

Jim Wright, President, Garden City Conservation Society, 8300 Osgoode Drive

Mayor Brodie and Councillors,

I'm speaking for the Garden City Conservation Society about Item 17—the Port Metro Vancouver land use plan.

We commend the City of Richmond response to Port Metro's land use plan, with its implicit long-term intent to turn large areas of our agricultural land into industrial land. In that way, Port Metro is already turning prime parts of *British Columbia's agricultural* land bank into *its own industrial* land bank.

Garden City Conservation wants to enable informed public support for your *current* action for agricultural and environmental conservation, along with the *follow-up* action that is bound to be needed.

Along with you, we want to alert the public to implications of the Port Metro plan for the Fraser Estuary and Richmond agriculture. To illustrate the challenge, I'll focus on agriculture and mention *five* of the threats to it:

1. First, the Port Metro Land Use Plan threatens our *food security*, especially since shipped-in food is *not at all* secure.
2. Second, it threatens *Richmond farming*, one of our core industries.
3. Third, it threatens our *identity* as the *Garden City* with a cherished agricultural heritage.
4. Fourth, it undermines the Agricultural Land Commission role.
5. Fifth, it undermines the role of our *local government*, your role.

That's a lot of reasons for some of the City of Richmond's proposed action but also a lot for anyone to quickly grasp.

Your proposed action cuts through to the chronic disorder that fosters the Port Metro threats to our agriculture: *Port Metro acts like a law unto itself*. In contrast, the City of Richmond action would make Port Metro more accountable—*less a law unto itself*. To have a chance, the city and its allies like Garden City Conservation must build powerful public support. I've earlier shown how the threats are overwhelming and not so easy to quickly grasp, but we *do see* ways to succeed.

For a start, the City of Richmond itself will need to clearly *exceed* the standards it expects of Port Metro. For context, we remind you that we've often had to ask council to respect ALR values. For a year and a half, for instance, we had to keep asking council to require *Metro Vancouver's* land use map to show *all* of our ALR land with *ALR* designations, not a *contra-ALR* one. These days, fortunately, the trend gives hope.

A great step would be to make *respect* for the ALR more prominent in our civic culture by celebrating the ALR in its birthplace. Maybe the place for that is the kitchen table in Kathy and Harold Steves' farmhouse with their belted Galloways nearby for ambience. Or it could be on the Garden City Lands. In any case, our museum has shown that we know how to celebrate our agriculture well.



The point is to treat the ALR as *a godsend that we love*—never as obstacles the city is trying to get around. When Richmond truly *celebrates* the ALR, the need will be *felt*. That will bring a surge of community desire to make Port Metro accountable, with hands off our farms. For now, we wish you good progress.