing light in place; this was to be used as a baseline to extrapolate costs for saving all lights.

A copy of the design consultant's memo can be found in Appendix 2 of this report.

The following paragraphs describe the scenarios and options the design consultant considered, along with additional implications staff have identified. Note that some options meet the recommendations of the heritage values report, while others don't.

Option 1: Status-Quo - Option 1 – Continue with the Current Design of Standard Davit-Style Roadway Lighting

This option sets the baseline for the options analysis. It considers the current design, which utilizes new davit poles and roadway-style streetlights, in accordance with the City's standardized street lighting requirements for residential areas, as per the [Subdivision and Development Control Bylaw No. 7142, 2007](#).

Poles are 7.6m in height with mast arms 2.5m in length at a pole placement spacing of 55-60m. The construction estimate for areas 1 and 2, based on the tender pricing received, is \$1.3M.

This option would not align with the heritage values assessment report's outcomes.

Option 2: Rebuild Five Heritage Poles and Luminaires as Heritage Features, with the Remaining to be Replaced with Standard Davit-Style Roadway Lighting

This option explores rehabilitating and rebuilding five existing poles and fixtures for use as a feature in an area of Massey Victory Heights to retain some of the area's heritage. The five rebuilt streetlights would represent the entire Massey Victory Heights area and would be rebuilt as an area legacy measure as part of the area 1 & 2 project. As part of the re-design work, specific location(s) which meet installation and City requirements would be identified. The remaining streetlights would then be replaced with standard davit-style poles and roadway lighting.

There are several challenges in rehabilitating the existing poles and fixtures, including finding appropriate replacement parts and testing the poles to ensure they meet today's structural standards. The method to rehabilitate the fixtures would involve removing them from site, shipping them to a professional for rehabilitation, shipping them back to

site, and reinstalling them. New bases would be required for each pole to ensure structural integrity.

It is best practice to add a contingency to rough order-of-magnitude costs (class D). Staff have included a 20% contingency to the consultant's conservative estimate. The additional costs to the project for this option would be:

	Option 2
Construction Cost Increase from Tender	\$ 110,000
Re-design Costs	\$ 20,000
Contingency (20%)	\$ 26,000

Total cost implication for Areas 1 and 2	\$ 156,000
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The above-described option would not align with the heritage values assessment report's outcomes.

Staff have previously shared that, due to the age and poor condition of the Massey Victory Heights streetlighting infrastructure, it is not practical to repair and retain the existing lamp standards. However, as a thought experiment, staff have requested that the consultant provide an estimate of the cost to rehabilitate each pole. The consultant determined the cost to be \$12,000 per pole. Extrapolating this cost to all 60 poles in areas 1 and 2, adding an additional 20% for the increased level of coordination and conflict mitigation measures and adding the contingency, generates the following additional cost:

	*Rebuild all Area 1 & 2 streetlights
Construction Cost Increase from Tender	\$ 720,000
Re-design Costs	\$ 80,000
Increased coordination and conflict mitigation (20%)	\$ 160,000
Contingency (20%)	\$ 192,000

* Thought experiment. This is not considered to be a practical option given the condition of most of the streetlights.

Total cost implication for Areas 1 and 2	\$ 1,152,000
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Staff note that heritage values advise on the conservation of a heritage asset through minimal intervention with the object. This is to retain the integrity of the object's authentic materials, craftsmanship, and historical context; connecting the object directly to the time, place, and people who created and used it. Option 2 (rebuilding five heritage poles) would most closely align with this value. While the City may be financially limited from rehabilitating all streetlights, there may be reason to consider rehabilitating a selection of the poles for reuse elsewhere in the neighbourhood. Staff explore this in Option 5.

Option 3: Replace existing fixtures and utilize new fixtures which are similar in style to the existing and are freely available commercial products.

This option proposes replacing the existing decorative poles and fixtures with new poles and fixtures in a similar style, which are readily available on the market. There are multiple manufacturer options for similar style luminaires and poles, and the consultant has provided several samples in their memo.

To achieve the required light coverage from the shorter decorative poles, nine additional pole fixtures would be required. The cost estimate, including the additional coordination, conflict mitigation and contingency, would be:

	Option 3
Construction Cost Increase from Tender	\$ 275,000
Re-design Costs	\$ 60,000
Increased coordination and conflict mitigation (20%)	\$ 67,000
Contingency (20%)	\$ 80,400
Total cost implication for Areas 1 and 2	\$ 482,400

This option would align with the heritage values assessment report's outcomes, given the similarity of the replacement units.

This option offers the city the best potential to retain the neighbourhood's heritage character while upgrading the lighting infrastructure and levels to current standards.

Option 4: Custom Replica of Existing Fixtures

This option considers the possibility of custom poles and fixtures that would match the existing street lights exactly. The development and production of custom-made decorative street lighting systems present several technical, logistical, and economic challenges compared with the use of standardized commercial products.

This option also requires nine additional poles and the cost estimate, including the additional coordination, conflict mitigation and contingency, would be:

	Option 4
Construction Cost Increase from Tender	\$ 650,000
Re-design Costs	\$ 80,000
Increased coordination and conflict mitigation (20%)	\$ 146,000
Contingency (20%)	\$ 175,200
Total cost implication for Areas 1 and 2	\$ 1,051,200

This option would align with the outcomes of the heritage values assessment report.

Option 5: A combination of Options 2 and 3 (Rebuild five street lights and similar commercial lights)

This option explores rehabilitating and rebuilding five existing poles and fixtures for use as a feature in an area of Massey Victory Heights and replacing the existing decorative poles and fixtures with new poles and fixtures in a similar style, which are readily available in the market.

This option also requires nine additional poles and the incremental cost estimate, including the additional coordination, conflict mitigation and contingency, would be:

	Option 5
Construction Cost Increase from Tender	\$ 385,000
Re-Design Costs	\$ 80,000
Increased coordination and conflict mitigation (20%)	\$ 67,000
Contingency (20%)	\$ 106,400

Total cost implication for Areas 1 and 2	\$ 638,400
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This is staff's recommended option, as it would provide the city with the best potential to retain the neighbourhood's heritage character while upgrading the lighting infrastructure and levels to current standards.

Operations and maintenance considerations

While shorter poles may simplify access for maintenance personnel, the increased number of fixtures results in a greater total maintenance workload over the system's lifecycle. More streetlights translate into higher cumulative costs for cleaning, lamp or LED driver replacements, and inspection activities.

The operational and maintenance implications of the additional fixtures would be factored into staff's existing workforce capacity. Staff anticipate that the addition of fixtures across Massey Victory Heights and other areas of the city will result in the need for additional resources to maintain these new assets in alignment with the City's Strategic Asset Management Plan. The electrical operations team will monitor staff workloads and, as required, bring forward enhancement requests through the budget process.

Construction mitigation strategies

On September 25, 2025, staff attended the Massey Victory Heights Residents Association meeting to discuss the construction mitigation measures and strategies the project would follow, based on recommendations from the arborist assessment report. Staff explained that the project team will develop measures on a case-by-case basis, ranging from shifting conduit and infrastructure alignments to directional boring, to protect critical tree root zones and address other conflicts during the project.

This mitigation plan will be developed after the designs and final locations of the streetlighting infrastructure are finalized.

Financial Implications

The 2025-2029 Capital Plan includes \$5.5 million to complete the planning, design, and construction of the six project areas in Massey Victory Heights. \$1.3 million has been allocated to the project in 2025 to complete the construction of project Areas 1 and 2.

The cost implications of the options discussed above, and the estimated revised project costs for Areas 1 and 2 are as follows:

	Option 1 (Status-Quo)	Option 2 : Rebuild and retain five lights	*Rebuild all Area 1 & 2 streetlights	Option 3: Replace lights with similar style	Option 4: Replace lights with custom replicas	Option 5: Combination of options 2 and 3
Construction Cost Increase from Tender		\$ 110,000	\$ 720,000	\$ 275,000	\$ 650,000	\$ 385,000
Re-Design Costs		\$ 20,000	\$ 80,000	\$ 60,000	\$ 80,000	\$ 80,000
Increased coordination and conflict mitigation (20%)		\$ -	\$ 160,000	\$ 67,000	\$ 146,000	\$ 67,000
Contingency (20%)		\$ 26,000	\$ 192,000	\$ 80,400	\$ 175,200	\$ 106,400
* Thought experiment. This is not considered to be a practical option given the condition of most of the streetlights.						
Total cost implication	\$ -	\$ 156,000	\$ 1,152,000	\$ 482,400	\$ 1,051,200	\$ 638,400
Revised project cost for Areas 1 and 2	\$ 1,300,000	\$ 1,456,000	\$ 2,452,000	\$ 1,782,400	\$ 2,351,200	\$ 1,938,400

Staff's recommendation is Option 5, which would increase the project budget for Areas 1 and 2 by \$638,400, increasing the value for this phase of the project to \$1.94M. The 2025-2029 Capital Plan includes \$5.5M, which will be sufficient to complete Areas 1 and 2 of the Massey Victory Heights project.

Based on Council's direction, staff will continue to undertake work for the remaining areas of the Massey Victory Heights within the approved 2025-2029 budget, and applying an approach similar to that which Council selects for Areas 1 and 2, and will

follow-up through the budget process should any changes or amendments be required. It is anticipated that additional budget will be required to complete the remaining areas.

Next Steps

Subject to Council's direction, the following next steps will be undertaken, dependent on the preferred option:

- Option 1 – No change to the project. Begin construction.
- Option 2 – Re-design and rebuild five street lights to retain the integrity of the objects' authentic materials, craftsmanship, and the historical context. Consult the Massey Victory Heights Residents' Association for the preferred location of the historical lights.
- Option 3 – Consult with the Massey Victory Heights Residents' Association on proceeding with the project by procuring commercially available street lights that retain the heritage character of the neighbourhood. Re-design the project and begin construction.
- Option 4 – Re-design and begin production of exact replicas. Construct street lights after fabrication.
- Option 5 – Re-design and rebuild five street lights to retain the integrity of the objects' authentic materials, craftsmanship, and the historical context. Consult the Massey Victory Heights Residents' Association regarding the preferred location of the historical lights and the procurement of commercially available street lights. Re-design the project and begin construction.

Interdepartmental Liaison

Staff in the Engineering, Community Services, Electrical and Parks and Recreation departments worked together to prepare this report.

Attachments

- Attachment 1 – Heritage Values Assessment Report – Massey Victory Heights Streetlights by Schueck Heritage Consulting
- Attachment 2 – PBX – Heritage Replacement Options Memo

Report Approval

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