

# QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY PLAN REVIEW AND UPDATE

Information Bulletin

November 2008

Recent growth and change within the Queensborough community has prompted the City to initiate a review of the **Queensborough Community Plan**. The City will be assisted by the consultant firm of UMA. Through this review, the City will ask local residents, property owners, and business owners to share their vision of what Queensborough should be like in the future – and what needs to happen to get there.

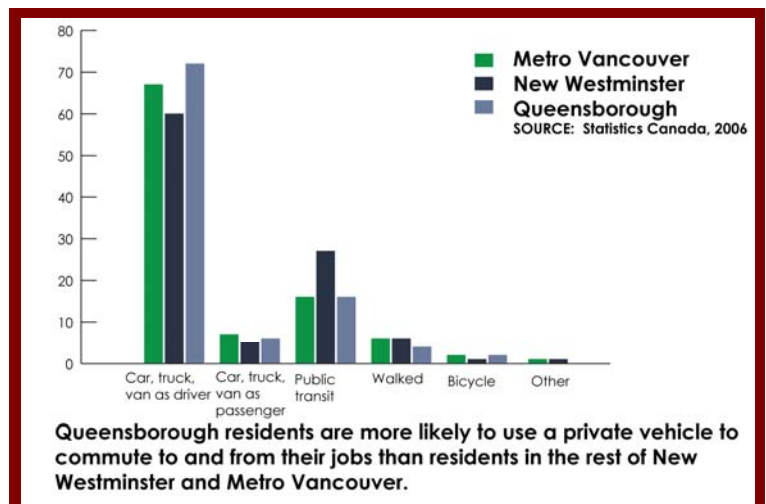
## TRANSPORTATION

Queensborough is a strategic location within Metro Vancouver; it is central to the region's major roads and is located on the Fraser River. As a result, Queensborough reaps both the benefits and challenges posed by its location within an urbanized metropolitan area.

## GETTING AROUND AND ABOUT IN QUEENSBOROUGH: Queensborough's Transportation Network

The transportation system within the Queensborough neighbourhood is one characterized by infrastructure to support a variety of travel modes including, vehicular, rail, transit, pedestrian, bicycle and water modes. Since the 1995 Official Community Plan, the character of the transportation network has undergone significant changes.

Growth in recent years in Queensborough has spurred considerable transportation infrastructure improvements within and through the community. These include the upgrading of the Howes Street and Highway 91A intersection to a full interchange, improvements to the Queensborough Bridge, local road improvements to service emerging developments such as Port Royal, and Queensborough Landing, as well as construction of sections of the Perimeter Trail.



### How do people travel in the community?

The 2006 Census provides interesting insight in the way people travel to and from work. When comparing the choice of travel for commuters, City of New Westminster residents are more likely to use transit than the rest of the (Metro Vancouver) region. However, in Queensborough, residents are more likely to use a private vehicle to commute to and from work than transit, in part due to the distance to rapid transit stations, as well as relatively less extensive transit service when compared to the rest of the City.

## Existing and Planned Transportation Network



The map shows the planned and existing transportation network for the community of Queensborough, including the road, rail, trails, and transit opportunities. *SOURCES: New Westminster Trail & Greenway Master Plan, New Westminster OCP, Translink*

### MOBILITY IN THE COMMUNITY:

## A TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM FOR QUEENSBOROUGH

The 1995 OCP and comprehensive transportation study identified a transportation system for the community based on land uses proposed in the Plan. The Plan defined a future road, bicycle and cycle network with significant emphasis placed on the development of Ewen Avenue as a major collector facility and gateway into the community at Howes Street.

### Road Network: Moving Goods and People to and from the Community

Queensborough's physical separation from the rest of New Westminster – located on the eastern-most tip of Lulu Island and surrounded on three sides by the Fraser River-creates opportunities and challenges in the provision of quality connections to the rest of the City and beyond. The major road access point between the neighbourhood and mainland is the Highway 91A and the Queensborough Bridge. Although Highway 91A bisects the community north south with its imposing infrastructure, creating somewhat of a barrier, recent roadway improvements to both the Howes Street Interchange and the Queensborough Bridge provide good access for residents to the rest of New Westminster and beyond. Other significant access connections are Westminster Highway to Richmond and Derwent Way to Delta (Annacis Island), both of whom are important industrial and goods movement (truck) routes.

### Transit Service

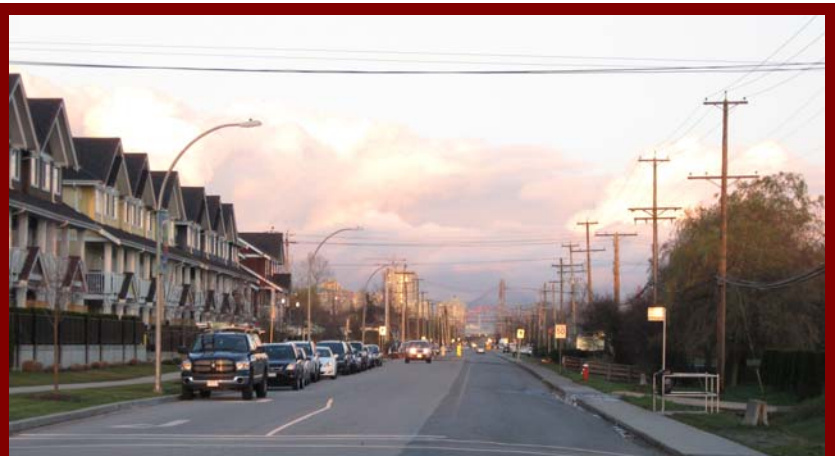
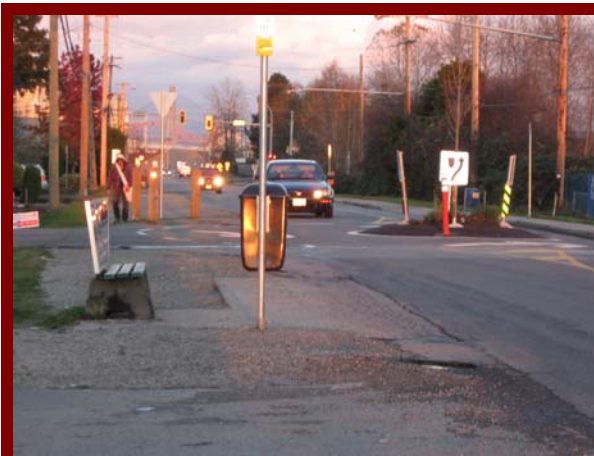
The community is currently underserved by transit, although the City has worked with Translink to improve service in the past year with the implementation of new service to Queensborough Landing. Current service and frequency are limited to daytime and, weekday hours. Additionally, the current routing through the community along Ewen Avenue, does not capture residents outside of walking distance (ie 400m north and south of Ewen). Translink has indicated that an update of the Richmond Area Transit Plan is pending, and is an important avenue by which to address improving existing service such as increased frequency, extended service hours, changes to routes as well as the need for improved transit infrastructure such as shelters and stops.

## Walking and Cycling in Queensborough

One of the benefits of Queensborough geography is that it lends itself to active or human-powered transportation within its boundaries. Approximately 1.5 km wide and 3 km long, the community is traversable by modes other than the car, such as walking and cycling. The Queensborough Perimeter Trail provides a variety of trail and walkway types for recreational purposes on the outside boundary of the community. Respectful of the significant historical and cultural heritage associated with the shores of Queensborough, trail sections have been developed as a natural extension of the existing waterfront walkway system. Portions of the trail have been completed, with others prioritized for construction in 2008/09.



The 1995 OCP also identified a system of on-road and off-road walkways through-out the community for pedestrian and cyclists. With the development of Queensborough Landing, there is an increased need for direct north-south pedestrian and cycle connections to the commercial node, than currently exist at Pembina Street and Derwent Way.



*“Ewen Avenue should become a pedestrian oriented “main street” with sidewalks, special character lighting, landscaping, parking, bike paths and civic art.” 1995 Queensborough OCP*

While recent improvements to the Queensborough Bridge have facilitated improved walking and cycling between the neighbourhood and mainland, the lack of direct connections to the downtown core or rapid transit stations continues to be a mobility barrier. The City has identified the possibility of providing a pedestrian and cycling linkage between the mainland and Queensborough through a pedestrian bridge from Port Royal to the Quay Area, and is currently assessing the potential.

## Ewen Avenue: Queensborough’s Main Street

Ewen Avenue is the east-west transportation spine of the Queensborough neighbourhood, running from Boundary Road to the tip of Lulu Island. The 1995 OCP identified Ewen Avenue as a Major Collector facility and a special character street, with pedestrian friendly, bicycle, and transit elements. The Plan proposed that Ewen Avenue be developed to a cross section with two travel lanes plus two parking lanes over most of its length, with the potential for an additional two travel lanes if required at the Commercial Gateway area adjacent to Howes Street. However, significant changes in land use patterns resulting from the development of commercial nodes at Queensborough Landing have affected the potential for a commercial gateway area at this location. In subsequent years, traffic circles were implemented along Ewen, in part to address safety and speeding concerns in the community. In 2008 the City engaged a consultant to undertake a Traffic Calming Study in Queensborough, focusing on Ewen Avenue, to examine critical circulation issues in the community. Results and recommendations regarding traffic calming and circulation measures are anticipated in 2009.

The 1995 *Queensborough Community Plan* outlined two specific transportation goals and various policies, focusing on roads and transit within the community:

16. *To accommodate the provision of improved roads in accordance with other policies in this Plan. To ensure integration within the grid pattern of streets in traditional neighborhoods and to provide adequate accessibility to employment, services and shopping areas. Safety and convenience must be maximized with minimum impact on residential areas. "Traffic calming" measures, including landscaping, are favoured over other approaches such as road widening. Cul-de-sac or dead end streets are not encouraged.*

21. *To encourage compact development with adequate density to support public transit which reduces the need for automobile use (avoid urban sprawl).*

## OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES: THINGS TO THINK ABOUT...

### **The Balancing Act: taming traffic versus neighbourhood mobility**

Finding the balance between competing interests and activities is a challenge. Roads are used for commuter use, industrial goods movement, as a place for cyclists and pedestrians, as a gateway to the community, as an access to community services and everyday needs. What is the right mix between taming non-local traffic and providing neighbourhood mobility, accessibility and

circulation? Traffic calming is also a major issue in the community – where should it be focused? Within neighbourhoods how and where should pedestrians and cyclists be accommodated? On local roads how and where should parking be permitted?

### **An opportunity for walkable and accessible communities: transit supportive development**

There is growing regional interest in

the creation of compact and transit supportive development in urban areas. Are there opportunities in Queensborough to increase demand to make transit a more viable alternative to the car? What level of transit service is desirable? Is current service routing, connectivity and frequency adequate? Would you take a bus if it came on Salter St? Would more direct access to the rest of New Westminster be desirable?

For more information about the Plan review and update, contact us at :

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