

Premier promises

By DIANE STRANDBERG
Richmond will have a new \$500 million rapid transit system in place by 1995, Premier Bill Vander Zalm promised Monday.

But what kind of system it will be and where it will go is still up for grabs.

B.C. Transit will begin detailed planning immediately on a rapid transit system to Richmond, with a possible spur to the International Airport here. The announcement was made Monday at the B.C. Institution of Technology training facility on Sea Island. It was part of a \$1 billion transit package that will see Skytrain and Seabus routes extended and a fleet of new ar-

ticulated buses purchased for use throughout the Greater Vancouver region.

Transit choices include a rail system, using existing rail lines from Vancouver to Richmond, along the Arbutus corridor, an elevated system similar to Skytrain, and express buses on special bus lanes. Mayor Gil Blair said he wouldn't speculate what type of system the planning committee will recommend. But he praised the Premier's transit proposal, particularly his commitment to 100 per cent funding for the project, which relieves local taxpayers of the burden of fully paying for the system.

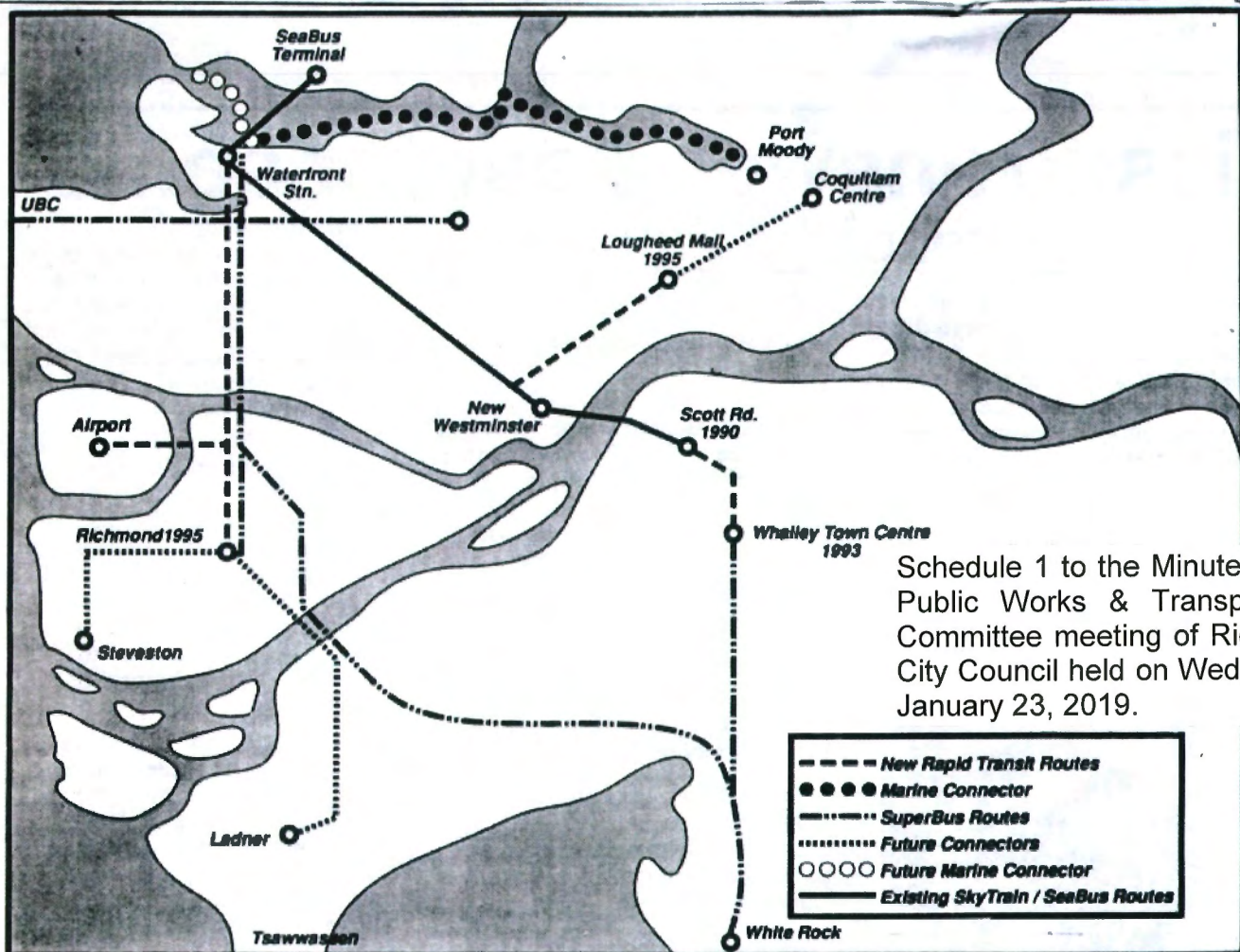
"It's a very significant an-

nouncement. The capital cost of Skytrain was an impossible burden for the (Vancouver Regional) Transit Commission to fund," Blair said.

While Blair wouldn't comment what kind of rapid transit system Richmond needs, his Vancouver counterpart, Mayor Gordon Campbell, has admitted a preference for buses.

In an interview Tuesday, Mayor Campbell said he wouldn't prejudge the transit commission's study of alternative systems. But he expressed his concern that an elevated Skytrain system would create "visual pollution" and a rail system would cause traffic problems and noise.

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Schedule 1 to the Minutes of the Public Works & Transportation Committee meeting of Richmond City Council held on Wednesday, January 23, 2019.

Transit improvements announced

Columbian 23 Dec 72 p 3

Affairs Minister taking a look at Fraser Valley transit plan

Municipal Affairs Minister Jim Lorimer has promised to examine a new public transportation proposal calling for a bus-on-railway-tracks-network.

The scheme, proposed by Richmond Ald. Harold Steeves and Dr. Ray Rodgers of White Rock, was presented to the minister at a meeting Thursday.

Ald. Steeves said Mr. Lorimer will add the suggestion to his study on public transportation now

being made by his department.

According to Ald. Steeves, the bus-on-tracks-transit-network would follow existing rail lines, making a loop through New Westminster, Surrey, Richmond and back to Vancouver.

The proposal calls for a light, rapid-transit system using silent operating equipment.

Mr. Steeves suggested the route could follow a path through the Arbutus corridor,

cross Richmond, reach past Delta as far as White Rock with a return through Surrey and New Westminster to Burnaby-Kingsway and downtown.

In addition, Dr. Rodgers has proposed a spur line that would extend the service through Crescent Beach to White Rock. The line would end just short of the beaches near Duprez St.

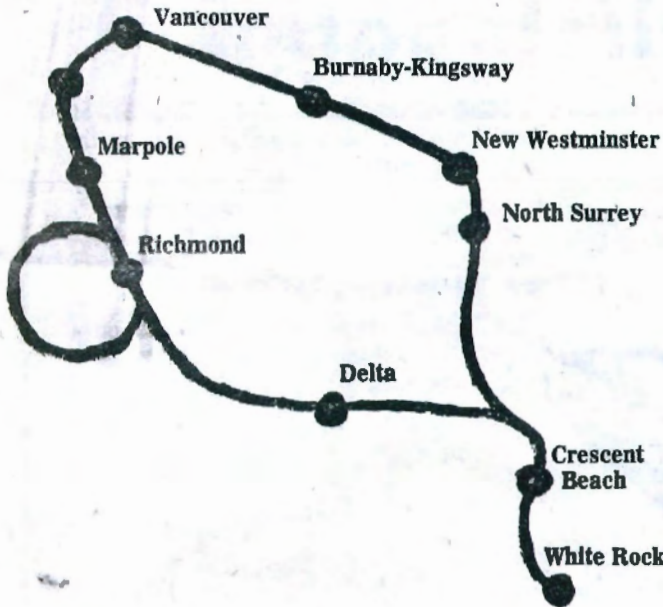
Mr. Steeves also suggested that if the CPR and CN rail lines could be connected in Richmond a secondary loop could be constructed to service the entire municipality.

"In effect you could serve every home in Richmond within a half mile of the line," he said.

Mr. Steeves said the scheme requires the co-operation of the CPR, CN, Burlington Northern and B.C. Hydro lines. He said one stumbling block could be the crossing of the Fraser River near the Deas Tunnel.

But he noted, previous rapid transit proposals have been of a radial type, with downtown Vancouver at the centre of the spokes, and with a further assumption of heavy equipment in most cases. The Steeves-Rodgers emphasis is for a loop with light equipment.

Mr. Rodgers said a White Rock spur using existing Burlington Northern Railway lines would provide commuter service for the South Surrey region and make it possible for weekend beach trippers to come from all parts of the region.



White Rock-Vancouver rail loop to get study