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**To:** "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"

**CC:** "City Manager's Correspondence Group - DL"  
"Dobrovolny, Jerry" <jerry.dobrovolny@vancouver.ca>  
"LaClaire, Lon" <lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca>

**Date:** 5/29/2018 12:29:58 PM

**Subject:** Memo - False Creek Flats Rail Corridor Strategy and Ongoing Monitoring

**Attachments:** ENG - Memo to Mayor and Council - False Creek Flats Rail Corridor Strate....pdf

Dear Mayor and Council,

Please see the attached memo from Jerry Dobrovolny with regards to the False Creek Flats Rail Corridor Strategy and Monitoring. A short summary of the memo is as follows:

The memo responds to rail activity concerns from the Strathcona Residents Association and provides an update on current work.

- Rail activity and noise levels are federally regulated. Staff have been monitoring train frequency, implementing safety measures, and liaising with CN on livability concerns.
- The False Creek Flats Rail Corridor Strategy (2008) continues to provide relevant directions to improve safety and reduce traffic disruptions in response to the increased rail activity.
- Staff continue to engage the community when implementing measures in the Rail Corridor Strategy, such as the Community Panel to recommend the alignment for grade-separating the existing Prior /Venables crossing.
- Staff continue advocating to senior government in the best interest of the city, supporting our role in international trade and also mitigating impacts on nearby residents and businesses.

If you have any further questions on this matter, please contact Lon LaClaire, Director of Transportation at [lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca](mailto:lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca).

Best,  
Sadhu

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## MEMORANDUM

May 28, 2018

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Sadhu Johnston, City Manager  
Paul Mochrie, Deputy City Manager  
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk  
Lynda Graves, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office  
Rena Kendall-Craden, Communications Director  
Kevin Quinlan, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office  
Naveen Girn, Community Relations Director, Mayor's Office  
Lon LaClaire, Director of Transportation

FROM: Jerry Dobrovolny  
General Manager, Engineering Services

SUBJECT: False Creek Flats Rail Corridor Strategy and Ongoing Monitoring

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On May 2, 2018, staff attended the Strathcona Residents Association meeting to respond to concerns regarding rail activity on the Burrard Inlet Rail Line, which runs between the Port of Vancouver south shore container terminals and the False Creek Flats railyards.

This memo responds to concerns from the Strathcona Residents Association follow-up letter to Mayor and Council dated May 7, 2018, and provides an update on the work that City staff have been doing related to the False Creek Flats Rail Corridor Strategy and monitoring train activity on the rail corridor.

### **False Creek Flats Rail Corridor Strategy**

The Strathcona Residents Association requested *"that the City initiate a review of the 2008 Strategy, in light of changing economic and city planning realities, this time with input from residents and experts who can speak to its impact on health, safety and well-being of the people who live and work here."*

The False Creek Flats Rail Corridor Strategy was developed in 2008 to prepare for the possibility of increased rail activity due to factors outside of the City's jurisdiction, such as an increase in activity at the south shore container terminals or a change in freight rail operations. Rail is vital to our city's local economy, and supports our sustainability goals by reducing the greenhouse gases that would otherwise be emitted if goods were moved by large trucks. Nonetheless, it also has significant impacts on nearby residents and businesses. As the rail authority's operations are federally regulated, the strategy's purpose is to address safety and

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traffic impacts of the rail corridor on nearby communities. The increase in rail activity in January 2017 reaffirmed the relevance of the Rail Corridor Strategy and the importance of having a strategy in place.

With direction provided by the Rail Corridor Strategy, staff continue to engage the community on how to implement measures that will improve safety and reduce traffic disruptions. For example, grade-separating the existing Prior/Venables crossing was identified as having more benefit to the community than to rail operations. The City has been engaging residents and businesses on the False Creek Flats arterial overpass since 2015, and we have now begun a Community Panel which will recommend the preferred alignment and identify important planning considerations and mitigation strategies for the affected residents and businesses.

### **Monitoring Train Activity**

The Strathcona Residents Association requested *"that the City and Translink assist residents to ensure that rail traffic along the corridor is abiding by existing federal regulations by sharing or initiating monitoring of the duration of stoppages on Venables over five minutes."*

Over the past year, staff have been monitoring rail activity at the Prior/Venables Street grade crossing through site inspections, sensors, and video to determine the frequency and duration of the trains. Where we have observed crossings being blocked by stopped trains for over five minutes, we have informed CN and Transport Canada staff.

Staff have also been working with CN to assess grade crossing safety and ensure the crossings are meeting regulations. In addition to regulatory requirements, staff have been working on other complementary measures to improve the safety of rail corridor crossings. New warning and directional signage has been installed at the Prior/Venables and Union Street crossings to direct pedestrians to the Keefer Street Pedestrian Overpass. The City will also be installing electronic changeable message signs which will alert motorists of train activity at the crossing so they can choose different routes to avoid congestion at the Prior/Venables crossings.

City staff will continue to monitor the grade crossings along the rail corridor and work with CN and Transport Canada to mitigate any unnecessary impacts at the crossings, and continue to improve the safety of the crossings.

### **Noise Complaints Related to Rail**

The City has been in discussions with CN respecting livability, safety and added congestion on city streets and neighborhoods. However, Port of Vancouver and rail authority operations occur 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and are outside of City jurisdiction. CN Rail is a federally regulated entity and as such follows guidelines set out by Transport Canada. Subsequently, the rail authority is not subject to municipal noise bylaws. Staff have referred community members to the appropriate contacts at Transport Canada and CN.

## **Continued Engagement with Residents and Businesses**

Following directions from the Rail Corridor Strategy and ongoing monitoring of rail activity, staff will continue to work with residents and businesses to implement measures that will improve safety, reduce traffic disruptions, and mitigate other rail impacts on nearby communities. We also anticipate that although the Community Panel process is focused on recommending an alignment for the False Creek Flats arterial overpass, the panel may choose to provide recommendations that can guide further work on these impacts.

In addition, we will continue to work with the community on rail-related concerns and advocate to senior levels of government in the best interest of our city.

If you have any further questions on this matter, please contact Lon LaClaire at [lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca](mailto:lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca)



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