



To: General Purposes Committee

Date: May 27, 2009

From: Joe Erceg, MCIP, General Manager,
 Planning and Development

File:

Re: Update: Port Metro Vancouver - Gilmore Lands

Staff Recommendation

1. That the City write Port Metro Vancouver (PMV) a letter emphasizing that:
 - A.) The Gilmore lands should continue to be farmed as they are prime farmland;
 - B.) Non-agricultural use of the Gilmore lands is not supported as such would be inconsistent with the ALR requirements as the lands are in the ALR, designated Agriculture in the Richmond Official Community Plan, zoned Agriculture (AG1) in the City's Zoning Bylaw, and shown and intended for long term agricultural use in the Richmond Agricultural Viability Strategy;
 - C.) PMV should use non-agricultural land to meets its port needs.
2. That PMV be requested to clarify its land use strategy for all of its property located in the City of Richmond and whether its it considering further purchases.
3. That copies of the letter be sent to all Metro Vancouver region Members of Parliament, Members of the Legislative Assembly, the Agricultural Land Commission, and Metro Vancouver Board and municipalities.

Joe Erceg
 Joe Erceg, MCIP
 General Manager, Planning and Development

JE:tc
 Att. 1

FOR ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT USE ONLY			
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER	
Law.....	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Joe Erceg</i>	
REVIEWED BY TAG	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	REVIEWED BY CAO <i>Atiny</i>	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Staff Report

Origin

On April 27, 2009 Council made the following referral.

- (1) *That staff draft an analysis and a reply to the correspondence dated April 9, 2009, received from the Vancouver Port Authority; and*
- (2) *That staff advise as to the effect of the potential development of the property on the irrigation improvements in the area.*

The referral was made in response to the April 9, 2009 letter from Port Metro Vancouver (PMV) (**Attachment 1**) which stated that: (1) PMV has bought the 200 acre Gilmore lands north of its existing Fraser Richmond lands, (2) the PMVs' Richmond Properties site has been transformed into an important logistics hub for cargo distribution and (3) by purchasing the Gilmore lands the Port Authority is protecting its (Richmond Properties) long term use. It is not clear what this last part means.

The purpose of this report is to address the first referral by commenting on the City's and ALC's jurisdiction over the Gilmore lands, and the land use, servicing and environmental implications of PMV's purchase. Reply comments are offered to PMV's letter.

The second part of the referral was addressed in a RTC which went to the May 19, 2009 General Purposes Committee meeting.

Background

City Policies

The Gilmore lands are in the ALR. The OCP designation is Agriculture and the current zoning is Agriculture 1. The Richmond Agricultural Viability Strategy shows and intends that the long term use of the Gilmore lands is to be for agriculture.

Jurisdiction

The Law Department will provide a confidential memorandum on this matter prior to the General Purposes Committee meeting on June 1, 2009.

Based on advice from Law regarding the applicability of the City's bylaws and Provincial laws (e.g., Agricultural Land Commission – ALC), the following comments are made. The Port advises that it intends to use the Gilmore lands for farming purpose for the foreseeable future and has leased the lands back to the Gilmore family for the next five years (e.g., to 2014). After this time, the PMV land intentions are not clear:

- While the lands are used for farming, (e.g., from 2009 to 2014), it appears that the City's bylaws and policies apply, as well as the ALC's regulations,
- If the Gilmore lands become used for port purposes, it appears that the City's bylaws and policies, and the ALC's regulations will not apply.

Analysis

In its April 9, 2009 letter, PMV states that they are unsure if the use of the Gilmore lands will change, but that if they do make plans to do so, PMV will work closely with the City and Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) on land use and development plans. As well, the letter states that the PMV is currently examining all (other) opportunities to purchase available land to protect the long term sustainability of the Port and Canada's Asia Pacific Gateway and Trade Corridor. It may be that PMV will make more similar purchases.

Based on the PMV April 9, 2009 PMV letter, PMV needs to clarify its long term land use intentions regarding the Gilmore lands.

Staff note that, the PMV's decision may cause others to speculate regarding the use and cost of ALR land, and thus generate an increase ALR land prices making it more difficult for people to buy or lease land and farm it. Also, City staff consider that there are alternatives available for the PMV to meet its needs and these need to be explored.

The PMV has advised that it is talking with the ALC to see if they wish to enter into an MOU which may include a farm plan for the Gilmore lands. No decision has been made to enter into this MOU.

The Port still needs to consult and negotiate with and meet City requirements if it uses any City services or City lands.

Summary

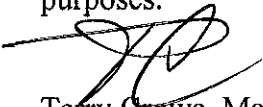
PMV's purchase of the Gilmore lands raises uncertainty regarding their long term use, and the servicing and environmental management implications, some of which may make ALR land more difficult to farm. Staff recommend that City write Port Metro Vancouver (PMV) a letter emphasizing that:

- A.) The Gilmore lands should continue to be farmed as they are prime farmland;
- B.) Non-agricultural use of the Gilmore lands is not supported as such would be inconsistent with the ALR requirements as the lands are in the ALR, designated Agriculture in the Richmond Official Community Plan, zoned Agriculture (AG1) in the City's Zoning Bylaw, and shown and intended for long term agricultural use in the Richmond Agricultural Viability Strategy;
- C.) PMV should use non agricultural land to meets its port needs.

Financial Impact – None

Conclusion

The PMV's purchase of the Gilmore lands has raised uncertainty regarding the future use of the lands. Staff recommend that Council advise PMV to use the Gilmore lands for agricultural purposes.


Terry Crowe, Manager, Policy Planning (4139)
TTC:cas



PORT METRO
vancouver

TO: MAYOR & EACH
COUNCILLOR
FROM: CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

ATTACHMENT 1



pc: GM - Business +
Fin Services
Manager, Real Estate Services

April 9, 2009

By Courier

City of Richmond
6911 No. 3 Road
Richmond, BC V6Y 2C1

ATTACHMENT 1

PHOTOCOPIED

APR 9 2009

& DISTRIBUTED

Attention: Mayor and Council

Dear Mayor Brodie and members of Council:

Re: Gilmore Farm Purchase

We write to advise you that the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority (doing business as Port Metro Vancouver) has purchased the Gilmore Property located at No. 8 Road and Westminster Highway in Richmond. This 200 acre property is located adjacent to the Port Authority's Richmond Properties site that has been transformed into an important logistics hub for cargo distribution over the past several years. The Gilmore Property has been for sale for some time and by purchasing it, the Port Authority is protecting its long term use.

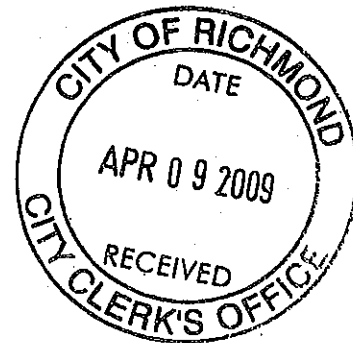
The property will remain under agricultural use for the foreseeable future; in fact it has been leased back to the Gilmore family to continue its use as a farm for the next five years. Port Metro Vancouver remains unsure at this time if the use of the property will change, however, if we do make plans to change the use of the property, we will work closely with the City of Richmond and the Agricultural Land Commission on land use and development plans.

Port Metro Vancouver is currently examining all opportunities to purchase available land that may have strategic benefits to protect the long-term sustainability of the Port and Canada's Asia Pacific Gateway and Trade Corridor.

If you wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact this office.

Yours truly,
PORT METRO VANCOUVER

Mark Erdman
Senior Manager, Provincial & Municipal Affairs



cc: John Cummins, MP Delta-Richmond East
Hon. Linda Reid, MLA Richmond East
Tom Corsie, VP Infrastructure Development