

City of Surrey

Environmental Advisory Committee

Minutes

Executive Boardroom

City Hall

14245 - 56 Avenue

Surrey, B.C.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 2004

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Present:

Dr. R.M. Strang - Chair
 Dr. T. Godwin
 B. Stillwell
 H. Locke
 Dr. F. Perello
 Councillor Bose
 S. VanKeulen, AAC Representative

Absent:

J. Grewal
 D. Maher
 J. Sarwal
 R. Wetzel

Staff Present:

C. Baron, Drainage & Environment Manager
 C. Bonneville, Legislative Services

B. DELEGATIONS

1. Greater Vancouver Gateway Council Bob Wilds, Chair

Mr. Bob Wilds, Managing Director of the Greater Vancouver Gateway Council was in attendance and made the following comments during his power point presentation:

- Greater Vancouver is Canada's international trade and tourism gateway to the Asia Pacific economies. Presently over 100 million tonnes of cargo, 15 million air passengers and 1 million cruise ship passengers move through the Gateway each year.
- The Gateway transportation industry pays some \$3 billion in taxes every year to three levels of government and its total economic output is \$10 billion.
- The Greater Vancouver Gateway Council was formed in 1994 to pursue a vision for Greater Vancouver as a world transportation gateway, able to capitalize on opportunities from expanding world trade and tourism. This region's deep water harbours and waterways world class sea ports, airport and rail system, skilled workforce and travel time to Asian destinations are tremendous advantages in a globalizing world economy.
- Urban congestions and competition from US West Coast gateways threaten to undermine our competitive position. The Gateway Council is proposing a Major Commercial Transportation System (MCTS) as a cornerstone of the Region's economic future. Western Diversification Canada, the Province of British Columbia, and Gateway Council have recently completed a landmark study on the costs and benefits of the MCTS.
- Differentials in local taxes – between 10 and 12 times higher in this Region than in competing US jurisdictions – and investment charges already place us at a 15% long term cost disadvantage. Massive US Federal spending on freight transportation infrastructure in competing US gateways will greatly improve their efficiencies and their competitive positions. This situation is the primary driver behind the MCTS project.
- Road congestion is having an increasingly negative impact on freight transportation and the efficiency of connections for international passengers between modes. Recent estimates place the cost of congestion at \$1 billion per year to the Region's economy. Population growth and increasing numbers of vehicles on the road will make the situation worse – if nothing is done.
- MCTS is proposed as a designated network of roads, rail and water routes between Gateway facilities, industrial areas and the major east west and north south trade corridors. MCTS seeks to make the best use of existing infrastructure and facilities and to identify major new investments in road, rail and water routes necessary to address congestion in the Region. It would:
 - Be a continuous network for efficient commercial vehicle operations in the region.
 - Effectively utilize road, rail and water routes to alleviate congestion and minimize the impact on local communities.
 - Accommodate future growth in goods, services and international passenger movements.
 - Enable 24 hour unrestricted commercial vehicle traffic use.
 - Provide rail movements operating free of road intersection constraints.

- Enhance connectivity to north-south and east-west trade corridors.
 - Maximize benefit/cost for major new transportation investments.
- Some 30 million tonnes of domestic cargo move through the Fraser ports and Port of Vancouver. Current barge volumes are equivalent to 5,000 – 10,000 trucks per day on the road system. New or expanded water routes offer potential alternatives to heavy truck traffic for local movements and possibly even for commuters. Gateway Council has identified eleven potential locations for new short sea shipping services.
- Three class one rail carriers link the Gateway to North American destinations and together with BC Rail and Southern Railway of BC they are the backbone of the freight rail system feeding our seaports. Some 60 million tonnes of cargo move on the freight rail system.
- Gateway Council is confident that separation of road and rail traffic at grade crossing, increased inter-modal operations, and innovative approaches to rail, truck and water transportation will allow Gateway growth while minimizing impacts on local communities and the environment. The MCTS rail committee identified \$1.18 to \$1.47 billion in rail system improvement needed to accommodate future container volume growth and passenger rail service demands without compromising the railways' ability and capacity to serve the seaports.
- An extensive consultation process on the MCTS road system was commenced in 1998, it focused primarily on truck routes linking Gateway facilities, industrial areas and the trade corridors. 38 road segments were identified for the MCTS. All lie on the existing arterial network under municipal jurisdiction (namely the GVTA Major Road Network) or Provincial road system. 11 major bottlenecks were identified and prioritized for this system. Detailed studies then identified 24 minor road improvement projects necessary to improve traffic circulation on the MCTS. These smaller projects include improved intersections, improved signal coordination and designated lanes for Priority Vehicles. The MCTS minor projects are included in the GVTA strategic plan.
- Eleven major investments totalling between \$4.8 and \$5.3 billion are necessary. These include important new GVTA projects and Provincial projects in addition to major improvements to highway 1 and 99 and a new road, rail facility to replace the New Westminster rail bridge:
 - Highway 1 – Vancouver to Langley.
 - South Fraser Perimeter Road
 - Fraser River Crossing
 - Rapid Transit – Richmond/Airport Vancouver
 - North Fraser Perimeter Road
 - New Westminster Rail Bridge replacement
 - Massey Tunnel (Highway 99)
 - Oak Street Bridge (Highway 99)
 - Highway 15 – Highway 1 to US Border
 - Highway 10 – Highway 91 to Highway 1
 - Access to Pacific Border Crossing – Highway 99
- The largest rail infrastructure investment required is a replacement for the aging New Westminster Rail Bridge. Initial studies indicated that a combined road/rail tunnel could be a cost effective alternate to:
 - Reduce local road congestion; particularly Pattullo Bridge
 - Increase freight rail capacity and improve connection to Burrard Inlet for Canada's international trade and tourism
 - Remove conflicts in marine and rail movements caused by the existing swing span.
 - Expand capacity for inter-city service.
 - Improvements to the Pitt River rail bridge and a number of grade crossings, sidings and double tracking of certain sections are also necessary.
- The investments, costs and benefits were the subject of an economic impact study on the MCTS. The study assessed future demands on the Gateway transportation system utilizing data from the LRSP Growth Management Strategy, population and employment forecasts, and business forecast from the various Gateway stakeholders. The study clearly showed that the MCTS will accomplish the ends for which it is proposed. The more efficient MCTS would attract more users as proposed and as consequence vehicle kilometres traveled would increase by 48 million per year.
- The economic impacts from the MCTS are significant to the Region and Western Canada as a whole. In the local economy 3,800 new jobs would be generated. Including jobs in the supply chain across Western Canada 7,300 jobs would be generated. Similar large increase in business output (sale) and GDP are also forecasted.
- Failure to invest in improved transportation for goods and services in the Region through the MCTS will

lead to a decline in international competitiveness. A total social impact cost of \$806 million per year and 6,400 jobs lost was estimated.

- Our next steps are to investigate the potential for increased rail utilization through a study we are commissioning with Western Economic Diversification and to assess the potentials for short sea shipping to alleviate traffic congestion in greater detail.
- A compact disc was provided of the report and it was advised that the report is also available at www.gvvc.org.

C. DISCUSSION OF DELEGATIONS

1. Greater Vancouver Gateway Council Bob Wilds, Chair

In response to questions from the Committee the delegation responded:

- The port of Vancouver is predicting \$6.2 million of goods to be moving through the lower mainland.
- There is difficulty in determining how to pay for the improvements that are required. The pay back would be in travel time.
- The facilities that are being dealt with by the Olympics Committee are vast without putting transportation into the mix.
- Vancouver Port is used as a primary port because they have dock rail service, shorter water route distance, deep water and work in Canadian dollars.
- If the vehicle transportation is improved the environmental conditions will improve. The MCTS will reduce the emission if we move people onto rail and water away from the roads.
- In urban areas you have limited movement for rail.
- Gateway Council has considered the carbon tax.

The Chair thanked Mr. Bob Wilds for his presentation to the Environmental Advisory Committee.

A member of the EAC stated that the environmental impact seems to be a minor issue on the Gateway Council agenda and we should encourage them to put more emphasize on environmental impact in the studies they conduct. This may help with their public campaign on why the investment should be made.

A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

1. Environmental Advisory Committee - Minutes - February 18, 2004

It was Moved by Councillor Bose
Seconded by T. Godwin
That the minutes of the Environmental Advisory committee meeting of
February 18, 2004 be adopted.
Carried

D. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

1. Campbell Heights File: 6250-20 (Campbell Heights); 0540-20 EAC

The EAC made the following comments regarding Corporate Report R069 – Campbell Heights – Agricultural and Environmental Issues:

- The arguments in the reports for not preserving land for agricultural purposes are based on the long-standing land use and generating revenue to offset the cost of infrastructure.
- The DCCs \$107,000 per developable acre is a one time charge; whereas agriculture would provide a long-term economic return.

The Chair requested that the EAC members review Corporate Report R069 and report back at the next

meeting of the EAC.

2. EAC's Outstanding Action List

At the January EAC meeting the Administrative Assistant requested clarification of the purpose of the action list. The Chair requested that the concerns of the Administrative Assistant be considered for discussion at the February/March meeting.

A member of the EAC advised that he would like to see the outstanding list added on the agenda. There was no objection to this suggestion; therefore the Administrative Assistant will add the outstanding list to the agenda for the next meeting.

3. Kathy Wardell, Busby and Associates

Council approved EAC's recommendation to hear the LEED presentation and Kathy Wardell will be presenting before Council-in-Committee on April 5, following her presentation will be a presentation from Surrey Environmental Partners.

4. Driving Range Lighting

In response to a memo from the Chair the General Manager, Planning and Development has provided the attached response for the EAC's review

The EAC received the information from the General Manager, Planning and Development. This item was addressed later in the meeting.

E. NEW BUSINESS

1. Port Kells Open House

Dr. Tom Godwin provided the following comments regarding the Port Kells Open House:

- Attending every meeting of the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) as an alternate.
- Disappointed that the Committee has neither voting power, nor are there any minutes taken at the meetings. Administratively staff could do whatever they want to do. There are opinion questionnaires submitted but CAC members never hear what happens to them.
- The CAC was against development to the east of 168 Street in the Tynehead Park area and that was never listened to. There is an open house scheduled for tomorrow night.
- Concerned that north Port Kells will be covered in cement.

The Drainage and Environment Manager advised that Council received a petition for a neighbourhood concept plan from the local landowners.

The Drainage and Environment Manager advised that there are briefing notes taken at the meetings with the interest groups and then open houses are held.

F. ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL

G. UPDATES

H. CORRESPONDENCE

I. INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Jean Lamontagne Manager, Planning, Design and Corporate Facilities

The Chair advised that Jean Lamontagne has advised that he was not able to attend this meeting. T. Godwin stated that the issue is a past thing now.

2. Good Citizen Award

The Chair advised on the call for nominations for the 2004 Good Citizen Award advising that Thursday, April 8, 2004 is the deadline for submissions.

3. Surrey Environmental Partners Minutes from the February 17, 2004 SEP meeting.

The EAC received the minutes of the Surrey Environmental Partners.

4. Policy for Management of Trees Close to Street Lights

The EAC reviewed the policy and provided the following comments:

- The policy is subjective and will not give the right amount of light on the streets.
- The guidelines should be more objective with regards to street lighting.

D. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (continued)

4. Driving Range Lighting

The EAC members provided the following comments:

- The reflective strips on the median barriers are distracting.
- The lights from the driving range are now less obvious, however installation of trees would protect the residents to the north.
- ICBC may have an interest in assisting with this issue.
- Does MoTH administer their own standards, if so, the City should be consistent with these standards.

It was suggested that the Chair request G. Vlieg to comment on the MoTH lighting standards for highways.

J. OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

1. Recyclable Milk Jugs

S. VanKeulen advised that there is an issue regarding placing deposits on the four litre milk jugs. The plastic from the jugs is highly recyclable and reusable. He requested that the EAC hear a delegation regarding this issue.

2. Surrey Transfer Station

H. Locke advised that he attended a meeting last week, which included a tour of the new Surrey Transfer Station that is receiving a Bronze LEED certification. The scheduled opening of the facility is the last week of April to coincide with the first week of May annual recycling date. The Chair of the Committee would like

to invite the EAC members to the Grand Opening and tour; he will have the invitation forwarded to the Administrative Assistant for circulation to the EAC members.

K. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Environmental Advisory Committee is scheduled for April 21, 2004 at 7:00 p.m. in the Executive Board Room.

L. ADJOURNMENT

The Environmental Advisory Committee adjourned at 9:13 p.m.

Chairperson