

**VANCOUVER-RICHMOND-AIRPORT RAPID TRANSIT PROJECT
(the "PROJECT")**

**RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

Pursuant to an order by Ministers under section 17(3)(iii)(the "Order") of the *Environmental Assessment Act* S.B.C. 2002, c. 43 (the "Act"), the Executive Director of the Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) provides the following recommendations and reasons relating to a further assessment for two segments of the Project where cut-and-cover technology will be applied. In preparing this document, the documentation that has been considered includes:

- RAV Project Management Ltd's. (the "Proponent") Application for an Environmental Assessment Certificate (the "Application");
- the Proponent's Application Supplement, providing further details of the Project as selected for implementation (the "Supplement");
- All subsequent Project Review Materials identified in Schedule A to the proposed Environmental Assessment Certificate;
- EAO's Richmond-Airport-Vancouver Rapid Transit Project Assessment Report (the "Assessment Report");
- RAV Project Management Ltd., Richmond-Airport-Vancouver Rapid Further Assessment Consultation Report , May 25, 2005;
- EAO's Richmond-Airport-Vancouver Rapid Transit Assessment Report Supplemental #1; and,
- EAO's Richmond-Airport-Vancouver Rapid Transit Assessment Report Supplement #2.

The Executive Director recommends that an Environmental Assessment Certificate for the Project be issued for the following reasons:

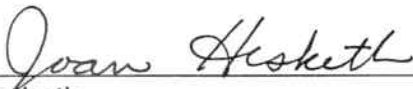
1. The Recommendations of the Executive Director and Reasons for Recommendation provided to Ministers on April 13, 2005, remain valid, as the review pursuant to the Order did not raise any additional substantive issues in the further assessment not otherwise covered in the EAO Assessment Report dated April 2005.
2. The environmental assessment of the Project was carried out in accordance with the scope, procedures and methods identified in the Order, issued on April 19, 2005.
3. Measures relating to the distribution of information and the identification of public views and interests have been carried out in accordance with the Order, including the holding of an open house and a public information meeting with interested parties carried out by the Proponent and EAO.

4. Issues identified by the public, during the further assessment for two segments of the Project where cut-and-cover technology will be applied, have been considered, and the Assessment Report Supplemental #1 identifies and discusses the key issues, which included:
 - public preference that the tunnel construction be bored tunnel instead of cut-and-cover technology;
 - potential for disruption of services to the public and commercial residents located along the northern section of Cambie Street (eg. Connectivity, public transportation, disruption utility services, emergency services, mobility and safety of seniors, reduced business, deliveries to business, etc.);
 - potential air quality impacts during construction;
 - potential human health impacts related to excavation of contaminated soils and resulting from construction noise, in particular relating to the cut-and-cover tunneling methodology proposed along Cambie Street;
 - socio-economic impacts and disruption to business and public accessibility along the Cambie Street during construction; and,
 - arboricultural issues and preservation of the Cambie Street Heritage Boulevard.

5. The Musqueam Indian Band (MIB) submitted comments on the Application and the Application Supplement shortly after the further assessment was ordered. These comments relate to the formal review of the Application that commenced on December 10, 2004 and not to the scope of the Project under the further assessment. The MIB raised concerns about the assessment of cumulative effects on fisheries and the aquatic habitat, Fraser River species habitat assessment, bridge construction and post-construction impacts on fisheries and aquatic habitat, proposed habitat compensation areas and design, and MIB involvement in finalizing mitigation measures and project monitoring. Since a decision on the Environmental Assessment Certificate for the Project is still outstanding, the EAO considered these issues and these concerns were addressed by the Proponent and reported on in Assessment Report Supplement #2. EAO's conclusion is that the issues raised by the MIB do not require any modification or amendment to the Assessment Report of April 2005 or to the *Owner's Commitments and Assurances* included in Appendix E of the report.

6. All potential significant adverse environmental, economic, social, heritage and health effects identified by the public, that fall within the purview of the further assessment, are considered to be manageable to an acceptable level through:
 - the implementation of Proponent commitments to mitigation identified in the Application, in the Application Supplement and in the *Owner's Commitments and Assurances* and correspondence from RAVCo dated May 26, 2005, submitted to EAO;

- compliance with the conditions of the Environmental Assessment Certificate (including the design, construction, operation and maintenance of the Project); and,
 - compliance with subsequent statutory permits, licences and approvals and other authorization requirements.
7. The Project is in the broad public interest and it provides significant economic benefits to the Province of British Columbia and the Lower Mainland.



Joan Hesketh
Executive Director and Deputy Minister
Environmental Assessment Office

Dated: May 27, 2005