



## 1.4 REGIONAL CONTEXT STATEMENT

*The Regional Context Statement is included to meet the Municipal Act requirement. It refers to many of the policies contained in the rest of the OCP.*

The Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) Livable Region Strategic Plan (LRSP) was approved by the GVRD Board of Directors on January 26, 1996 and deemed to be a regional growth strategy by the Minister of Municipal Affairs on February 10, 1996. The LRSP is a regional vision for growth, transportation, and environmental protection management in Greater Vancouver.

The Municipal Act requires that each municipality prepare, as part of the Official Community Plan (OCP), a Regional Context Statement which illustrates the policy links between the OCP and the LRSP.

The LRSP is based on four fundamental strategies to achieve a more livable and balanced regional community:

1. Protect the Green Zone
2. Build Complete Communities
3. Achieve a Compact Metropolitan Region
4. Increase Transportation Choice

### **PROTECT THE GREEN ZONE**

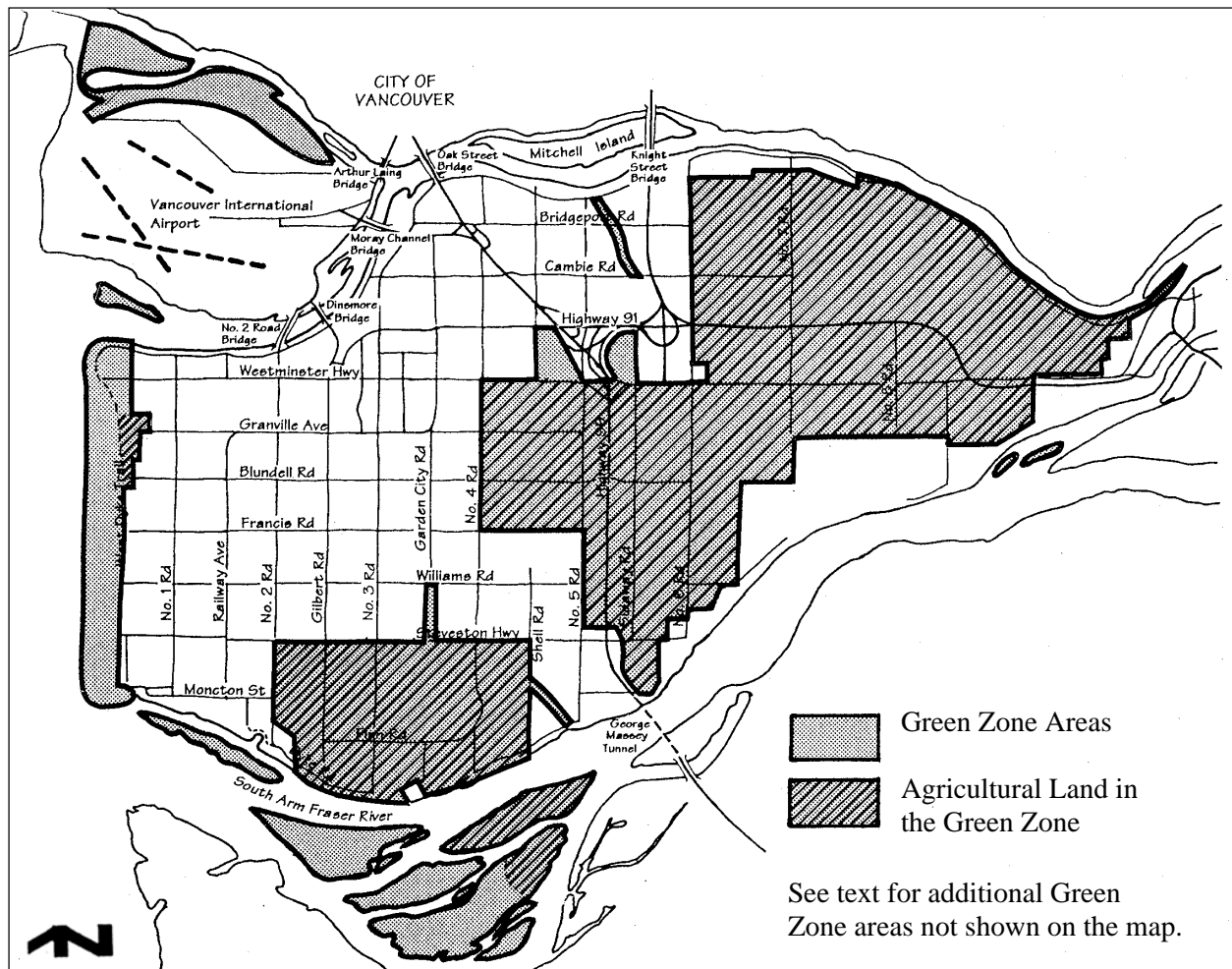
The OCP supports the LRSP policy of "Protect the Green Zone", by designating the Richmond Green Zone (see map).

As Richmond is a community virtually surrounded by river and estuary and contains significant agricultural land and rural activities, there is a compelling need for strong environmental policies. The preservation and protection of the natural environment and agricultural land are goals of the OCP (see 2.1 Agriculture and 5.0 Natural & Human Environment).

*The LRSP was accepted by all member municipalities prior to its adoption by the GVRD Board. The City of Richmond endorsed the LRSP on January 22, 1996.*



## Green Zone



*The Green Zone Map identifies and protects different types of natural land assets and resources, including:*

- *Renewable resources lands (agricultural lands);*
- *Ecologically important lands (conservation and environmentally sensitive lands);*
- *Outdoor recreation and scenic lands (major regional parks, golf courses, and riverfront areas).*

### Green Zone Lands

The Green Zone designations and boundaries on Sea Island are under review and discussion with the Vancouver International Airport Authority and the Agricultural Land Commission.

Because of the map scale some smaller Green Zones Lands are not shown. These include the following:

- Pockets of land along the shore of South Arm of the Fraser River (Gilmore, East Richmond, and Hamilton);
- Land along the north (toward the Moray Channel Bridge) and south (to No. 2 Road Bridge) shores of the Middle Arm of the Fraser River;



- The west shore banks of Iona Island;
- Shore area adjacent to Bridgepoint, and pockets of shore areas around Mitchell Island (North Arm Fraser River);
- Pockets of land along south shore of North Arm Fraser River (from Mitchell Island to Tree Island in Hamilton).

### **Natural Areas & Environmentally Sensitive Areas**

The OCP (see 5.0 Natural & Human Environment) requires natural areas to be conserved, protected, and, where appropriate, used for park and recreational purposes through land use planning and development applications. The Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) (see Attachment 3 to Schedule 1) are included in the OCP to protect environmental features that are sensitive to change. The OCP designates certain areas as ESA Development Permit areas. Development activity in these areas may require a Development Permit Application.

In addition, two areas, the South Arm Islands and Sturgeon Banks, have now been designated as Wildlife Management Areas by the Provincial Government. Overall wildlife management of these areas will reside with the BC Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks.

*The agricultural lands account for 49% of Richmond's total land base.*

### **Agricultural Land Reserve**

The OCP (see 2.1 Agriculture and Attachment 1 to Schedule 1) requires the protection and enhancement of agricultural areas and farming by designating a consolidated agricultural land reserve in Gilmore and East Richmond, and smaller parcels elsewhere. The OCP establishes a distinct boundary between urban and rural lands to protect the ALR from urban encroachment, using existing roads and railways, or creating urban-rural buffer areas; it also acknowledges and encourages the City to take a number of key initiatives to support farming and agricultural activities. The City continues to work with the Agricultural Land Commission to maintain these areas for agricultural and related purposes.

### **Parks & Open Spaces**

The City's parks and open space distribution is shown on the OCP Land Use Maps (see Attachments 1 and 2 to Schedule 1), and the accompanying Area Plan Maps contained in Schedule 2. The permanent status of the parks is secured through dedication and by-law measures. The protection of lands other than parks is secured by by-laws and by policy mechanisms in the area plans.



As a demonstration of additional linkages between the OCP and LRSP, the OCP includes ESA designations and boundaries, and FREMP policies supportive of parks and Steveston Waterfront Study. Other complementary initiatives include Parks, Open Space and Beautification strategy, and State of the Environment Report.

### **BUILD COMPLETE COMMUNITIES**

The OCP supports the "Building Complete Communities" policies described in the Livable Regional Strategic Plan.

The OCP (see 2.4 Commercial, and City Centre Area Plan) identifies and promotes key strategies for facilitating the achievement of complete communities, by working to balance the City's role as an economic centre through the creation and reinforcement of strong neighbourhoods; the development of a broad range of housing to meet the needs of a sizable and diverse resident population; and fostering locally based employment and jobs (see 2.0 Jobs & Business, and 3.0 Neighbourhoods & Housing).

Together, the following objectives and policies work towards building a complete community by: striving to create built environments that are safe, attractive, and people friendly (see 3.1 Neighbourhoods & Sense of Community, and 6.2 Public Safety); locating a range of community services and facilities closer to neighbourhoods (see 6.0 Community Facilities & Services); promoting and developing energy efficient communities (see 7.5 Energy, and City Centre Area Plan); promoting a range of housing opportunities by encouraging a variety of housing tenures, types, and densities (see 3.2 Housing); servicing enough land for business and job creation (see 7.0 City Infrastructure); and providing viable alternatives to the car (see 4.0 Transportation, and City Centre Area Plan).

Equally importantly, the complete community strategies endeavour to create recreational amenities and resources for residents (see 6.0 Community Facilities & Services). The planning policies also work to retain, conserve, and re-use heritage buildings, landscapes, and sites as community resources (see 6.7 Heritage).

The OCP promotes the development of a network of mixed-use urban activity centres by:

- Continuing to support the City Centre as a regional centre encouraging mixed-use commercial, office, retail, and residential uses (City Centre Area Plan);



- Encouraging private sector investment through redevelopment potential in the City Centre and other commercial areas, including Steveston commercial centre, and Shellmont, Garden City, Seafair, Broadmoor, Terra Nova, Ironwood, and Hamilton commercial areas (see 2.3 Industry, and 2.4 Commercial);
- Developing and maintaining local and regional access and transportation connections to and within the City Centre and between the other commercial areas (see 4.0 Transportation);
- Protecting and recognizing areas for industrial uses and activities along the North and South Arms of the Fraser River, north-west area of the City Centre, the Knight Street corridor, and the Vancouver International Airport (see 2.2 Airport, and 2.3 Industry).

The OCP, through the Land Use Map (Attachment 1 to Schedule 1), further identifies components of complete communities strategies by distinguishing between the City Centre, commercial, and industrial designations.

A demonstration of additional linkages between the OCP and LRSP, the OCP consolidates multi-family and commercial guidelines. Other complimentary initiatives include community policing, additional library services, fire-rescue improvements and the Richmond Public Art Program.

These strategies and their implementation are all further detailed in OCP and the Area and Sub-Area Plans (Schedule 2 of the OCP).

#### **ACHIEVE A COMPACT METROPOLITAN REGION**

The OCP is committed to achieving a compact metropolitan region by means of employment targets, as well as intensification of residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional land uses.

The OCP provides key policy directions and implementation measures to promote the development of a Compact Metropolitan Region. The OCP goal is to balance employment and housing opportunities in the City (see 1.2 Goals, and 2.0 Jobs & Business).

**Land Use Designations**

The OCP designates 41% of Richmond's total land base for both existing and future housing (26%), commercial (3%), and industrial development (13%). An additional 10% of total land base is designated for parks, marinas, schools, and institutional uses. These land use designations, totalling 51% of the land base, will accommodate future growth through infill and redevelopment of serviced residential land (e.g. City Centre), followed by redevelopment of unserviced land, and through subdivisions of existing lots into smaller ones by amending the Richmond Zoning and Development Bylaw No. 5300 (Single Family 702 Lot Size Policy).

**Residential Development**

The OCP has a capacity for 92,550 households (or 212,000 people) based on a future average household size of 2.29 persons to the year 2021. The City Centre is expected to absorb more than half of the new population growth. The population capacity of 212,000 will be achieved as the provision of adequate sewerage services is provided. The OCP anticipates high growth for all types but continues to place emphasis on the creation of opportunities for the development of ground-oriented housing.

The City is working toward an implementation plan for flood protection acceptable to the Province that will reduce the risk of flooding for residents and their property. To such an end, the City will budget, as part of its capital expenditure program, a portion of the funds necessary for the construction of a mid-island dyke, and develop and implement regulations for improved flood protection in West Richmond (see 7.6 Flood Protection).

**Employment & Commercial & Industrial Development**

The OCP encourages job-intensive business and industry, supports traditional agriculture and fishing, and concentrates commercial and visitor services in the City Centre (see 2.0 Jobs and Business). Like the City of Vancouver, Richmond has achieved a favourable balance of employment opportunities with the resident labour force. The bulk of Richmond jobs will continue to be located in the "golden triangle", consisting of the airport, the City Centre, and the industrial-commercial lands from the City Centre east to the Knight Street corridor.

The OCP directs commercial development mainly into and around the City Centre and to neighbourhood centres (see 2.4 Commercial, City Centre Area Plan, and Land Use Map, Attachment 1 to Schedule 1). It is anticipated that these areas will continue to be prime commercial areas to 2021.



*Richmond OCP Capacities*

<i>Households (total)</i>	<i>92,530</i>
<i>- Single-family to townhouse, apartments less than 5 storeys</i>	<i>77,530</i>
<i>- Apartments (5 storeys &amp; up)</i>	<i>15,000</i>
 <i>Population</i>	 <i>212,000</i>
<i>Employment</i>	<i>150,000</i>

The OCP assigns industrial activities to the City Centre’s northwest sector, the Bridgeport-Knight Street corridor, the waterfront areas along the North Arm (including Mitchell Island), the South Arm of the Fraser River, and Sea Island (Airport Master Plan). There is a sufficient supply of developable industrial land to accommodate a proportionate share of regional industrial development and employment growth. The City plans to improve access and extend services to the existing industrial land to meet future demand, and has already initiated an Industrial Land Strategy to address all aspects of commercial/industrial developments both in the short and long terms. The City will work with the Agricultural Land Commission, other pertinent agencies, and local agricultural groups in its planning for improved road and transit access to the Fraser Lands Industrial Area, and for mitigation of potential impacts on adjacent farm areas.

Richmond has a number of unique economic drivers of regional significance and benefit (i.e. Vancouver International Airport) that will affect future employment in the City and Region. As a result, Richmond is expected to experience substantial employment growth. The City is committed to working with the GVRD, other municipalities, and affected parties to understand and address the impacts on the regional transportation system, and will work towards resolution of these impacts with the appropriate agencies benefiting and having jurisdiction

The OCP supports compact and planned community development and will coordinate residents, business and City resources to guide the location and form of growth. The City is committed to working with other communities to achieve the region’s goals to accommodate long-term growth. Currently, an Industrial Land Strategy is underway to work towards maintaining existing industries in Richmond, while finding ways to attract new ones to ensure a healthy economy.

**INCREASE TRANSPORTATION CHOICE**

The OCP strongly supports the Increase Transportation Choice Policies through objectives aimed at reducing automobile dependency and increased use of transit, walking, and cycling (see 4.0 Transportation). As Richmond grows, the City works to ensure that its transportation needs are met by reinforcing a network of roads, railroads, pedestrian walkways, bicycle, wheelchair and scooter paths, a bus system, and future rapid transit.

The following policies in the OCP are intended to achieve increased transportation choice:



- Move people and goods safely and efficiently by promoting a safe pedestrian environment (see 4.3 Pedestrians), by supporting the provision of custom transit services (see 4.2 Transit), by reducing congestion through improved road network design, and by supporting a railway and road network for transporting goods (see 4.1 Road Network);
- Develop a transportation system that supports a livable community by emphasizing transit use for regional commuter travel in preference to new facilities for automobiles, by encouraging the provision of on- and off-street parking for disabled persons, and by moderating the effects of traffic noise on residential environments along major arterial and highway routes (see 4.0 Transportation and 5.0 Human and Natural Environment);
- Support non-car transportation alternatives by increasing transit ridership to, from, and within Richmond, by pursuing rail transit service to and from Richmond, and by providing a network of bicycle routes throughout Richmond (see 4.0 Transportation);
- Target population and job growth for areas that are served by transit and existing or planned transportation routes (see 4.2 Transit);
- Commit to work with transit authorities to coordinate an efficient regional public transportation network (see 4.0 Transportation);
- Encourage the development of a network of sidewalks, paths, and trails through parks, natural areas, and waterways to link neighbourhoods and destination areas, and to actively promote more pedestrian activity and bicycle use (see 4.3 Pedestrians and 4.4 Cycling);
- Support partnerships with GVRD member authorities and other jurisdictions to coordinate an efficient regional joint City/regional bicycle transportation network (see 4.4 Cycling);
- Provide appropriate levels of services for inter-regional transportation and truck movements through the network of arterial, collector, and local roads that minimize intrusions into neighbourhoods (see 4.1 Road Network);
- Encourage the application of transportation management techniques, such as public transit, car pooling, traffic signalling coordination, parking alternatives, and traffic control devices (see 4.5 Automobiles).



- As a demonstration of additional linkages between the OCP and LRSP, the City is implementing the City Centre Transportation Plan and the Cycling Network Plan, pursuing transit improvements between Vancouver and Richmond, undertaking new sidewalk, streetscape designs and traffic calming measures, planning new road and transit connection between Richmond and Sea Island, and initiating City employee ride-share and van pooling program.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION**

The City of Richmond and the Greater Vancouver Regional District are committed to working in partnership together to achieve the shared goals of the LRSP and the OCP. Should a disagreement arise, both Richmond and the GVRD are committed to cooperate in discussions to resolve disagreements in keeping with the provisions of the Municipal Act.