



REPORT TO COUNCIL

TO: Richmond City Council
FROM: Cllr. Howard, Chair
Public Works & Transportation Committee
RE: **PROPOSED TWINNING OF PORT MANN BRIDGE**

DATE: December 23, 2004
FILE: 10-6460-01

The Public Works & Transportation Committee, at its meeting held on Wednesday, December 22, 2004, considered the attached report, and recommends as follows:

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION –

Whereas
The City of Richmond

- **recognizes the efficient movement of goods, people and services in and through the Lower Mainland is integral to a strong provincial economy**
- **acknowledges the cost of congestion to Lower Mainland businesses is an impediment to the provincial economy**
- **recognizes the heavy environmental and quality of life cost associated with idling and slow moving traffic**
- **agrees that the Port Mann Bridge is a critical transportation route to the region**
- **have considered the widening of about 33kilometres of the Trans Canada Highway between Vancouver and Langley and twinning the Port Mann Bridge**

Therefore be it Resolved

That the City supports a collaborative approach to pursue the proposed project with a joint assessment by the province, GVTA and the affected municipalities of the impacts of the widening of this bridge crossing on adjacent roadways and regional growth and transportation goals, and develop the appropriate complementary regional road improvements with the enhancement of the movement of commercial, transit and high occupancy vehicles as a primary objective including dedicated lanes for the commercial transportation of goods.

Cllr. Howard, Chair
Public Works and Transportation Committee

Attach.



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Public Works and Transportation Committee **Date:** December 6, 2004
To Public Works & Transportation - Dec 22, 2004

From: Victor Wei, P. Eng.
Acting Director, Transportation **File:** 10-6460-01

Re: **PROPOSED TWINNING OF PORT MANN BRIDGE**

Staff Recommendation

That the attached report, on the Province of BC's proposal to twin the Port Mann Bridge, be received for information.

Victor Wei, P. Eng.
Acting Director, Transportation
(4131)

FOR ORIGINATING DIVISION USE ONLY		
CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER		
REVIEWED BY TAG	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>dw</i>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
REVIEWED BY CAO	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Staff Report

Origin

At the October 25, 2004 regular Council meeting, Council passed the following resolution:

(2) *That staff comment on the proposed twinning of the Port Mann Bridge.*

As part of this resolution, staff were directed to consult with TransLink and the BC Trucking Association regarding the twinning of the Port Mann Bridge. This report provides information on and staff's comments of the Province of BC's proposed project to twin the Port Mann Bridge.

Analysis

1. Province of BC – Gateway Transportation Strategy

As part of its *Gateway Transportation Strategy* that will provide transportation infrastructure to maintain and improve BC's competitiveness as an international gateway, the Province of BC has identified several highway improvement projects that are intended to better integrate ports, airports, rail yards and border crossings. The following projects would be undertaken in partnership with TransLink provided there is strong support and leadership from TransLink, local communities, industry, and the public:

- *Fraser River Crossing (Golden Ears Bridge)* – new six-lane bridge along the 200th Street corridor to connect Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows with Surrey and Langley;
- *South Fraser Perimeter Road* – primarily four-lane, intersection-free commercial route along the south bank of the Fraser River connecting Highways 1, 91 and 99;
- *North Fraser Perimeter Road* – expansion of capacity of existing arterial routes on the north bank of the Fraser River to provide a more efficient commercial route through New Westminister to Burnaby and Vancouver; and
- *Twinning the Port Mann Bridge* – widening of about 33 kilometres of the Trans-Canada Highway (TCH) between Vancouver and Langley and twinning the Port Mann Bridge.

2. TransLink – Regional Transportation Plan Context

With respect to the twinning of the Port Mann Bridge, TransLink's *Three-Year Plan and 10-Year Outlook*, which identifies its transportation projects and initiatives to 2013 (approved by the GVTA Board in February 2004), states:

“The widening of the Port Mann Bridge requires more analysis to determine its implications, from both a traffic impact and growth management perspective. While not identified in the LRSP, given its critical role for goods movement and severe congestion levels, it is considered that widening of this facility deserves serious consideration. An important factor will be the funding and tolling regimes and policies that the province adopts.”

The *Outlook* document states that the GVTA will work with the Province on the preliminary planning and policy development of the Gateway and other programs, and “will place a priority on projects the support the *Liveable Region Strategic Plan (LRSP)*, such as the South Fraser Perimeter Road.” Funding commitments for the Golden Ears Bridge and the North Fraser Perimeter Road are specifically included within the 2005-2007 Three-Year Plan. The *Outlook* document also notes that

“continued involvement or support by TransLink in specific project approvals or implementation beyond the preliminary planning phases, for those projects outside the scope of this plan or the LRSP, would require an amendment to the GVTA’s Strategic Transportation Plan and, where applicable, the LRSP.”

Staff raised the proposed project at the November 2004 meeting of TransLink’s Major Roads and Transportation Advisory Committee (MRTAC), which is comprised of TransLink staff and representatives from municipal transportation and engineering departments. The topic was received for information only and the GVTA Board has not yet formally considered and/or commented specifically on the proposed project.

3. BC Trucking Association – Comments

Staff spoke with Paul Landry, the President and CEO of the BC Trucking Association (BCTA). The BCTA is strongly supportive of the Province’s proposal to widen the TCH and twin the Port Mann Bridge. Mr. Landry observed that Highway 1 serves as an economic spine for the Lower Mainland and connects the region to the rest of BC and Canada. The trucking industry carries approximately 70% of all freight by value and the TCH is critical to this goods movement. The Port Mann Bridge is the most congested bridge in the Lower Mainland and added capacity on this facility as well as the TCH is needed.

Mr. Landry further noted that the BCTA supports dedicated traffic lanes for goods movement. While various transportation planning documents have identified the need to protect goods vehicles from the effects of overall road congestion (e.g., GVRD’s *Transport 2021*, TransLink’s *10-Year Outlook*), no substantial progress has been made to address this issue.

4. GVRD Resolutions

At the July 30, 2004 regular meeting of the GVRD Board, the following motion was approved:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

GVRD request the Provincial Government to delay any move to proceed with the twinning of the Port Mann Bridge and the widening of Highway 1 to eight lanes until both the GVTA and the GVRD have assessed the impacts of the proposed increase in the capacity of the Trans Canada Highway on the transportation system of this region and on its Livable Region Strategic Plan.

At the October 1, 2004 regular meeting of the GVRD Board, the following motion was passed, ostensibly as a result of the Board being informed that the provincial Minister of Transportation had not yet responded to the Board’s request of July 30th:

It was MOVED and SECONDED:

That the GVRD Board express its concerns with the province’s unilateral approach to regional transportation planning and urge the province to return to a regional transportation planning process that involves the collaboration of municipalities, the GVRD, the GVTA and the province.

Per media reports (*Vancouver Sun*, October 2, 2004, p. B9), the Minister of Transportation has stated that the Province is willing to consult with municipalities, the GVRD and the GVTA, and

would then proceed with the project. It was reported that further details are to be provided by the Province later in the year.

5. Staff Comments

Staff offer the following comments on the proposed twinning of the Port Mann Bridge:

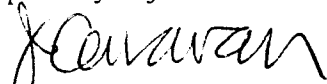
- the regional road network in the area of the Port Mann Bridge should be assessed with the projected changes in traffic patterns resulting from the proposed twinning of the bridge, which currently carries around 120,000 vehicles per day and is the most congested crossing in the region (based on the proportion of vehicles carried to vehicles in congestion);
- complementary regional roadway infrastructure may be necessary to accommodate the anticipated increase in traffic feeding into the Highway 1 corridor as a result of the improvements;
- the user benefits of the added capacity of the bridge would best be targeted primarily for goods movement and transit priority/high occupancy vehicles, and further promotion of increased single occupant vehicle use should be minimized to achieve more compact communities and increased transit use as stated in the goals and objectives of the GVRD's *LRSP* and the GVTA's *10-Year Outlook*; and
- given the potential significant benefits of enhancing the liveability and economic competitiveness of the region by improving goods, transit and high occupancy vehicle movements, the proposed twinning of the Port Mann Bridge would be considered a regional benefit.

Financial Impact

None to the City at this time.

Conclusion

As part of its Gateway Transportation Strategy to improve BC's competitiveness as an international gateway, the Province of BC has proposed expanding the capacity of the Trans-Canada Highway (TCH) by widening about 33 kilometres of the TCH between Vancouver and Langley and twinning the Port Mann Bridge. Staff support a collaborative approach to pursue the proposed project with a joint assessment by the province, GVTA and the affected municipalities of the impacts of the widening of this bridge crossing on adjacent roadways and regional growth and transportation goals, and develop the appropriate complementary regional road improvements with the enhancement of the movement of commercial, transit and high occupancy vehicles as a primary objective.



Joan Caravan
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