

Richmond's Appalling Record of ALR Exclusions

Richmond has a land area of 32,926 acres. In 1956 Richmond Council adopted a zoning by-law that zoned over 12,500 acres of Richmond's farmland residential and industrial and 13,790 acres agricultural. Farmers were not consulted and those who found themselves in the residential zone were not permitted to build new barns or expand their facilities, while facing increasing taxes. Those who did not sell willingly were eventually forced to sell when their land was re-assessed from farmland to residential, and they lost their assessment appeals. The last of the large farms in the residential zone were gone by 1969.

This threat to farming was also being felt in surrounding municipalities. From 1963 to 1966 the NDP, which still had a large agrarian membership, adopted policies prepared by the NDP Standing Committee on Agriculture, to set up a provincial agricultural land bank. The Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board investigated the possibility of regional zoning of agricultural and industrial land, and adopted a draft regional plan around 1969.

The plan protected the agricultural lands that the provincial government had expropriated for a super-port in Delta and the LMRPB was disbanded by the provincial government.

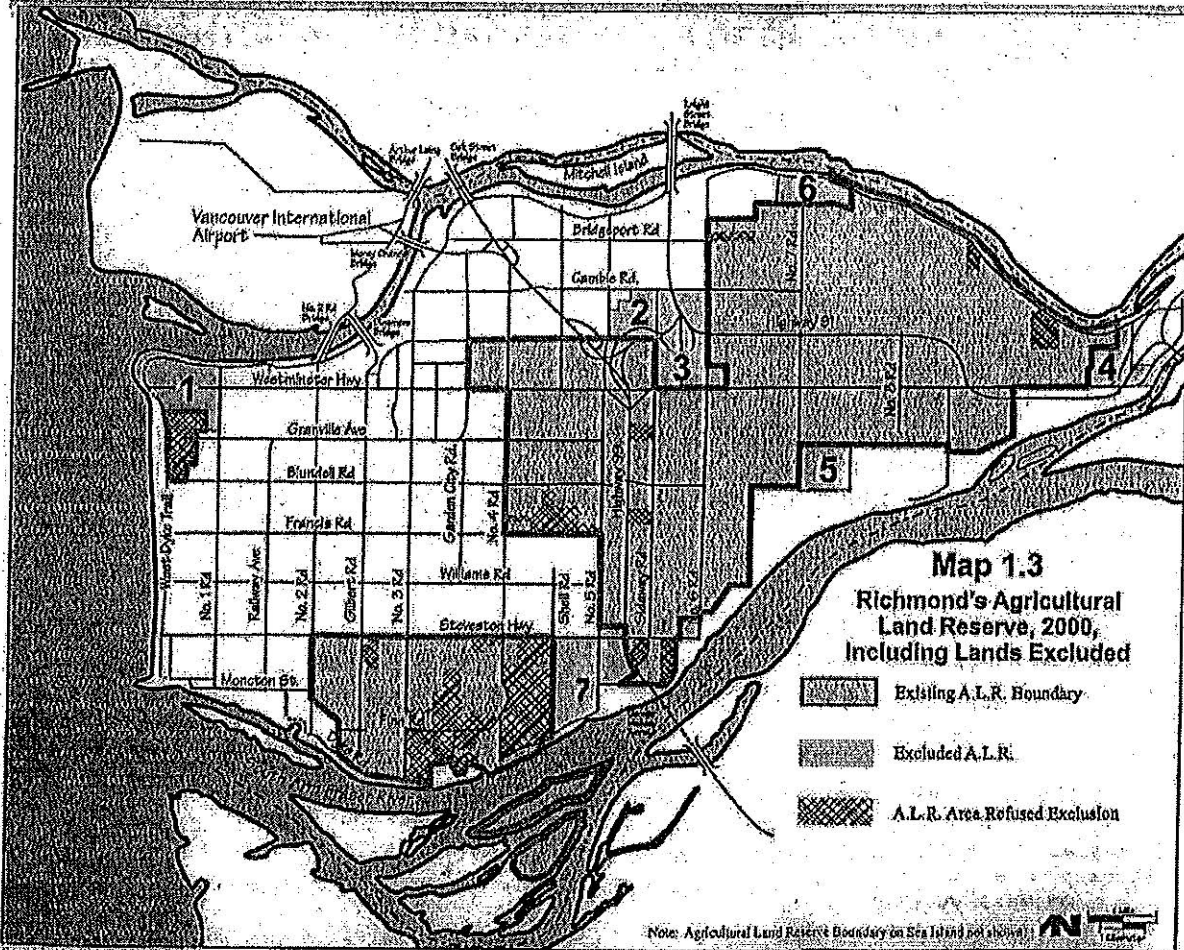
In 1973 the new NDP government enacted its long awaited agricultural land bank legislation. The land Reserve act included an agricultural land reserve and an industrial land reserve. The Industrial Land Reserve and Park and Green Belt Reserves were deleted from the act in 1978. The Agricultural land reserve Act does not provide for farmlands to be removed from the ALR for Community Need, because there was ample land in 1973 for non-farm uses on non-agricultural lands. By drawing a firm boundary around agricultural land, municipalities were expected to plan their communities wisely to include residential, industrial, and community uses in the urban areas, which were largely undeveloped at the time. With proper community planning by Richmond and other communities over the last 30 years there would no need to rezone farmland today.

Richmond's first exemption from the ALR occurred in 1973 when the Agricultural Land reserve was being established. The ALR in Richmond used the exact boundaries of the agricultural zone established in Richmond's own zoning 1956 by-law. However, Richmond claimed that the 150 acre Howard Wong Farm and an additional 50 acre site adjacent to it were already committed to industrial development, and therefore should be exempt from the ALR. After tremendous opposition to the loss of the Howard Wong farm and a major public hearing under the Environment and Land Use act, the province decided in Richmond's favour. The land was developed as Riverside Industrial Park and became a magnet for future exclusions in the area. In a compromise move the slough banks were protected as environmentally sensitive areas and 12 acres were donated to the city as waterfront park. However, the weakness shown in protecting farmland in Richmond soon became a trend that has never stopped.

When 348 acres was removed from the ALR at Terra Nova in 1987, after the longest public hearing in Canadian history, all but one member of the council majority group was defeated in the next election. Fortunately, before the council changed again, Metro Vancouver established the Green Zone and only small properties at Riverside, River Road and the Dhillon property in

East Richmond have been removed since then. In 1973 Richmond still had 3,500 acres of farmland zoned urban that was undeveloped. Since 1973, 1,643 additional acres have been removed from Richmond's agricultural zone for urban development. In total 5,140 acres have been developed since 1973. Richmond had ample land available for Residential, Industrial and Community Needs. Richmond chose to use farmland instead and the trend continues.

Appendix 2b – 1,643 acres lost since 1973



Major ALR Exclusions, Map 1.3 – Over 1,000 acres was removed from the ALR since 1986

Land Zoned Agriculture	13,790 acres 1973
1. Terra Nova	248 acres - 1987
2. Cambie	131 acres - 1987
3. Knight Street	329 acres - 1975
4. Hamilton	213 acres - 1986
5. Landfill	158 acres - 1986
6. River Road	27 acres - 2000
7. Riverside	364 acres - 1974 (half) and 2005 (remaining half)
Total removed	1,643 acres or 11.91% of total farmland lost since 1973
Remaining ALR Land	12,147 acres - 2005
Less non-farm land	4,704 acres (highways, roads, golf courses, etc.)
Arable ALR Land	7,443 acres - 2005, available for farming in Richmond
8. Garden City Lands	136 acres - or 1 % more, if removed from the ALR in 2008
New Total would be	1,779 acres or 12.9% of total farmland lost since 1973.

Garden City Lands ALR Block Exclusion Application - Opposition

"The time for the fine tuning of the Agricultural Land Reserve in the Lower Mainland is over."

Hon. Pat Bell, Minister of Agriculture, Sept. 27, 2007

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- is Chair of Planning for Richmond
- has been a Richmond City Councillor for 36 years and a member of the Planning Committee and the Parks Committee for the entire time, chairing both committees alternately
- is Richmond Council representative on the Richmond Agricultural Advisory Committee.
- is a former Indian Land Claims negotiator at the Musqueam and Tsawwassen Treaty tables
- is a founder of the Richmond Nature Park, and has a lifetime involvement with the property under review.

The City of Richmond and the Consortium have re-applied to have the Garden City Lands removed from the ALR, based on the statement on community need made by the Commission when denying the first application in a letter dated Sept. 8, 2006. The Commission correctly concluded:

1. The land under application has agricultural capability and is appropriately designated as ALR.
2. The land under application is suitable for agricultural use.
3. A convincing community need argument has not been made that would justify the Commission considering the exclusion of prime agricultural land from the ALR.
4. The proposal is inconsistent with the objective of the Agricultural Land Commission Act to preserve agricultural land."

The Commission stated that "The Commission does not believe the City has conducted the necessary analyses or provided the level of detail that would warrant further consideration of community need. In the absence of a substantive community need argument it would be inappropriate for the Commission to consider excluding land with prime agricultural capability from the ALR."

As statements 1, 2, and 4 still apply, it is the purpose of this submission to review inaccurate statements in the application made by the Consortium and show that there is even less community need than when the first application was denied in 2006.

The numbering system and appendices that follow coincide with the numbering system and appendices of the Consortium's submission. The italicized statements are direct quotations from their submission.

1.0 OVERVIEW

"Since 2006, the City of Richmond has invested substantial time and resources into assessment of and planning of the Garden City Lands" (Garden City Lands ALR Block Exclusion Application, 2008) **Because the City of Richmond has wasted time and resources is not a valid reason for taking land out of the ALR.**

Much has changed since 2006. Due to strong public opposition, Richmond is no longer planning to move a fire hall, and recreation facilities from other locations to the Garden City Lands. Richmond has modified its proposed uses of the Garden City Lands to uses compatible with land remaining in the ALR such as community gardens, urban agriculture, park, trails, etc. The Musqueam no longer have a valid community need to sell the land for profit as they have received substantial funding and land adjacent to their reserve in Vancouver; and there never was any community need by the CLC. There is no attempt in the application to justify a 20 acre Trade Centre as community need, as if the applicants hope the commission won't notice.

City Centre Area Plan:

The City Centre Area Plan *"informs the potential for the Garden City Lands"*.

As will be discussed in greater detail, the City of Richmond has unanimously approved an amended Richmond City Centre Area Plan that will provide enough urban park space in the City Centre, and additional park land at Garden City will not be required. Residential development of the Garden City Lands was omitted from the plan pending a decision by the Agricultural Land Commission, and is not part of the City Centre Area Plan as adopted.

Question: With the population growing to 120,000 people in the city centre by the year 2100, what will be the population increase if the Garden City Lands are excluded from the ALR?

Answer given: The Garden City Lands will accommodate 12,000 people in the CCAP.

A zoning plan has not been developed. However, similar densities in the city centre area indicate a density of over 15,000 people, especially if the Trade Centre is dropped and 78 acres are developed. The City Centre has enough land available for a population increase to 120,000 people without adding 12,000 to 15,000 more people on the Garden City Lands. Richmond has no community need for the Garden City Lands, and absolutely no need to increase the population to 135,000 people.

Agricultural Endowment Fund:

The annual interest from a \$10 million Agricultural Endowment fund is proposed to support *"a wide range of projects"* that *"will mitigate non agricultural use of the Garden City Lands"*.

"Projects ... could include ... purchasing land in the ALR and capital funding of agricultural projects over and above those currently funded by Richmond".

\$375,000 per year is less than what Richmond is presently spending on drainage and irrigation projects in east Richmond. \$375,000 a year will not mitigate the loss of 136 acres of farmable, carbon sequestering, ALR land. \$375,000 might buy about 2 to 3 acres of Richmond farmland that is already in the ALR and about half of a city lot not in the ALR. The Richmond Agricultural Advisory Committee has not agreed to the fund, and no *"wide range of projects"* has been discussed, only a *"framework"* to discuss them. In fact, when setting up a framework was discussed, the RAAC was unable to come up with ideas for any projects over and above those currently funded by Richmond. That discussion was to occur at a future date, but it never happened.

The City of Richmond does not need \$10 million from the development of the Garden City Lands for an Agricultural Endowment Fund. The City recently sold the last 29 acres of the Brighthouse Estate and set the money aside, primarily for land acquisition. Using part of the \$140,000 million "windfall profit" from the sale of the last piece of the original Brighthouse Farm to buy threatened farmland and assist agriculture would be much more appropriate than destroying more farmland at Garden City.

Community Need:

The consortium has provided an "assessment of community need that the Commission called for". However, a very important part of that assessment has been omitted. Except for financial profits, neither the Canada Lands Company nor the City of Richmond had a community need for developing the Garden City Lands in the first place. The Musqueam have had their immediate community needs met with 218 acres of land in Vancouver and a \$20.3 million financial contribution from the BC Government. Any additional needs should be determined at the treaty table, by returning to the treaty process, not by applying to the Agricultural Land Commission to convert farmland into cash.

2.0 SITE

The Garden City Lands Were Farmed:

The Richmond application to take the Garden City Lands out of the ALR states

"2.0...There are no records that the lands have ever been farmed"

The person who wrote that statement, and those who repeat it, know nothing about growing low-bush blueberries, or Richmond history, and obviously haven't read Richmond's own staff reports.

The Garden City Lands are part of the Lulu Island Blueberry Bog that was formed to its present depth about 4,000 years ago. (Ross, 1979, Richmond,) As noted in "Richmond's Agricultural Profile", (City of Richmond, 2002), First Nations people burned off underbrush to promote new growth of low-bush blueberries without cultivation, the same method that is still used on both private and Crown land by farmers in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick today. Early Richmond settlers, mainly from the UK and the Maritimes, continued the practice on the Crown-owned Garden City Lands until the 1950's. For over a thousand years the Garden City Lands were used for agriculture to produce food.

City Centre Growth Does Not Require The Garden City Lands:

"The City of Richmond is growing and its downtown population is expected to triple in size from 41,000 to 120,000 residents over the next 100 years."

Richmond can accommodate over 80,000 new residents in the downtown core without the Garden City Lands. If the downtown area was developed first, the Garden City Lands would not be needed to provide land for the last 15,000 people for another 100 years!

In actuality, 120,000 people is just an arbitrary number chosen by Richmond Council because it would probably be more palatable to the general public.

A study done by the City of Richmond in 2006 shows that the City Centre could accommodate 156,000 people. If Richmond's downtown core can accommodate 156,000 people it can easily accommodate 120,000 people without the Garden City Lands.

Surrounding Streets are an Asset not a Problem;

"The Garden City Lands are surrounded by four main transportation corridors. ... Streets east of Highway 99 and far from the City Centre Area, where the majority of the ALR Land and Richmond is located, have significantly fewer transportation and traffic constraints".

If only this was true! Farmers in east Richmond have been constantly complaining about the heavy traffic on Westminister Highway. That is why new multi million dollar overpasses are needed over Highway 99 at Steveston Highway and Blundell Road, and over Westminister Highway in east Richmond. The last thing needed is to have urban agriculture located in east Richmond or south of Steveston Highway where users must drive their cars to get there. One of the main benefits of using the Garden City Lands for Urban Agriculture is that nearby people can walk there, and others will not have far to drive. The authors want us to believe that it will be hard to move large equipment on and off of the Garden City Lands. Easy access to the Garden City Lands is not a problem. 136 acres is a parcel large enough to afford keeping large equipment permanently on site. Urban agriculture and low-bush blueberry agriculture do not require large equipment.

Low-bush blueberries grew on the Garden City Lands for centuries in harmony with the growth of sphagnum moss. Rehabilitating low-bush blueberry production and growth of carbon sequestering sphagnum moss in the middle of a major CO2 producing traffic zone is exactly where it is needed.

A Finger Of Farmland Is Ideal For Urban Agriculture And Open Space:

"Adjacent to the Garden City Lands are three urban neighbourhoods. ... The actual configuration of the Garden City Lands is, therefore, a "finger" of ALR land protruding into an existing urban setting".

Protruding into an urban setting is an asset. It is there is no reason to build 68 to 78 acres of high density housing on it. Furthermore, the Garden City Lands are much larger than a "finger" and can be farmed independently. A "finger" of ALR land protruding into an urban setting is the ideal location for urban agriculture. Cities around the world are scrambling to find enough land in their city centres to provide food security. The city of Beijing is demolishing houses to create "fingers" of agricultural land protruding into their city centre for urban agriculture and open space. These "fingers" have even become a tourist attractions.

3.0 Application History

The Garden City Lands Have Always Been Farmland:

"In 1974, the Government of British Columbia designated the Garden City Lands to be within the ALR." The City of Richmond zoned the Garden City Lands for agriculture when Richmond's zoning by-laws were first established in 1956, and 12,000 acres of Richmond farmland were zoned for residential and industrial use. Clearly, with farming activity occurring on site at that time, the Planning Department and City Council deemed it important agricultural land, or it would have been zoned residential or industrial then. In Richmond the ALR conformed entirely to Richmond's zoning by-laws. At no time since 1974 has there been a report adopted (or even debated) by Richmond Council suggesting that the Garden City Lands should be removed from the ALR until 2001.

In 2001 Richmond entered into discussions with the Musqueam and the Government of Canada and reached an agreement that provided the Musqueam and Tourism Richmond with 20% of the land or 13.6 acres each with a requirement that the remaining 80% of the land or 109 acres remain in the ALR for future agricultural and park uses by the City of Richmond.

There Is No Need To Remove The Land From The ALR:

"In 2002, the Treasury Board of Canada approved the sale of the Garden City Lands to the Canada Lands Company, the federal arms-length agency mandated to develop surplus Crown real estate to the economic benefit of the local community and to the benefit of the Canadian Taxpayer". The transfer of the land to the CLC was contrary to the agreement. A delegation from Richmond, including Mayor Brodie, and Councillors Howard and Steves flew to Ottawa to protest the transfer. The Musqueam First Nation filed an injunction to prevent the transfer. Upon returning from Ottawa, Mayor Brodie put Richmond's previous understanding with the Musqueam and Canada in writing.

"In Summary, this exclusion application... is supported by the Richmond Council." The present proposal to remove all 136 acres from the ALR is only supported by six members of Council. The original proposal to keep 109 acres in the ALR had the unanimous consent of Richmond Council.

4.0 THE CITY OF RICHMOND'S VISION FOR THE GARDEN CITY LANDS - THE RICHMOND CITY CENTRE AREA PLAN

Smart Growth Principles Have Been Compromised:

"There are four Smart Growth goals adopted for the City Centre Area Plan: Build community; Build green; Build economic vitality; Build a legacy". One smart Growth principle the city did not adopt was: Build food security by preserving farmland.

"The Garden City Lands are not designated as part of the LRSP "Green Zone". This is in part an acknowledgement by Metro Vancouver of the City's long term desire to use the Garden City Lands as open space".

Question: "Why isn't the Garden City Land in the Green zone?" **Answer given:** "There was some discussion with ALC staff, City of Richmond staff and GVRD staff regarding park use of the site, and the land was left out of the Green Zone."

Richmond Council did not ask to have it left out. If it was desired to use the site for open space, it should have been put in the Green Zone, because the Green Zone was established to protect open space. The Agricultural Land Reserve protects open space, and that open space will be protected as long as the Garden City Lands remain in the ALR.

Developing Garden City Will Actually Develop A Park Land Deficit:

The Garden City Lands offer *"the following community needs: Extensive open space and public amenities...; A vibrant, environmentally sustainable urban village...; Great access...; and an inclusive community..."* ... *"there are no other available vacant lands that would provide similar opportunities within the City Centre Area Plan"*. However, at Richmond's requirement of 7.66 acres per 1,000 people, the amount of land provided for park on the Garden City Lands is not large enough to meet the needs of the 12,000 to 15,000 people that would live there. The shortfall will have to be made up elsewhere in Richmond. Furthermore, the City does not need vacant land to provide park space. The City's normal procedure is to negotiate the acquisition of open space when land is rezoned, and to charge development cost charges to buy additional lands. Keeping the Garden City Lands in the ALR will provide twice as much open space and could include all of the "public amenities" proposed by the City of Richmond, pending approval by the Agricultural Land Commission.

Public Opinion Has Been Compromised:

"To date, the City of Richmond, the Canada lands Company, and the Musqueam Indian Band have had several open houses in a variety of locations to receive input from the community". In spite of the fact that the City has used "push polling", to push people into giving the desired answer in favour of the ALR exclusion, the majority of Richmond residents are opposed. Out of 127 people surveyed at the open houses 74 people were opposed to removal of the Garden City Lands from the ALR and 42 were in favour.

5.0 ASSESSMENT OF AGRICULTURAL CAPABILITY

The Garden City Land Has Good Agricultural Capabilities:

"ALC staff... concluded that the property's soils were similar to the Lulu and Blundell Soils described in the provincial mapping. ... and the agricultural capability of the subject property was class 4 in the unimproved state and class 3 if improved with needed drainage and irrigation. ...no other investigations of the subject property's soils have been carried out.DSCI indicated that ... ALC staff's assessment of Class 3 improved capability should be accepted"

However, DSCI concluded that *"that crop water requirements could only be met through the City's domestic water system ... incurring water costs that are estimated to be at least an order of magnitude greater than those typically incurred by farmers in the Lower Mainland Area"*

It should be noted that DSCI was careful NOT to suggest that water costs would be an order of magnitude greater than those incurred by farmers in Richmond. The Lulu and Blundell soils and the associated drainage and irrigation problems north of Westminster Highway at Garden City are exactly the same as the adjacent 900 acre Blueberry Zone south of Westminster Highway and east of Number Four Road, known as the McLennan Area.

Furthermore, Richmond has a serious run-off problem from a vast impervious downtown core. During major storms Richmond's pumps can't pump the water fast enough and rapid run-off causes flooding of farmland south of Steveston Highway. Because of this an artificial holding pond has already been created in Garden City Park to the south of the Garden City Lands. An artificial holding pond of about 6 acres will be needed on the Garden City Lands. There will be no little or no water costs for irrigation as Richmond will have to put the pond in anyway. The only drainage problem is where the City covered the Garden City Road ditch and didn't provide drainage to it. That problem will be resolved with the pond construction the same way it was at Garden City Park. With a pond required anyway, it would be of most benefit if all of the land is retained for park and urban agriculture.

6.0 ASSESSMENT FOR AGRICULTURAL SUITABILITY

Farming the Garden City Lands Would Have a Positive Effect on ALR Land in Richmond.

"The nearest agricultural use to the parcel is a small holding located approximately a quarter kilometre east of the southeast corner of the subject property along Westminster Highway. There are more agriculturally assessed small holdings located further away along Westminster Highway and further south along No. 4 Rd. It is not apparent that exclusion of the subject property would pose difficulties for agricultural operations on these lands."

However, if the Garden City Lands were farmed, it would improve the critical mass of agricultural activity in the area, and provide an incentive to increase the agricultural operations on the adjacent lands. Every argument about lack of agricultural capability or suitability that the consortium has made about the Garden City Lands applies even more to the adjacent lands. The McLennan Area Blueberry Zone immediately to the south-east would be completely isolated and is threatened by any rezoning of the Garden City Lands.

Question: Is the City never going to ask for ALR lands again? What are the City's plans for outside the City Centre? **Answer given:** "You cannot bind a future council." "a study is being done next year with a 25 year time frame. There is nothing in the OCP that would suggest future exclusions."

Here is what the planning department recommended to Richmond Council in 1986. "The agricultural part of the McLennan area contains large and small parcels, many of which are under cultivation for blueberries. ... The McLennan area is faced with an urban/rural conflict. Urban encroachment has made farming more difficult. Restrictions have been placed on aerial spraying, drainage problems have intensified, there has been an increase in vandalism, and it has been difficult for farmers to gain access to their properties. The long range plan for the McLennan area is based on the concept of enabling the urban and rural uses to co-exist compatibly with each other until such time as the rural area may be developed for urban uses." (McLennan Area Plan- Concept, April 9, 1986, Richmond Planning Dept.)

The Garden City Land Has The Same Restraints As Other Farms In Richmond:

"The proximity of the parcel to urban development poses noise and odour constraints; would negate the ability of a farm operator to use firearms to control duck and geese predation of vegetable crops; would likely result in theft and vandalism problems; and could create icing on adjacent roads from frost protection systems." As noted in 1986, those urban pressures apply equally to the entire 900 acre McLennan Area Blueberry Zone and to several thousand acres of farmland encroached upon by residential development east of Highway 99 and south of Steveston Highway. The blueberry growers have been complaining to the City about theft for years. It is against the law to use guns in the McLennan Area already. Farmers south of Steveston Highway don't dare use guns to protect their crops from ducks, geese and rabbits now, except during hunting season. Crop damage to forage crops by waterfowl south of Steveston Highway in 2009 was extensive. In 2008 rabbits destroyed the crops. Perhaps the consortium supports removing all of those lands from the ALR too.

Fill Is An Asset, Not A Problem

"Up to two metres of fill has been placed on ... 6-7 acres along the north-western portion of the property... Limited geotechnical auguring in the filled areas suggests that this fill material is probably not suitable for agricultural use". In 2007 a test plot of sunflowers was successfully grown on the fill area along the north-west portion of the property. All that was required was some compost and manure dug into the soil. As the 6-7 acre fill site is within close walking distance, it is ideal for Kwantlen University Experimental plots and highly intensified Urban Agriculture.

"subsoil material from road and ditch construction has been side-cast up to 80 feet into the property". Side-casting subsoil from ditch digging onto adjacent farmland was common practice in Richmond for 100 years. Farmers simply added manure and compost and incorporated it into the soil.

Wires And Bullets Are Not A Hindrance To Agriculture:

"There are many kilometres of antenna cable buried throughout the subject lands, removal of which would be expensive and may result in considerable soil disturbance". The simplest solution for the copper cable buried on the Garden City Lands is to leave it buried. The only problem posed by the cables is if heavy tillage equipment is used and the cables are within plough depth. Urban agriculture doesn't require ploughing. Low-bush blueberries are grown without cultivation. Sphagnum bog would be destroyed by tillage. Even commercial agriculture utilizes several methods of no-till agriculture.

There is *"possible contamination from still earlier use of the property by the DND as a rifle range". Use of the Garden City Lands as a rifle range was short lived because of complaints of bullets whizzing overhead. Steel jacketed 30.03 and 30.06 army bullets travelling at 2,500 ft. per sec. with a minimum range of over 1,100 yards were a hazard to blueberry pickers, vehicles on No. 4 Rd. and even vehicles and pedestrians on No. 5 Rd. Any bullets fired from the Rifle Range would have landed somewhere in the vicinity of the Richmond Nature Park, not on the Garden City Lands.*

Question: "Don't people have to clean up a site like that?" **Answer Given:** "We are only speculating there may be contamination from the rifle range."

Location Far Outweighs Problems:

Because the bog soils of the Garden City Lands were farmed but never cultivated, they are ideal soils for less demanding low-bush blueberry production, and also regeneration of the carbon storing capabilities of sphagnum moss. One of the greatest assets is the close proximity to the urban population. The 6-7 acre fill site and the 80 ft. wide broadcast area are ideal for rehabilitation to Urban Agriculture, Park and Trail uses. **The Garden City Lands are the ideal location for Urban Agriculture, Kwantlen University Experimental Farm and allotment gardens. The Garden City Lands have a high suitability for Urban Agriculture and low-bush blueberry development.**

7.0 ASSESSMENT FOR FOOD SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS

"Vegetable and potato production has been moving out of Richmond... If the province needed to increase regional vegetable and potato production in the future, the region has a capable land base on which to do so, that is many times what would be required. This statement is totally contrary to the recent BC Ministry of Agriculture report on "B.C.'s Food Self-Reliance", "To produce a healthy diet for the projected B.C. population in 2025, given existing production technology, the farmland with access to irrigation will have to increase by

92,000 hectares (over 200,000 acres) or 49% over 2005 levels. ... The increased production will be concentrated on the land that has access to irrigation – land that is typically near the urban centres”.

“Any such expansion would take place in locales with lower land pricing – and not next to downtown Richmond”. By this reasoning as Richmond’s downtown expands onto the Garden City Lands land prices will continue to rise and always be too high for agriculture. The reason farmland prices are so high adjacent to developed areas is because governments keep taking land out of the ALR. **If local government set the example and drew the line at removing both Crown land and private land from the ALR, land prices would not go up.** Removal of the Garden City Lands from the ALR would be a clear signal that over 1,000 acres of other lands less suitable for agriculture can also be removed from the ALR, and would drive prices up even further. **The Garden City Lands are exactly the kind of lands, “typically near urban centres”, that the BC Ministry of Agriculture was referring to, in order to meet BC’s Food Security needs by 2025.**

Question: “Why is the production of vegetables in Richmond going down?” **Answer Given:** “Cost of farmland has gone up, farmers are leaving, farmers are aging and retiring.”

Over the past 35 years, much of the farmland that was developed for housing was previously in vegetables. Most of the small farms grew vegetables, and these farms were the first to go. The last major property to be rezoned at Terra Nova was a major vegetable producer.

Question: “What has caused Richmond Farmland values to go up?” **Answer Given:** “Supply and demand has increased Richmond farmland values.”

The real reason farmland values have gone up in Richmond is speculation that the land can be removed from the ALR. An exclusion at Garden City will prove this.

“BC production of cranberries already exceeds total Canadian consumption. BC production of blueberries is approaching two-thirds of total Canadian consumption” ... “There is certainly no compelling rationale for preserving the subject lands for possible future regional or provincial cranberry food requirements. or possible future blueberry food security requirements”. Overall, DSCI concluded that, *there is no obvious need to preserve the subject lands for future regional or provincial food requirements”.* **This statement is totally irresponsible. The DSCI has set up a fake premise and then knocked it down.** No one is suggesting that there is an immediate need for large scale commercial production of any of the three crops DSCI analyzed. Comparing this very narrow market perspective to other crops and to the rest of BC, there is no “obvious” need to preserve any BC lands for future regional or provincial food requirements.

Peak Oil and its companion Peak Food have already arrived. Continuing climatic disruptions of food-producing areas around the world by storms, floods and drought are commonplace. Dramatic food price increases, food shortages, and food rioting have already occurred. None of this was considered in the DSCI report.

Presently farmers, even in Richmond, are going to great expense to convert vegetable producing clay soils to blueberry production. Eventually, with the rapidly increasing cost of fuel for importing food, if it is available, those soils will be needed for vegetables. Blueberries will be grown primarily on bog soils again.

"DSCI assessed the current and expected viability of the three crop enterprises that have been identified in its report as potentially suited to the soils of the subject property. Repeating the same arguments made under their assessment of agricultural capability, suitability, and food security DSCI "concluded that the prevailing economics do not suggest viability for expanding vegetable, cranberry or blueberry production anywhere in Richmond, and it is even more certain that using the Garden City Lands for these types of crops would be even less attractive given the required costs....." In spite of the fact that two commercial blueberry growers and one commercial cranberry grower offered to pay the costs and farm the Garden City Lands in the past, the best use for the Garden City Lands is Urban Agriculture, not the three crops "identified" in the DSCI report. With United Nations officials calling the conversion of farmland to ethanol production a "crime against humanity", developing 68 to 78 acres of high density housing on farmland is equally irresponsible.

9.0 ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNITY NEED

9.1 The Commission does not have the Statutory Authority to Consider Community Need

On Sept. 27, 2007, Mayor Brodie and a delegation from Richmond Council met with the Minister of Agriculture, lobbying to have the Garden City Lands removed from the ALR. **The Hon. Pat Bell told the Mayor that "the time for the fine tuning of the Agricultural Land Reserve in the Lower Mainland is over."** That statement reflects the original intent of the Agricultural Land Commission Act. When the Land Commission act was enacted, it was expected that there would be a short period of fine tuning to allow the removal of land that was not suitable for farming.

9.1.1 The Purpose of the Commission Does Not Support Community Needs:

The original Land Commission Act had eight objectives for the commission.

It is the object of the commission to:

- (a) preserve agricultural land for farm use;
- (b) encourage the establishment and maintenance of family farms, ...
- (c) preserve green belt land in and around urban areas;
- (d) encourage the establishment and maintenance of land in a green belt land reserve
- (e) preserve land bank land having desirable qualities for urban and industrial development and restrict subdivision or use of the land for other purposes;
- (f) encourage the establishment and maintenance of land in a land bank land reserve for a use compatible with an ultimate use for industrial and urban development;
- (g) preserve parkland for recreational use
- (h) encourage the establishment and maintenance of land in a park land reserve for use compatible with an ultimate use for recreation;

(Statutes of BC, 1973, Chap. 4)

The six non-agricultural provisions and the family farm provision were removed from the act by later governments to make it clear that the only objective of the Agricultural Land Commission is to " (a) preserve agricultural land." By removing the other objectives, the provincial government made it very clear that the ALR is not a land bank for urban land, industrial land, park land, green belt or any other community need. In fact, there never was a separate provision for community need in the Agricultural Land Act. If there had been, it would have been stated under the objectives of the commission.

9.1.2 The Act Does Not Approve Consideration of Community Needs:

Contrary to the suggestion made by the consortium that the Act is not explicit to solely preserving farmland, the legislature did make it explicit by removing all other uses from the act. The community needs proposed for the Garden City Lands are urban use and park use, two community needs that were removed entirely from the Agricultural Land Act.

To make it even clearer, the Provincial Government amended the Agricultural Land Act objectives in 1994 to include:

- (b) to encourage farming on agricultural land in collaboration with other communities of interest;

Contrary to a further inference by the Consortium that "collaboration with other communities of interest" somehow includes taking land out of the ALR, this means what it says it means. There will be collaboration to "encourage farming."

The explanation of the new clause provided by the BC Provincial Government in 1994 states:

"This amendment gives the commission the responsibility to work with and encourage local governments and other agencies to be supportive of agriculture in their by-laws, plans, and policies. This change to the Act's Objectives and Powers in fact reflects the efforts that the Commission have been undertaking for some time now in working with local governments and other agencies. Thus, the amendment provides for this ongoing partnership work of the Commission to continue in an effort to ensure the integration of the farmland preservation program and the Agricultural Land Reserves into other land use and planning documents affecting agricultural land."

This amendment led to the very successful collaboration between the commission and local government to develop "Agricultural Profiles".

The Act is very clear. Community need is not mentioned anywhere in the Agricultural Land Commission Act. All references to urban, industrial, park and green belt uses that constitute Community Need have been removed from objectives of the Act. The Act now includes the very positive objective of collaborating with other communities of interest "to encourage farming on agricultural land.

In the BC Court of Appeal case over the rezoning of Garry Point in Richmond between Sandra Bourque, Harold Steves, et al and the Corporation of Richmond in 1977, the court ruled that an action had been taken that was outside of legislated procedures, and the by-law was quashed.

Under common law, objectives that are not spelled out in the legislation are not legal.

9.1.3 Consideration of the Act as a Whole does Not Support Community Need.

The Consortium is treading on very thin ice when suggesting that considerations under Section 13 of the Act have some bearing on decisions about community need by the commission. Section 13 is a clearly defined mechanism for dispute resolution, specifically for institutions prescribed by regulation and an official community plan or a regional growth strategy. It is not a blueprint for removing land from the ALR for urban use. Section 13 clearly puts the preservation of agricultural land first and foremost, and "only applies to values that cannot be replaced or relocated to land other than agricultural land.

In the case of the Garden City Lands dispute, resolution was avoided when an open space designation was agreed upon for Richmond's Official Community Plan. Richmond and the Consortium have broken that agreement.

9.1.4 Policy Considerations: Defining Community Need:

As previously noted the Act is not silent on community need, it does not permit community need. Both the government service plan defining community need and commission policy are attempts to curb the increasing number of applications in Metro Vancouver as communities exhaust their supply of urban lands within their urban boundaries. In the Barnston Island decision July 24, 2006 and the Garden City Lands decision Sept. 8, 2006 the commission noted that community need arguments should be based on local and regional planning assessments based on rigorous technical analysis. Unfortunately, as each local government makes a case for their own community need, a regional perspective may not be possible.

Community need is not only outside the legislated objectives of the Agricultural Land Commission Act. It is the exact opposite to agricultural land preservation and totally contrary to the Act. The ALR is a land reserve for preserving agricultural land. It is not a land reserve to provide land for community need. If community need was an objective of the Agricultural Land Reserve, the ALR would become a land bank for urban and industrial development as well as agriculture. Preserving agricultural land would no longer be the main objective, and would probably be impossible as every community expanded to satisfy its need. **It is time for the Agricultural Land Commission to echo the words of former Agriculture Minister Pat Bell and declare that the fine tuning of the ALR in the Lower Mainland is over.**

9.2 Assessment of Community Needs in Respect of the Garden City Lands

9.2.1 Need For and Expected Community Benefits

The City Of Richmond

"The City of Richmond is growing and its downtown population is anticipated to triple in size from 41,000 to 120,000 residents over the next 100 years,"

As Richmond Council instructed staff to develop the City Centre Area Plan without including the Garden City Lands, Richmond can expect a downtown population of 120,000 people without the Garden City Lands.

Presently, under the park guidelines adopted by Richmond Council, the City has a surplus of 59 acres of parkland in the city centre. At 3.25 acres per 1,000 people there is already enough parkland for the first 18,000 people. If 80,000 people are added to the downtown core a total of 260 acres needed. If 15,000 people are added to the Garden City Lands for a total of 95,000 more people 308 acres are needed. Using Development Cost charges, as the downtown is re-developed for 80,000 people, enough land for park can be acquired to accommodate them and maintain a modest surplus. There is also no need to decide now whether the 120,000 people should be spread out to include the Garden City Lands. **Logically, the downtown core should be developed first and the Garden City Lands developed last. If the first 80,000 people went to the downtown core there would be no need to develop the Garden City Lands for the last 15,000 people for 84 years! If the downtown population was reduced to a total of 80,000 people, the Garden City Lands wouldn't be needed for 88 years.**

Question: If the Garden City Lands provide 32% of the required parkland, where will the 68% come from? **Answer given:** 200 acres are needed for 120,000 people, 140 acres must be acquired by the city.

Much of the land to be re-developed is very low density industrial warehousing. Whether 200 acres or 140 acres are needed, the cost is paid for by development cost charges so the city can acquire land to re-develop for park at the same time as developers are acquiring land for 80,000 people. There is no need to include the Garden City Lands. The City has 100 years to do it.

"The location of the Garden City Lands within the city centre in the urban core, and availability of transit, makes the Garden City Lands a logical site for the continued growth of the City Centre Area." The problem is, should there be "continued growth" of the City Centre outside of the downtown area in the first place? Or should City Centre growth be contained in the downtown area along the No. 3 Rd. public transit corridor?

When Richmond Council adopted its new City Centre Area Plan, two scenarios were considered, a future population of 120,000 people or a population of 156,000 people. A population objective of 120,000 downtown residents was chosen, since it would be more palatable to the public and require less effort providing jobs, parkland and amenities.

The decision to have 120,000 people in downtown Richmond instead of 156,000 was purely arbitrary. There is absolutely no reason for adding 12,000 to 15,000 more people on the Garden City Lands when the City's own studies show that the downtown core can accommodate 156,000 people.

The City Centre Area Plan envisions downtown growth increasing by 80,000 more people in the next 100 years. However Richmond Council has never been known to slow down growth in the past. After the last Official community plan was adopted, residents under the flight path in the Cambie area, north of the Garden City Lands, were successful in lobbying Richmond Council to change their industrial designation to high density residential to increase their property values. Already the residents of the last two areas under the flight path are campaigning to have their lands rezoned from industrial to residential, which would add another 30,000 people to the downtown area. Reality suggests that if the city population grows at the same rate that it has in the past there will be 300,000 people in the City Centre in 100 years.

The last census results reveal that Richmond's population increased 17% to 173,567 in the 5 year period from 2001 to 2006. If the downtown population increases 17% every five years it would triple from 41,000 to 120,000 in just 35 years.

The Garden City Lands are not in the downtown core area now, and will only be in the "urban core" if the land is removed from the ALR and the core is allowed to expand to the east. The Garden City Lands do not meet the downtown City Centre standard for maximum 10 minute walk to transit. It is a 10 to 15 minute walk to the nearest transit centre.

"It is technically possible to shift some of the expected growth and associated development elsewhere in the City Centre by increasing density in the City Centre outside of the Garden City Lands." Conversely, City staff are reducing the approved 120,000 downtown population by shifting some of the expected growth and associated development from the downtown city centre to the Garden City Lands.

"Without the Garden City Lands, the City will not be able to meet its open space requirements to achieve its community need as envisioned in the City Centre area Plan." If all 136 acres of the Garden City Lands remain in the ALR there will be twice as much land available for the real Community Need for community gardens and urban agriculture; along with elevated boardwalks through low-bush blueberry bog to create an urban agricultural park. All other public amenities can be located elsewhere.

The Musqueam Indian Band

"Failure to implement the MOU could lead to a perception among the Musqueam Indian Band and other First Nations that the negotiated settlement model is unworkable." Conversely, implementation of the MOU could lead to a perception that it is better to litigate than negotiate a treaty settlement. The negotiated settlement was the direct result of court action taken by the Musqueam against the CLC. The settlement negotiated was outside of the treaty process, and does not apply to a final treaty settlement.

"Failure of the MOU would force the Musqueam peoples, to once again have to turn to the courts for relief." That is highly unlikely. The Musqueam went to court to prevent the transfer of the land from the Crown to the CLC. The CLC realized that if they took twice as much land out of the ALR for themselves and twice as much for the Musqueam both the CLC and Musqueam would come out ahead. That scenario became the basis of the MOU. If the MOU fails, and the Musqueam go to court and win, the land will go back to Crown Federal. That is the best thing that could happen as the Crown would be in a position to return the land to agriculture.

"Success of the MOU would allow the Musqueam... onsite benefits ... including skill development and training relating to land development and construction, .. (and) opportunities related to the development of existing and new Musqueam businesses: ... Offsite community benefits will derive directly from the proceeds from site development..." Neither job training through development and construction on farmland, nor the profits derived from the development and construction, can possibly be construed as a Community Need to remove farmland from the ALR. With 55 acres of developable land recently provided to the Musqueam in Vancouver, there will be ample opportunities for job training and immense profits to provide community benefits.

"The Musqueam Indian Band is currently developing a comprehensive and strategic Community plan." While the Musqueam could have used the *"revenues that the Garden City Lands would generate"* for community benefits under their community plan, that is no longer necessary. The BC Provincial Government has wisely provided the Musqueam with land that they can develop, immediately adjacent to the University Golf Course and the Musqueam Indian Reserve. Lands have been provided for short term development and sale and for long term income, in addition to \$20.3 million cash to initiate the development process. The Musqueam now have enough cash and revenue generating land that there is no Community Need for the profits of developing farmland.

The Canada Lands Company

"Funds that the Canada Lands Company raises are distributed to the Government of Canada, which in turn, fund the goals of the Government of Canada" In plain English this means the \$100 million in profits from rezoning farmland will fatten the coffers in Ottawa. That is definitely not a Community Need.

The Public

"The success of the MOU demonstrates the Government of Canada, the Government of British Columbia and Musqueam people's strong preference to negotiate resolution without costly and divisive litigation. The MOU demonstrates the exact opposite. Without the "costly and divisive litigation" that has already occurred against the CLC, there would be no MOU. As previously stated, this MOU could lead to a perception that it is better to litigate than to negotiate a treaty settlement.

9.2.2 Impacts or Risks to the Community if the Proposal does not Proceed or is Delayed.

Believing that the weight of paper is more impressive than the weight of words the remainder of the document degenerate into misleading, rambling dissertations, showing little knowledge about the topic and repeating what has already been said.

"The cost to purchase alternate sites for open space would be prohibitive. The City's portion of the Garden City Lands (50% of the site or approximately 68 acres) is \$4.7 million. The current market rate for open space in Richmond City Centre is between \$4 million and \$5 million per acre. In a scenario where growth is not contained within the City Centre Area boundary, then this will put greater development pressure on outlining lands, or in existing well established suburban neighbourhoods and direct pressure on lands being farmed, all of which will increase the potential for urban/agricultural conflict."

1. Developers in the City Centre pay Development Cost Charges based on the "current market rate" for the City to buy the parkland that is needed for their development. As a condition of rezoning the city can require that park be developed on the roof of major parkades, and in various locations in a development and has done so. The Planning Committee Chair refused to vote for the Richmond City Centre Area Plan unless City staff found enough areas for rooftop parks, patios, lanes and sidewalk trails to provide 48 acres of additional park in the downtown core, so land at Garden City will not be needed. They did.

2. The Garden City proposal is nothing new or different. Before Development cost charges it was a standard requirement for all developers of large properties to provide the amount of park needed for their development. In fact, the Garden City development doesn't even meet the required amount of park needed for the number of people that will live there.

3. The city needs to acquire 201 acres of parkland in the City Centre, not today, not tomorrow, but over the next 100 years. Even with 48 acres of parkland at Garden City, 201 acres will still have to be purchased in the City Centre, unless overall population growth is decreased, which is highly unlikely.

4. The City is receiving only 48 acres for "open space" and park purposes. An additional 20 acres is to go to Tourism Richmond for a massive Trade Centre building and parking lot, and will belong to Richmond in name only. It can not be considered "park" by any stretch of the imagination, and certainly won't be open space.

5. At \$4.77 million for 48 acres the City is not getting a special deal. That comes to \$99,000 per acre which was the going price for larger farms in Richmond when the deal was made. Under the original deal the land was to stay in the Agricultural Land Reserve.

6. Growth is contained by zoning. The suggestion that growth will not be contained is a threat to continue the growth pattern of the past. In Richmond growth happens. If the Garden City Lands are developed, it will still happen.

In Richmond the ALR has been a land bank for development since the day it was founded. Every Mayor in Richmond but one has presided over a council that took land out of the ALR. Except for the Garden City Lands and the Dhillon property in East Richmond, the present council was unable to take land out of the ALR because it was in the Green Zone. To date 1,600 acres have been lost since 1973. The only way to prevent any more losses is for the Agricultural Land Commission to close the barn doors and draw a firm line around the existing Agricultural Land Reserve. Excluding the Garden City Lands would swing the barn doors wide open.

7. Richmond already has major urban/agricultural conflicts, and exclusion would make it far worse. The owners of the 900 acre McLennan Area Blueberry Zone have already attempted to take their land out of the ALR on several occasions, and some of the owners have recently initiated court action against the city.

Whoever wrote this report has absolutely no knowledge about Indian Land Claims and hasn't read the recent settlement with the Musqueam!

"There is very little federal land available for the Musqueam to pursue."

There are over 100 properties in the lower Mainland that are available for the Musqueam to pursue. They have just been awarded four of them. Many of the properties are more valuable than the Garden City Lands. When it was announced at a Musqueam Land Claims negotiating meeting that two of the largest parcels, the Garden City Lands and Jericho Lands, were going to be put up for "strategic disposal" the Musqueam were justifiably concerned. However, they have since placed additional land claims on federally owned office buildings in downtown Vancouver that are equally valuable.

"While the Musqueam have recently secured a settlement regarding the UBC Golf Course, the conditions of that settlement require a significant delay in development."

There are no conditions regarding the recent settlement regarding the UBC Golf Course that require a significant delay in development. The Musqueam now own land adjacent to their reserve and to the UBC Golf Course that they can develop and sell in the same way they intended to develop and sell the Garden City Lands. As the new owners they have new revenue from the lease of land to UBC Golf Course and to the Great Canadian Casino.

"All of the Musqueam's physical development projects and programs would be delayed, ... self governing on behalf of their own economic, social and cultural objectives would be severely impeded."

1. None of the Musqueam's physical development projects and programs will be delayed or social and cultural objectives impeded because of a decision to keep the Garden City Lands in the ALR.

The Musqueam received an immediate cash settlement from the Provincial Government of \$20.3 million. Under the Garden City MOU there is no cash settlement. The Musqueam would have to wait until the property is sold or developed.

"The Musqueam band is one of the wealthiest in Canada, owning real estate and businesses worth hundreds of million dollars. ... the band's budget shows revenues this year of \$8.2 million from the federal government and \$4 million from their own resources." (Toronto Globe and Mail, Aug. 22, 2008)

That's a total of \$32.5 million cash or \$27,000 per person in the Musqueam Indian Band for this year and in the future they can expect additional revenues from the casino and golf course leases and many millions from the development and sale of the developable land they received.

2. The Musqueam received 218 acres of land in addition to \$20.3 million.

- 21 acres, Block F, near the University Golf Course has a similar zoning to adjacent properties and can be developed now.

- 34 acres, Triangle Lands, adjacent to the Musqueam reserve, can be incorporated into their existing reserve if and when they negotiate a land claim and it will be more valuable than developing it now, as they will have zoning control over reserve land.

- 17 acres, Great Canadian Casino lands, is already developed providing a revenue generating lease

- 146 acres, University Golf Course, provides a revenue generating lease and a possible opportunity to develop the Shawnessey Golf Course on the Musqueam Reserve land if an accommodation can be made to combine operations.

The Musqueam have absolutely no Community Need for the Garden City Lands.

"The future status of the lands will become uncertain with a high likelihood that the courts will be left to settle the matter" The next four paragraphs in the Consortium application are primarily uninformed fear mongering. The City's own consulting lawyer told Richmond Council not to be concerned about it.

9.2.3 Reasonable Alternative Means of Meeting Community Need

"An unsuccessful application would limit the City of Richmond's involvement in the future of the Garden City Lands."

An unsuccessful application would give the City of Richmond far more opportunities for preserving all of the land for Kwantlen University, experimental agriculture, urban agriculture, community gardens, open space, and park. If necessary, the city could buy the entire property from the \$140,000 Brighthouse estate fund. The fund would be replenished and used for other purposes as DCC's are collected in the future. Canada Lands could deduct their \$5 million payment for the land to the DFO to provide the funds to the Musqueam.

9.2.4 Impacts of Meeting Community Need on Agriculture and Non-Agricultural uses of the Lands

"The RAAC endorsed the concept of creating an Agricultural Endowment fund to benefit agricultural at its May 2007 meeting. That is not correct. The RAAC adopted a framework to study the option of creating an agricultural endowment fund. It was supposed to come back to the RAAC for a final vote as to whether the RAAC would support the endowment fund concept or not. It never did.... Staff note that the endowment could be used in a variety of ways including education and research, improvement to soil to increase productivity, production techniques, or buying land to add to the ALR if the opportunity arises." That is a staff suggestion never discussed at the RAAC

"The Commitment to create an Agricultural Endowment Fund mitigates and manages any impact that the removal of the Garden City Lands from the ALR may have on commercial farming."

The City is already spending \$10 million on drainage and irrigation in East Richmond. As previously stated, \$375,000 per year interest from a \$10,000 endowment fund is less than the city is spending now. At that rate it would take 26 years to put in the approved drainage and irrigation improvements, and there would be no money for anything else.

10.0 Conclusion

To meet the needs of Richmond's burgeoning population growth the onus is on Richmond to provide the funds to improve the viability of Richmond farmland commensurate with that growth. It is equally imperative that the Garden City Lands remain in the ALR to meet future agricultural and environmental needs of all people, native and non-native alike.

Appendix 1 Agricultural Assessment

The Consortium has stated over and over throughout the document that "*The Garden City Lands have no recorded agricultural history.*" This repetition does not give the statement authenticity. The fact that the Garden City Lands have not been farmed by modern industrial agriculture is an asset. There will be no artificial fertilizer, herbicide and pesticide residues from agricultural use. Most important of all, the structure of the sphagnum moss has not been damaged by cultivation. Each strand of sphagnum moss can reach down to the depths of the bog, and it will be easier to rehabilitate the bog if the moss structure is intact.

The fact that the Consortium has to emphasize continually that there is no "recorded" history infers that they are aware that it does have a rich agricultural history. In reality the history is recorded in Richmond's own papers and documents.

The "Richmond Agricultural Profile" prepared by the Richmond Planning Department clearly states, "Early surveyor's notebooks state that First Nations peoples used fire to maintain open spaces along the edges of bogs in order to aid the growth of berry bushes." (Planning Dept., 2002, Richmond). If Richmond staff didn't see that as a form of agriculture, they wouldn't have put it in the report. The "Richmond Nature Park" study also noted that First Nations people managed the bogs with fire to maintain the growth of blueberry shrubs and sphagnum moss layers. (Cairns, 1972, Richmond) Because of their abundance blueberries were an important part of the diet of First Nations people across North America, both fresh and preserved. (Clark, Nova Scotia) Lewis and Clark recorded that the Indians smoke-dried their blueberries for winter use in soups, and stews, and they feasted on smoke-dried venison with blueberries pounded into the flesh.

The Lulu Island Blueberry Bog formed to its present depth in central Richmond about 4,000 years ago. (Ross, 1979, Richmond) For 4,000 years the bog has been sequestering and storing carbon from the air. As sphagnum moss simply grows higher and suppresses the moss beneath there is carbon stored at the lowest depths that was put there up to 4,000 years ago.

Dating of artefacts found in Richmond archaeological sites indicate that for at least 2,000 years the Garden City Lands were used for agriculture to produce food. The oldest known archaeological site in Richmond is the "Blundell Basketry Site", where a basket for picking berries was found in the bog dating to 2,180 years ago. (Ham, 1987, Richmond)

Webster's dictionary defines a farm as "a piece of land devoted to raising of crops". Low-bush blueberries must be pruned, as one year old blueberry shoots are the most vigorous and productive. Burning is a form of farming that prunes the blueberries, removes competing weed trees and shrubs, and provides ash for fertilizer without destroying the sphagnum moss layer with cultivation.

Blueberries were extremely important to the early settlers. There was little or no sugar to be had, and the only fruit in abundance was the sweetest of all, the blueberry. In Richmond, the "Lulu Island Blueberry Bog" (as the pioneers called it) was settled in the early 1870's. Settlers came from Europe, the Maritimes and New England where they had used for centuries the same "burn" method of agriculture as the First Nations people.

In fact in 1928 the Nova Scotia Government passed "The Blueberry Associations Act" which legalized burning on Crown land. Although mechanical mowing can be used where blueberries can't be burned, burning is still the preferred method of growing low-bush blueberries in Nova Scotia today.

The Garden City Lands were privately owned for over 30 years with various owners from the 1860's to 1903. One of the original owners was W. D. Ferris, a farmer from eastern Canada. He was the founding father of Richmond who drafted Richmond's petition of incorporation and gave Richmond its name. (Kidd, 1927, Richmond) Because the Garden City Lands were purchased by the Crown in 1903, the land was never subdivided. However, the area on each side of the Garden City Lands became one of the most productive areas in the Lower Mainland for small self-sufficient farms. Each farm had enough land for vegetables, a blueberry patch and possibly poultry, a cow or a horse. The area became known as the Garden City and the road was named Garden City Road.

The agricultural consultant for the consortium has made the somewhat ridiculous suggestion that there may be *"possible contamination from still earlier use by the DND as rifle range"*.

The Lulu Island Blueberry Bog is comprised of four quarter sections, the Garden City Lands, DND Lands and the Richmond Nature Park. The original farmers sold the land to the Crown in 1903 for use as a two mile long rifle range which opened in 1904. (Major Matthews, 1928, Richmond Archives). However, the rifle range was used sparingly and its use as a rifle range was short lived. Public harvesting of blueberries was permitted on Crown land across Canada so the land continued to be farmed. While originally accessed by horse and buggy on No. 5 Road and the North Arm Bridge built in 1893, the Garden City Lands were accessible by the Vancouver to Steveston train in 1903 and the Interurban tram in 1906. Blueberry pickers came by tram, horse and buggy and the new automobiles from all parts of Richmond and Vancouver for the annual blueberry harvest for both personal and commercial use. Pioneer families who came to harvest the blueberries every summer complained about the rifle bullets whizzing over their heads. (Cleland, 1972, Richmond).



Blueberry Pickers who came by tram or crossed the No. 5 Rd. Bridge thronged in the blueberry bog in those areas. Many local residents chose to drive to the bog in their new cars to pick blueberries along No. 4 Rd. The short stubby shore pine stunted by fire and a high water table left lots of open space for berries to grow.

Richmond Council complained that:

"two gazetted roads pass through the said range, and one of these roads (No. 5 Rd.) is in constant use by vehicles and pedestrians at considerable risk from bullets, the said road being one of the main roads between Vancouver, New Westminster, and other municipalities and the Provincial Government Ferry at Woodward's Landing"
(Richmond Archives)

The Rifle Range closed for good. Any bullets fired from the rifle Range pavilion at Garden City Road, while the range was open, would have landed in the vicinity of No. 5 Rd. and on farmland further east, not on the Garden City Lands. As it was a military site, rifles were used, with long range steel cased bullets, not shotguns using short range lead pellets.

"Blueberry picking was often an excursion for the whole family, especially the women and children who would start early for the fields carrying a lunch with them". (Kinsman, 1986, Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture) The Steves family came to Richmond from New Brunswick and Nova Scotia in 1877 and settled on marshland where it was difficult to grow cane fruits or orchards until the dykes were built in 1907. Like other early settlers they brought their knowledge of culturing and growing blueberries with them. They harvested blueberries from the Lulu Island Blueberry Bog shortly after they arrived, and through to the late 1950's.



As shown in these photos of the Steves family harvesting blueberries on the crown lands ca. 1915, pioneer farmers as well as First Nations harvested berries from the Garden City Lands. The Author harvested blueberries on the Garden City Lands with his family, and went on the family's annual winter outing to cut a Christmas tree on the Garden City Lands until he graduated from high school in 1955.

By the Late 1940's complaints by nearby residents about the fires set by the blueberry farmers, and just as frequent attempts by the Richmond Volunteer Fire Department to put the fires out, prompted Richmond Council to try to prevent blueberry harvesting in the bog. While the blueberry farmers didn't have the same kind of legislative support as the farmers in Nova Scotia, it was Crown land and Richmond had no jurisdiction. The end was soon to come, however, when the BC Government bulldozed a highway through the eastern half of the bog. The hydrology of the east half of the bog was altered, the usually stunted shore pine grew taller, and the bog was invaded with rapidly growing birch and other invasive species. (Davis, Klinkenburg, et al, 2008, Richmond)

While taking agriculture at UBC, the Author had a summer job as an equipment operator building the road that went through the bog.

Some time later, the western quarter section of the bog was mowed and manicured and posted with threatening warning signs by the Department of National Defence, warning against anyone who dared to pick blueberries under the new aerial towers. In the early 1960's, Will Paulik, the Author, and two other environmentalists asked Richmond Council to do a land swap to create the Richmond Nature Park.

Early pictures show that the trees and vegetation were kept low from the frequent burning of the Lulu Island Blueberry Bog. "Repeated burning appears to encourage the growth and spread of low-bush blueberries and to retard weed development. If pruning or weed control is stopped, the area grows up into brush and woodland again". "Surface ditching or underground drainage may be put in place when developing the field. The water table should be kept at least 14 inches below the soil surface. Ponds, to be used for fire protection or irrigation (are) used by many producers". (Kinsman, Nova Scotia, Department of Agriculture)

Replacing burning with mechanical brush cutting is all that is needed to rehabilitate the blueberry bog today.

For more commercial types of agriculture, the costs of bringing the land into production would be no more and probably a lot less than the costs on other properties in Richmond. Because the Garden City Lands have never been mechanically cultivated, or had the peat removed, the soils are as close to virgin agricultural soil as is possible.

Elsewhere in Richmond bog land has been mined for peat, filled with unacceptable subsoil and in some cases everything from old car chassis to rock and boulders. The Country Meadows Golf Course on No. 6 Rd. was mined out peat bog filled with car chassis before Richmond farmer Harry Hogler covered it with class 1 agricultural soil and created a golf course. The India Cultural Centre filled their entire acreage with hard pan subsoil and rock that appears to have come from Vancouver, and tried unsuccessfully to grow turf. The soil was so compacted that it was impervious to water. Upon the advice of the Author and a private consultant, they planted 300 apple trees on the property this spring. Jose Serabia acquired a farm on Blundell Road. When he tried to cultivate his field, he found the soil was mined with debris and plastic sheeting.

The Agricultural Land Commission was correct in its analysis of the Garden City Lands soils. "There are no significant limitations to agricultural capability to restrict the agricultural use of the soils on the subject property. Compared to other agricultural capability assessments made on similar soils, no evidence was found to suggest that the Land Capability Classification for agriculture ratings for the soil identified on the property would be any more limiting than those given to those soils previously surveyed."

In 2007, the Author successfully grew sunflowers on the 6 acre fill area in the north west corner. The Author did preliminary soil tests to determine the soil type and water holding capacity of the soil. Compared to the hardpan subsoil used as fill on the India Cultural Centre land, the Garden City Lands fill would appear to be a mixture of topsoil and subsoil of local origin.

When cultivated, the water retention is good particularly when compost was added to the soil. With composting to help break up the soil structure, plus the close proximity to Kwantlen University, this soil would be good for Kwantlen University experimental plots, urban agriculture, community gardens and tree fruits.

The area along the perimeter, where a strip of soil has been broadcast from ditch digging, offers no particular problem. Broadcasting soil from ditch digging has been the common practice in Richmond over the past 100 years and farmers simply incorporate it into their soil.

Paul M. Wood, Associate Professor of Conservation Policy at UBC states, "We are now in the beginning of the sixth major mass extinction event of all time. ... Human activities, increment by increment, day by day, nearly everywhere on the globe, are eradicating species by direct or indirect means. And climate change is predicted to compete with habitat loss as the leading cause of biodiversity loss in the next few decades."

"Every small local land use decision is important. The power of incremental loss has been underestimated. At the level of the next local land-use decision, whether or not to convert a small, natural area for economic gain seems of so little importance on a global scale. The only way to stop the global effect is to decide to conserve instead of convert – at the local level. The importance of incremental economic gain has been overestimated.

Richmond's bogs, depending on whether they are converted or protected, could contribute to this trend or resist it." (Paul M. Wood – Foreword – A Biophysical Inventory and Evaluation of the Lulu Island Bog, Davis, Klinkenberg, et al, 2008, Richmond)

The Kyoto Protocol, negotiated in 1997, bound signatories (including Canada) to the "protection and enhancement of sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases" (UNFCCC, 1997). Peatlands act as significant carbon reservoirs, and they are estimated to contain between a quarter and a third of the world's pool of soil carbon (Armento and Menges, 1986, Gorham, 1991, Ramsar, 2005). Carbon is sequestered from the atmosphere by photosynthesis in plants, and remains largely un-leased due to the very slow rates of organic matter decomposition characteristic of peatlands' cold, waterlogged acidic soils (Gorham, 1991). The accumulation of this un-decayed organic matter has built up for thousands of years in many peatlands around the world. The carbon would otherwise be released into the atmosphere as carbon dioxide, one of the gases principally responsible for climate change. (Davis, Klinkenberg, et al, 2008, Richmond)

Development of peatlands can have the opposite effect on the carbon storage capacity of peatlands. Drainage allows the peat layer to oxidize, and accelerate the release of carbon dioxide and methane greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. The outflow of drainage water carries further quantities of dissolved carbon and CO₂ with it. (Worrall, 2003, Kusler, 1999) With the development of peatland, a carbon sink becomes a carbon source.

How much carbon per acre is sequestered every year by a peat bog has not been determined. However, research by the Rodale Institute has found that "organically managed soils can sequester more than 1,000 pounds, while non-organic systems can cause carbon loss". (Rodale, 2008, www.rodaleinstitute.org/global_warming) Low-bush blueberries have grown on the Garden City Lands organically for thousands of years.

The message is very clear. Both sphagnum bog and organic agriculture on 136 acres between four roads will sequester large amounts of carbon produced by the vehicles on those roads, and help reduce global warming. The highest and best use for the Garden City Lands is a combination of agriculture and bog rehabilitation. The original decision of the Agricultural Land Commission was correct. The Garden City Lands should remain in the Agricultural Land Reserve.

Boundary Bay Conservation Committee
Box 1251, Delta, B.C. V4M 2X8
susanj@dccnet.com

Agricultural Land Commission
133-4940 Canada Way
Burnaby, BC
V5G 4K6
Email: erik.karlsen@gov.bc.ca

August 29, 2008

Attention: Erik Karlsen, Chair

**Re: Exclusion Application #38099 - Proposed Exclusion of 55 hectares
Richmond Garden City Lands**

The Boundary Bay Conservation Committee (BBCC) is opposed to the exclusion of 55 hectares of the Garden City Lands from the Agricultural Land Reserve in Richmond.

It is unacceptable to bring this proposal forward to the public as the Agriculture Land Commission already ruled against exclusion from the ALR on September 1, 2006 finding:

1. The land under application has agricultural capabilities and is appropriately designated as ALR.
2. The land under application is suitable for agricultural use.
3. A convincing community need argument has not been made that would justify the Commission considering the exclusion of prime agricultural land from the ALR.
4. The proposal is inconsistent with the objective of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* to preserve agricultural land.

These facts have not changed since 2006. The land is still good for farming.

The arguments for benefits and 'community need' should not be made as the Agricultural Land Commission is not mandated to remove ALR lands for community need.

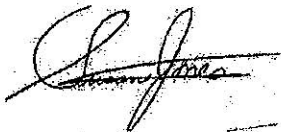
Land claim issues should not be a means of bartering land out of the ALR. If the provincial government wishes to overrule the ALC, the Ministers have the power. If that choice is made, the blame should rest on the shoulders of the provincial government, not municipal governments and the Agricultural Land Commission.

Bartering land out of the ALR is an unacceptable process. It is important to have integrity with the ruling that has already been made by the Agricultural Land Commission. The current proposal, like the proposal of 2006, is inconsistent with the objective of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* to preserve agricultural land. It is the job of the Agricultural Land Commission to adhere to this legislation. Furthermore, it is inappropriate to collaborate and cooperate with a conglomerate application that politicizes the process. It becomes obvious that a lot is going on behind closed doors compromising integrity of process and decisions. The reversal of the 2006 decision would raise serious questions.

The Boundary Bay Conservation Committee finds it unreasonable that submissions to this controversial proposal are being requested during the summer months. It gives the appearance of trying to avoid public input to an important, high-profile issue. Also, your web pages do not appear to show that a deadline is pending. On visiting the site, there is no clear indication of the deadline of August 29th.

The Boundary Bay Conservation Committee supports the Farmland Defence League of B.C. in filing a request for a Federal Environmental Assessment Review of the development proposal and asks that the Commission suspend any further decision-making pending the outcome of that investigation. The Garden City Lands is habitat to multiple species identified under the federal *Species At Risk Act*. It appears that this proposal on federal lands should trigger an environmental assessment.

Yours sincerely,



Susan Jones
Director Boundary Bay Conservation Committee

Wallace, Ron ALC:EX

From: Roland Hoegler [rahoegler@shaw.ca]
Sent: Friday, August 29, 2008 2:56 PM
To: Karlsen, Erik ALC:EX
Cc: Wallace, Ron ALC:EX
Subject: Garden City Lands : ALC Decision: Island:TIMBERWEST ALR Inclusion in return for Exclusion

To: ALC

Re: Garden City Lands ALR Exclusion application

Below is a link to another recent ALC Decision from the ALC Island panel
ALC Letter dated JUNE 23, 2008

Reference: ALC Files #1 - 37430

The message is ready to be sent with the following file or link attachments:
Shortcut to: http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/application_status/Docs/37745d1.pdf

NOTE: I have already submitted to the ALC a similar case (ie **ALC File N # 37662 : PRINCE GEORGE**) whereby a condition of the applicants ALR exclusion was the **INCLUSION** of new lands (approx 668 hectares) within the ALR in return for the subsequent **EXCLUSION** of 668 hectares of lands currently within the ALR.

It is duly noted in this Island case (ALC File #1 - 37430) that the amount of land to be **INCLUDED** into the ALR (ie **480 hectares**) far surpasses that being excluded from the ALR (ie **166 hectares**)....ALR replacement (in hectares) by almost a **3:1 factor**.

In addition, NO "endowment fund " offer is noted as either (i) part of the Island applicants submission, nor (ii) as a condition imposed by the ALC.

This ALC Island Panel ALR Exclusion case, as well as the Prince George ALR Exclusion case , implies "land" is THE prime recognized bartering commodity for ALR exclusion , contrasts with the Garden City Lands application which offers only fiscal, and not physical (ie land) , compensation.

Quotes from ALC decision #1 - 37430:
PG: 5

"The Commission determined that it could not consider the proposal for exclusion without the appropriate measures in place to mitigate any agricultural losses resulting from the proposal for exclusion from the ALR...."

"The Commission gave consideration to ensuring that the amount of land included into the ALR was sufficient in agricultural capability to adequately mitigate for the exclusion of the

airport lands"

It is quite clear that an endowment fund would not mitigate losses noted aboveif we define " losses" as the losses of ALR inventory (in land acreage).

Any endowment fund "may" assist existing ALR lands actually being farmed via increasing production , but one would presume that such lands have had their potential already close to maximized by the given farmer ..and not subsidized by external sources, which is what an endowment fund would most likely do (ie "subsidize" active agriculture) , and thus absolve the given Local Gov't from paying more than token lip - service to its own ALR lands within its jurisdiction.

In fact, NO endowment fund can additionally put the onus on, nor force , the Local Gov'ts to actively support agriculture with their own Local Gov't funding, versus the discriminatory " land bank" the ALR often ends up as in many Local Gov't jurisdictions .

Thus, the City of Richmond itself would be a beneficiary of the proposed GCL endowment fund...given that the City gains a major portion of the GCL ALR lands to exploit and abuse to remedy a litany of poor past planning practices... ..and the City can also use the endowment fund as its sole token support for agriculture, and thus not provide any further agri - investment from the City's own budget, and then the City can wash its hands of any /all future agricultural support otherwise..... likely claiming the endowment fund will "suffice" ..

CONCLUSION :

The ALC Island Panel decision as noted above , in conjunction with the Prince George decision , can be taken as case precedents which further weakens the Garden City lands applicants case.

The proposed Garden City Lands ALR exclusion does not submit any measures to mitigate " agricultural losses " , which are best defined as replacement in equivalent land (ie acres) , and not \$\$\$'s .

The Garden City lands case has shown that some of Richmond farmers do not consider the Garden City Lands as agri- viable, yet these same farmers are willing to accept the endowment fund for benefit to their own operations in lieu of the Garden City lands ALR exclusion.

However, if this "endowment fund" pattern is established in Richmond ..one could foresee , " in theory " other large ALR exclusions applicants having some Richmond Farmers provide the same opinion, and in turn further benefitting from an endowment fund , as the ALR LAND base continually shrinks.

Finally...It is my understanding that the ALC does not engage in consideration of economic arguments, hence the endowment fund enters perhaps treacherous waters of the possibility of rather dubious precedent for the ALC (in lieu of other ALR loss -mitigating factors),.....and the further collateral consequences of a shrinking pool of beneficiaries who may ultimately gain a literal monopoly on the endowment fund's alleged benefits.

Regards:

Roland Hoegler

RECEIVED
 PROV. AGRICULTURAL AUG 28 2008
 LAND COMMISSION

August 26, 2008

Agricultural Land Commission
 133 - 4940 Canada Way
 Burnaby, B.C.
 V5G 4K6

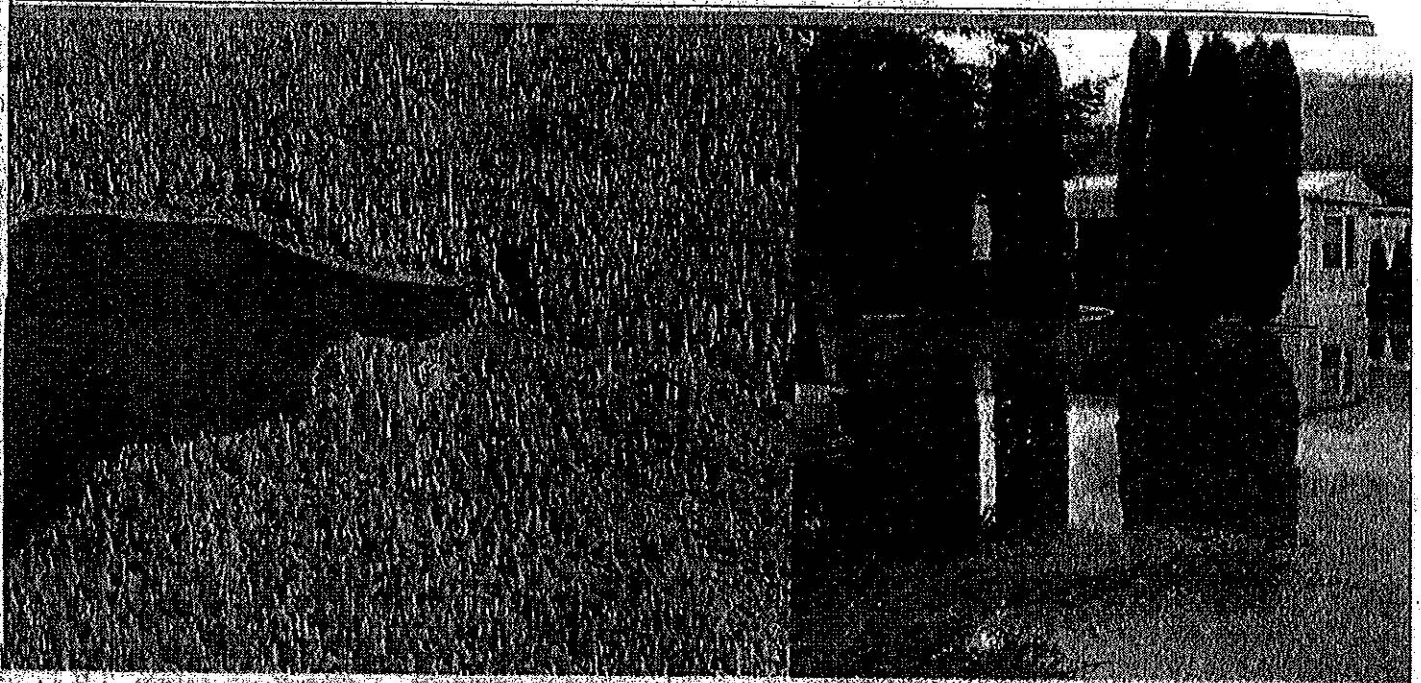
Time is running out for the public to have their say on the Garden City lands.

In spite of the Garden City lands being designated prime agricultural land just two years ago by the Agricultural Land Commission Richmond city council is attempting to again have them removed from the A.L.R.

The Agricultural Land Commission vetoed a previous bill stating that the city of Richmond hadn't demonstrated there was a community need for the land.

I am convinced that there is a great community need for the land to stay in the Agricultural Land Reserve.

First of all the very most important reason is our struggle to combat global warming.

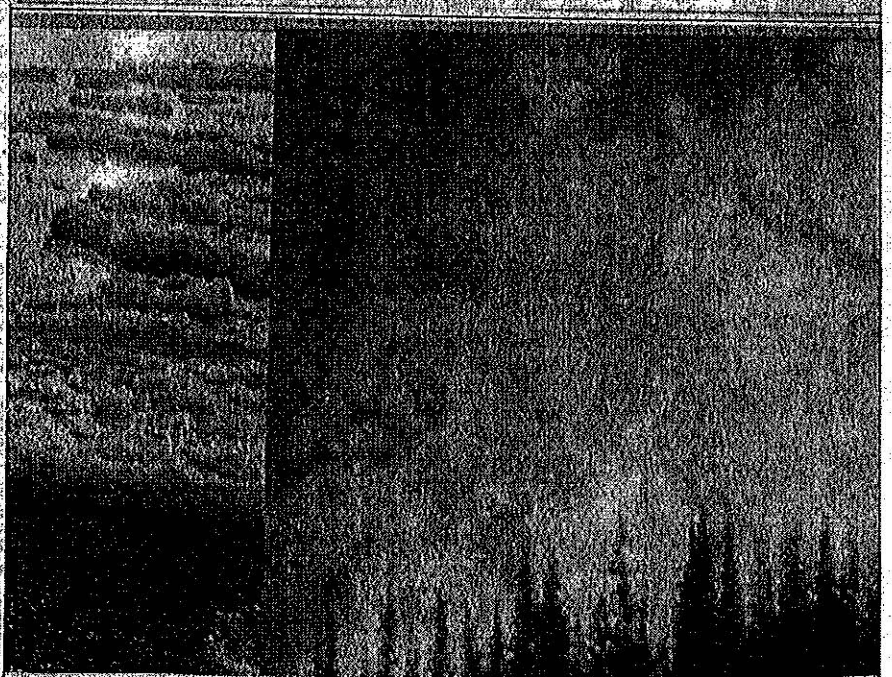


BC is taking action against global war

Many parts of BC have been warming at a rate that is twice the global average. It isn't hard to see the impact that climate change has already had on our province: the mountain pine beetle epidemic, the storms that devastated Stanley Park, the floods of 2007, the loss of water supply to over 900,000 people in 2006, the wildfires of 2003 and the depletion of our glaciers.

These effects of global warming have already taken a heavy toll on our economy, our natural resources and people's homes and livelihoods. It's clear that it's hurting our province. It's time for all of us to take action.

- 11 of the last 12 years were among the warmest ever since 1850.
- Over the last century BC has lost up to 50 per cent of its snow packs, and glaciers have melted away.
- Warm winters have created the mountain pine beetle epidemic.
- 80 per cent of our pine forests will be red



A Biophysical Inventory of the Lulu Island Bog, Richmond, British Columbia

3.3 Bogs and Global Warming

The Kyoto Protocol, an amendment to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change negotiated in 1997, bound signatories (including Canada) to, among other things, the "protection and enhancement of sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases" (UNFCCC 1997). This has indirectly highlighted the importance of wetlands, and more specifically, peatlands (including bogs), which play a significant role in reducing the amount and rate of carbon emitted into the atmosphere (Kusler 1999a). Peatlands act as significant carbon reservoirs (Armentano and Menges 1986). Peatlands cover approximately 400-500 million hectares of the earth's surface (Gorham 1990 as cited in Keddy 2000) (Ramsar 2005), which is approximately 4% of the world's ice-free land area (Keddy 2000). However, they are estimated to contain between one quarter and one third of the world's pool of soil carbon (Armentano and Menges 1986) (Gorham 1991) (Ramsar 2005). Carbon is sequestered from the atmosphere by photosynthesis in plants and remains largely unreleased due to the very slow rates of organic matter decomposition characteristic of peatlands' cold, waterlogged and acidic soils (Gorham 1991). The accumulation of this undecayed organic matter has built up for thousands of years in many peatlands around the world. The carbon would otherwise be released into the atmosphere as carbon dioxide, one of the gases principally responsible for global warming.

Peatlands are not only reservoirs of carbon stored in dead, undecayed organic matter, they can also be active carbon sinks if the rate of carbon sequestration via photosynthesis exceeds the rate of carbon release. Past studies have shown that peatlands can act as sources or sinks of carbon depending on a number of factors (Worrall et al. 2003). Development or alteration of peatlands can have a significant impact on their carbon storage capacity, and can change them from sinks to sources of carbon. For example, drainage leads to the oxidation of the peat layer and the accelerated release of carbon dioxide, methane and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere (Kusler 1999b). Drainage water outflow can also increase carbon dioxide release from bogs in the forms of dissolved organic carbon, particulate organic carbon, dissolved inorganic carbon and dissolved carbon dioxide (Worrall et al. 2003).

Proposed strategies to meet the Kyoto stipulation of protecting and enhancing greenhouse gas sinks and reservoirs have included blocking drainage in bogs. This can serve to reduce carbon release and preserve their function as carbon sinks and reservoirs. It has been suggested that this strategy may be a cheaper method of carbon storage than other strategies such as afforestation. Moreover, blocking drainage in bogs can have other positive outcomes such as improved ecological health.

Richmond is a participant in the "Partners for Climate Protection" program, a group of Canadian municipalities and regional governments working to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in their communities (City of Richmond 2005). Richmond is currently completing an emissions inventory and must develop a local action plan to reduce emissions and monitor progress. The existence of remnant boglands in Richmond presents municipal government with an opportunity to preserve a significant carbon

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My second reason is to keep the land for future urban agriculture.

Some of the finest residents of Richmond have shown in the past two years what can be accomplished both educationally and environmentally. It definitely takes initiative, interest, money, volunteering and hard work. But the individuals have unequivocally shown that they can do it.

Urban agriculture works all over the world

Sharing farm brings people together

If this land had not been set aside we would not have experienced the wonderful benefits that have come from it.



Mary Gazetas photo
The field at Terra Nova Sharing Farm where the peas are planted.

brewed on a camp stove.

Program co-ordinator

*Arzeena Hamir writes:

"We have some really nice interactions between young and old at the greenhouse. A father and son come and all the older women treat him like a grandson. He's gotten into drinking herbal tea with all the ladies..."

Richmond is food insecure

from Page 1

Hamlir, an agronomist who regularly helps out at the Richmond Food Bank, recognizes food security issues can be overwhelming, but simple changes can make a difference, she said.

"Small changes in the way that they approach food can have such a huge impact—whether it's buying your potatoes from a local farmer versus having the imported potatoes, or eating more squash."

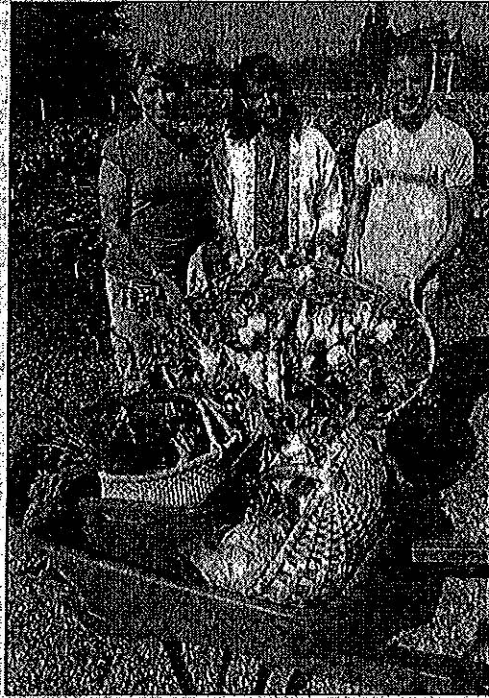
The Richmond Food Security Task Force previously organized events around World Food Day, has hosted a local food bus tour and supported *The Richmond Review's* 10-Mile Diet last year.

The task force has also floated a new plan for the Garden City lands—one that incorporates community gardens, small farm plots, research and education.

The task force is helping plan another 10-mile diet challenge this year and is working on a map that will indicate where locally-grown produce can be purchased.

Hamlir said Steveston is talking about hosting a farmer's market this year, and the task force is hoping to start a "pocket market"—a smaller, mobile market that can be set up in a parking lot.

"Something that really allows local people who probably don't have access to cars, who



Mark Patrick/RR photo
10-mile dieters Erin Rochard, Arzeena Hamlir and Shane McMillan with a wheelbarrow full of local produce. Despite Richmond's many farms, the city is considered 'food insecure.'

can't get out to local farms, East Richmond as well." She hopes this weekend's dialogue will also bring new energy and new ideas to the task force.

Food For All Dialogue

Organized by the Richmond Food Security Task Force, the dialogue will feature a diverse array of workshops and a locally-sourced lunch.

Speakers include Kim Sutherland of the Ministry of Agriculture, Richmond School District Superintendent Bruce Bealisto, Inne Smith from Smart Growth BC, local farmers Carol Southgate and Bill Jones and Clefian Lal from the Terra Nova Schoolyard Project.

Friday, Feb. 29, and Saturday, March 1, from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Gilmore Park United Church, 8060 No. 1 Rd.

Cost is \$30 per day or \$50 for both days.

More information and online registration: www.richmondrc.org or register at the Richmond Food Bank (604-271-5609).

energy and new ideas to the task force.

Sponsoring the dialogue is the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, which in 2006 sponsored a food system analysis of Richmond and found that Richmond is "food insecure." The report cited a lack of community gardens, decreases in local food production and loss of farmland as all issues.

How does your garden grow?

Good climate, rising food prices prompt Richmondites to grow their own food

Thousands sample Chefs to Field's best

Sample some of the best gourmet food in town and watch as the region's top chefs use freshly harvested local organic ingredients in a head-to-head culinary competition.

Chefs to the Field, a celebration of food and organic growing, is this Sunday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Terra Nova Rural Park, 2631 Westminster Hwy.

Besides the chefs competition, guests can enjoy samples of freshly prepared dishes for \$3 per portion.

Live entertainment, children's activities and a silent auction are also part of this fundraiser for the Terra Nova Schoolyard Society.

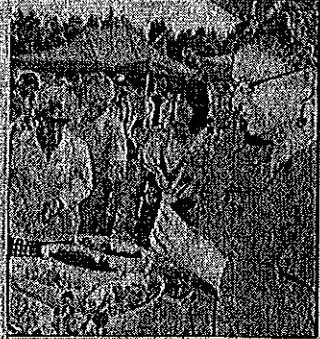
Participating restaurants include Tapenade Bistro, Papi's Ristorante Italiano, Raincoy Grill, Bistro's Dive at the Met, Wild Rice and Vancouver Airport Marriott.

Chefs compete from 2 until 4 p.m. and the food booths will be open 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. A free shuttle bus service will depart from the city's works yard, 5599 Lynas Lane, every 15 minutes.

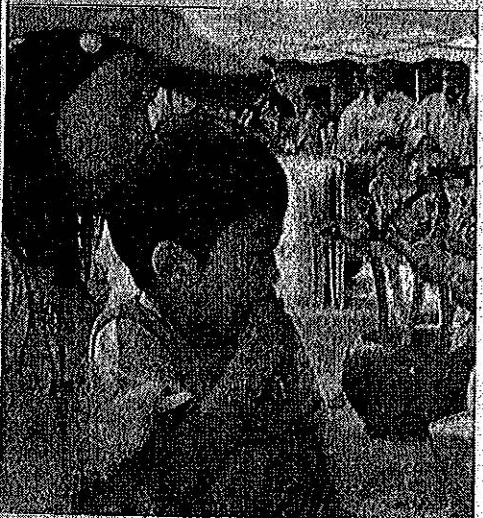


Mark Patrick photo
Chef Ian Lal, founder of Terra Nova Schoolyard Project, is busy Thursday preparing for a field of chefs at Terra Nova Rural Park.

Park-o-plenty



Mark Patrick photo
Above: Pan-O-Pan chef Maria Pan puts the final touches on an edible flower. At right, chef Mo Burke and pastry sous chef Alysa Downs serve up roasted peach palette, fresh quark and hazelnut.



News

FARMING

Richmond
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Kwantlen may cultivate urban agriculture

Proposal targets 40 to 50 acres of farmland in Richmond, which could be found in the

By NELSON BENNETT
nbennett@richmond-review.com

The City of Richmond will consider a proposal by Kwantlen University College to establish a post-secondary urban agriculture program in Richmond.

The city's planning committee agreed Tuesday to consider a proposal by Kent Mullinix, a sustainable horticulture specialist with Kwantlen, to develop a new urban agriculture research and education centre in Richmond.

Mullinix said the centre would require 40 to 50 acres of farmland in the city.

Coun. Harold Steves said he met with federal agriculture minister Chuck Strahl a year and a half ago to discuss the possible agricultural uses for the Garden City lands. He said Strahl told him his department might consider using the land for agriculture if a university came forward with a proposal to use the land for educational purposes.

"You have just come forward with that exact proposal," he said.

The city has generally endorsed the principle of using some of the Garden City lands for things like community gardens and urban agriculture. But 40 to 50 acres would eat up more than half of the city's share of the land, which it also wants to use for things like parks and sports fields.

While the Garden City lands have the advantage of being agricultural-class land in close proximity to Kwantlen's Richmond campus, Mullinix's proposal is not site specific.

Other possible sites discussed Tuesday included Terra Nova — which is already being used for community gardens — and the Fantasy Gardens site at the corner of No. 5 Road and Steveston Highway.

The Fantasy Gardens lands are problematic for developers because a portion of it is locked in the Agricultural Land Reserve.

Kwantlen already has a horticulture program, but according to a concept paper presented by Mullinix, no university in North America currently offers a program specifically tailored to urban farming.

Mullinix said there is a growing demand for such a program because North America has become so urbanized. Moreover, as the world's oil supplies begin to dwindle, the cost of fuel is expected to one day

put an end to the current produce markets, where fruits and vegetables that can be grown locally are trucked thousands of miles from Mexico and Southern California.

"Agricultural land has been maxed out," Mullinix said. "There's great pressure to produce food and feed the urbanized population."

Coun. Rob Howard said it was a "very exciting proposal." While 40 to 50 acres of experimental farmland

would not feed Richmond, he said "thousands and thousands of backyards" might.

He and other councillors therefore liked the idea that, in addition to offering a post-secondary degree program in urban agriculture, the centre would also teach local residents how to grow their own food in their own back yards.

Mullinix's proposal was referred to staff for further study.

There are not

that many suitable backyards in Richmond any more.

This land is now under future developments plans by Progressive Construction. Rick Ellick

Letters

Research farm is worth pursuing by council

Editor:
Re: "Kwantlen makes pitch for research farm," Feb. 7.

I attended the Richmond planning committee meeting on Feb. 5 and was very impressed by the presentation made by both Dr. Kent Mullinix and Kwantlen student representative Shane McMillan

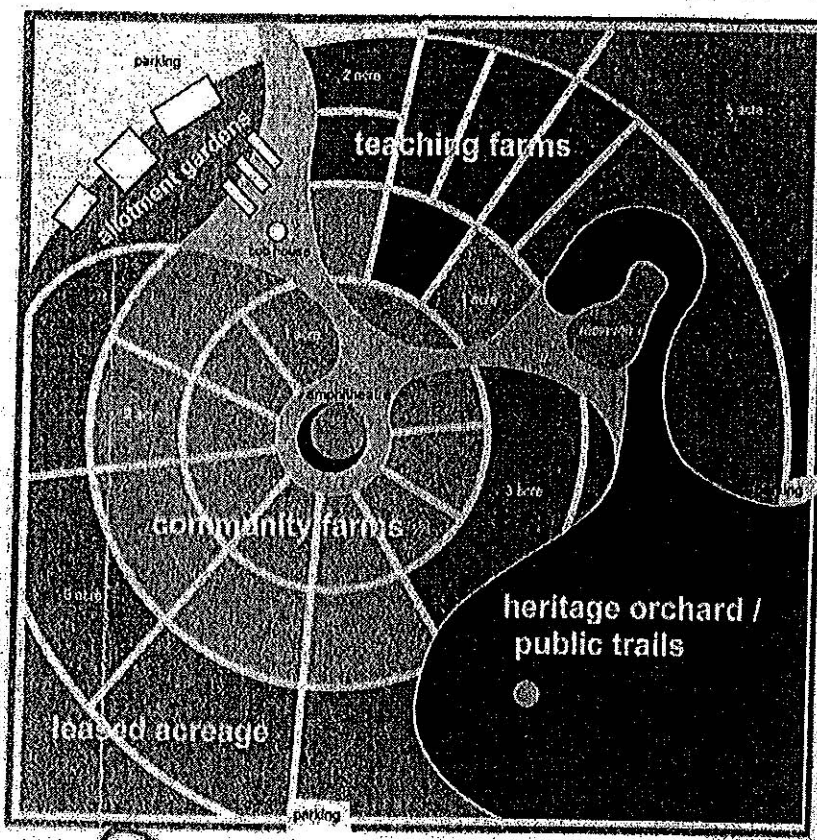
on the issue of urban agriculture food systems and the proposed development of a horticultural research station.

As a former member of the Kwantlen staff, I endorse the concept especially as it would be unique to North America if implemented. This type of program would establish

Richmond as an educational and research centre for urban farming nationally and internationally.

Farming has deep heritage in Richmond and I highly encourage Richmond city council to give due consideration to this innovative proposal.

Allice Wong
Richmond



Keeping the Garden City Lands in the ALR and developing a Sustainable Food Systems Park would position the city of Richmond on the world map as forward-thinking community that is well positioned in terms of food security. Besides attracting tourists, the park would afford opportunities for learning on community farms and in community kitchens, business ventures for new Richmond farmers, garden space for Richmond resident a farmer's market, and a restaurant. All farm equipment and machinery would be kept on-site, so there would be no interference with local traffic.

ABOVE: One alternative is the proposed Sustainable Food Systems Park.

What is Urban Agriculture?

Urban agriculture is an industry located within (intra-urban) or on the fringes (peri-urban) of a town, a city or a metropolis, which grows and raises, processes and distributes a diversity of food and non-food products, (re-) using largely human and natural resources*, products and services found in and around that urban area, and in turn supplying human and material resources, products and services largely to that urban area.

Local economies

Localized food production in urban areas creates stronger local economies by creating jobs. Some researchers indicate that unemployed populations in large cities and suburban towns would decrease if put to work by local food movements.

Energy efficiency

The current industrial agriculture system is accountable for high energy costs for the transportation of foodstuffs. The energy used to transport food would be greatly decreased if urban agriculture could provide Canadian cities with more locally-grown food.

Quality of food

Urban agriculture supports a more sustainable production of the food that tries to decrease the use of harmful pesticides that result in agricultural runoff. Urban and local farmers also eliminate the need for preservatives, as their products do not need to travel long distances.

Community-based Infrastructure

Creating a community-based infrastructure for urban agriculture means facilitating how crops are grown, how the food is processed, and how it is transferred from the farmer (producer) to the consumer. (Terra Nova Sharing Farm)

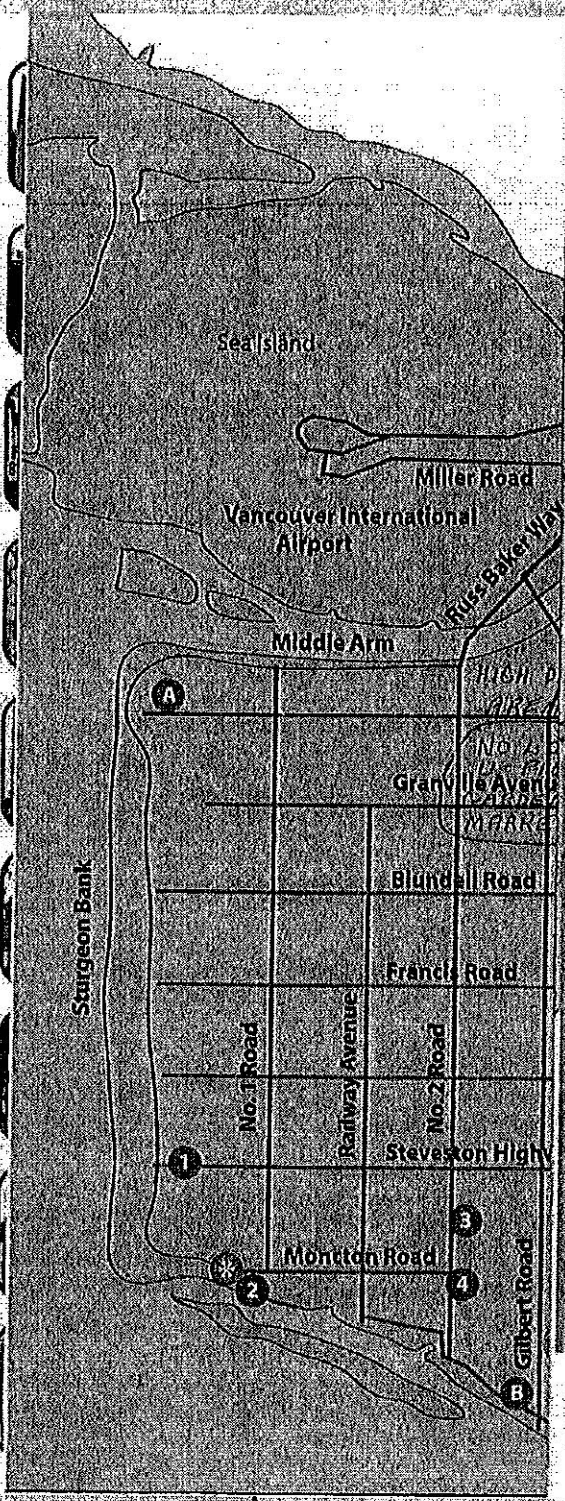
Local Food Guide

A map resource guide
to Richmond's local
food sources

2008



Farmer's Markets



Related Web Links

- RRPC - www.richmondprc.org
- Local Food Directory - www.localfooddirectory.ca
- Circle Farm (08) - www.circlefarmtown.com
- Farmfolk/Cityfolk - www.farmfolk.ca
- Farm Fresh - www.bcfarmfresh.com
- Get Local - www.getlocalbc.org/en/
- 100 Mile Diet Society - www.100milediet.org
- BC Agriculture Council - www.bca.ca
- Pick Your Own - www.pickyourown.org/canada.htm
- Eat Well Guide - www.eatwellguide.org
- Lifecycle - www.lifecycleproject.ca

Mission

Our long-term goal is that in Richmond, people are making healthy choices, supported by a sustainable, affordable and equitable food system that maximizes community resilience and cultural inclusion. - Richmond Food Security Task Force



Richmond
Food
Security
Task
Force

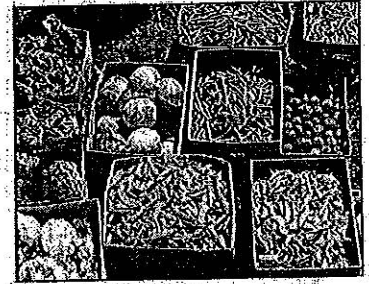


Richmond
Food
Security
Response
Committee

Vancouver
Coastal Health

History of the Sharing Farm Project

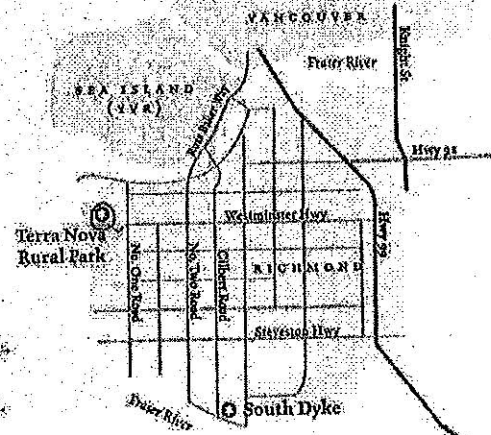
In 2001, a group of volunteers started the Richmond Fruit Tree Project as a food rescue initiative to pick donated fruit and to give it to those living with poverty. London Farm donated six rows of garden space in 2002 in order to grow vegetables on a small scale. Since then the Sharing Farm project has continued to expand and vegetables and fruits are now grown on 2.5 acres of City of Richmond land - at the end of Gilbert Road and at the Terra Nova Rural Park. In eight years over 120,000 pounds of food has been harvested and donated to the Richmond Food Bank and other charitable food secure agencies.



Purposes & Goals

- To provide a year round harvest of locally grown fruit and vegetables to the Richmond Food Bank and other charitable agencies.
- To participate in an active Richmond-based community food security system.
- To foster responsible stewardship of the land through a commitment to sound, organic, sustainable environmental practices.
- To work in partnership with Richmond organizations that value the spirit of collaboration - schools, institutions, youth services and businesses.
- To implement educational programs for people of all ages, with an emphasis on youth.
- To celebrate the permanent location for the farm at the Terra Nova Rural Park and to plan towards the establishment of a public fruit tree orchard at the South Dyke location in the future.

Sharing Farm Locations





Enthusiastic volunteers plant rows of seeds in the spring.



Little and big hands help to make light work of plucking peas.

The Sharing Farm is a place to plant, share, grow, harvest and give.



A bountiful harvest afternoon in the late summer.



A fresh delivery to the Richmond Food Bank.

My third reason is the community need for good mental health.

The Richmond city core area is in the process of becoming extremely densely populated. To be entirely immersed in density with just the few manicured parks that dot the landscape is claustrophobic and unhealthy.

The Garden City lands offer many opportunities of which have already been set forth.

There is no need for heavy machinery to be used. It can all be contained within the lands ^{outside}.

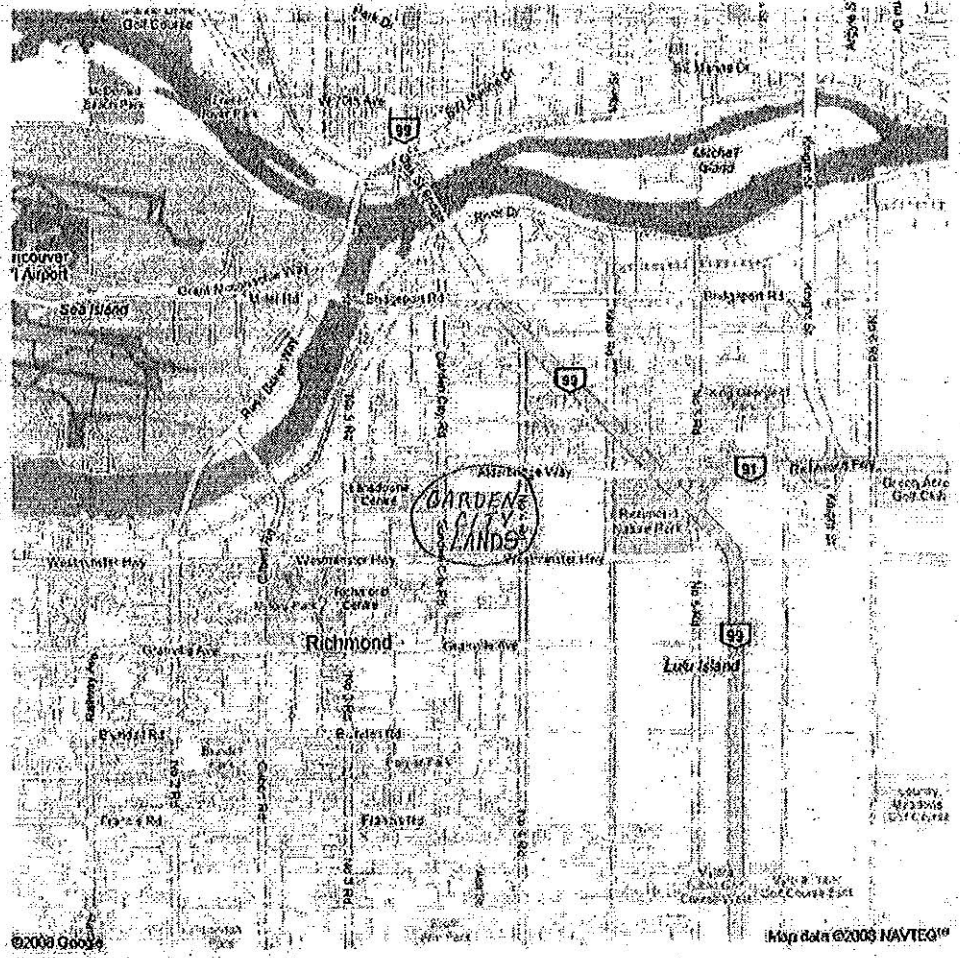
As a community we can do much to enhance the bog land and our farmland.

I believe the surrounding residents will be greatly indebted in the years to come!



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Maps

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LOOKING AT THIS MAP IT IS
OBVIOUS THAT THERE IS NOT ADEQUATE
PARK LAND AND OPEN SPACE.

Community

DEVELOPMENT

Today's kids battle 'nature-deficit disorder'

Danielle Aldcorn



FAMILY FUNCTION

Think back to a moment in your life when you felt completely relaxed and stress free. What memory popped into your head when you thought about the feeling of real relaxation? Perhaps you were sitting on a tropical beach, swimming in a lake, riding on a bike with the wind blowing in your hair, swinging in a hammock, or planting flowers in your garden.

I have lots of relaxing memories but my favourite was from when I was a child and I would sit reading in the tree-filtered sunlight overlooking the Saskatchewan prairie where my grandparents had their ranch. I remember the azure sky meeting the perfectly flat horizon of golden rows of wheat that transitioned neatly into emerald prairie

grasses at the edge of the field. The only sound I would hear was the buzz of the crickets and the wind gently rustling the wheat.

I also remember climbing cherry trees on my way home from school for a quick snack; searching for frogs in the ditches that lined Richmond's streets; pulling carrots out of our back yard garden for dinner, and picking pussy willow branches for my mom from the empty fields that are now high density town-house complexes.

When I ask both children and adults to remember a time when they felt really relaxed, the overwhelming majority will remember a time when they were in nature. When I ask people to visualize a place where they feel relaxed and peaceful, they all describe a beautiful and imaginative oasis filled with some combination of natural greenery, flowers, birds, or water. We have an instinctive tendency as humans to feel calm and grounded in nature. We look forward to vacations in the tropics, we camp in the

wilderness, we swim in the lakes and oceans, and we plant gardens and put out bird houses.

The reason we are so attracted to nature is

because we are composed of things like oxygen, carbon, nitrogen and hydrogen that connect us to all aspects of the natural world like water, fresh air, trees and soil, which are composed of the same elements. We are essentially one and the same with the natural world and we take energy from it by simply allowing our five senses to experience the earth, air and water.

Unfortunately, many children today are growing up without a connection to the environment. Technology like video games and TV entertains children, and they no longer are comfortable with silence, and they don't allow their boredom to lead to imagination. Parents have also been inundated with media hype around pedophiles, playground accidents, drownings, skin cancer from the sun, and diseases from mosquitoes, so children are scared into playing in very structured and artificial environments.

Richard Louv's book, *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder*, describes this epidemic of children being isolated from nature. He emphasizes the importance of nature in the

physical, cognitive, social and emotional development of a child.

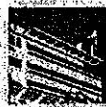
Louv is not the first professional to suggest that nature is healthy and necessary for well-being. Psychiatrists have said for more than a century that garden settings hold curative effects for people with mental illness. Today, several penitentiaries and psychiatric hospitals have horticultural and wilderness programs to help with the treatment of inmates and patients.

Since it's summer, get connected with nature. Take the kids berry-picking, have a picnic at the lake, plant a tree, pull weeds at the community garden, catch crickets on the dyke, hike through the forest, or search for sand dollars, crabs and starfish at the beach. More importantly, let the children be bored because eventually nature will grab their attention with a butterfly or a hummingbird and next thing you know they will be building forts and making terrariums for the snake they found.

Danielle Aldcorn is a registered clinical counsellor and co-director of *Safari* at *Integrative Health Centre in Steveston*. Reach her at 604-274-7224.

"I've heard it said that young people in North America can recognize 1,000 corporate logos, like Coca-Cola or Nike or something

they don't know the names of 10 neighbours around their house— different trees and birds and plants and things like that."



Council Update

Facts and fiction about the Garden City Lands

By Harold Steves

With 120,000 people planned for downtown Richmond, who needs another 48 acres of high-rises on the Garden City Lands?

We are short 600 acres of parkland. We need it most adjacent to the City Centre, where Council now requires 50% less parkland from developers.



Harold Steves Councilor

It is impossible to resurrect farmland and green space after you have paved it over. We cannot continue to demand that other countries, poorer countries, countries struggling to feed themselves, instead send us their food. The choices we make today are the legacy we leave our children. Please don't remove the Garden City Lands from the Agricultural Land Reserve. Please. R. A. Hogarth-Davis Richmond

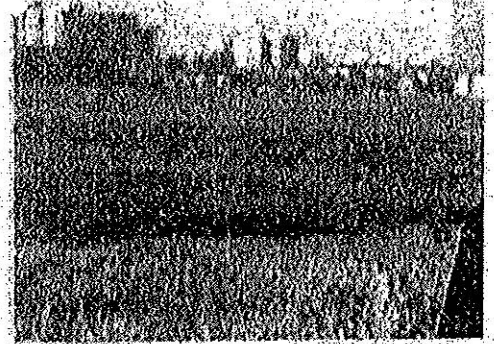
Kept in the A.L.R. future generations will get all of the land

Tourism Richmond might benefit but the residents of Richmond will benefit very little

Kept in the A.L.R. it isn't a wish but 100% possible

Th

Brodie: On



GARDEN CITY LANDS: A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Richmond City Council recently voted to favour future generations through an application to exclude the Garden City Lands from the Agricultural Land Reserve. If excluded, our City will get at least half of this otherwise unavailable land for a fraction of the open market price. The other half will go to the Canada Lands Corp. and the Musqueam Nation. Council has restricted the ultimate use of its half of the land to community wellness, healthy lifestyles, urban agriculture, environmental sustainability and potentially Tourism Richmond's trade and exhibition centre. The Musqueam's half of the land will be subject to City zoning and public consultation.

Richmond's endorsement is based in part on factors such as:

- The wish to ensure green uses on as much of the land as possible.
- Since Richmond has no legal claim to the land unlike the Musqueam, Richmond's only hope to obtain a portion is through this landmark agreement.
- If the agreement fails, other parties including the Musqueam may get all the land which could then be out of Richmond's zoning control.

The Issues...



DS - FUTURE

- Under the agreement, the City will control development on the entire parcel. Any development on the non-City half must conform to Richmond's zoning guidelines and OCP. These include dedications for parks and open spaces as well as roads and affordable housing, to mention only a few.
- The land never having been farmed; lifetime Richmond commercial farmers have confirmed the land's unsuitability for commercial agriculture.
- Community need is demonstrated by the open space that the land will provide and the civic growth it will support.

If the land is excluded from the ALR, the City will work towards its green vision for the City's portion of the property and exercise control over all development. Upon exclusion from the ALR, future generations throughout Richmond will enjoy yet another large parcel of open space in the heart of the City.

Malcolm Brodie
Malcolm Brodie, Mayor

brodie.com

I live in the village of Steveston, which obviously

can't really be a part of Richmond as the 40-acre Development Omb has just completed seems to be missing something - green space and parks.

So how are we expected to trust this council to ensure parks and green space will be made available in the Garden City development when they

haven't demonstrated any capacity to provide this in Steveston?

If you want to see what Garden City will look like just come to Steveston and walk amongst all the lovely townhouses and condos. If you find any "parks" please let me know.

Nell Floyd
Richmond

Five-term MP says Garden City lands deal offers nothing to Richmondites

"It will be a patchwork quilt spread throughout, basically providing parkland for a high-density development that's owned by Canada Lands and the Musqueam."

John Cummins

Is this what A.R. land was meant for? High-rise, roads, trade and exhibition centre, to mention only a few?

Commercial agriculture has never been mentioned by the proponents who want to save the Garden City lands. Urban agriculture has been the suggested use. Only Richmond City Council and certain commercial farmers keep harping on this theme.

Richmond residents will never have more open space in the city core than they have right now by keeping the Garden City lands in the A.R.

Richmond shouldn't feel threatened to accept bad Garden City lands deal



Guest Shot

John Cummins

The key to a long-term community plan for sustainable, environmentally friendly development in the heart of Richmond doesn't rest with a scheme that will pave over more than half of the 136 acres of the fertile Garden City agricultural lands.

Nor should the people of Richmond feel so threatened that they must honour a deal cooked up behind closed doors by a previous government—a bad deal that will simply see a native band reap the financial benefits of a

huge private condo tower development on valuable open space adjacent to Richmond's core.

Geoff Plant's recent letter to the editor addressing the future of the Garden City lands pleads for the current agreement between the city, the Musqueam and the federal government's land disposal agency to be honoured. Yet there is nothing in that agreement that will benefit the people of Richmond and plenty that runs counter to the notion of sustainable, environmentally friendly development.

In September 2006, the province's Agricultural Land Commission categorically rejected an application to exclude the lands from the Agricultural Land Reserve stating that the property is "prime agricultural land." Yet the Musqueam and the City of Richmond are forcing Canada Lands to reapply to the commission to redesignate the lands.

Contrary to Mr. Plant's assertion, the Musqueam band does not have a right to obtain the land in its entirety. The only reason the lands are the subject of the Musqueam's interest is that a previous federal Liberal government

There is nothing in that agreement that will benefit the people of Richmond and plenty that runs counter to the notion of sustainable, environmentally friendly development.

declared them surplus to federal needs. The Musqueam have only one intention—development of at least half of the lands with high density urban development.

Under the current agreement, which Mr. Plant terms "honourable," the people of Richmond do not get a "portion" of the lands as Mr. Plant implies. The agreement calls for the city to be given 50 per cent of the lands—not contiguous but scattered throughout the site that would be developed by the Musqueam and the federal government.

Many people in Richmond have told me they want to see this

land remain agricultural and all of the open space preserved. They do not want to be coerced into accepting an agreement that gives them little more than a few small pockets of park scattered amongst a sprawling high-rise development.

However some fear the prospect of the Musqueam getting all of the Garden City lands and developing it completely.

We must remove that threat of such an undesirable option.

Therefore, I am urging the federal government to declare the lands once again integral to federal needs so that valuable agricultural land and open space can be preserved in perpetuity.

I believe there is an opportunity for the federal government to lead a process involving the city government and the people of Richmond in developing a world-class model of green urban infrastructure in the heart of an already dense city centre, making land available for various forms of agriculture, recreation and public enjoyment.

John Cummins is MP for Delta - Richmond East.

Plan before planting green roofs idea

The Editor,

On the surface, the idea of requiring future large flat roof buildings to have a vegetated roof sounds great, but it will not be without potential problems if it is not well thought through.

I wish I had more confidence in city staff to develop specifications that will make this idea workable. These are some of the same people who set out to increase density in the city core without thinking through all the ramifications.

Now we have longtime business owners being forced out of business because of higher assessments and resulting increased taxes that are being passed on to those operating from leased premises.

In my opinion, we have been too

even before the Canada Line arrives in Richmond.

How do you square this initiative with the fact the city itself is paying over huge areas of city parks and playing fields and installing artificial turf?

Certainly, the loss of these grassed areas will do nothing to make Richmond a healthier community at a time when we have a shortage of real park land!

Didn't I read that Richmond plans to spend \$400,000 each year with the objective of becoming "carbon neutral"?

I guess at the end of the day we really aren't serious about some of these things, but it sounds good to say you want more open spaces, want to be carbon neutral, etc.

We as residents and taxpayers rely on you to be thorough in your deliberations and to protect us, as much as possible, from new ideas which have not been well thought out.

Bill Sorenson
Richmond

Letters policy

The editor reserves the right to edit letters for brevity, clarity, legality and good taste. Letters must include the author's telephone number for verification. We do not publish anonymous letters.

Send letters to The Editor,
Richmond News,
5731 No. 3 Road
Richmond, B.C. V6X 3C9
Fax: 604-270-2248 or

"The reform that is needed is not
anti-capitalist, anti-American, or
even deep environmentalist; it is
simply the transition from short-term
to long-term thinking."

- Ronald Wright
from *A Short History of Progress*

Thank you for taking the time to
read and consider this submission.

Sincerely,

Rorraine Bell
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Richmond, B. C.
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