



To: Community Safety Committee  
From: Suzanne Bycraft  
Manager, Emergency & Environmental Programs

Date: September 24, 2003  
File: 5125-01

Re: Disaster Response Routes

**Staff Recommendation**

That Disaster Response Routes and associated signage be approved along Alderbridge Way from the Highway 91 interchange, south on Garden City Road to Granville Avenue, west along Granville Avenue to No. 2 Road, along No. 2 Road from the airport to Steveston Highway, west on Steveston Highway to No. 1 Road, and south on No. 1 Road, (as shown on Attachment 2 of the staff report dated September 24, 2003 regarding Disaster Response Routes).

Suzanne Bycraft  
Manager, Emergency & Environmental Programs  
(4166)

Att. 2

FOR ORIGINATING DIVISION USE ONLY		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Fire Rescue .....	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
R.C.M.P. ....	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
Director of Operations .....	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
Transportation .....	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	

## **Staff Report**

### **Origin**

At the July 15, 2003 Community Safety Committee meeting, a presentation was made on the Disaster Response Route network by Allan Galambos, Ministry of Transportation, and Doug Allan, Joint Emergency Liaison Committee Project Manager. The delegation requested that Richmond consider implementing Disaster Response Routes.

As a result, Committee directed staff to report back on this issue and to include information relative to the cost, number and positioning of the signs. This report responds to that direction. The delegation has been invited to attend the Committee/Council meetings wherein this issue will be further considered.

### **Analysis**

#### Background

In 1997, an initiative was introduced to create a unified, rational plan throughout the Lower Mainland for a network of routes to be used in the response to a major earthquake or other regional disaster. These "disaster response routes" are predefined, identifiable and capable of withstanding natural disasters. They are used in post disaster situations for relocation of affected people (injured and homeless) to a point of collection, and to transport emergency supplies and personnel to key points.

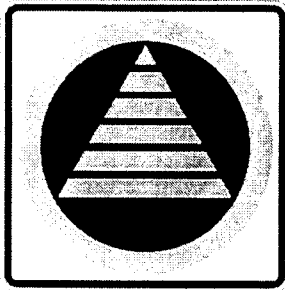
Disaster response routes (outlined in Attachment 1) have been approved and designated for provincial highways and in all Lower Mainland communities, with the exception of Richmond, which currently does not have confirmed response routes. The matter has been outstanding since April 8, 1998, when it was tabled by the Public Works & Transportation Committee.

#### Process Concerning Tabling of an Item

Community Safety Committee, on July 15, 2003, asked that staff advise on proper process concerning the previous direction to table this item. The City Clerk advises that because the matter was simply tabled to a future meeting, the fact that the Chair approved a referral to staff for a report to Committee and has placed the item on the Community Safety Committee agenda, this action will lift the matter from the table and no additional motion to lift from the table is required. Had there been a particular action tabled, then that would have required a motion to lift from the table.

#### Disaster Response Routes

The concept of the disaster response routes and the signage which marks these routes all over the Lower Mainland, is now very familiar to most people. Based on the concerns raised by Richmond and other municipalities regarding the potential confusion regarding wording on the signs, an additional tab has been developed, making the new look of the signs as follows:



If approved for Richmond, twenty-three signs will be positioned at key intersections along the routes on existing lamp standards. With the placement of the signs along the Richmond routes, Phase 1 of the regional disaster response route project will be complete.

During Phase 2, the regional group will finalize the operational procedures, such as activation of the routes, establishment of traffic control and coordination between the agencies.

In Phase 3, a communication initiative will be undertaken by staff and the regional group to provide public education about the routing and signage. Information is currently available about these signs in local telephone directories, on the Ministry of Transportation website ([www.th.gov.bc.ca/bchighways/disroute/1742\\_5.htm](http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/bchighways/disroute/1742_5.htm)) and as a recognized symbol in the drivers' handbook. City staff would work with the regional group to deliver additional information about the routes and signs through promotional brochures, print ads and information on the City's website.

The disaster response routes represent an important component in Richmond's emergency response capabilities. In a major emergency, it is critical that we be able to bring in resources and supplies as quickly as possible as well as transport the injured to medical facilities outside of Richmond. By designating and signing these routes in advance, we are ensuring our ability to do this in the quickest manner possible, which enhances our ability to protect lives and property. It also provides a good basis from which to develop key aspects of the City's emergency plan.

In light of the demonstrated support for this initiative at the Provincial, regional and municipal levels, combined with the public familiarity about the program, and the benefit to Richmond in our emergency response capabilities, staff are recommending that the route outlined in the attached drawing (Attachment 2) be approved. This route runs along Alderbridge Way from the Highway 91 interchange, south on Garden City Road to Granville Avenue, west along Granville Avenue to No. 2 Road, along No. 2 Road from the airport to Steveston Highway, west on Steveston Highway to No. 1 Road, and south on No. 1 Road. These routes were selected based on input from Richmond RCMP, Richmond Fire Rescue, as well as the Transportation and Engineering & Public Works Departments. The routes were selected because of the following:

- They link to the Provincial disaster route on Highway 91,
- They link to the Vancouver International Airport, which is an important component of this initiative since the airport's designated access to the disaster response route system is through Richmond,
- They have adequate road widths for this purpose,
- They are expected to withstand a disaster situation,
- They would provide faster travel times for emergency response personnel to and from the Works Yard and City Hall,
- There are alternative transportation routes available for residents and businesses in the area,

- They link to the majority of pre-established muster points for Richmond. These muster points are designed to be places to bring in and ship out people and supplies where the road network is insufficient.

In the event a state of local emergency is declared, the routes would be regulated, if required. Emergency response personnel, including Council and designated City staff, will be provided with appropriate identification cards which permits their travel on these routes.

**Financial Impact**

As noted previously, designated disaster response routes must be capable (to the degree possible) of withstanding natural disasters. This cost, combined with sign development and placement costs, is the responsibility of the host municipality. Construction enhancements are not required on the routes identified in this report. The cost to Richmond for the purchase and installation of the signs is estimated at \$4,100, detailed as follows:

Cost of signs, tabs and taxes	\$ 3200.00
Installation	500.00
Mounting hardware	<u>400.00</u>
Total	<u>\$4100.00</u>

This cost can be accommodated within the Emergency Program budget, and no additional level funds will be required. Subsequent work on this project during phase 2 and 3 will be included in the Emergency Program’s work plan.

**Conclusion**

The pre-designation of disaster response routes represents an important emergency preparedness measure for Richmond. These will become key routes for:

- transporting emergency supplies and other resources to Richmond,
- relocating injured and homeless people
- forming part of the City’s overall Emergency Plan, particularly with respect to controlled evacuation routes, staging areas, priorities for debris clearing, etc.

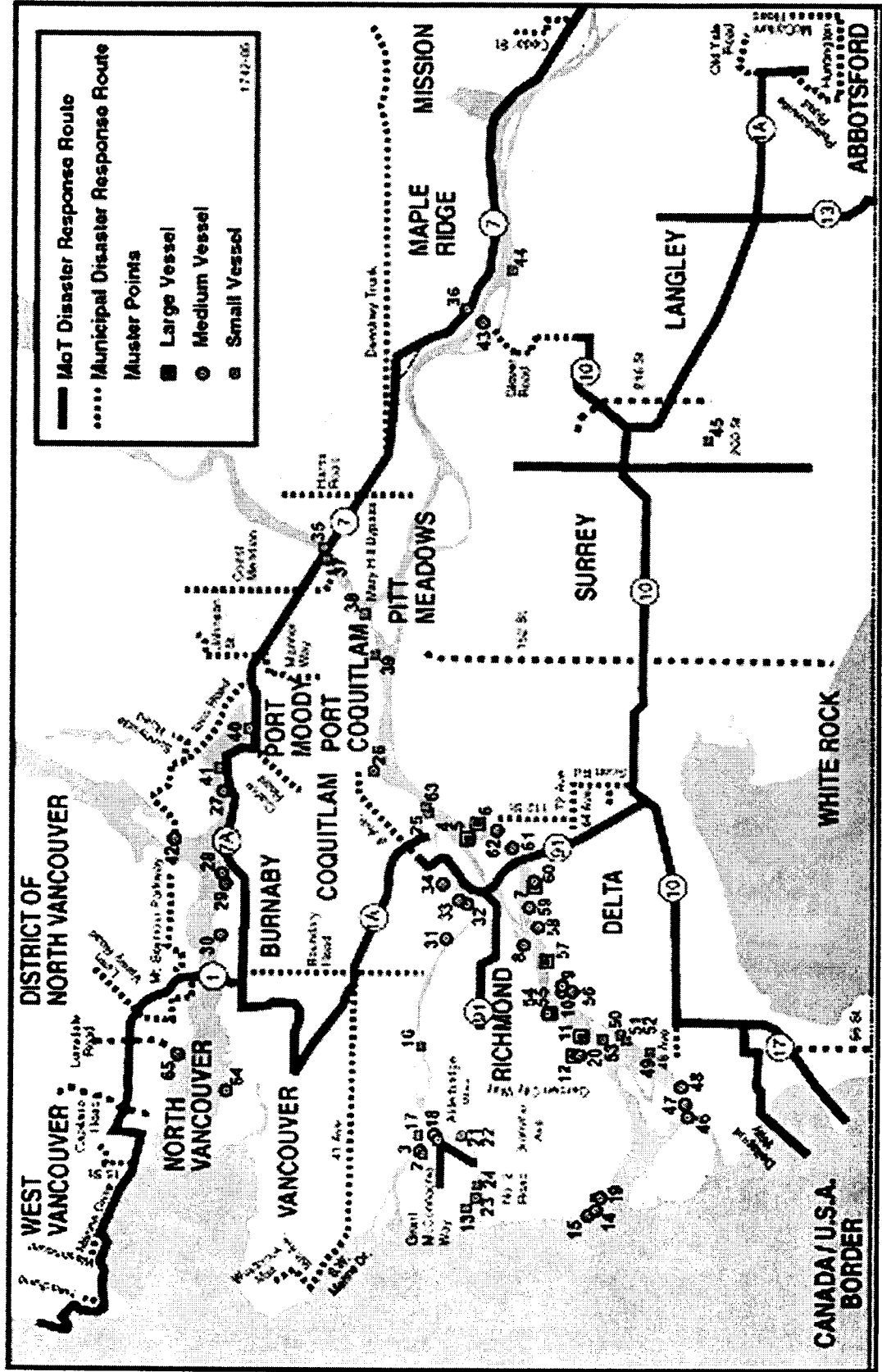
By pre-establishing the routes, we are taking key steps to ensure preparedness measures are in place. It is critical that such action be taken in advance, to help speed our response and recovery efforts in the event of a major emergency or disaster situation.



Wendy Mah  
Project Lead, Emergency Program

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# Lower Mainland-Disaster Response Route Network



# City of Richmond Proposed Disaster Response Routes and Muster Stations

