



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: General Purposes Committee

From: Rendall Nasset
Officer In Charge,
Richmond RCMP Detachment

Phyllis Carlyle
General Manager
Law & Community Safety

Date: November 1, 2011

File: 09-5000-01/2011-Vol 01
(11.43 V11)

Re: Police Presence in the Downtown Core

Staff Recommendation

That:

1. A City Centre Community Police Office be considered on a 3 year trial basis:
 - a. at 5671 No. 3 Road, as the temporary location in the downtown area;
 - b. a maximum of \$573,800 in total costs over 3 years (\$167,000 in capital costs and operating costs of \$406,800) be funded from the existing RCMP budget.
2. Staff report back annually regarding the success of the program.

Rendall Nasset
Officer in Charge, Richmond RCMP Detachment
(604) 207-4718
Att:2

Phyllis Carlyle
General Manager, Law & Community Safety
(604) 276-4104

FOR ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT USE ONLY					
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE		CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER		
Real Estate Services	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>		 _____		
Parks and Recreation	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>				
Project Development	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>				
Facilities Services	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>				
Budgets	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>				
Community Services	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>				
Development Applications	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>				
REVIEWED BY TAG	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	REVIEWED BY CAO	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Staff Report

Origin

In contemplation of the potential impact of the relocation of the RCMP Detachment to a new location Council requested that a report be prepared:

(4)(b) on a continued police presence in the City centre area including the possibility of having community police stations.

This report supports Council's term goals to:

1. Ensure Richmond remains a safe and desirable community to live, work and play in through an interdisciplinary approach to community safety.

Background

The RCMP Detachment and staff previously located at the Courthouse (7577 Elmbridge Way) have recently relocated to the new Community Safety building located at 11411 No. 5 Road, thus leaving the City Centre core with a seemingly reduced policing presence.

Operational Response in the City Centre

Transitional Period (Short-term)

Until the end of October 2011, the Detachment's mobile command post remained on the site of 6900 Minoru Blvd, to maintain an RCMP presence during the short-term transition period. The command post was staffed with Municipal Employees, Regular Members and Auxiliary Constables who:

1. Educated the public attending the office of the new address for the RCMP.
2. Completed any routine requests for police information or crime prevention programs.
3. Completed any tasks, formerly conducted by the RCMP front counter staff, which could be completed in the confines of the command post.
4. Dispatched a police officer for any request requiring police attendance or follow-up.

The command post was open between the hours of 8am to 6pm, Monday through Friday. After hours, a sign was posted with directions and contact numbers for the new Detachment.

Current Operational Deployment Strategy

The City Centre community is located in Zone 3 of the Richmond RCMP's deployment strategy (Attachment 1). Zone 3's boundaries are No 2 Road to the west, No 4 Road to the east, Granville Avenue to the south, and River Road to the north. The Zone is approximately 3.6 square miles¹ in size and is home to approximately 38,610 citizens.

¹ Information found in: http://www.richmond.ca/_shared/assets/Population_Hot_Facts6248.pdf

Currently, Zone 3 has 5 full-time General Duty uniformed members assigned to patrol the downtown core 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. In December 2010, Council was advised of a "Beat (Foot) Patrol Initiative" that operated during the months of December 2010 and January 2011. In March 2011 Council received the results of the initiative and the conclusion was made that the objectives of the initiative were not only met but were exceeded. As a result, Beat (Foot) Patrol has been implemented as a regular strategy to be utilized in the City centre on a permanent basis.

Additionally, each of the support sections such as Plain Clothes, Traffic, and Crime Prevention play an active roll in keeping the citizens of Richmond safe and can also be relied upon for covert police presence.

Summation

As the response-to-call for service requirement in the City Centre remains the same, as before the move, the addition of a City Centre Community Police office will not impact the Zone's operations. In order to ensure appropriate future operational response to the City Centre, crime statistics have been tracked and will continue to be monitored. This will enable the Detachment's Leadership team to modify the deployment strategy if necessary.

City Centre Community Police Office

A City Centre Community Police office would be an elevated level of service above what has historically been available in the downtown core. A new office would equate to an additional 33% increase in the Community Policing Programs delivered across the City.

At the July 12, 2011 Community Safety Committee meeting, Committee received a report from Superintendent Nessel recommending that the existing Community Police Offices at South Arm and Steveston remain open and accessible to the public in their current form. Residents in the South Arm and Steveston areas have endorsed the concept of community policing and the importance of community partnerships to the sustainability of key preventative programs. South Arm and Steveston's Community Police Offices now serve as a significant base for volunteers engaged in community outreach programs. It is the proximity of the volunteers' residences to the Community Police Office that supports their engagement in the programs. Most are able to walk, or conveniently take public transit, to the respective offices.

The existence of these two offices in their respective central community locations contributes to the sustainability of volunteer based crime prevention programs. In their day-to-day focused tasks, RCMP members consistently use the South Arm and Steveston locations to complete paperwork and make inquiries related to ongoing investigations and follow-ups. This leads to an increased police visibility and therefore, an increased perception of police presence; a greater awareness of crime prevention; a reduction in the fear of crime; and is an effective crime reduction strategy.

Management of the community programs is the responsibility of a full-time municipal employee (Community Police Office Co-ordinator) in each office. These co-ordinators recruit, train, motivate and organize a number of volunteers who assist in the administration, operation of the various programs and office support.

Currently the Community Police Offices offer the following programs:

South Arm

Lock-Out Auto Crime
Speed Watch
Distracted Drivers
Bike Patrol
Rent Safe
Stolen Auto Recovery

Steveston

Lock-Out Auto Crime
Speed Watch
Distracted Drivers
Mature Drivers
Crime Free Multi-Housing

In addition to the above-noted programs, a local Community Police Office fosters strong allegiance with both volunteers and local businesses that are making a difference in the community. Furthering partnerships with local community business groups, like the Richmond Chamber of Commerce, would be a priority of a City Centre Community Police Office.

In addition, Council has previously allocated \$25,000 annually for a community police office in the Hamilton area. The Community Liaison police officer currently occupies a space at the Community Centre and some of these funds will be used for modifications to this space. A future community police office will require discussions with the development industry.

A survey of neighbouring communities' Community Police Office operations illustrates a number of different models:

Municipality	Number of Community Police Offices	Programs Offered
Delta	4	Lock-Out Auto Crime Speed Watch Bike Patrols Crime Watch Senior's Abuse
New Westminster	0	Currently No Community Police Offices
Surrey	5	Lock-Out Auto Crime Speed Watch Bike Patrols
Vancouver	8	Lock-Out Auto Crime Speed Watch Bike Patrols

In each of the 3 municipalities that have Community Police Offices, there is a regular member stationed at the office, which is a substantial cost to the municipality. The Officer in Charge does not support the permanent placement of a regular member at a City Centre Community Police Office at this time, due to resource allocation priorities. The Community Police Offices in the neighbouring communities were located either in a stand-alone location or in a strip-mall style location with an outside entrance; none were located in an indoor mall.

Options

As directed by Council a review was undertaken regarding a continued police presence in the City Centre area, including the possibility of a community police station. The Detachment's Leadership Team proposes the following two options:

1. All City Centre walk-in clients report to the new location at No 5 Road - The Officer in Charge has advised that the existing level of operational police presence in the downtown core can be maintained with the resources currently allocated.
2. A 3 year trial City Centre Community Police Office, similar to both South Arm and Steveston, that includes the following additional requirements:
 - (a) a new temporary full-time City Employee position;
 - (b) offices for the Youth Intervention and Restorative Justice Program Coordinators; and
 - (c) storage space for both the Auxiliary Constables' and the Bike Squad's equipment.

Analysis of Options

Recognizing that safety is a primary concern to Richmond citizens, the City has identified the delivery of Public Safety Services as a top priority. The above options have been evaluated based on the Detachment's vision of providing "*Safe Homes and Safe Communities*" to the citizens of Richmond.

Option 1: All City Centre walk-in clients report to the new location at 11411 No. 5 Road (Not Recommended)

This option provides a centralized location for both police-based and community based programs for all areas of the City, except for Steveston and South Arm. All Detachment personnel would be deployed from the main Detachment located on No. 5 Road. This location provides adequate parking for the public and allows easy access for citizens.

Pros: The service level to the community remains the same as it was whilst the Detachment was located at the Minoru location.

Cons: The move of the RCMP Detachment to the No. 5 Road location may result in a perceived reduction of police presence by the citizens of the City Centre; citizens will have to travel further to access RCMP resources.

Option 2: 3 year trial City Centre Community Police Office staffed with a temporary full-time City employee (Recommended)

This facility would represent an enhanced level of service to the City Centre core. The availability of a City Centre Community Police Office would provide an office space for General Duty, Traffic and Crime Prevention Unit members to complete paperwork; engage with the public and plan/coordinate crime prevention activities.

A benefit of having a City Centre location would be the ability to efficiently deploy the Bike Squad and the numerous auxiliary constables and volunteer resources from this location as the vast majority of their duties occur in the downtown core. Furthermore, these units require a significantly large storage area for equipment such as mountain bikes and Speed Watch items.

The proposed City Centre Community Police Office would require a centrally located office space that is visible and accessible to all clients. Adequate parking for staff, police vehicles and the public would have to be provided which would be no more than 20 to 30 feet from the front entrance for easy access. The office space should be comparable to the South Arm Community Police Office with the addition of two enclosed office spaces to accommodate private interviews with the general public or prospective volunteers. This would include a counter reception space, work cubicles for volunteers, a small project/break room, storage space for office supplies and equipment, and washroom facilities.

Pros: Management of the community programs will be the responsibility of a temporary full-time municipal employee Community Police Office Co-ordinator. This new temporary City employee would be responsible to provide services to the community as follows:

- Personal counter service to the public, receives telephone inquiries, generates police files, conducts background searches and forwards file information to appropriate parties.
- Recruits, trains and supervises volunteers based in the City Centre Community Police Office.
- Co-ordinates the delivery of community programs by volunteers, such as Anti-graffiti, Lock it or Lose it, Speed Watch and Business Watch.
- Develops and maintains working relationships with community partners such as the community centre and the Chamber of Commerce.
- Maintains the Community Police Office space for members and volunteers, ensuring supplies, equipment and work areas are available and in good working order.

Two additional community programs, which are staffed by two full-time Municipal Employees, are better suited to a City Centre Community Police Office: Youth Intervention and Restorative Justice. This location is preferable due to the proximity to public transit, location of alternative and public high schools and the School Board's Office.

Cons: Additional cost to provide a temporary full-time City employee. The facility may require modifications to the building, including enhanced security features. Annual operating and rental costs will also be required.

Possible Locations for a Community Police Office (Attachment 2)

Location 1: 5671 No. 3 Road, City-Owned Premise (Recommended)

The City-owned premise at 5671 No. 3 Road is the preferred location to accommodate a City Centre Community Police Office. A number of key elements were examined in determining the requirements of a Community Police Office, such as: police presence, accessibility by the public, proximity to public transit, ease of access and building security.

The City Centre Community Police Office would provide office space for General Duty, Traffic Section, and Crime Prevention Unit members. The City Centre would benefit from the increased police presence in the downtown core and provide opportunities for members to engage with the public and to plan/coordinate crime prevention activities. Operational benefits of having a Community Police Office located in the downtown minimizes the time required for deployment of the Bike Squad and the auxiliary constables, as the majority of their calls for service occur in the Downtown area.

The premises at 5671 No. 3 Road of approximately 4,473 square feet, represents an opportunity for a City Centre Community Police Office, as follows:

- a central City Centre location
- across the street from the Lansdowne Canada Line Station
- immediately available
- more than 12 parking stalls located outside the premises
- two entry areas off the parking lot for a variety of purposes including confidential access for clientele, bike access, etc.
- City-owned property
- easy access to all areas of the City Centre including the Oval via Lansdowne Road (and laneways)

A section of the building is currently tenanted by the Richmond Centre for The Disability (RCD). The RCD has been advised of the potential for a Community Police office to be located adjacent to its premises. On September 29, 2011 staff met with both the principals and the Executive Director of the RCD to discuss the opportunity and long-term vision of the RCMP's Community Police Office and City's use of the building. The RCD had no objections to the Community Police Office and saw many potential opportunities could be gained from the co-location of the two community services.

Location 2: 6900 Minoru Boulevard, Old Public Safety Building (not recommended)

Currently there is a study being undertaken for a future civic precinct. Any costs attributed to a Community Police Office would have to be considered as part of the overall vision for this project. The initial estimate is \$50,000 for the Community Police Office function alone, without the presence of the other community-based functions such as Restorative Justice, Youth Intervention or the Bike Squad storage. This option is not immediately available.

Location 3: 140-8279 Saba Road and Firbridge/Minoru Boulevard, City Community Centres (not recommended)

The City Centre community centres, Firbridge and Lang, are not immediately available. The programming of these two spaces does not currently envision a policing presence, as there is a continued need for neighbourhood level recreational services.

Location 4: 7577 Elmbridge Way, Old RCMP Annex (not recommended)

Although RCMP staff had previously been occupying some of the space above the courthouse, this option is not preferred for the following reasons:

- Site is not easily accessible by Transit.
- Office space is on the second floor with no street level entrance.
- No ability to store bicycles.
- Limited parking.
- "E" Division Security approval has not been sought.
- Space is larger than what is required, and a substantial retrofit is anticipated although the costs have not been estimated.

Location 5: Development Industry to Contribute Space (not recommended)

It is the desire of the Detachment's Leadership Team to operate as a functional Community Police Office on a trial basis. This would allow a full cost/benefit analysis before requesting Council's permission to locate in the City Centre on a permanent basis. The timing of development is paramount to this philosophy, however there are currently no opportunities in the immediate future. After the trial is conducted, then the preservation of the function in the City Centre could be the subject of discussion with the developers in the area.

Location 6: Shopping Centre Storefront (not recommended)

The neighbouring municipalities have not placed their Community Police Office's in indoor shopping centres but have located them in strip malls. Challenges identified by the other municipalities with shopping centres were security issues, and unrealistic expectations by mall management as to uniformed police presence.

Recommended Option

Given the above analysis, Option 2 – a 3 year trial of a City Centre Community Police Office staffed with a temporary full-time City employee position is recommended as this option would enhance a downtown police presence and provide Community Policing services to a segment of the City that does not currently have them.

Financial Impact – Option 2 at 5671 No. 3 Road**Operating Budget for 3 years only**

Temporary FT City Employee Salary & Benefits	\$ 78,000 ²
Community Policing Program Operating Costs	\$ 2,600 ³
Operating Budget Impact (OBI)	\$ 28,000 ⁴
Janitorial Services	\$ 27,000 ⁵
Total Annual Costs	\$135,600

Capital Budget

Tenant Improvements (Paint, front counter, carpet, security)	\$ 72,000 ⁶
Information Technology	\$ 95,000 ⁷
Total One Time Costs	\$167,000

The costs of the one time capital costs of \$167,000; annual operating costs of \$135,600 for 3 years (\$406,800) for a total of \$573,800 would be funded within the RCMP budget. As this is a City-owned building the annual lost rental opportunity would be in the order of \$62,622 and annual lost tax revenue of \$6,398. This would result in an opportunity cost of \$207,060 over the 3 years of the trial project.

² ME Costs are based on 2011 Richmond Detachment Community Policing Co-ordinator City Employee

³ CP Program Operating Costs are based on 2011 Programming Costs for South Arm and Steveston Community Police Office's

⁴ Operating (OBI) Costs are based on information from CoR Real Estate Services \$3.50/sf for general building costs plus \$2.75/sf for utility costs (gas, electricity, garbage, etc.)

⁵ Janitorial Services are based on information from CoR Building Maintenance, \$6.00/sf

⁶ Tenant Improvement Costs are based on information from CoR Project Development

⁷ IT Costs are based on estimates from CoR and RCMP IT

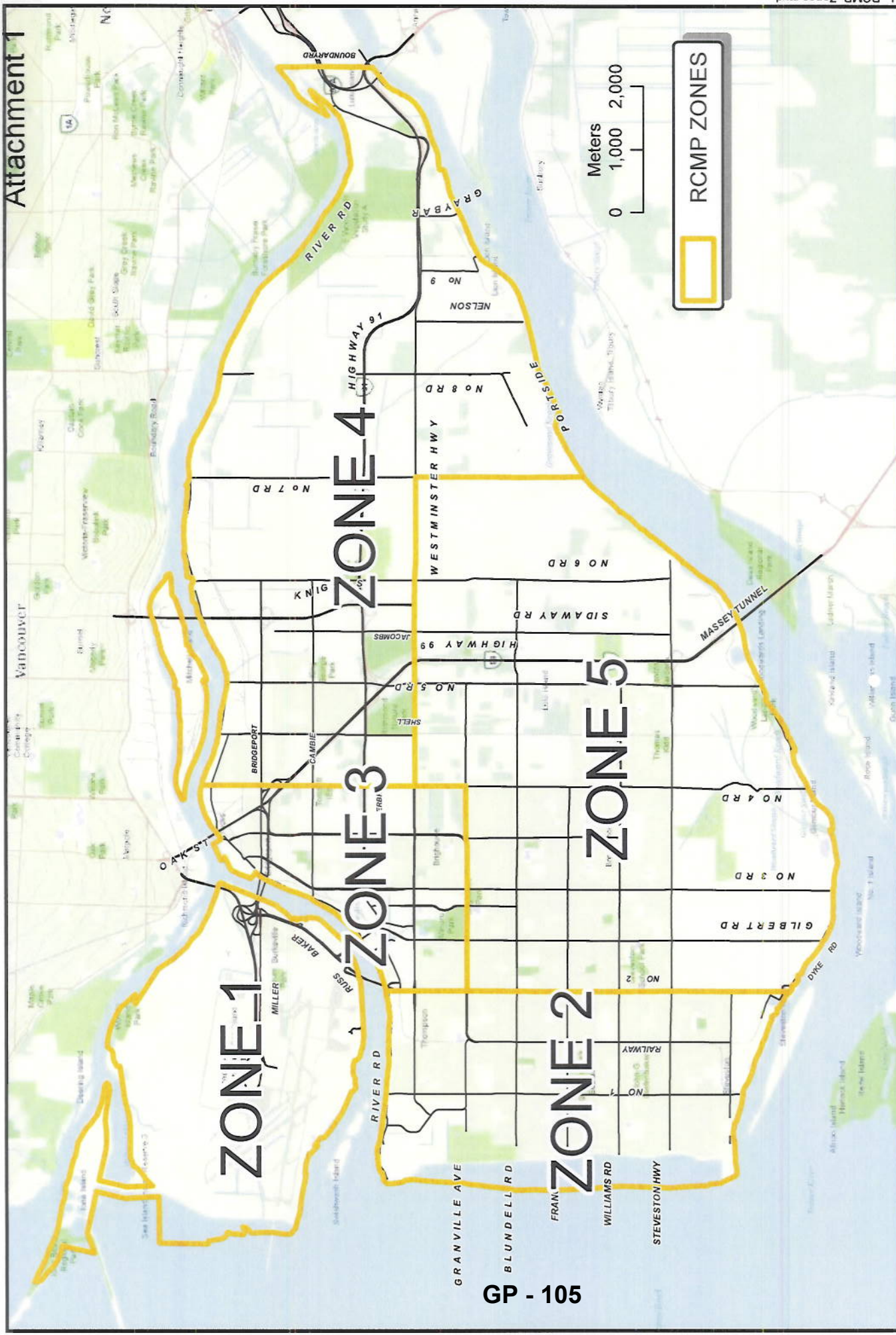
Conclusion

Although a Community Police Office is not required for an operational response to the City Centre, it would provide the citizens of Richmond with a higher level of service than currently received. Option 2 provides a model that will be fully functional within two months and the City has the ability to recruit and maintain a volunteer base to support and sustain crime prevention programs in the City Centre of Richmond. A Community Police Office would assist in maintaining a visible police presence during and after hours in the City Centre. This increased level of service is balanced against the overall costs to the City of \$780,860 for the 3-year trial.

The continuation of this program after 3 years will be subject to Council review and approval.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Lainie Goddard', is written over the printed name.

Lainie Goddard
Manager, RCMP Administration
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Oct 6 2011

RCMP Zones

For convenient visualization only.
May not be accurate or complete.
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Scale approximate, directions, locations approximate.
Top of page is oriented toward north.

By: David McGee, GIS Analyst, L&CS Department



