



CITY OF RICHMOND

REPORT TO COMMITTEE

TO: Public Works and Transportation Committee

TO PW+T - DECEMBER 6, 2000
DATE: November 21, 2000

FROM: Gordon Chan, P. Eng.
Manager, Transportation

FILE: 0154-03

Jane Bird
Project Director, Richmond/Airport-Vancouver Rapid Transit Study

**RE: RICHMOND/AIRPORT-VANCOUVER RAPID TRANSIT STUDY - PROGRESS
REPORT ON PHASE 2**

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Committee receive this report on the status of the Richmond/Airport-Vancouver Rapid Transit Study for information; and that staff continue to actively participate in the project.
2. That a Richmond Rapid Transit Public Advisory Committee, consisting of various local Richmond stakeholders and based on the Terms of Reference outlined in the attached report, be established to provide input on specific aspects of the study and other general issues that may have an impact on Richmond.
3. That staff and the Project Director provide further updates to Council on the work progress, including the conclusions and recommendations reached at the end of Phase 2 of the study.

Gordon Chan, P. Eng.
Manager, Transportation

Jane Bird
Project Director
Richmond/Airport-Vancouver Rapid Transit Study

Att. 1

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CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER

STAFF REPORT

ORIGIN

At the regular Council meeting held on September 25, 2000, staff presented a report that outlined the Management Plan for the Richmond/Airport-Vancouver Rapid Transit Project. The project is a joint planning initiative for a rapid transit link connecting Richmond and the Airport to downtown Vancouver. The project has eight partners:

- TransLink
- Transport Canada
- Vancouver International Airport Authority
- Province of British Columbia
- City of Richmond
- City of Vancouver
- GVRD
- Vancouver Port Authority

At the same meeting, Council approved a number of staff recommendations with respect to the project, including:

- Endorsement of the Management Plan, which provides for a Project Team that works for and reports to the eight project partners;
- Staff participation on the Project Steering Committee and Technical Committee, each comprised of representatives from each partner agency;
- Formation of a Richmond Rapid Transit Public Advisory Committee, with staff to report back to Council of the proposed composition of the Committee; and
- Direction to staff to report to Council on the progress of the study.

The agreement of the project partners to the Management Plan represented Phase 1 of the project. Phase 2 will take place over six months, from October, 2000 to March, 2001. During Phase 2, the various agencies will determine whether there is a need, and potential to fund, a rapid transit line in the corridor in the next 10 years.

This report provides an update of the progress to date, outlines the work plan for the balance of Phase 2 and provides a proposed membership and Terms of Reference for the public advisory committee.

ANALYSIS

1. Facilities and Project Team Staffing

Facilities - The project office is open at the interim City Hall at Suite #150 - 5840 Cedarbridge Way in Richmond.

Staff - The Project Team is staffed to a level appropriate at this point in the project. The Management Plan contemplates one additional staff member, who will be added when required.

2. Work Plan

The work plan for Phase 2 has three primary elements:

- An evaluation to compare the costs and benefits of building the line by 2010 versus a later date; communicating the conclusions of that analysis and consulting with decision makers, key stakeholders and the community;
- Seeking public sector funding, in particular from the Federal Government; and
- Exploring the potential for private sector involvement.

Phase 2 will take place over six months (October, 2000 to March, 2001) and all work plan items are well underway.

3. Evaluation

In evaluating the various transit development scenarios the Project Team and its consultants will use the "Multiple Account Evaluation" model developed by a number of agencies as a means of evaluating capital projects. The model will be tailored to suite this project. In this phase, the Project Team will not be comparing alternative technologies and routes, nor will the team be recommending a preferred route or technology. Rather, the comparison is one of timing. The evaluation framework is designed to measure the merits of three transit development scenarios: rail transit with an in-service date of 2010, as compared to in-service dates of 2021 and 2030. To make these comparisons, the Project Team will use a "base case" which assumes bus and road improvements included in current agency plans, and includes estimates of congestion. It will include a series of "accounts" or "bundles" of costs and benefits, including financial, urban development, environmental, social, and consumer. These separate bundles will allow each of the eight agencies to review from their perspective the costs and benefits of the implementation scenarios. The consulting contract for this work will be awarded in mid December, 2000 with completion of the work anticipated by mid February, 2001.

Staff have been involved in the specification of the framework and have provided input regarding the methodology and the inclusion and definition of the accounts and performance indicators. These comments suggested:

- The addition of a number of quantifiable transportation-specific performance measures for the six accounts; and
- A broader use of sensitivity analysis in the assessment of risks and identification of major impacts which may require development of mitigation strategies in a later phase.

All the staff suggestions have been incorporated into the evaluative framework.

4. Communication / Consultation

While the evaluation work is proceeding the Project Team will develop a program to communicate the vision for the region and this corridor, and the role of transportation in that vision. This work, and the evaluation, will form the basis of a communication and public consultation program. While informal information meetings are underway now (e.g. meetings with the Richmond Chamber of Commerce Transportation Task Force), the formal program will begin in December, 2000 and continue through March, 2001. The program will involve a web site (which will be accessible in Chinese and English), open houses, and meetings with key stakeholder groups, quantitative surveys and focus groups.

5. Public Sector Funding

The Project Team is communicating with federal officials to express its appreciation for their commitment to fund this phase. The following unique characteristics of the Project that warrant federal investment in the development of a rapid transit connection were also conveyed to the Federal Government:

- The unique partnership among all levels of government, the Airport and the Port;
- The fact that the line will link two key federal facilities, the Airport and the Port, both of which are expanding;
- The Airport's commitment to fund a significant portion of the project;
- The opportunity to implement important federal environment and transportation policies – including the commitment to improve air quality in urban regions, the commitment to reduce greenhouse gases and the commitment to sustainable transportation in the region; and
- The national role of the region as Canada's Pacific Gateway, and the importance of infrastructure in the region's efforts to remain competitive with US Pacific port cities, many of which are receiving from the US Federal Government significant investments in transportation.

The Project Team will continue to discuss the project with federal officials, and will work closely with TransLink staff in their ongoing efforts to encourage the federal government to invest in transportation in the region.

6. Private Sector Participation

The Project Team is exploring the potential to involve the private sector in a public private partnership (PPP), noting that this approach may offer an opportunity to build transportation infrastructure in a time of constrained funding. Thus far, TransLink has sponsored a workshop at which the key members of the public and private sector met to discuss the implementation of major road and rapid transit projects in Canada and elsewhere in the world. Few large PPP transportation projects have occurred in Canada (notable exceptions include the Confederation Bridge and Highway 407 in Toronto). However, transportation projects using private sector expertise in design, construction and financing are widely used in the UK, South America and Australia. Advisors to government and the private sector in these transportation projects attended the workshop.

The Project Team presented this project at the workshop. TransLink presented another potential project to build a bridge to replace the Albion ferry. TransLink is considering retaining an advisor to provide early advice on the potential to involve the private sector in these projects. This early advice will be valuable for the Richmond/Airport-Vancouver Project for three primary reasons:

- To ensure that the work in this phase (in particular the financial evaluation) is done with a view to the future potential involvement of a private sector partner;
- To gain a better understanding of the potential to involve the private sector; and
- To understand the ways in which the Project Team can structure a public private partnership for this project.

7. Public Advisory Committee

As the #98 B-Line project is nearing completion, staff propose that the mandate of the #98 B-Line Public Advisory Committee be extended to providing input on specific aspects of the current rapid transit study and other general issues that may have an impact on Richmond. It is proposed that existing members of this Committee be invited to form the Richmond Rapid Transit Advisory Committee. Attachment 1 contains the proposed Terms of Reference for the Committee. If endorsed, it is expected that the first meeting of this new advisory committee will be held in early December, 2000. The proposed composition of the committee is:

- City Council Liaison (one member)
- Richmond Chamber of Commerce (one member)
- Richmond Centre Mall – North and South (one member)
- Lansdowne Park Shopping Centre (one member)
- Richmond Asia-Pacific Business Association (one member)
- City Centre Community Association (one member)
- Vancouver International Airport (one member)
- Aberdeen Mall (one member)
- Richmond Committee on Disabilities (one member)
- Richmond Seniors Advisory Committee (one member)
- Regular Transit User of Express and Local Services (two members)

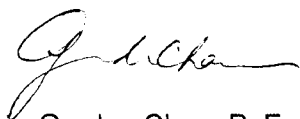
FINANCIAL IMPACT

The City is providing office space and equipment for study team members and secondment of staff to the Steering Committee and Technical Committee. Transport Canada and the Vancouver International Airport have agreed to fund Phase 2 of the study. The City receives credit for the contribution of office space and staff resources towards its share of the total funding for the study.

CONCLUSION

The work plan for Phase 2 of the Richmond/Airport-Vancouver Rapid Transit Project is well underway. This phase is devoted to a confirmation of the need to build rapid transit in this corridor in the next 10 years and a determination of funding capacity. The work will involve technical investigations and public consultation. Between now and February, 2001, the Project Team will complete its technical work and engage in a communication and consultation program. Concurrently, the team will be communicating with federal officials about the project with a view to a significant federal investment. The Project Team will also continue to explore the potential to involve the private sector.

Staff are supportive of the progress to date of the Richmond/Airport-Vancouver Rapid Transit Study and recommend the formation of a Richmond Rapid Transit Public Advisory Committee and continued active staff participation on the study Steering Committee and Technical Committee. Further reports will be presented to advise Council on the progress of the study and to seek input and direction.



Gordon Chan, P. Eng.
Manager, Transportation



Jane Bird
Project Director
Richmond/Airport-Vancouver Rapid Transit Study

RICHMOND/AIRPORT-VANCOUVER RAPID TRANSIT PROJECT
RICHMOND RAPID TRANSIT PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TERMS OF REFERENCE

Introduction

A Richmond/Airport-Vancouver rapid transit link has been part of the regional planning policy since the 1970s. This rapid transit line is also recognized as an important element of the Liveable Region Strategic Plan, which provides the framework for regional land use and transportation decisions in the Greater Vancouver area. During the public consultation processes for the TransLink Strategic Transportation Plan, the #98 B-Line service and the Richmond Area Transit Plan, there was consistently strong public interest in a Richmond-Vancouver rapid transit link. Given that the line is part of the regional planning policy, the significant growth in the communities along the line and the recent public input, the Richmond/Airport-Vancouver Rapid Transit study was initiated in June, 2000.

The goal of the Richmond/Airport-Vancouver Rapid Transit study is to “*determine whether there is an appetite among the agencies to proceed with a rapid transit line linking Richmond City Centre, the Airport, and downtown Vancouver in the next decade.*” The study will be completed in three independent phases:

- Phase 1: Development of Management Plan
- Phase 2: Needs Assessment and Concept Feasibility
- Phase 3: Rapid Transit Alignment and Technology Definition

Phase 1, the development of a Management Plan to define the administrative structure of the study and the work program for Phase 2, was completed in September, 2000. Phase 2 is currently underway and consists of:

- A comparative analysis of the costs and benefits of building the rapid transit line now (i.e., in service by 2010) or later (i.e., in service by 2021 or 2030);
- The determination of the potential to fund the project within the next decade; and
- The exploration of the potential to involve the private sector in the project.

Richmond Council has approved the formation of an advisory committee, consisting of representatives of the business community, citizen groups and transit users, to provide input to the Project Team on specific aspects of the current rapid transit study and other general issues that may have an impact on Richmond.

Objective

The objective of the Richmond Rapid Transit Advisory Committee is:

To advise Council on the overall planning of the Richmond/Airport-Vancouver Rapid Transit line, particularly in the evaluation of the different scenarios developed to determine the timing of the implementation of the line, in accordance with Richmond's Official Community Plan and the City Centre Transportation Plan.

Membership

The Committee should have representation from the following parties:

- City Council Liaison (one member)
- Richmond Chamber of Commerce (one member)
- Richmond Centre Mall – North and South (one member)
- Lansdowne Park Shopping Centre (one member)
- Richmond Asia-Pacific Business Association (one member)
- City Centre Community Association (one member)
- Vancouver International Airport (one member)
- Aberdeen Mall (one member)
- Richmond Committee on Disabilities (one member)
- Richmond Seniors Advisory Committee (one member)
- Regular Transit Users (two members)

The members of the Committee will elect the Chair of the Committee at the beginning of the first Committee meeting.

The Committee will be supported by staff resources from the Project Team and the City of Richmond.

Communication

The Chair will initiate all communications representing the position of the Committee. Committee members will have an opportunity to receive information, as it becomes available, discuss the issues, and forward comments and advice to Council, the Project Team, and City of Richmond staff.

Schedule

The timelines for the Richmond/Airport-Vancouver Rapid Transit study are as follows:

- Phase 1: June, 2000 to September, 2000
- Phase 2: September, 2000 to March, 2001
- Phase 3: March, 2001 to January, 2002

The consulting contract for the Phase 2 cost-benefit analysis is expected to be awarded by the middle of December, 2000 with completion of the analysis scheduled for February, 2001.

The Committee will likely hold monthly meetings during Phases 2 and 3, with a minimum of three meetings during Phase 2.

Meeting Space and Support Services

City staff will provide the meeting space. The Project Team, with the assistance of City staff, will be responsible for the co-ordination of presentation materials, the production of meeting minutes and other organizational matters.