

Staff Report

Origin

A future Highway 99-Blundell Road Interchange along with associated road improvements to Blundell Road between No. 4 Road and Savage Road are identified as part of the City's long-term transportation network in the *Official Community Plan (OCP)*, which was adopted in November 2012. As recent studies have revealed that a new interchange at Blundell Road is predicted to create community disbenefits, this report recommends that the OCP be amended to remove reference to the future implementation of these road network elements.

This report supports Council's 2014-2018 Term Goal #3 A Well-Planned Community:

Adhere to effective planning and growth management practices to maintain and enhance the livability, sustainability and desirability of our City and its neighbourhoods, and to ensure the results match the intentions of our policies and bylaws.

3.3. *Effective transportation and mobility networks.*

This report supports Council's 2014-2018 Term Goal #5 Partnerships and Collaboration:

Continue development and utilization of collaborative approaches and partnerships with intergovernmental and other agencies to help meet the needs of the Richmond community.

5.1. *Advancement of City priorities through strong intergovernmental relationships.*

Analysis

Current Policy in Official Community Plan

The Mobility and Access section of the *Official Community Plan (OCP)* identifies the following policy with respect to Highway 99:

- d) *support the implementation of improvements along Highway 99, including an upgraded interchange at Steveston Highway and a new interchange at Blundell Road, to enhance local circulation and connectivity, increase safety and improve goods movement;*

The OCP further states that these improvements would be undertaken through:

initiatives of senior governments (e.g., external grants, improvements to the Highway 99 corridor).

Further, the Road Classification Map within the OCP (Attachment 1) identifies the extension of Blundell Road between No. 6 Road and No. 7 Road and the classification of the road segment of Blundell Road between No. 5 Road and Savage Road as a proposed major arterial. The existing segment of Blundell Road between No. 5 Road and No. 6 Road is currently

classified as a minor arterial. Note that Blundell Road does not physically exist as a road between No. 6 Road and just east of the Savage Road right-of-way.

George Massey Tunnel Replacement Project

As stated in the report titled “Update on George Massey Tunnel Replacement Project” adopted at the July 27, 2015 regular Council meeting, the George Massey Tunnel Replacement (GMTR) team modelled the effect on traffic patterns of a new interchange at Highway 99 and Blundell Road. The GMTR team subsequently concluded that a new interchange at Blundell Road was not required to support the project objectives and thus the project scope as outlined in the Project Definition Report released in December 2015 did not include this element.

Further, the modelled effect on traffic patterns of a new interchange at Blundell Road indicates there are more disbenefits than benefits to Richmond from such an interchange. As shown in Attachment 2, traffic would be diverted to several roads that would experience higher vehicle volumes including rural roads through existing lands that are being actively farmed (e.g., cranberry and blueberry farms):

- Blundell Road east and west of Highway 99 in both the AM and PM peak;
- Sidaway Road to and from Knight Street, particularly in the AM peak;
- Granville Avenue west of No. 5 Road, particularly in the AM peak; and
- Williams Road west of No. 5 Road.

These negative community impacts arising from a new interchange at Blundell Road-Highway 99 would be expected regardless of the outcome of the current independent technical review of the Massey Tunnel crossing or any future improvements to the crossing. Further, as there would be significant impacts on existing residents along the two-lane rural roads in this area, strong opposition to the road network changes from Blundell Road residents has been expressed in the past and would also be expected to continue should implementation of this road extension be pursued. Removal of the interchange would provide certainty for residents, land owners and the City regarding future road network elements based on recent studies and findings.

Development Cost Charges Bylaw 9499

At the regular Council meeting of September 26, 2016, Council endorsed proposed updated city-wide Development Cost Charges (DCC) rates as the basis for further public consultation in establishing an updated DCC Rates Bylaw. The staff report identified projects on the Master DCC Program to be deleted or deferred due to changes in program requirements including the following:

- Upgrade and extension of Blundell Road from No. 4 Road to Savage Road (\$17.3M), and
- Highway 99 Interchange at Blundell Road (\$13.0M).

The report provided the following rationale for deletion of these two projects from the Master DCC Program:

The George Massey Tunnel Replacement (GMTR) Project Definition Report (PDR) released by the Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure (MoTI) identifies a new interchange at Steveston Highway rather than an upgrade to the existing interchange (as noted in the

existing DCC program), as well as a new overpass at Blundell Road rather than an interchange (also noted in the existing DCC program).

The updated Development Cost Charges Imposition Bylaw No. 9499 was adopted at the regular Council meeting of May 8, 2017.

Planned and Proposed Road Improvements in Fraser Richmond Port Lands

A primary reason for the inclusion of the proposed interchange and the westward extension of Blundell Road from No. 7 Road in the OCP was to serve goods movement generated by the Fraser Richmond Port Lands (the Port Lands). Since that time, a number of road improvements in the area have been implemented such as the Highway 91-Nelson Road interchange and the widening of Westminster Highway east of Nelson Road. Moreover, a traffic impact study conducted for the recently approved Ecowaste development in east Richmond concluded that the combined existing and planned road improvements associated with the ultimate build-out of the area (including Ecowaste) would provide adequate area road network capacity to accommodate traffic growth without having to extend Blundell Road to Highway 99. Hence, the widening of Blundell Road east of No. 7 Road within the Port Lands would not be required for capacity reasons but rather for improving truck turning movements at driveways serving various distribution centres east of No. 7 Road within the Port lands as well as a storage area for traffic that may queue due to railway activity at the Blundell Road-Portside Road railway crossing.

Planned and proposed interim road improvements within the Port Lands (shown in Attachment 3) are summarized in Table 1. Road improvements in this area are the responsibility of the Port of Vancouver (the Port), not the City, as the Port does not pay any Development Cost Charges (DCCs) including Roads DCCs, which is the City’s funding source for transportation capital projects. Further, the City is responsible for the maintenance of the roadways within the Port Lands with the exception of Portside Road, which is a private road.

Table 1: Planned and Proposed Road Improvements in Fraser Richmond Port Lands

Road Segment	Road Improvement	Planned or Proposed?	Within Port Lands?	Funding Agency
Blundell Road: No. 7 Road-No. 8 Road	Widen from two to four lanes with left-turn lanes to improve truck turning movements	Planned: Ultimate	Yes	Port of Vancouver (100%)
Blundell Road-Portside Road/No. 8 Road Overpass and Upgrade	Widen and provide grade separation at Blundell Road-Portside Road/No. 8 Road intersection			
Blundell Road-No. 8 Road Intersection	Widening of southbound No. 8 Road to create right-turn lane at Blundell Road	Proposed: Interim (Recommended)		
Blundell Road-No. 8 Road Intersection	Widening of eastbound Blundell Road to create right-turn lane at No. 8 Road			
Blundell Road: No. 7 Road-No. 8 Road	Widening to three lanes at select locations to accommodate truck turning			
Nelson Road-Blundell Road Intersection	Signalization of intersection and upgrade of CN Rail crossing	Planned: Ultimate	No	Port of Vancouver (52%) City of Richmond (48%)

Road Segment	Road Improvement	Planned or Proposed?	Within Port Lands?	Funding Agency
New Roadway through Ecowaste Site	New access for emergency services at the south end of Ecowaste site to connect to Williams Road-Triangle Road-No. 6 Road	Planned: Ultimate	No	Ecowaste (100%)

Note: per the 2007 Nelson Road Contribution Agreement between the City and the Port, the cost of signaling the Nelson Road-Blundell Road intersection is shared between the Port (52%) and the City (48%) as not all of the properties at the south end of Nelson Road are within the Port Lands.

In September 2017, Council considered a staff report regarding the Greater Vancouver Gateway 2030 strategy for transportation infrastructure investments to enhance gateway-related trade movements. Council endorsed the City’s collaboration with the Port to facilitate the Blundell Road widening and Portside Road overpass improvements. The City has provided a letter of support for the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority’s two-phase submission for consideration of cost-share funding from the Government of Canada’s National Trade Corridors Fund.

The recent funding announcements did not include these two projects and no further announcements are anticipated; the next call for proposals in Fall 2018 will target the Territorial North. Notwithstanding, the Port maintains that federal funding is necessary to support a business case for the improvements and remains hopeful that the funding will be secured in the future, possibly as part of the next intake of applications anticipated in 2019.

Consultation with the Port and Stakeholders within Fraser Richmond Port Lands

In April 2018, staff met with the Blundell Road Business Consortium (the Consortium), a group of stakeholders representing businesses in the Port Lands, to discuss the need for road improvements and other traffic safety concerns in the area. The Consortium acknowledged the potential negative impacts of extending Blundell Road to Highway 99 and indicated support for the planned road improvements to address traffic growth.

Staff met again with the Consortium in June 2018 to discuss the results of a traffic count survey on Blundell Road, which verified that the widening of the roadway is required to accommodate truck turning movements rather than increased capacity. Following further discussion of road improvement options, staff and the Consortium agreed to collaborate to request the Port to implement the timely widening of Blundell Road and the No. 8 Road-Blundell intersection improvements.

A follow-up meeting with the Consortium, staff and the Port was held in July 2018 to discuss road improvements and the means to advance the projects to construction. Of the five road improvements listed in Table 1 that are the Port’s sole responsibility for funding, the three proposed interim projects (i.e., selected widening of Blundell Road to three lanes and No. 8 Road-Blundell intersection improvements) could be feasibly implemented in the near-term. The parties collectively agreed that the projects would provide an interim solution until the long-term planned improvements are implemented, as the projects would materially improve truck turning movements and accommodate continued growth in the area. Port staff, with assistance from City staff, will undertake further technical analyses to confirm the scope of each of the proposed interim projects including the preparation of cost estimates.

Accordingly, regardless of whether or not the ultimate Blundell Road widening project east of No. 7 Road within the Port Lands is included in the next federal government funding announcement, staff recommend that the City formally request the Port to undertake the timely implementation of these three interim projects solely with its funding, as occurred with the construction of the eastern one-half of the existing Blundell Road within the Port Lands in 2002-2003.

Removal of Highway 99-Blundell Road Interchange and Associated Road Improvements

In light of the recent provincial study and its conclusion of the potential Blundell interchange as part of the tunnel improvement project as noted earlier, staff recommend that the *Official Community Plan* be amended to remove reference to a new interchange at Highway 99 and Blundell Road along with the extension of Blundell Road west of Savage Road based on:

- the transportation modelling analyses undertaken as part of the George Massey Tunnel Replacement Project;
- consistency with the current Master DCC Program and the updated DCC Rates Bylaw;
- the planned road improvements and capacity of the ultimate area road network for the Fraser Richmond Port Lands including a future new access for emergency services via the Ecowaste site;
- the transit and cycling routes being planned and/or secured as part of the Ecowaste development off-site works; and
- the adverse impacts of the road extension through existing active farm lands and residential neighbourhood.

The proposed specific amendments to the Mobility and Access chapter of the OCP comprise:

- Section 8.1 Road Network: deletion of text regarding a new interchange at Blundell Road from Objective 3, Policy d);
- Road Classification Map: deletion of proposed new Blundell Road interchange and the Blundell Road segment between No. 6 Road and Savage Road, and revision of the Blundell Road segment between No. 5 Road and No. 6 Road from Proposed Major Arterial to Minor Arterial (i.e., the existing road classification);
- Transit Network Map: deletion of a Local Transit Route on the Blundell Road segment between No. 6 Road and Savage Road, and addition of a new Local Transit Route through the Ecowaste site to Williams Road-Triangle Road-No. 6 Road, as described in TransLink's Southwest Area Transport Plan, which was endorsed by Council in March 2018; and
- Cycling Network Map: deletion of a Major Street Route on the Blundell Road segment between No. 6 Road and Savage Road, and addition of a new Major Street Route through the Ecowaste site to Williams Road-Triangle Road-No. 6 Road-Steveston Highway.

Staff have reviewed the proposed OCP Amendment Bylaw with respect to the *Local Government Act* and the City's OCP Bylaw Preparation Consultation Policy 5043 and no further consultation is required. The public will have an opportunity to comment on the proposed amendment at the Public Hearing. Public notification of the Public Hearing will be provided as per the *Local Government Act*.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

The future Highway 99-Blundell Road Interchange as well as the upgrade and extension of Blundell Road from No. 6 Road to No. 7 Road are both proposed to be removed as elements of the City's long-term transportation network as recent transportation modelling studies indicate more disbenefits than benefits to Richmond. Deletion of these elements in the *Official Community Plan* would reflect the land use and transportation changes that have occurred since 1999 when the Blundell Road improvements were incorporated into the OCP. The proposed amendment would ensure existing active farm lands (e.g., cranberry and blueberry farms on Sidaway Road and Granville Avenue) and residential neighbourhoods in Richmond would not be adversely impacted by unnecessary road network expansion and provide clarity and certainty for residents, land owners and the City regarding future road network elements based on recent studies and findings.

Staff further recommend that the City formally request the Port of Vancouver to undertake the timely implementation of three interim road improvement projects solely with its funding regardless of whether or not the ultimate Blundell Road widening project east of No. 7 Road within the Port Lands is included in the next federal government funding announcement. The interim road projects would address the immediate need to facilitate truck turning movements and accommodate continued growth in the area while opportunities for federal funding may still exist for the Port to pursue the planned major road improvements in 2019.



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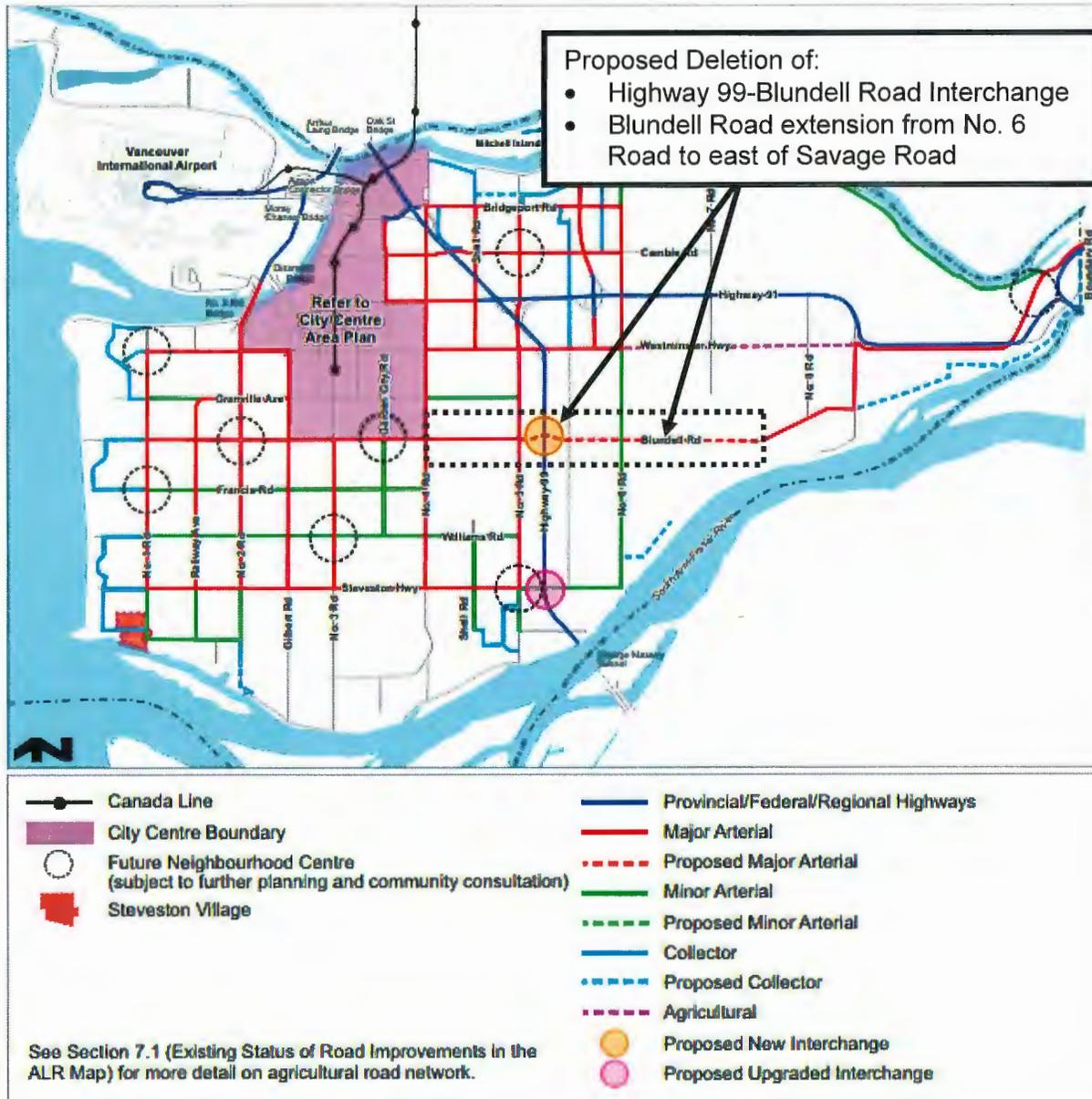


Joan Caravan
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- Att. 1: Official Community Plan – Road Classification Map
- Att. 2: Model Results of Highway 99-Blundell Road Interchange: Increased Traffic Volume Diversion
- Att. 3: Planned and Proposed Interim Road Improvements in Fraser Richmond Port Lands

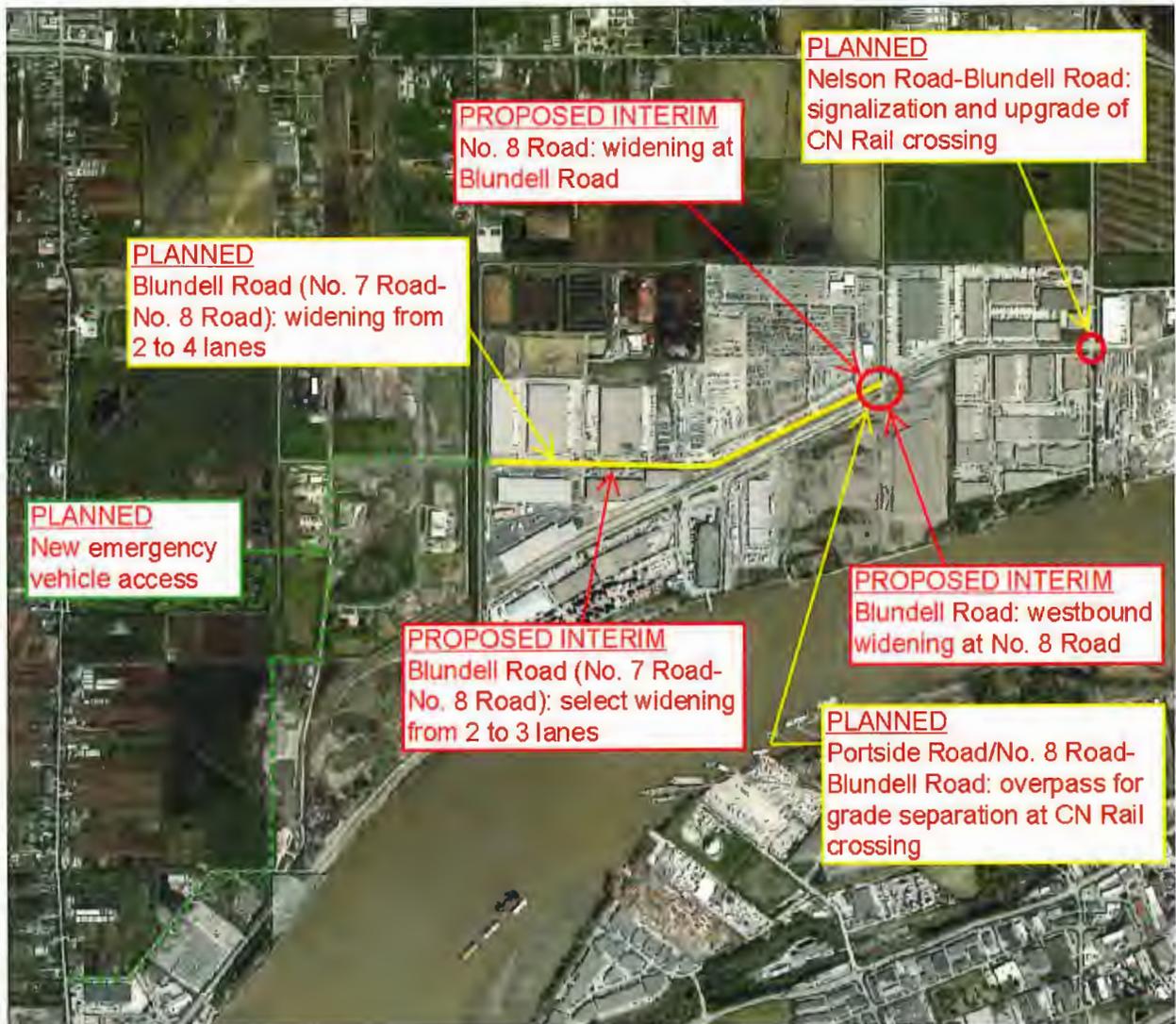
Road Classification Map



**Model Results of Highway 99-Blundell Road Interchange:
Increased Traffic Volume Diversion**



Planned and Proposed Interim Road Improvements in Fraser Richmond Port Lands





Richmond Official Community Plan Bylaw 9000 Amendment Bylaw 9901

The Council of the City of Richmond enacts as follows:

- 1. Richmond Official Community Plan Bylaw 9000, as amended, is amended further by replacing Chapter 8.0 Mobility and Access, Section 8.1 Road Network, Objective 3, Policy d) with the following:
d) support the implementation of improvements along Highway 99, including an upgraded interchange at Steveston Highway, to enhance local circulation and connectivity, increase safety and improve goods movement;
2. Richmond Official Community Plan Bylaw 9000, as amended, is amended further by deleting the Road Classification Map and replacing it with Schedule A attached hereto as the new Road Classification Map to Bylaw 9000;
3. Richmond Official Community Plan Bylaw 9000, as amended, is amended further by deleting the Transit Map and replacing it with Schedule B attached hereto as the new Transit Map to Bylaw 9000;
4. Richmond Official Community Plan Bylaw 9000, as amended, is amended further by deleting the Cycling Network Map and replacing it with Schedule C attached hereto as the new Cycling Network Map to Bylaw 9000.
5. This Bylaw is cited as "Richmond Official Community Plan Bylaw 9000, Amendment Bylaw 9901".

FIRST READING

SECOND READING

THIRD READING

ADOPTED

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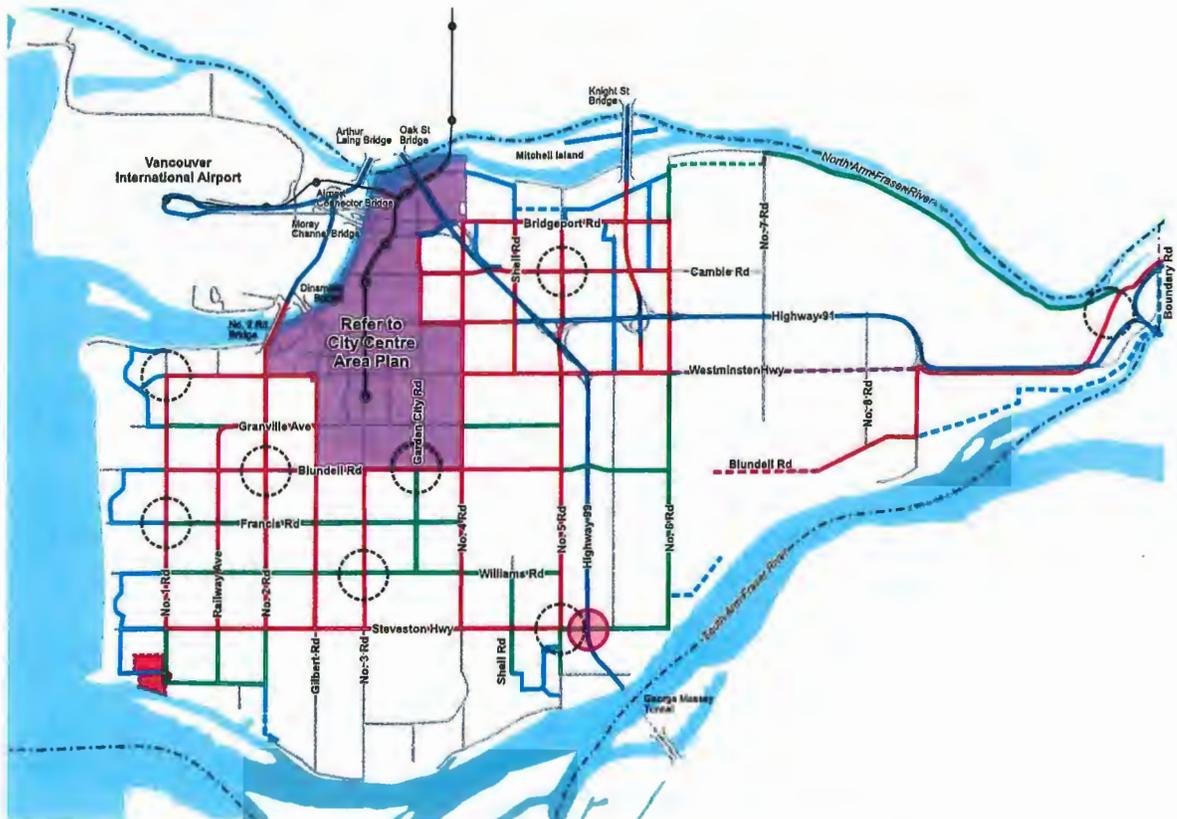
CITY OF RICHMOND APPROVED for content by originating dept. [Signature] APPROVED for legality by Solicitor [Signature]

MAYOR

CORPORATE OFFICER

SCHEDULE A to AMENDMENT BYLAW 9901

Road Classification

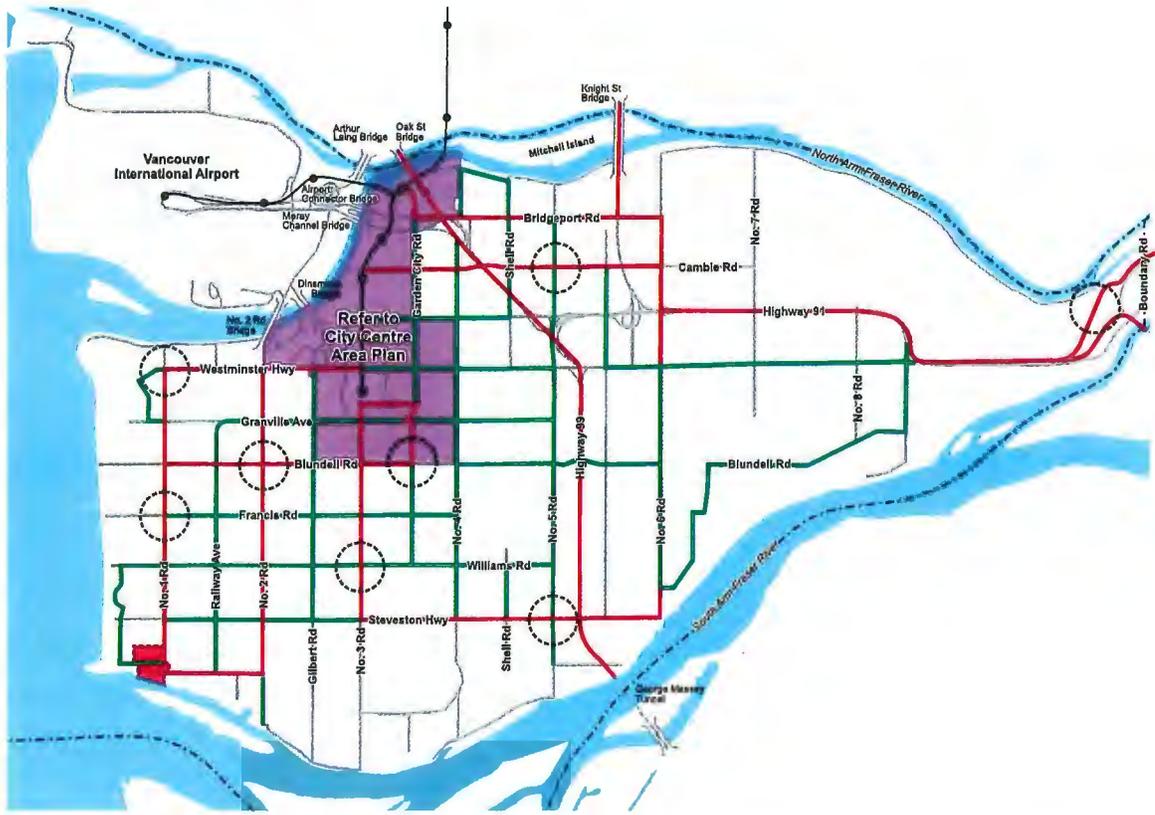


-  Canada Line
-  City Centre Boundary
-  Future Neighbourhood Centre (subject to further planning and community consultation)
-  Steveston Village
-  Provincial/Federal/Regional Highways
-  Major Arterial
-  Proposed Major Arterial
-  Minor Arterial
-  Proposed Minor Arterial
-  Collector
-  Proposed Collector
-  Agricultural
-  Proposed Upgraded Interchange

See Section 7.1 (Existing Status of Road Improvements in the ALR Map) for more detail on agricultural road network.

SCHEDULE B to AMENDMENT BYLAW 9901

Transit Network

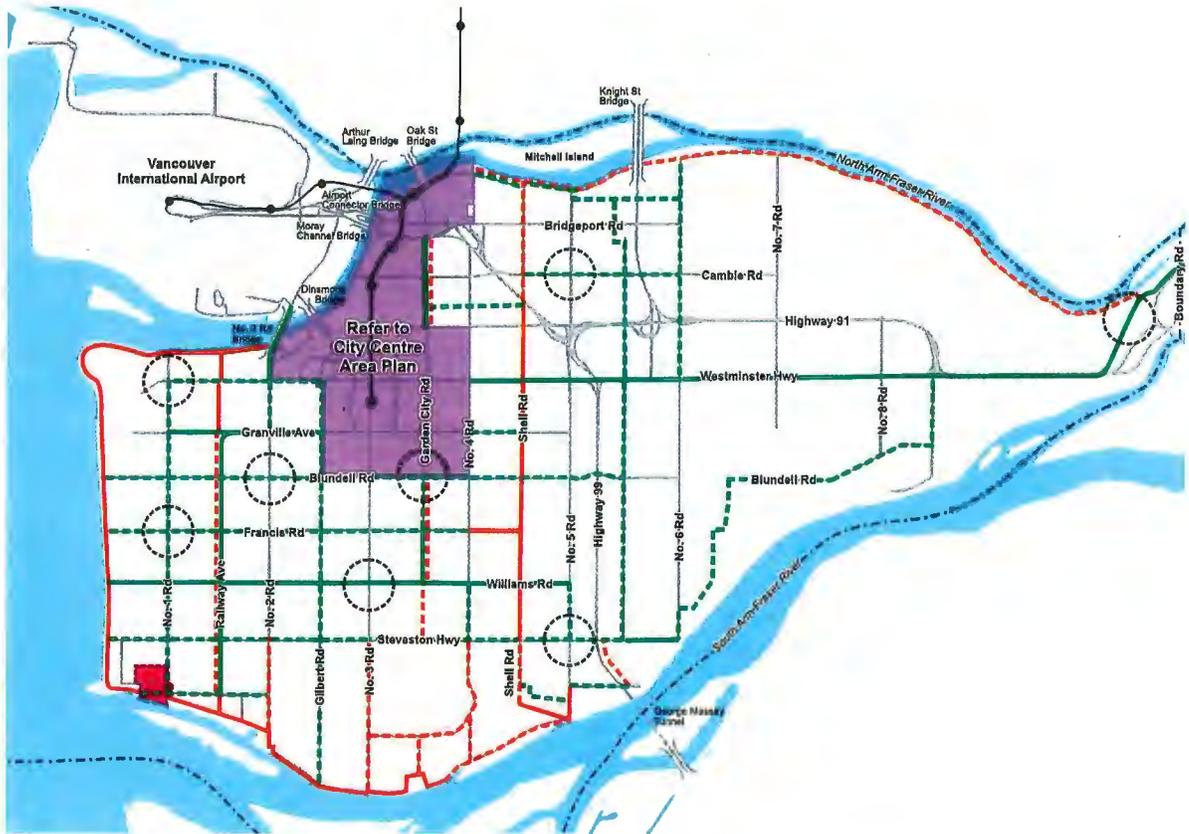


- Canada Line
- City Centre Boundary
- Future Neighbourhood Centre (subject to further planning and community consultation)
- Steveston Village
- Frequent Transit Route (key transit corridors with higher levels of all day demand in both directions)
- Local Transit Route (transit corridors with varying levels of demand throughout the day in each direction)

Note: the transit network is a long-term concept that will be refined in collaboration with TransLink through successive Richmond Area Transit Plan updates.

SCHEDULE C to AMENDMENT BYLAW 9901

Cycling Network



- Canada Line
- City Centre Boundary
- Future Neighbourhood Centre (subject to further planning and community consultation)
- Steveston Village
- Existing Major Street Bike Route
- - - Planned Major Street Route
- Existing Major Greenway
- - - Planned Major Greenway

See Section 3.5 (Specific Richmond Neighbourhoods) for more detail on planned cycling and rolling routes, including Neighbourhood Links.