

Hello, my name is Olga Tkatcheva, 8-7680 Gilbert rd Richmond BC

I want to offer my congratulations to the members of council that were reelected and newly elected. I was very pleased to see that some of the council members have provided an example for the community demonstrating that people's voices are heard and their opinion is counted and taken into consideration. The ability to change a position according to an ever changing world is a very valuable asset of the politician when it comes from the genuine desire to be a real representative of the people and ability to learn.

I want to inform the council about some new statistical data for our community that recently became available and from my point of view can changes your view about what is the community benefit now for Richmond comparing to a few years ago.

In a short version, the Urban Futures study was based on a statistical data from the Census 2001 but when Census 2006 data became available, the prediction of growth has been downgraded by more then 12,000 people by year 2011 and the difference will increase exponentially as the time goes.

I suggest that there is no community needs for the housing development on the Garden City Lands and other competing community needs for these lands have to be taken into the closer consideration, as their ability to fulfill the need for the park or the teaching field and community gardens that might be allowed under the ALC compatible uses within the walking distance from the high to medium density housing developments in the neighborhood.

I ask the council not to prolong the current PSA agreement and continue to negotiate under the MOU for the future with no housing development on the Garden City Lands,

The longer version with the tables is on the next pages,

With best regards,

Olga Tkatcheva.

**Review of the “Projecting Community Change in the Richmond City Centre—
A Community Lifecycle Approach,” Urban Futures study**

The Urban Futures study is based on expired data and it greatly overestimates the need for the new housing developments in Richmond.

The study was accepted by the Richmond Council on July 9, 2007, and edited last time AUGUST 14, 2007. They state that a General Methodological Approach - the Community Lifecycle Model - commences with data from the 2001 Census describing the community's existing housing stock and the demographic characteristics of its occupants for years between 1996 and 2001 and with the residential permit data from 2001 to 2006 from the City of Richmond Planning Department.

But even before the study was finished, beginning March 13, 2007, the raw 2006 Census data became available, and it was found that the tendency of the rather faster population growth did not prove to be of a long duration and that the projections that were done using the 2001 Census data did not prove to be correct by the 2006 Census.

There was overestimation that needed to be corrected. BC STATS, Service BC, BC Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services, revised its previous population estimates and projections with the note that “Population estimates for 2002 to 2006 have been revised (March 2008) to align with the 2006 Census age/sex population counts”.

Urban Futures study states that they did some editing on Aug. 14, 2007, but they apparently failed to make the corresponding adjustment and did not use the new data that was available by then. In result, since their study used incorrect data, it caused the overestimation in all targeted parameters and provided a wrong guidance for the council in its estimation of the need for the housing in Richmond.

They assume that “We are in a period of faster growth since ~2003 that is projected to continue for another 10 years” (page 46).

This assumption was proven to be wrong very soon – in year 2006 the GVRD growth was 1.51%, and then in 2007 it fell to 1.27 %. Analyzing the new trend, BC STATS changed their projection. Their new estimation is a yearly growth about 1.5-1.7 % for GVRD and around 1.4% for Richmond (up to year 2018).

It means that the Figure 9 on the page 18 of the Urban Futures study with the projected jump in growth between years 2006 and 2016 up to 3% is false.

I used the corrected data from the BC Stats to calculate the % of the yearly growth for GVRD and Richmond and you can see on the next page that there is nothing in a 2-3% range.

Based on data from <http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/pop/popstart.asp>, unadjusted data caused the following overestimation for GVRD and Richmond:

Table 3. Population projection for the GVRD in 2031

source	people
BC STATS	3,151,271
Urban Futures (figure 9)	3,227,482
overestimation	76,211

For municipality of Richmond, Urban Futures did not provide any clear estimation outside of the year 2011 (appendix 4 of the Urban Futures study) so I can only calculate their error for up to that year.

Table 4. Population projection for Richmond in 2011

source	people
BC STATS	197,504
Urban Futures (appendix 4)	210,000
overestimation	12,496

The overestimation is 6.3%.

(**Source:** Population estimates (1986-2007) and projections (2008-2036) by BC STATS, Service BC, BC Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services.)

Even by the year 2011, Urban Futures are over by 12,496 people in the projected growth. This number is as great as the projected population of the Garden City Lands, so at least by the simple correction these lands can be spared from undesirable development.

Recent changes in the immigration

The tendency of a lower rather than a faster growth is also supported by the data of the immigration to BC in the recent year. According to data from the Immigration Highlights Fourth Quarter 2007, the immigration to BC is on the decline for the third consecutive year:

Based on data of the Citizenship and Immigration Canada, published by the BCStats in the May 2008 Issue: 07-4i, mm074.pdf:

Table 5: Immigrant Landings by Class - British Columbia –

Year	people
2005	44771
2006	42083
2007	38893

The second trend in immigration is specific for Richmond with the increase in the % of the people of the older age arriving to join their earlier settled families when Chinese families sponsor their parents. There was only 6,2 % increase in the total population of Richmond in 5 years since Census 2001 with the modest medium yearly growth of only 1.24 %, but we had much more bigger increase in the specific age group of the people older then 45 years. There were 62890 people according to the Census 2001 and their number increased up to 74245 acc. to the Census 2006 with the 18 % growth in this age-specific growth. These are the people that do not need the high-rise apartments as traditionally Chinese families do not invite their parents to Canada to settle them alone, they live as a Multi-family households, and it is reflected in the 21 % of the growth in the Multi-family households in Richmond since the last Census. Plans to increase the number of the high-rises are not supported by this current trend in statistics, specific for

Richmond. There is also no rationale to attract the younger people from outside of Richmond to settle here because according to the same Urban Futures study when the population is expected to triple, the number of Job is expected to double so there is a shortage of jobs for the work force age and it contradicts to the Smart Growth BC principals.

Latest real estate market stagnation

The real estate market has already reacted to the apparent overestimation of the population growth and resulting overdevelopment and excessive starts of housing development. Currently, the supply exceeds the demand on the real estate market, with more then 20 high rise buildings in Richmond in stage of completion and about the same number in already approved plans on the land adjacent to the Olympic oval.

According to a latest Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver (REBGV) release on July 3, 2008 –

*Increased property listings and moderating home prices have eased the Greater Vancouver housing market into a buyer's phase. The Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver (REBGV) reports that **residential property sales in Greater Vancouver declined 42.9 per cent in June 2008 to 2,425 from the 4,244 sales recorded in June 2007.***

New listings for detached, attached and apartment properties increased 18.3 per cent to 6,546 in June 2008 compared to June 2007, when 5,533 new units were listed.

This is an expert opinion of Alex Carrick from the Reed construction data, June 25, 2008:

New-Housing Equilibrium and What This Means for Home Prices

*Over the past six years, 2002 through 2007, **total housing starts have averaged to "heavy"** and expect a period of adjustment ahead. Examples of negatives in the marketplace include: high gasoline prices and a riskier jobs outlook are making everyone more cautious about spending plans; **home builders are facing higher levels of unsold inventories; demographic shifts to the West have slowed down; and existing home sales have dropped so far this year.** On the latter point, the Canadian Real Estate Association is expecting unit-sales of existing homes to decline 11.5% in 2008 on a year-over-year basis, after increasing 7.6% in 2007.*

For the same time, Urban Futures study uses data from the 2001-2006 housing starts for the extrapolation and makes far from correct prediction for the higher-than-needed housing starts.

Conclusion

In my opinion, the "Projecting Community Change in the Richmond City Centre—A Community Lifecycle Approach," Urban Futures study is generally of a low prognostic significance. It makes a very long term prognosis based on very short term data in times of unstable tendencies that are not useful for extrapolation. Its resulting numbers are incorrect, as it uses expired data and needs to be adjusted according to the latest population estimates (1986-2007) and projections (2007-2036) by BC STATS, Service BC, BC Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services (August 2007, Population estimates have been revised March 2008). I suggest that there is no community needs for the housing development on the Garden City Lands and other competing community needs for these lands have to be taken into the closer consideration, as their ability to fulfill the need for the park or the teaching field and community gardens that might be allowed under the ALC compatible uses within the walking distance from the high to medium density housing developments in the neighborhood.

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