



Corporate Report

NO: R177

COUNCIL DATE: September 29, 2008

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: Mayor & Council DATE: September 25, 2008
FROM: General Manager, Engineering FILE: 8630-30(SFPR)
SUBJECT: Bolivar Heights Residents' Concerns With Construction of 115 Avenue

RECOMMENDATION

The Engineering Department recommends that Council receive this report as information.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of concerns that have been raised by residents of Bolivar Heights, and to provide background to Council regarding the rationale related to the routing of the community connector road that is being constructed on 115 Avenue as part of the South Fraser Perimeter Road (SFPR) project.

BACKGROUND

At the Regular Council meeting on September 8, 2008, Council requested a report from staff on concerns being raised by residents of Bolivar Heights in relation to a road that is being constructed along the north edge of Bolivar Park (115 Avenue). This report responds to that request.

During the development of the SFPR alignment and associated roadways, Gateway staff have communicated with members of the Bolivar Heights neighbourhood at two community meetings and at five open houses between June 2006 and February 2008.

Engineering Department staff also attended a number of the open houses and the community meetings with the Gateway Program staff.

The Bolivar Heights Community Association (BHCA) was formed in 2007 as a result of a proposal to install play field lighting in Bolivar Park. Following resolution of that concern, the BHCA reviewed the plans for the SFPR, identified a number of concerns with the alignment of the SFPR and its connector roads, and proposed four alternatives. These were presented at an April 3, 2008, public meeting organized by the Association.

DISCUSSION

Bolivar Heights Community Association Alternate Road Alignment Options

The four optional road alignments developed by the Bolivar Heights Association to mitigate their concerns with the current road alignment plans were presented at their April 3, 2008, public meeting. The options were:

1. Put the road elsewhere.
2. Follow the BHCA plan, illustrated in Appendix I, which essentially creates frontage roads north and south of the SFPR, thereby eliminating the need for a road to be constructed on the 115 Avenue alignment at the north edge of Bolivar Park.
3. Cut and cover the SFPR through Bolivar Heights and construct 116 Avenue to run on top of it.
4. Proceed with the current SFPR plan but remove the ball diamonds in Bolivar Park and build a significant berm and treed area to separate the neighbourhood from the traffic.

Response from the public meeting revealed that the majority of Bolivar Heights residents did not want a road constructed on the alignment of 115 Avenue (illustrated in Appendix II), and if a road had to go in, they preferred the Association's Option 2 alignment, being a frontage road along the south side of the SFPR.

Option 1, moving the road elsewhere, is not supportable as residents from the broader area wanted a road at the bottom of the hill (King Road/115 Avenue) to provide them options for access and community connectivity.

Option 2, new alignment for connector roads, requires a widening of the road corridor, between approximately 132 Street and 140 Street, by approximately 22 metres from the SFPR's current cross-section of approximately 23 metres. This widening would have to take place entirely on the south side of the current alignment due to the rail switching/staging trackage that exists immediately north of the existing road right-of-way boundary. To complete this widening would severely impact the existing strata complex and timber mills between 132A and 136 Streets, to such an extent that they would become operationally unviable. This would result in the need to buy out these properties and businesses, the cost of which is estimated to be between \$20 and \$30 million. As a result, the Gateway Program cannot support this option.

Option 3, the cut and cover option, had already been reviewed by Gateway elsewhere along the route as a result of consultation in Delta. Gateway concluded that they could not justify the large costs of this option in comparison to the benefits and thus would not consider such an option.

Option 4, removing the ball diamonds, would not be acceptable to the general public or the City as these ball fields are heavily used by the baseball/softball leagues and for tournaments. There would be strong public opposition to this option.

Therefore, none of the options proposed by the BHCA are viable alternatives to the current Gateway/City alignment of 115 Avenue. The purpose of the construction of 115 Avenue is to provide neighbourhood connectivity and access to the properties to the north of this road in lieu of driveways that currently exist to these properties off 116 Avenue that will need to be eliminated to ensure safe operation of the SFPR, which will be aligned along 116 Avenue in this area.

Road Interface with Bolivar Park

The extension of 115 Avenue alongside Bolivar Park was identified on City Transportation plans as a Collector Road sometime prior to 1995. It was considered necessary with construction of the SFPR in order to maintain and improve access between the surrounding neighbourhoods and to Bolivar Park.

The extension of 115 Avenue will result in traffic passing by Bolivar Park; however, this is a typical situation for most parks and can improve safety of the park by providing additional “eyes on the Park”, which can deter undesirable activity in the park. Traffic volumes are expected to be relatively low on this roadway and it will be separated from the Park by a ditch, fence and pathway. As such, there should be no safety issues/concerns for the Park patrons from this road.

To avoid impacting the ball diamonds and to minimize the impacts on the industrial lands to the north, the road width has been minimized. Consultation with the public revealed a desire to preclude truck parking and/or stacking (prior to entering the industrial sites) on the roadway. Based on these two considerations, it was concluded the best approach was to narrow the paved roadway and ban parking along this section of 115 Avenue.

Parking at Bolivar Park

Residents noted that by precluding parking along 115 Avenue, it would create a parking shortage for the Park. This issue was reviewed with the Parks Division staff, who advised that the Park currently contains a gravel parking area that holds 100-110 cars, but it is not always being utilized efficiently. The Parks Division will improve this parking area with paving, curb and gutter and landscaping concurrently with the construction of 115 Avenue. This will improve the efficiency/capacity of the parking area and should address the residents’ concerns with respect to adequate parking for Park patrons.

Walking/Biking Trails

The residents of Bolivar Heights have advised that the SFPR has impacts to them but does not offer any benefits. They have noted that there would be widespread support for improvements to the trails and parks in the area and along the river. The Gateway Program has advised that a future pathway would be possible on the south side of the SFPR from Bolivar Park to the Port Mann Park and Barnston Island. Staff of the Engineering Department and the Parks, Recreation and Culture Department will meet with the residents of Bolivar Heights to discuss this option and other ideas they may have with respect to walking/trail amenities in the area.

CONCLUSION

The construction of 115 Avenue is supported by the Gateway Program and has been designed to minimize impacts to Bolivar Park. The extension of 115 Avenue will provide a sidewalk/pathway for the full frontage of the Park and will improve accessibility to the Park and the neighbourhood properties. It will also improve connectivity between neighbourhoods and provide an alternate “downhill” route for residents during icy conditions.

The City will pave and upgrade the parking area at Bolivar Park to mitigate the concerns over loss of on-street parking along 115 Avenue, which paving and upgrading will occur at the same time as the construction of 115 Avenue.

City staff is arranging to meet with the Bolivar Heights Community Association to discuss possibilities for Park and pathway improvements in the neighbourhood.

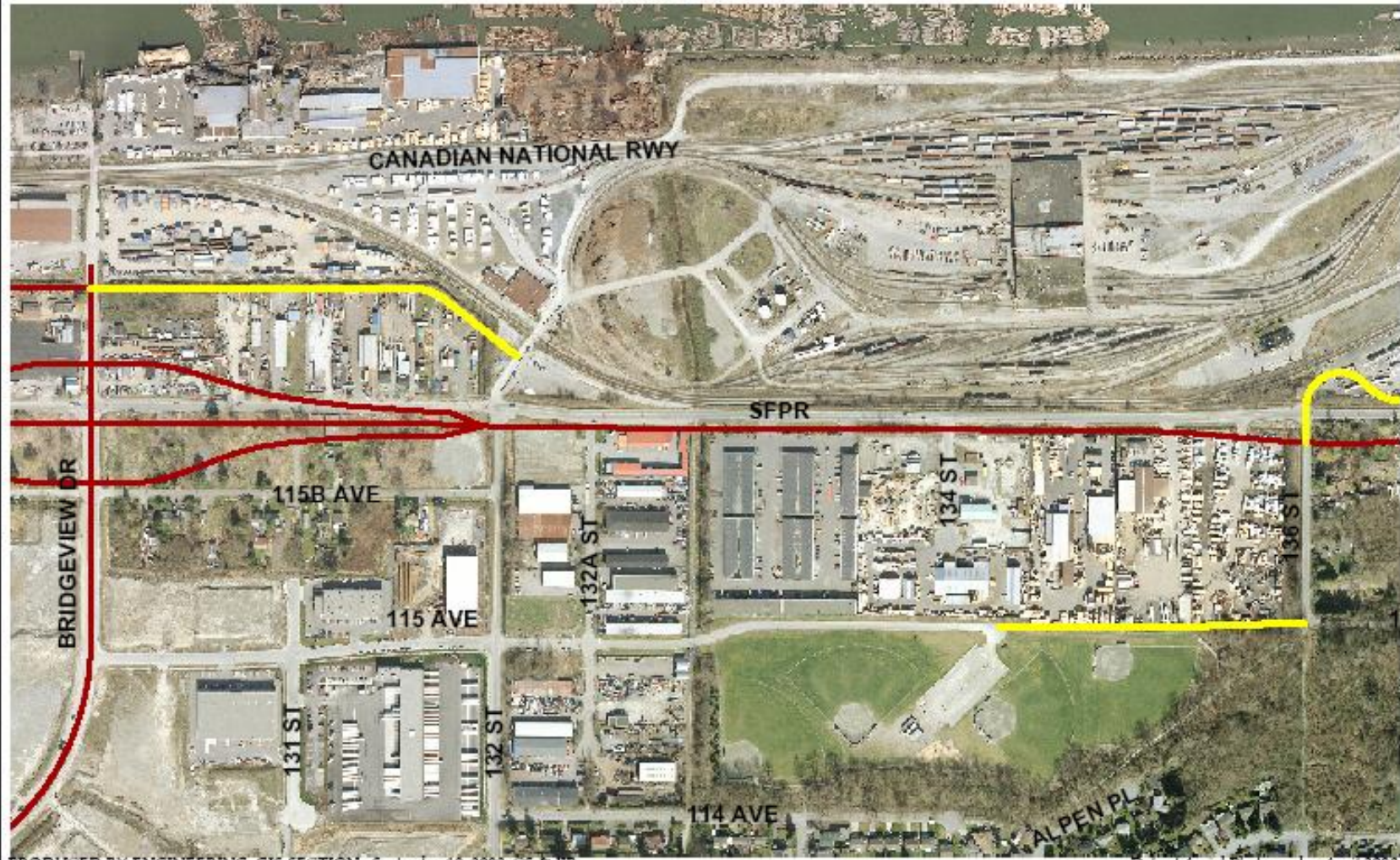
Vincent Lalonde, P.Eng.
General Manager, Engineering

VL/JB/brb

Appendix I - Proposed Gateway Program Alignment of 115 Avenue

Appendix II - Proposed BHCA Proposed Alternate Connector Road Alignment

APPENDIX 1



PRODUCED BY ENGINEERING, GIS SECTION: September 19, 2008, CS & JJR

Date of Aerial Photography: April 2008



Gateway SFPR Alignment



ENGINEERING
DEPARTMENT

The data provided is compiled from various sources and IS NOT warranted as to its accuracy or sufficiency by the City of Surrey.
This information is provided for information and convenience purposes only.
Lot sizes, Legal descriptions and encumbrances must be confirmed at the Land Title Office.

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APPENDIX 2



PRODUCED BY ENGINEERING, GIS SECTION: September 19, 2008, CS © JTR

Date of Aerial Photography: April 2008



BHCA Option #1

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