



**To:** Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services  
 Committee  
**From:** Jane Fernyhough  
 Manager, Cultural Services  
**Re:** Steveston Interurban Tram Feasibility Study

**Date:** February 12, 2002  
**File:** -

**Staff Recommendation**

That the City commission a Transportation/Tourism/Engineering study based on the attached Terms of Reference, to review the feasibility of restoring and operating Interurban Tram #1220 in Richmond.

*Jane Fernyhough*  
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 Manager, Cultural Services

Att. 1

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<b>ROUTED TO:</b>	<b>CONCURRENCE</b>	<b>CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER</b>
Transportation.....	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>[Signature]</i>

## **Staff Report**

### **Origin**

At the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee meeting on August 28, 2001 a motion was passed to authorise staff to undertake a Transportation/Tourism/Engineering study of Interurban Tram #1220. This study was to be commissioned upon completion of an agreement with the Steveston Interurban Restoration Society (S.I.R.S.) to maintain the tram's presence in Steveston.

S.I.R.S. have been unable to reach a satisfactory agreement regarding the potential lease of the tram to the Surrey based Fraser Valley Railway Society and negotiations, according to S.I.R.S. president, Michel Brisebois, have been terminated.

This report contains the principles of the agreement currently being negotiated with S.I.R.S as well as draft Terms of Reference for the feasibility study.

### **Analysis**

The main principle of the agreement between S.I.R.S. and the City is that the Society agrees to keep the tram in Richmond for the duration of the feasibility study and resulting City decisions, currently estimated to be one year.

In the event that the City commits money for the restoration and operation of the tram, the Society would in turn transfer a percentage interest in the tram to the City. S.I.R.S. would also commit to working with the City to complete restoration and infrastructure needed for operation.

A Working Committee will be formed to coordinate the feasibility study, provide expertise and work with the consultant to consider, evaluate and make recommendations to Council on all proposed initiatives and undertakings for the development and completion of the feasibility study. The proposed membership of the Working Committee is as follows:

- Coordinator, Heritage Sites
- Transportation Engineer
- Parks Planner
- Engineering representative
- Steveston Interurban Restoration Society – two representatives

The feasibility study will undertake the investigation of the total cost of tram restoration, possible routes, cost of laying track, possible operation schedule, cost of a car barn and stations, cost of an office/display space and workshop, cost of operation and a market feasibility study. Once approved, staff will proceed with drafting a request for proposal.

**Financial Impact**

\$75,000 is set aside in a provisional operating account for the tram and has been included in the 2002 capital budget submission. These funds will be used for the study.

**Conclusion**

Interurban Tram #1220 is a particularly valuable heritage asset given that it is an original car that ran from Vancouver to Steveston, completing the last run in 1958. City involvement and commitment is required to investigate the feasibility of completely restoring the tram and presenting it as an operating tourist attraction.

Connie Baxter  
Coordinator-Heritage Sites

CB:cb

# STEVESTON INTERURBAN TRAM NO. 1220 FEASIBILITY STUDY

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### 1. Introduction

The purpose of the feasibility study is to investigate and determine the viability of restoring and operating an interurban tram in the Steveston village area with specific reference to the tourism potential of the tram, the projected economic impacts and benefits of the tram and the technical transportation and engineering measures required to support operation of the tram. These latter elements would include an assessment of route alignment, land requirement issues, engineering design implications for the tram and roadways, traffic impact management, geotechnical requirements, full tram restoration costs, and capital and operating costs.

### 2. Background

B.C. Electric Railway established the Steveston-Vancouver interurban tram link in 1905. The southern terminus of the line in Steveston, with its fishing wharves and processing plants, gave the line its nickname of the "Sockeye Special." The line continued to operate for over 50 years with Steveston Interurban Tram No. 1220 making the final journey on February 28, 1958. In the early 1990s, the historic tram was found in poor condition on Mitchell Island and relocated to Steveston village in Richmond. The Steveston Interurban Restoration Society (SIRS) purchased the tram for \$1.00 from the provincial government in 1993 and is now restoring the tram to its original state with the assistance of grants and dedicated volunteers. The tram is currently located in a temporary shelter in Steveston Park behind the Steveston Community Centre.

The planned redevelopment of Steveston Park and the former B.C. Packers site has prompted the City of Richmond to examine options for a permanent location of the tram, including the possibility of operating the tram in the Steveston area. City Council has approved policies in the Official Community Plan for the Steveston area that state:

*"Explore the possibility of a working heritage tram route, connecting the Waterfront's heritage sites and community services, and using existing and new road rights-of-way wherever possible" and*

*"Encourage B.C. Packers to include within their Interpretative Plan: ...  
- Accommodate a Heritage Tram route in existing and new road allowances".*

The City has secured a public right-of-way through the former B.C. Packers site and this corridor may offer a potential alignment for a future tram operation along the waterfront.

### 3. Project Description

The feasibility study is intended to provide the City of Richmond with information regarding current and developing tram technology for retrofitted cars, infrastructure requirements, management and operational options, route selection, tourism and marketing potentials, and financial viability. The results and recommendations arising from the study will be evaluated to determine if the operation of a tram in the Steveston area is feasible for the City. Given these

objectives, the study should explore a number of different technical engineering, operational and financing options in order to determine the preferred approach for the City. The study should provide details on engineering and fuel technology issues, environmental, traffic/transportation and social impacts, mitigation measures and a management system for the recommended tram line.

#### **4. Work Program**

The overall scope of work for the study will include the following components.

##### **4.1 Literature Review**

The successful Consultant will be expected to review relevant City documents and archival information related to the tram, which could include:

- City of Richmond Official Community Plan, 1999
- City of Richmond Zoning and Development Bylaw, 1989
- City of Richmond 5-Year Financial Plan, 2001
- Comprehensive Development Bylaw re: former BC Packers site
- Development plans and documents for former BC Packers site
- City of Richmond Archives resources
- B.C. Electric Railway Collection (UBC)
- B.C. Archives and Record Services (Victoria)
- City of Richmond Mapping and Engineering/GIS information
- Steveston Interurban Restoration Society Business Plan, 1996

The Consultant shall conduct thorough research and analysis of technology options for powering and integrating the tram into the public realm. Familiarity with other municipal examples will provide effective background information for this study.

##### **4.2 Civic Objectives**

Prior to establishing a strategy for the operation of the tram, a vision and supporting rationale for introducing the tram in the Steveston area should be established. Aspects to be considered include:

- tourism potential and generation;
- mobility and linkages to heritage sites, other attractions and focal points;
- heritage conservation;
- community pride/identity/liveability;
- potential for energy-efficient technology; and
- economic benefits.

##### **4.3 General Technical Assessment**

A general technical assessment of the following aspects of implementing a tram service in the Steveston area should be addressed:

- viability of retrofitting the existing Steveston Interurban Tram No. 1220 to active service;
- assessment of other tram car options and products;
- investigation and recommendation regarding energy sources for powering the tram;
- physical design impacts and infrastructure requirements for operating the tram in the existing rights-of-way;
- operational requirements for providing effective, efficient and safe service; and
- impacts of options on existing physical street layout, pedestrian, bicycle, bus and general purpose traffic movement, parking and amenity spaces, and mitigation measures.

The advantages and disadvantages of various technologies should be examined as well as the viability of retrofitting and using Tram No. 1220 or other tram systems or configurations.

#### 4.4 Review of Operational Options

##### (a) Service Options

Several service options should be explored and evaluated for operational and financial viability. These may include but not be limited to seasonal versus year-round operation and tourist versus integrated tourist and local use.

##### (b) Route Options

Consideration should be given to route options that are oriented towards linking the existing heritage sites within Steveston (i.e., Gulf of Georgia Cannery, Britannia Heritage Shipyard Park) with opportunities for future expansion (e.g., London Farm). It is expected that the Consultant will comment on the potential market impact expected from proposed route and service options.

##### (c) Management and Governance Options

The Consultant will be required to identify and assess proposed management and governance models for operating the tram, which may include partnering with more than one organization or with the private sector. Each of the options or systems identified should be evaluated with respect to its applicability and effectiveness for the City of Richmond. This evaluation should be linked directly to the civic objectives identified earlier in the study. An order of magnitude assessment of capital and operational costs will be required for each of these options. The Consultant will be responsible for establishing the criteria for ranking the proposed options and selecting a preferred or recommended option.

#### 4.5 Recommended Option

The Consultant should be prepared to invest a significant amount of the project's resources on information devoted to the recommended option. Based on the previous evaluation of the range of options, the Consultant will recommend the most effective tram line for the City of Richmond. The line must be described in sufficient detail to allow the City to be vested with a thorough knowledge of the physical, financial and community impacts of this project. The recommended option should include an analysis and explanation of the following issues:

- objectives and rationale for selected system;

- technical and engineering requirements;
- route selection and alignment;
- physical, traffic and environmental impacts;
- social and cultural impacts;
- operational and governance management;
- market area impact;
- tourism potential;
- capital and operational cost analysis;
- business plan, including financial options; and
- proposed implementation plan and next steps, including proposed public consultation process.

## **5. City Responsibilities**

The City of Richmond will supply or direct the Consultant to relevant resource material that will assist the Consultant or team with their work program. This material is described in Section 4.1 of the Terms of Reference.

A Working Committee will be established comprising staff from Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services, Transportation, Engineering, and volunteers from the Steveston Interurban Restoration Society. This Committee will serve as both the Selection Committee for the Consultant as well as an advisory body throughout the study.

## **6. Required Project Deliverables**

The report will respond to the work program outlined above as well as provide a schedule for regular meetings with the Working Committee. The Consultant must also be available and prepared to make presentations to City Committees and City Council accompanied by display boards and appropriate presentation materials.

## **7. Budget**

The budget for this study is \$75,000 including all taxes and disbursements.

## **8. Completion Date**

It is anticipated that the study would take six months to complete upon the awarding of a contract.