City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To:	Public Works and Transportation Committee	**Date:**	July 30, 2003
From:	Gordon Chan, P. Eng. Director, Transportation	**File:**	6500-01
Re:	**TRANSLINK 2004 CAPITAL PROGRAM COST-SHARING SUBMISSIONS – MAJOR ROAD NETWORK, BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM AND TRANSIT-RELATED ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM**		

Staff Recommendation

1. That the submission of the following two road improvement projects for cost-sharing as part of the TransLink 2004 Major Road Network Minor Capital Program, as described in the attached report, be endorsed:

   (a) Westminster Highway Widening – Nelson Road to Westminster Highway/Highway 91 Interchange (Year 2 of a 3-year accrued funding application); and
   (b) No. 2 Road / Blundell Road Intersection Improvements.

2. That the submission to extend the Shell Road bicycle route from Athabasca Drive to Horseshoe Slough Trail for cost-sharing as part of the TransLink 2004 Bicycle Infrastructure Capital Cost-Sharing Program (Year 2 of a 3-year accrued funding application), as described in the attached report, be endorsed.

3. That the submission of various transit facility improvements for cost-sharing as part of the TransLink 2004 Transit-Related Road Infrastructure Program, as described in the attached report, be endorsed.

4. That staff report back to Council on the outcome of the evaluations by the Major Road and Transportation Advisory Committee on the above proposed submissions.

Gordon Chan, P. Eng.
Director, Transportation

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Staff Report

Origin

TransLink provides shared funding for improvements to road, bicycle and transit-related facilities through three capital cost-sharing programs:

- *Major Road Network (MRN) Minor Capital Program* – funding for capital improvements of approximately 2,100 lane-kilometres of major roads across the region that comprise the Major Road Network (MRN). MRN-designated roads provide access to important activity centres in the region and meet funding criteria related to trip length and traffic volumes of automobiles, transit vehicles and trucks.
- *Bicycle Infrastructure Capital Cost-Sharing (BICCS) Program* – funding for the construction of bicycle routes and the removal of existing barriers to cyclists across the region.
- *Transit-Related Road Infrastructure Program (TRRIP)* – funding for roadway infrastructure facilities required for the delivery of transit (bus-based) services in the region.

Each year, municipalities are invited to submit road, bicycle and transit-related improvement projects for 50-50 funding consideration from these programs. This staff report presents the proposed submissions from the City for cost-sharing as part of TransLink's 2004 capital cost-sharing programs.

Analysis

1. Major Road Network (MRN) Minor Capital Program

1.1 MRN Elements in Richmond

Richmond's share of the MRN consists of 130 lane-kilometres, which represents about 6 percent of the entire MRN in the region. Richmond's components of the existing Major Road Network (MRN) are comprised of the following elements:

- No. 2 Road (Russ Baker Way to Steveston Highway including the No. 2 Road Bridge);
- Steveston Highway between No. 2 Road and Highway 99;
- Westminster Highway between No. 2 Road and Boundary Road;
- Alderbridge Way between No. 3 Road and Shell Road;
- Bridgeport Road between Highway 99 and Knight Street;
- Knight Street Corridor (Westminster Highway to south end of the Knight Street Bridge);
- No. 3 Road between Sea Island Way and Westminster Highway; and
- Gilbert Road between Westminster Highway and Dinsmore Bridge.

In addition, the City has applied to TransLink for inclusion in the MRN of the following sections of roads:

- Nelson Road between Westminster Highway and Blundell Road; and
- Blundell Road between Highway 99 and Nelson Road.

Although Blundell Road between Highway 99 and No. 8 Road currently does not exist, an application for its consideration as part of the MRN is necessary at this time in order to be eligible to access future TransLink funding to support its construction. The City is awaiting a decision from TransLink regarding this application.

1.2 Capital Cost-sharing Arrangement

TransLink funding available for the 2004 MRN Minor Capital Program is $20 million. Of this amount, $15 million is available as block funding for municipalities with the remaining $5 million available for needs-based funding for larger scale projects of a regional significance. Municipalities are required to match TransLink funding on a 50-50 cost-sharing basis up to a maximum funding level allocated for each municipality based on the following criteria:

- the percentage of MRN lane-kilometres in each municipality (50% weight);
- the municipal share of the combined regional population and employment growth over the 1999-2006 period (25% weight); and
- the municipal percentage of the regional travel growth over the 1996-2006 period (25% weight).

Based on these criteria, Richmond is eligible to receive 9.2 percent of the annual MRN capital funding (Richmond has 8.1 percent of the total GVRD population and 6 percent of the total MRN lane-kilometres), or $1.38 million in block funding for 2004. This figure would increase to $1.87 million should the needs-based funding be combined with the block funding, as happened in 2003.

1.3 Submissions to 2004 MRN Minor Capital Program

Based on the current planned capital projects on major roads for 2004 and potential development-related road upgrades, staff have identified the following road improvements as candidate projects for submission to TransLink for inclusion in the 2004 MRN Minor Capital Program.

(a) *Westminster Highway Widening (Nelson Road to Westminster Highway/Highway 91 Interchange)* – this project, to be constructed in 2005, involves widening Westminster Highway to four lanes to improve roadway capacity to meet both current and future traffic growth. As TransLink allows municipalities to accrue MRN funding for up to three years, this phased project was submitted to and approved by the TransLink Board in July 2003 as part of its 2003 MRN Minor Capital Program. The City is required to submit a 2004 application for the project in order to accrue 2004 funding through to 2005.

(b) *No. 2 Road / Blundell Road Intersection Improvements* – this project involves installation of a centre median on No. 2 Road immediately south of its intersection with Blundell Road to improve traffic safety by preventing illegal southbound left-turn access to the Blundell Shopping Centre located on the southeast corner. The left-turning vehicles also block southbound through traffic, which in turn adversely affects the overall capacity of this busy intersection.

2. Bicycle Infrastructure Capital Cost-Sharing (BICCS) Program

Total TransLink funding available under the 2004 BICCS Program is $2.5 million, up from $2.0 million in 2003. Funding in the 2004 BICCS Program is comprised of $1.65 million in block funding to be allocated to municipalities based on their proportion of population in the region and $850,000 reserved for cost-sharing of major projects of regional priority. Based on Richmond's proportion of the GVRD population (8.3 percent), the City is eligible for $136,900 in block funding for 2004, an increase of nearly $54,000 over 2003.

As TransLink allows municipalities to accrue BICCS funding for up to three years, this phased project was submitted to and approved by the TransLink Board in December 2002 as part of its 2003 BICCS Program. The City is required to submit a 2004 application for the project in order to accrue 2004 block funding through to 2005.

3. Transit-Related Road Infrastructure Program (TRRIP)

TransLink funding available for cost-sharing under the 2004 TRRIP is $3.0 million. As TRRIP has no block funding formula, there is no allocated amount of eligible funding for the City. Historically, however, the Program has been under-subscribed and thus all eligible projects submitted by municipalities have been funded. Eligible projects include HOV lanes, transit priority and traffic management measures, roadway modifications, and passenger facility improvements.

As in past years, the majority of projects proposed to be submitted by the City for cost-sharing under the 2004 TRRIP are upgrades to bus stops along various routes to make them wheelchair accessible. These continued efforts have made Richmond a regional leader in the proportion of its total bus stops that are wheelchair accessible. As of June 2003, 47 % of the city's bus stops were accessible (in August 2001, the regional average was 34 %). In addition, the entire bus fleet operating out of the Richmond Transit Centre is wheelchair accessible.

Additional projects proposed for submission to the 2004 TRRIP include connecting sidewalks to bus stops (e.g., Westminster Highway at Gilley Road) and the upgrade of existing crosswalks at bus stops to special crosswalks with overhead lights and flashing amber beacons.

Financial Impact

The total estimated project cost of the above 2004 submissions to TransLink's three capital cost-sharing programs is approximately $7.16 million as summarized in the table below. These costs are comprised of $6.6 million for the MRN Minor Capital Program, $500,000 for the BICCS Program and $95,000 for TRRIP. Note that the estimated MRN road improvement project costs are very preliminary and will be further refined in the detailed design process.

If approved by TransLink, it is expected that the City will recover 50 percent of the project costs (construction and land costs) or up to a total maximum amount of $3.3 million. In addition, the No. 2 Road median installation is a potential project for cost-sharing with ICBC. The City's portion for these projects will be incorporated in the City's Major Capital Works Program as part of the 2004 Capital Budget development process.

Funding Program	Project Name	Funding Source for City's Portion	Estimated Total Cost
MRN Minor Capital Program	(a) Westminster Highway Widening (Nelson Road to Hwy 91 Interchange)	2003-2005 Major Capital Program	$6,525,000
	(b) No. 2 Road / Blundell Road Intersection Improvements	2004 Neighbourhood Traffic Safety Enhancement Program	$37,000
Sub-total			**$6,562,000**
Bicycle Infrastructure Capital Cost-Sharing Program	Shell Road Bike Route (Athabasca Drive to Horseshoe Slough Trail)	2003-2005 Bicycle Program	$500,000
Transit-Related Road Infrastructure Program	• various bus stop upgrades • crosswalk upgrades • various connecting sidewalks	2004 Transit Infrastructure Program	$95,000
Total			**$7,157,000**

The various projects identified in the above proposed 2004 TransLink Capital Program cost-sharing submissions by Richmond are subject to Council approval of the 2004 Capital Program Plan.

Conclusion

A number of road improvement, bike and transit-related facility projects are proposed for submission to, respectively, TransLink's 2004 MRN Minor Capital Program, 2004 Bicycle Infrastructure Capital Cost-Sharing Program and 2004 Transit-Related Road Infrastructure Program. This report seeks to formalize Council support for the submissions and secure Richmond's allocation of funding for 2004. Staff will report back to Council on the results of the review and approval of the capital programs by TransLink.

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