



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee
From: Kate Sparrow
Director, Recreation & Cultural Services
Re: J. Ratsoy's Mechanical Collection (Juke Boxes & Motor Vehicles)

Date: January 5, 2006
File: 11-7000-03/2006-Vol 01

Staff Recommendation

Take no further action on opening the Ratsoy mechanical collection to the public at 12391 Gilbert Road and leave the viewing of his private collection up to the owner.

Kate Sparrow
Director, Recreation & Cultural Services
(4129)

Att. 1

FOR ORIGINATING DIVISION USE ONLY					
ROUTED TO:		CONCURRENCE		CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER	
Development Applications.....		Y	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	<input type="checkbox"/>
Building Approvals		Y	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transportation		Y	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	<input type="checkbox"/>
Policy Planning		Y	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	<input type="checkbox"/>
REVIEWED BY TAG		YES		NO	
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Staff Report

Origin

At the Council meeting of September 26, 2005 City Council made the following referral:

1. *That staff investigate options for opening the Ratsoy automobile and musical museum to the public.*
2. *That staff use a timeline to effect an opening in April, 2006.*

This report responds to these referrals.

Background

Mr. Ratsoy, a long time Richmond resident, has amassed a large personal interest collection consisting of approximately ninety three motor vehicles produced between 1906 and 1963, more than twenty jukeboxes plus an equal number of phonographs and other mechanical music makers and automotive ephemera such as product signage and maintenance and repair supplies.

His collection is housed in two large industrial style buildings located behind his residence on 12391 Gilbert Road south of Steveston Highway in the agricultural land reserve. Mr. Ratsoy currently shows the collection on an appointment basis and generally to members of car clubs. Most of the items came from the U.S. and have no known connection to Richmond.

Analysis

Staff were directed to investigate options for opening the Ratsoy automobile and musical museum to the public. In order to conduct an analysis of the feasibility of the City managing the public access to a private collection, a consultant was retained to evaluate the opportunity. The consultant, Ms Morhun, has extensive experience in managing historical collections and museums including as Executive Director of the Transportation Museum of BC. Her report is included as Attachment 1.

This report presents six options for consideration:

1. provide occasional display venues off site at City owned locations
2. identify short term loan exhibit opportunities
3. partner a select number of exhibit days at the collection site
4. partner in seasonal operation at the collection site
5. conduct pre-booked tours as part of the Richmond Museum program (similar to the popular Temples of Faith Tours)
6. take no further action on opening the collection to the public at this location and leave the viewing of the private collection to the owner.

Staff have reviewed these options from a short term perspective. There is no long term assessment on the impact of maintaining access to the collection. This would require further investigation.

The criteria for evaluating each option included the Tourism benefit, compatibility with Museum and Heritage objectives, acceptable uses within the zoning, transportation access, accessibility, financial impact and liability.

The report refers to two ways to make the collection accessible to the public: guided tours and self guided tours.

Guided tours require very knowledgeable tour guides (staff and volunteers). The groups would be limited in size and times scheduled. The guides would explain the artefacts, answer questions, animate the tour by operating the music boxes and provide security. This type of tour requires less interpretive signage and more security is provided for the artefacts.

Self guided tours require more interpretive signage in order to provide a meaningful visit. Staff and volunteers provide security and casual orientation. An overview brochure would need to be produced to explain the collection. Operation of the music boxes should be controlled by guides. This type of tour has more security issues for the artefacts.

Analysis of Options

1. Provide occasional display venues off site at City owned locations
 - Mr. Ratsoy has not expressed interest in 'loaning' his artefacts off-site
 - There is no suitable site for things such as a motor vehicle display
 - The Richmond Museum is the only place for items such as juke boxes and other mechanicals relating to Richmond heritage. Some of the collection is not in keeping with the vision and objectives of the Museum.
 - Does not increase the number of visitor opportunities
2. Short term loan exhibit opportunities
 - Mr. Ratsoy has not expressed interest in 'loaning' his artefacts off-site
 - There is no suitable site for things such as a motor vehicle display
 - The Richmond Museum is the only place for juke boxes and other mechanicals as they relate to Richmond heritage. Some of the collection is not in keeping with the vision and objectives of the Museum.
 - Does not increase the number of visitor opportunities
3. Partner a select number of exhibit days at the collection site including weekends and statutory holidays between the beginning of May and Thanksgiving (23 weeks).
 - Increases the number of visitor opportunities and therefore could extend the time a visitor stays in the Steveston area
 - Misses the spontaneous visitor as only open on select days (Gulf of Georgia Cannery visitor statistics show no pattern in days of week visitations except Sunday morning which is very quiet)
 - Issues of zoning, accepted use within the ALR, building code and parking (see issues analysis section below)

4. Partner in seasonal operation at the collection site to coordinate with the Gulf of Georgia Cannery – beginning of May to Thanksgiving; Thursday to Monday in May, June, September and October; Monday to Friday in July & August.
 - Increases the number of visitor opportunities and therefore could extend the time a visitor stays in the Steveston area
 - Easier access for visitors as site is open every day
 - Issues of zoning, accepted use within the ALR, building code, transportation and parking (see issues analysis section below)
5. Pre-booked tours through the Richmond Museum program
 - allows public access to view this interesting collection
 - enhances the opportunities available through the Richmond Museum
 - issues of zoning and building code
 - could take place throughout the year
 - less costs than the other options
6. Take no further action on opening the collection to the public at this location and leave the viewing of his private collection up to the owner (similar to the Grocery Hall of Fame). (Recommended)
 - Potential increase in tourist destination opportunities
 - The responsibility remains with the owner

See attachment 2 for a summary of the options.

Issues Analysis

Building Code: The buildings were permitted and built as agricultural buildings under the farm building code. In order to accommodate public access the building would require assessment by a Code Consultant and a Structural Engineer to ensure compliance with the BC Building Code. Building upgrades and issues such as fire fighting accessibility, exiting and washroom facilities require consideration. The exiting may be sufficient depending on the number of people permitted at one time. Lack of washroom facilities could be overcome with provision of port-a-potties.

Zoning: The property is located in the ALR. Current zoning does not fit a publicly accessible “museum” type activity. To accommodate this use would require an application for “non-farm use” and a rezoning of the property. There could be financial implications related to this action. The owner prefers this not occur.

Financial: Should Council wish to pursue option 3, 4 or 5, staff will further investigate, with the owner, any upgrades to the building required and report back on costs. In addition, city funds will be required for managing, coordinating and interpreting the collection. A proposed operating budget has been outlined in Attachment 3.

Assuming the technical issues related to zoning and building code can be overcome, in order to open this private collection to the public there are a number of items that require funding.

Some are one time start-up costs and will be incurred only in the first year. Start-up costs include: research on the collection; preparation of staff & volunteer training; interpretive signage; brochure scripting and layout; directional and entry signage. Ongoing costs include: staff; staff & volunteer training; volunteer recruitment; brochure printing; port-a-potty rental.

There are no identified funding sources for these options. Council could either include in one time additional levels, fund from council provision or from the operating budget for 2006 through an ongoing additional level increase.

- Parking: There is provision of parking on site for a limited number of vehicles and a transportation plan would need to be completed to manage accessibility, buses and parking.
- Insurance: Liability insurance for participants would be covered under the City's policy. Coverage of damage to the vehicles or other artefacts caused by participants would require discussion with the owner.
- Pricing: The consultant recommended a flat fee per person to start of between \$5 and \$10 per visit. The revenue would go towards the City's budget.
- Agreement To ensure all conditions are met, an agreement would have to be developed and signed outlining the City's terms and Mr. Ratsoy's terms for access to his private collection.

Given the technical zoning and building codes issues and the issues with funding, it is recommended the City take no further action to open this collection to the public at this location. This still leaves access to Mr Ratsoy's private collection to be managed by the owner at his discretion.

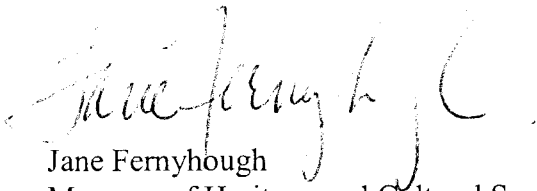
Financial Impact

No financial impact of the recommended option. However, if council wishes to further pursue the public access to the collection, funding sources will need to be identified to resolve the outstanding issues.

January 5, 2006

Conclusion

The operation of a privately owned collection could be viewed as an opportunity to increase the tourist draw to the community at a relatively low cost and no capital outlay to the City. However, given the issues of zoning, transportation, ALR restrictions and building code it is recommended that the City take no further action on opening the Ratsoy automobile and musical museum to the public at this time.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jane Fernyhough", written in dark ink.

Jane Fernyhough
Manager of Heritage and Cultural Services
(4288)

*Mechanicals –
Juke Boxes and Motor Vehicles and More*



By Sue Morhun

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Mechanicals – Juke Boxes and Motor Vehicles and More

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose

This report explores the benefits and constraints of entering into a partnership with a private collector in order to provide public access to a significant and interesting collection located in Richmond.

About the Collection

Over the past 30 years Richmond collector Mr. Jim Ratsoy has accumulated an interesting and diverse personal interest collection. It includes 93 registered vehicles, over 20 juke boxes, and a large number of other mechanical musical devices and automotive ephemera, much of which he displays in a 12,000 square foot building designed as a show room and located behind his home on Gilbert Road. Other items, some in varying degrees of restoration, are housed in an adjacent 18,000 square foot building. A long-time employee takes care of the collection and does most of the restoration and ongoing maintenance.

Most of the items originated in the United States and have no known connection to Richmond. Collection information is oral and there is no formal documentation. Access to this collection has largely been limited to car clubs, interested individuals who seek the owner out, and friends. No records are kept, but attendance numbers are limited. The vehicle component is likely the largest private collection in BC and the same could well be true of the jukeboxes and mechanical musicals.

Private and Public Collections

The exclusive nature of this collection (termed an “industrial collection”) is not surprising in that the cost to acquire, maintain, house, and exhibit collections of such large size and complexity requires considerable funding. These niche collections appeal to a select group of people rather than a more general audience and, consequently, growing visitation is challenging. As a result, these kinds of collections, whether public or privately owned, are the exception rather than the norm. More typically, they occur as part of a larger whole rather than as a stand-alone entity. This situation is especially true in Canada where financial resources are limited.

Private versus public collections come into conflict in terms of ownership. Privately owned collections are unencumbered. Owners can buy and sell and change at will. They are under no obligation to restore to exacting standards, to retain the item for posterity, or to provide any kind of access. Public collections, on the other hand, are not seen as being owned by any one person or group. Rather, the current caretakers are seen as stewards with an obligation to “do the right thing by the real thing” for the most number of people and for all time. There are rigorous ethical and legal standards to attain and maintain.

Consequently, there is challenge when blending private with public collections. The risks are three fold:

- Fair play – i.e., why that one person and not another (or even all collectors in the same situation) is being offered the opportunity;
- The perception (real or imagined) that an individual is benefiting from the public purse to the detriment of others; and
- Relevancy and authenticity – i.e., what the importance is to the community versus the public investment and the level of authenticity.

Additionally, the terms of a partnership need to take into consideration the impact (real or perceived) it might have on publicly owned collections. In the case of Richmond, community collections have largely been acquired by donation and have a direct connection to the history of the community. At the current time, the ability for the public to access their own collections is very limited with only about 2% of it on exhibit at any one point in time. Despite the best efforts of the small staff and volunteers, programming is equally limited. If a partnership is reached, great care needs to be taken to ensure that the public collection is not seen to be further disadvantaged.

Options

A range of options are identified:

- Gratefully decline the opportunity;
- Provide occasional display venues off site at City owned locations;
- Identify short term loan exhibit opportunities;
- Partner a select number of exhibit days at the collection site; or
- Partner in seasonal operation.

Conclusion

Whichever course is pursued will be dependent on the investment of time, staff resources, and money the City of Richmond is willing to consider.

Mechanicals - Juke Boxes and Motor Vehicles and More

1. Report Purpose

This report explores the benefits and constraints associated with a possible partnership involving the City of Richmond and a private collector, Mr. Jim Ratsoy. The collector is interested in making his collections of motor vehicles, musical jukeboxes, and automotive ephemera more accessible to the general public.

An initial interest in what would be a private-public relationship was discussed briefly a number of years ago but no action was taken. However, there has been a renewed interest on the part of two members of Council to re-visit the situation and explore options. In general terms, the owner would be delighted to let more people see and enjoy his collection on a controlled basis, provided the City of Richmond was involved in some manner, primarily providing staffing assistance. He believes that his collections would be of interest to a large number of people and would benefit the community as a tourist attraction. The owner has no stated interest in disposing of the collection through donation or sale at the present time.

2. About the Collection

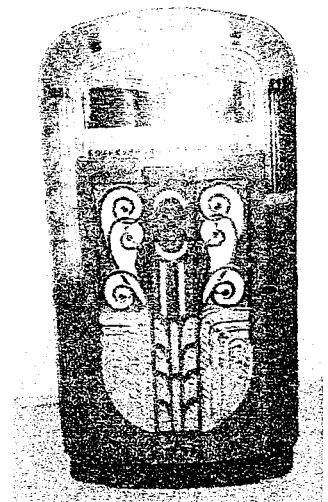
2a. *Origins*

Mr. Ratsoy, a long time Richmond resident, has amassed a considerable and diverse personal interest collection. This eclectic collection includes approximately 93 registered vehicles (including six trucks), in excess of 20 jukeboxes plus an equal number of phonographs and other mechanical music makers, and automotive ephemera such as product signage and maintenance/repair supplies. His collection is housed in two large industrial style out-buildings (covering 30,000 square feet in total). The buildings are situated behind his home, which is located in a rural area on Gilbert Road and access to the buildings is via a separate driveway.

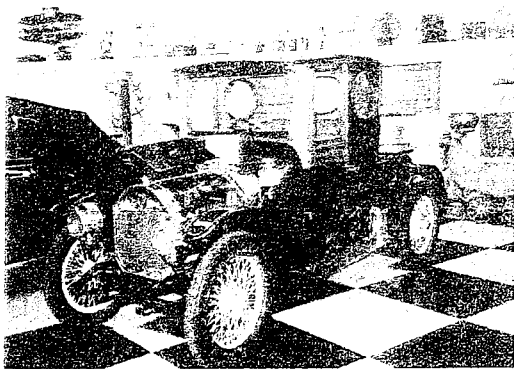
Much of the collection has been acquired in the United States and Mr. Ratsoy is unaware of any known connection to Richmond. None of the collection has been documented formally. Information about each item is aural only and based on personal experience and informal research. Both the owner and his employee are quite knowledgeable about the items in their care, especially from an operational perspective.

As would be expected, the collection changes on the whim of the collector. Items are bought and sold as desired. What is acquired is also very personal and not necessarily themed (e.g., limited to one brand). The one exception to this observation might be the Ford car series, which covers most of the years between 1929 and 1942. The oldest vehicle in the collection is a 1906 Stevens and newest a sleek 1963 Buick Wildcat. There are several unique vehicles: For instance, the 1912 Unic, a French automobile, is one of only four known to exist in North America.

The mechanical players include the always popular and desirable Wurlitzer jukeboxes (the oldest originates from 1938) plus Wurlitzer pianos and an especially unusual Mills Vilano combination violin-piano that dates to 1921.



2b. *Presentation and Care*



The collection facility is in immaculate condition, as are the items on exhibit. A good portion of the collection is presented in a 12,000 square foot building in a show room setting. Fully restored vehicles are displayed in a warehouse style with no attempt at contextual display. The various types of music makers, including a white baby grand piano, are placed around the perimeter of the building, also with no attempt at contextual display. Automotive signage, ephemera, and other smaller sized curiosities are generally mounted on the walls or located on wall-mounted perimeter shelving in an open storage format. Signage is lit and other items are in good repair and clean. Despite being presented in an industrial style metal building and in a warehouse exhibit format, the overall impression is pleasing and the setting light and airy. An average temperature of 55 degrees is maintained year round.

Once restored, the vehicles are kept in working order: They are occasionally driven in parades and taken to "show and shine" events. Many vehicles are not driven in the course of a year and so engines are turned over on an annual basis, seals etc. lubricated to minimize leaks. In terms of the musical artifacts, they too, must be used regularly. Regular cleaning is essential as the accumulation of dust on well-oiled parts can cause the items to seize. Cleaning is a delicate – and time consuming – task. These items tend not to leave the premises.

For the past 28 years, Mr. Ratsoy has employed a staff person to take care of what has been both a growing and an often changing collection. His employee attends to ongoing collection maintenance requirements, repair, and restoration, and assists with conducting occasional tours for pre-booked interested groups or driving a vehicle in a parade. None of the collection is rented to the movie industry.



2c. *Public Access*

Access to this private collection is naturally limited. Mr. Ratsoy does not market the facility in the traditional sense. Since no attendance records are kept, annual visitation can only be guessed. He has suggested it is a small number. The guest book indicates visitors from around the world. Generally, people visit the collection as a result of being active in a car club that either books a visit or spreads word of the collection's existence by word of mouth. Access is by appointment: Other interested people are invited by the owner on a casual basis. Groups that do attend usually number less than two dozen people, and most of the time they are also car collectors. Recently, Mr. Ratsoy held a first time – and successful – charity fundraiser that attracted a crowd approaching 300 people. He has, on one or two occasions, opened the facility to high school automotive classes but on a highly controlled basis and only when he has a personal connection with the teacher.

Site visits are carefully controlled. This is due to the financial value of the pieces, the potential for costly scratches unwittingly resulting from the actions of an enthusiastic viewer, the potential for damage to more delicate music makers caused by improper handling, and, to a lesser extent, the possibility of theft. Visitors are almost always escorted by the owner or his employee, who are delighted to talk about the items.

3. Private Collections and Public Collections: General Observations

3a. Private Collections

It would be fair to say that private collections of all kinds abound in most communities.

They are personal in nature, very focused in subject matter and, as a consequence, appeal to a select and limited group of people. Their ability to generate a wider public appeal is also limited – except where the extent, quality, subject matter, and financial value is so overwhelmingly unique that they become a destination experience (e.g., the Crown Jewels in the Tower of London).

Private collections (along with the concomitant acquisition, storage, display, and maintenance costs) are generally much less in extent than most “industrial collections”. The number of people with both the financial ability and the desire to accumulate any number of large sized items such as cars, small engines, or farming equipment as opposed to Inuit carvings or teaspoons is limited. The average “industry collector” will typically only be able to acquire a half-dozen large sized items or less. Mr. Ratsoy’s collection, obviously, falls outside of the norm.

There is one other significant and special interest private collector in Richmond. The Grocery Hall of Fame on No.6 Road pays homage to an early 20th Century general store complete with product packaging, signs, and retail goods. The owner opens it to the public one day per week.

3b. Collection Rarity

Mr. Ratsoy is aware of a handful of private collectors with multiple vehicles in BC, although he believes he is likely the largest holder. Initial research confirms his assessment. There is one larger sized public collection of trucks – all that is left from the Province’s failed Transportation Museum experiment of the late 1980’s (see Attachment A) – and, due to funding constraints, it is accessible on a very limited basis. Mr. Ratsoy’s collection of musical machines is equally unusual. The automotive ephemera are more commonly seen in both private and public collections.

In Canada, the number of large privately owned vehicular collections is very limited. Publicly owned collections (e.g., held by museums or non-profit organizations), are equally limited in number. The reason is financial in nature.

As with the private sector, most museums are also limited in terms of space and funding. Publicly owned museums are further constrained by collecting practices vested largely in donations, in policies that typically require them to only collect items that have a direct connection to their respective community or region, in preservation standards, and as public stewards, to retain ownership for all time. Unlike the private collector, every new asset presents a long-term liability. De-accessioning (i.e., getting rid of a legally acquired item) is subject to stringent requirements and regulations – some of which may involve Revenue Canada, and all of which involve maintaining public trust.



Due to serious and widespread funding constraints, most Canadian museums are extremely limited in the number of larger items they can collect and, like the Richmond Museum, have to limit what is collected to those things that have overwhelming significance to their community and have multiple heritage values. Many times those items cannot be displayed regularly due to space constraints and lack of funds to conduct requisite conservation.

3c. *Richmond's Collections*

Discussing whether or not a community should invest in a privately held collection requires information about those collections already held in public trust either by local government or non-profits groups, and especially those collections that have a direct connection to the people of Richmond, past and present.

The Richmond Museum, located in the Richmond Cultural Centre, stewards the largest community collection. Other collections reside at various City owned historic sites including Britannia Heritage Shipyard, Steveston Museum, and London Farm, while others are owned by other agencies such as the Gulf of Georgia Cannery. Depending on the governance/ownership model, the Richmond Museum and its staff can have either a formal or an informal relationship with all of these special places. Those relationships are vested in curatorial, exhibit, and programming planning expertise as well as collaborative programming, collecting, and profile raising.

The challenge of providing public access to the community's own collection currently is apparent when one reviews statistics. The existing collection is in excess of 12,000 items including a teaching collection and archival ephemera. It is estimated that only 2% is publicly accessible at any one given time. This is due to space constraints associated with having to mount exhibits and program them in a 2,000 square foot facility designed to conform with a cultural centre design as opposed to the needs associated with a collection-based facility. There are no permanent or large sized exhibits as a result of the space constraints and, while a changing exhibit schedule enables part of the collection to be displayed from time to time, the story of the community can only be told in a piecemeal manner. As well, museum-related programming often occurs off site without the benefits of having any exhibits as a contextual backdrop.

A majority of the collection is stored less than ideally in a 3,000 square foot off site facility, as well as in the Phoenix net loft and at the Works yard. The collection is inventoried and every effort is made to ensure that documentation and conservation meets professional standards of care within the limitations of the storage facilities and staffing.

There is one vehicle in the collection – a 1951 Ford truck used on a local blueberry farm. It is not restored, nor is it roadworthy. There is a horse drawn wagon in the collection.

As noted previously, staff have duties beyond the Museum itself in that they have responsibilities in Richmond's overall heritage and historic site system (with the exception of those owned and/or operated by a stand alone entity. There are:

- Two full-time staff: A supervisor who is responsible for museums and heritage services; and a curator who has the lead role for all of the community's collections;
- Three part-time staff who attend to cultural and school programming in addition to exhibit co-ordination; and
- Cultural Center staff support routine clerical, security, and cleaning needs.

A formal volunteer program including training was instituted last year and presently approximately 20 people are involved. A majority of these people support program delivery and a small number assist with exhibit and/or collection work.

4. *Situational Analysis*

Despite best efforts, museum collections (either public or private) are not economically self-sustaining. Without a doubt, organized collections of all kinds are valuable – both socially and economically. Their economic impact is largely indirect, rather than direct (i.e., they create the activity that other people

make the money on and are part of a larger package).

Experience demonstrates that the appeal of highly focused and industrial collections tends to be limited to a select audience that is difficult to grow. Vehicular collections are perhaps the most appealing type of industrial collections and there is a reasonable cross section of people who want to see a good sized industrial collection at least once. Often, individual vehicles hit a responsive cord with the general public, a cord that is usually based on notoriety (e.g., an association with a famous person as was the case with the Beatle's psychedelic Rolls Royce). But collectively, size, quality, and notoriety are usually not enough to sustain an operation in the long term. A subsidy is central to ongoing operations. Private owners have the flexibility to manipulate their collections – to buy and sell at will, to change collecting directions, etc., while public collections do not (see Attachment B for further discussion).



4a. Partnership

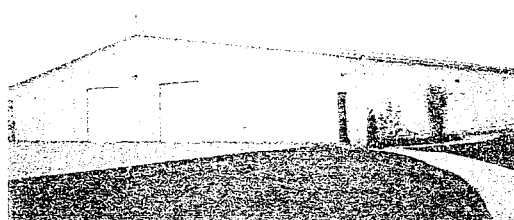
Blending public and private museum collection or attraction operations, regardless of the scale or duration of the relationship, is not straightforward. At the heart of the matter is ownership and the ease with which the general public can accept a partnered situation. It is very easy for a partnership of this nature being misconstrued, especially if there is a direct financial investment of public money. It triggers a subjective rather than objective reaction. The risks are three fold:

- Fair play – i.e., why that one person and not another (or even all in the same situation) is being offered the opportunity);
- The perception (real or imagined) that an individual is benefiting from the public purse to the detriment of others; and
- Relevancy and authenticity – i.e., what the importance is to the community versus the public investment and whether and the level of authenticity.

A corollary issue is the current state of Richmond's own collections (i.e., donated artifacts with a direct connection to the history of Richmond). The major issue that could arise would be why the money is not being directed toward improving the challenged state of the community's own collections, collections which the community has already invested in, so as to improve public access, exhibitry, conservation, and programming. This reaction would be exacerbated if the current budget levels (operating, project, and/or capital) were seen to be adversely impacted.

Obviously, there are ways to mitigate the above noted concerns, some of which are noted in the report section titled "Options".

A second and somewhat lesser concern is the location of the Ratsoy collection. The site is not on a heavily traveled route, there is little or no walk by traffic, and the main exhibit building cannot be seen from the road. Good directional signage, installed with the approval of the City, can solve some of these problems. However a solid investment in a variety of marketing tools will be critical for generating offsetting revenue for an ongoing operation. This will come at a considerable cost.



If the relationship between the City and the private collector becomes formalized in any manner, both parties must pay particular attention to managing the risks. It will be critical to demonstrate that the benefits to both parties are equitable, that other collectors are not being disadvantaged, and that the community's collections are not being adversely impacted. A signed contract or M.O.U. (Memorandum of Understanding) that details the responsibilities of, and benefits to, both parties should underscore any agreement.

Senior museum professionals who were canvassed in the course of preparing this report stressed the need for any partnership to be open, transparent, equitable, and **very** accountable. Several shared instances in their own institutions where controversy dogged a partnership because critical elements were either missed or not understood. "If you proceed, proceed with caution" was a constant refrain.

5. Options

A range of options can be considered:

Gratefully decline the opportunity

Explain the financial and perception concerns with the collector.

Provide occasional display venues off site at City owned locations

Agree to provide a venue at various historic sites or other City locations at no cost on a set number of event days. This would allow the collector to exhibit a select number of vehicles, circulate advertising leaflets, etc.

Identify opportunities for loans for upcoming short term exhibits

Loans would be for two to three months in duration. The intent would be to present some of the smaller sized items in the collection in an exhibit context. For example, a "cabinet of curiosities" exhibit that features items from a number of private collections or have one historically appropriate vehicle at a historic site provided it can be displayed in a secure setting.

Partner in a select number of exhibit days at the collection site

Provide basic reception/security staffing for the day and advertise using in-house Parks and Recreation programming tools. This could be done in return for either restoration of the Richmond Museum's blueberry truck or charge admission and receive a portion of the gate proceeds. Invite other collectors to bring their relevant items for the day in an expanded "Show and Shine" format. The daily cost (calculated on what a Cultural Centre front desk attendant earns) ranges between \$151 and \$193 for a 7.5-hour day.

Partner in a seasonal operation

Provide one staff person, in house advertising as above and directional signage to make the collection accessible every weekend from the beginning of May through to the end of September (22 weeks) would range between \$6,655 and \$8,492 (statutory holidays extra). Again, offset the public investment with the restoration of the Richmond Museum's blueberry truck, or by receiving a portion or all of the gate fees.

6. Considerations for an On-Site Partnered Operation

Before entering into negotiation, staff will need to determine if there are any zoning conflicts associated with the proposed usage, whether or not there are any public safety issues, for example adequate egress, exit lighting, and attendance capacity, and whether or not washroom facilities are adequate for the anticipated level of usage. City liability needs to be fully assessed.

6a. *The Visitor Experience*

The type and level of interpretation shapes the visitor experience. Decisions as to what method is employed would be dependent on two things – the owner's comfort level with certain types of access and the money available.

6b. *Group Touring*

At the most basic level, the current showroom building could be opened as is – provided there was someone able to lead and control a group (i.e., tightly controlled access). It is doubtful an owner of a collection of this caliber would agree to uncontrolled visitation.

The role of the guide would be not only to explain what people were seeing and to answer questions but also to ensure the security of the collection. They might also animate the tour from time to time (e.g., allow people to step into a vehicle or operate some of the music boxes). This approach requires staffing (paid and volunteer) that is more than a gate keeping function. Tour guides must have solid collection knowledge and be very responsible. In the case of volunteers, close supervision would be required until a high level of trust was developed.

Groups would likely be limited in size (12 or less) and tour times scheduled to some extent. Offering occasional specialty tours (e.g., led by Mr. Ratsoy or his employee) would be a more meaningful way to deal with the avid aficionados or pre-booked car groups. Being able to satisfy this kind of visitor is the challenging but very important because they are the repeat visitors – the niche market – and the best word-of-mouth marketers.

6c. *Self-Led Touring*

Self-led visits and/or ones where there is more casual contact with staffing (paid and volunteer) require interpretation in order to provide a meaningful and an enjoyable visit. This approach would require developing a “path” around the collection with barriers that endeavor to keep people from straying. Typically, large artifact exhibits use floor-mounted signage that includes a combination of text and drawings or pictures to explain what the visitor is looking at. Some interpretation styles are highly technical in nature, while others focus on the item's social history, and still others use a combination of both.

This approach allows for more flexibility in terms of the size and scheduling of visitors. The chief role of the people on the floor is security, providing a casual orientation, engaging in general conversation and answering questions. In more sophisticated environments audio tours can augment signage or the brief introduction provided by an attendant. Usually self-led attractions offer a basic overview pamphlet to every visitor. Often one can purchase a more detailed guidebook or an exhibit collection catalogue. Increasingly these kinds of products are available in a CD or DVD format.

6d. *Fee Structure*

Establishing a workable fee structure is challenging art. What price is both appealing enough to attract people, have them leave feeling they have received good value but also meets much of the cost of providing that experience? A personalized tour format with someone exceptionally knowledgeable lends itself to charging a much higher fee while a self-led format is usually the lower cost option. A market survey of comparable attractions including the length of stay would be a prudent undertaking before setting an entrance fee.

It would be tempting to set a flat fee to start with (e.g., between \$5-\$10 per person) and for an experience that falls between the escorted tour and the fully self-led format. But whomever staffs the facility will have to be ready with a policy statement that resists the inevitable demand for senior rates, group rates, family rates – and even more.

7. Negotiating a Partnership Operating Agreement

A partnership of this nature demands a mutually agreeable operating agreement; one that anticipates issues and opportunities and is flexible enough to respond to the inevitable oversights that will occur. Changes to the agreement should be based on a routine evaluation program rather than being episodic in nature.

Some of the things that need to be considered for inclusion are:

- The type and extent of interpretation to be conducted and any limitations placed on collection handling or collection operation
- Liability, other insurances required, and who is responsible for securing and paying for what
- The process for controlling and reporting on damage done to the collection
- Agreeing to who pays for utilities and other routine operating expenses
- Determining what type of marketing will be done, at what cost and by whom
- Agreeing who is responsible for directional signage
- Determining who supervises volunteer recruitment (including ensuring Criminal Record checks are completed) trains, schedules and supports them

8. Conclusion

Whichever course is pursued will be dependent on the investment of time, staff resources, and money the City of Richmond is willing to consider.

ATTACHMENT A

Transportation Museum of British Columbia

The short-lived Transportation Museum of British Columbia had its beginnings in the early 1980's during the early stages of Expo 86 planning. In fact, the highly successful world's fair was originally conceived around a transportation theme titled "Transpo". One of the legacies was to be a combined transportation museum/attraction. Well known museum planner and architect Henry Hawthorne was commissioned to prepare a conceptual design for a location at Boundary Bay airport, a design that was to include provisions for planes, trains, and automobiles plus other forms of transportation, both historic and futuristic.

About the same time two vehicular collections came into being. One, focused on collector vehicles, was business based. It was conceived by a car collector who believed that with the right kind of initial financing, older vehicles could be acquired by donation or purchase, restored, and then re-sold at a profit. The collector secured provincial government support for his small business located in New Westminster. The second collection centered on a donation of 26 unique commercial trucks to the then Provincial Museum, now the Royal BC Museum, from the estate of long time Vancouver trucker Bob King. The truck collection was warehoused in Richmond with a part-time curator in charge. Both collections were on exhibit throughout Expo at a site near First and Main alongside other transportation artifacts.

When the heady days of Expo were over, the reality behind the transportation museum dream became quickly apparent. Realistic operating costs associated with a comprehensive approach were significant, and funding was not forthcoming. Artifact acquisition costs associated with filling major gaps in the proposed collecting mandate were considerable. The Boundary Bay site was no longer available for a museum/attraction use.

Meanwhile, the government-funded vehicle restoration business was failing, and assets were poised to become the property of the crown. There was the provincially owned truck collection to care for and the Province was now obliged to care for the Beatles' famous psychedelic Rolls Royce, an unexpected but encumbered donation to the people of BC by Expo chair Jimmy Pattison. The province had an orphaned collection on its hands.

The then tourism and culture Minister Bill Reid decided he would find "a home" for the "orphans" and invited two non-profit groups (Can Steam and the West Coast Railway Association) to join the operation, presenting a somewhat abbreviated version of the original dream. The site secured for what was originally called the Historic Transportation Centre (later the Transportation Museum of BC) was a long vacant mall located on Highway 10 in Cloverdale. The Minister appointed a closely held non-profit board consisting largely of businessmen resident in Surrey. Vehicle collection ownership was vested in the Provincial Museum.

The Museum consisted of two buildings: The first, arranged in a salon style show room setting featured 48 cars, two horse drawn carriages including a hearse, and a small gift shop; and the second building housed all the trucks (49 in total), a small community meeting room and two restoration/maintenance bays. The outside yard housed a variety of steam engines that operated on event days only plus two pieces of rolling stock undergoing restoration and a dismantled DC 3.

The operation survived for nearly four years before the Province ordered it closed. It was never well funded and was heavily reliant on various government employment programs for much of its labour. There was no money for marketing, no local government support, and anticipated sponsorships from local dealerships failed to materialize in any substantive manner. The volunteer board proved unable to address the significant fund raising responsibilities.

While the location did not lend itself to walk by traffic, it became evident quickly that the appeal for the general public (women and children especially) was limited due to both the nature of the collection and the static nature of the exhibits. While there were many creative low-cost event and marketing activities generated by the small staff, revenue generation failed to reach more than 30% of the operating cost. There was no high-level political support for the "dream" and the Province tired of finding ways to offset the balance which, by the late 1980's, was in the range of \$375,000.

A last ditch attempt was made in late 1989 to change the financial situation by turning the enterprise from a museum to an attraction. The BC Pavilion Corporation took over management, invested heavily in marketing, and delivered a series of large scale, high profile events. Within five months they decided the attraction was not economically feasible.

The Royal BC Museum was charged with disposing of the entire vehicular collection, a difficult and often distressing task. Following standard de-accessioning practices, including those involving Revenue Canada transactions, the Museum endeavored to return items to donors wherever possible, and to transfer ownership of purchased items to a responsible public organization in the community with which that vehicle had a close association. Bob King's truck collection was transferred in its entirety to a non-profit society in response to the legal provisions associated with that donation. Despite careful efforts the process was often plagued with bad feelings and occasionally controversy.

Only the unplaced vehicles were sold. The number of vehicles disposed of in that manner was small and the price fetched at auction equally small.

ATTACHMENT B

Financial Challenges of Managing Industrial Collections

The financial challenges associated with managing industrial collections are considerable and generally go well beyond those associated with a traditional community museum. This is due to the extent of the housing required to store and exhibit (especially if a more complex contextual display technique is desired), the higher concomitant operating costs (utilities, security, labour, collection maintenance), and a niche visitor market appeal that is difficult to transcend and grow. Attachment A details the ultimate demise of the Transportation Museum of BC.

For these reasons there are very few substantive vehicular collections in either public or private hands in Canada. There are exceptions (e.g., the National War Museum, the provincially operated Reynolds Museum in Wetaskawin, Alberta). Interestingly, railway museums that exhibit more than rolling stock tend to be more successful in Canada. The vehicular collection situation is different in the United States and Europe where there is more individual and corporate wealth. Often a casino or a winery will underwrite the owner's passion for automotive artifacts (known as "vanity collections") and those items, in turn, will be used to expand the product appeal of the main financial generator. There are also industry-based collections (e.g., the Ford Motor Company).

Most community museums cannot afford to acquire many industrial artifacts. In BC, for instance, there are only two organizations, the Saanich Pioneer Artifacts Society and the BC Agricultural and Farm Machinery Museum, who have more than three or four working vehicles in their collection. Both are heavily volunteer dependent and are struggling with declining volunteerism, rising costs (much of which is associated with a sharp increase in insurance and heating costs and low appeal), and lack of funding.

There is always the temptation to think that these collections will appeal to volunteers and that they can heavily offset labour costs, etc. Experience shows otherwise. As with other types of collections, volunteers can provide important and enjoyable services for the general public. The most successful programs are those that are supported by staff who take on mundane administrative duties and are focused on the constant recruitment, training, and nurturing needed to maintain a great program. Volunteer managers must also be cognizant of the documented and changing nature of volunteerism in Canada (e.g., the desire to tackle short term tasks but an increasing hesitancy to become involved in ongoing or overly onerous responsibilities). Programs heavily reliant on volunteerism are subject to wide swings in quality and quantity of the operation. The availability and reliability of volunteers can be inconsistent. Matching skills and interest with need is never easy. Managing volunteers in an industrial collection setting is especially tricky, particularly if the collection is operational. A stated skill set needs to be proven before any work on or in the vehicle occurs. Therefore, accredited supervision needs to be in place in order to comply with WCB regulations and to manage the risks inherent in motors, etc. Operating policies need to be in place and rigorously followed. Training is essential.

ATTACHMENT C

Report Author

A museum and heritage professional for over 30 years, Ms. Morhun has managed museum/archival and heritage collections as well as historic sites in a variety of settings and communities throughout BC. From March 1988 to January 1990, she was the Executive Director of the Transportation Museum of BC. As the Manager of Community and Heritage Services for the Township of Langley for the past 14 years, Ms. Morhun oversees a comprehensive community centered heritage program that includes a wide range of collections, facilities, heritage resources, and partnerships.

As a private consultant, she delivers heritage planning and board development workshops throughout the Province. She is on the Boards of Tourism BC, the Barkerville Heritage Trust, and the Land Conservancy of BC.

Ms. Morhun was the recipient of the Minister's Award for Heritage in 2004.

Analysis of Options

	Option 3: Partner a select number of exhibit days at the collection site.	Option 4: Partner in seasonal operation at the collection site to coordinate with the Gulf of Georgia Cannery	Option 5: Pre-booked tours through the Richmond Museum program	Option 6: Leave the viewing of his private collection up to the owner.
Dates	weekends and statutory holidays between the beginning of May and Thanksgiving (23 weeks).	May to Thanksgiving; Thursday to Monday in May, June, September and October; Monday to Friday in July & August.	On Demand	
# of Tourism Attractions	Increased	Increased	By request	Possibly
Marketing	Required	Required	Some Required	No
Heritage Interest				
Zoning	No	No	No	OK
Transportation	Some, need plan	Some, need plan	OK	OK
Code	Upgrade Needed	Upgrade Needed	Upgrade Needed	OK
Accepted Use in ALR	No	No	No	OK

Option 3

- Increases the number of visitor opportunities and therefore could extend the time a visitor stays in the Steveston area
- Misses the spontaneous visitor as only open on select days (Gulf of Georgia Cannery visitor statistics show no pattern in days of week visitations except Sunday morning which is very quiet)
- Issues of zoning, accepted use within the ALR, building code and parking (see issues analysis section below)

Option 4

- Increases the number of visitor opportunities and therefore could extend the time a visitor stays in the Steveston area
- Easier access for visitors as site is open every day
- Issues of zoning, accepted use within the ALR, building code, transportation and parking (see issues analysis section below)

Option 5

- allows public access to view this interesting collection
- enhances the opportunities available through the Richmond Museum
- issues of zoning and building code
- could take place throughout the year
- less costs than the other options

Option 6

- Potential increase in tourist destination opportunities
- The responsibility remains with the owner

Analysis of Operating Budget

Evaluation	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5	Option 6
Option description	Open weekends & stat holidays May to Thanksgiving (23 weeks), 12:30 – 6 pm (51 days) based on a 6 hour day	Open daily – May to Thanksgiving (23 weeks), 12:30 – 6 pm (136 days) based on a 6 hour day	Scheduled, pre-booked tours (based on one tour per month x six months)	Tours managed by owner
Staffing	\$7,100	\$18,900	\$600	
Staff & Volunteer training	\$ 2,140 (trainer, two staff, volunteers)	\$ 2,140 (trainer, two staff, volunteers)	\$ 1,025 (trainer, one staff, volunteers)	
Volunteer recruitment (advertising, interviewing)	\$ 400	\$ 400	\$ 200	
Supplies and communication	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	
Research of artefacts; preparation of training & interpretive signage and brochure content	\$1,750*	\$1,750*	\$1,750*	
Interpretive signage	\$3,000*	\$3,000*	\$3,000*	
Brochure	\$3,000**	\$3,000**		
Insurance	City liability insurance	City liability insurance	City liability insurance	
Advertising	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	As per regular program advertising	Could be included in city leisure guide at no cost to owner
Road/directional/entry signage	\$ 500*	\$ 500*	N/a	
Utilities	Owner	Owner	Owner	Owner
Port-a-potty rental	\$ 480	\$ 480	\$ 480	
Bus rental	N/A	N/A	\$ 530	
Total for 2006	\$20,870	\$ 32,670	\$ 8,085	

Visits required to break even (excluding building improvements)	4,174	6,534	\$5.00 per visit
Cost of seat to breakeven on 6 tours of 20 people			\$ 67.40 per tour

* one time costs – first year only

** costs for printing only in subsequent years