

**REZONING**

# Airport authority opposes plan for Richmond development

City staff recommend approval of two projects to build highrise towers, including affordable housing

**BY TARA CARMAN**  
VANCOUVER SUN

The Vancouver Airport Authority is opposing plans for new highrise developments in the Capstan Village area of Richmond, saying residents would be disturbed by too much aircraft noise.

Richmond staff have recommended that council approve the rezoning applications under terms which offer the two developers, Concord Pacific and Pinnacle, bonus density in exchange for helping to finance a Canada Line station at Capstan Way.

Concord Pacific proposes to build 1,245 new residences, of which 81 would be low-end market rental or affordable units, near the intersection of Patterson and Sexsmith roads. The other developer, Pinnacle, is proposing 200 new residences, of which 13 would be affordable units, near Sexsmith and Capstan. The buildings will be of varying heights up to a maximum of 16 storeys.

However, Transport Canada has deemed the area incompatible with new residential development due to high levels of aircraft noise, said Anne Murray, YVR's vice-president of community and environmental affairs.

"We don't recommend that there be new residential development. Transport Canada doesn't recommend that and we want to make sure we point that out to the City of Richmond," Murray said in an interview.

Richmond's official community plan has its own guidelines for what's called aircraft noise sensitive development and the proposed residences are in a permitted area under those rules, as long as developers take steps to minimize noise transmission.

"With modern building practices, a lot of aircraft noise can be mitigated for people living inside homes," said City of Richmond spokesman Ted Townsend. Many of the proposed developments are multi-family residential and such dwellings are easier

to insulate against outside noise than detached homes, he added.

If approved, the developments would be part of the city's broader strategy to house more people in town centre areas and along the Canada Line. City staff reports indicate that the Capstan Village area is designated for future high-density growth, something YVR's Murray acknowledges.

"If the city chooses to approve new ... residential development in those areas, we know that they have these stringent requirements, that they have those guidelines that really try to make it quieter for people who live there," Murray said, adding that YVR has worked cooperatively with Richmond for decades. "But it's important for people to know that the airplanes will

still be operating there, so if they're choosing to move into that area ... there will be aircraft noise."

Construction of the new Capstan station is estimated at about \$25 million and is to be funded entirely by developers. TransLink requires that 50 per cent of Capstan Village's new residences — about 3,250 dwellings — are built or approved for development

before station construction, according to a report prepared for Richmond council.

The proposed rezonings passed third reading unanimously on Monday night but must still be formally adopted by council, Townsend said, adding that no date has been set.

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**TRANSIT**

# Reward offered in latest attack on bus driver

**BY EVAN DUGGAN**  
VANCOUVER SUN

The union representing Metro Vancouver bus drivers is offering a \$2,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of a man who attacked a bus driver on the weekend.

The attack happened on Feb. 18 at 76th Avenue and King George Highway in Surrey on the No. 321 route.

The driver asked a passenger to step back, away from the front of the bus, said Don MacLeod, president, Canadian Auto Workers Local 111, in a news release. The passenger moved back, but grabbed the driver's throat with both hands, choking him for about a minute as he left the bus, staring emotionless into his face, MacLeod said.

The driver was shocked, but is recuperating well, he said.

MacLeod said recorded attacks on bus drivers climbed from 119 in 2010 to 145 in 2011. Among those was Charles Dixon, who suffered a broken bone near his right eye during an attack at the Edmonds bus loop on Feb. 15, 2011. Del Louie, 21, is awaiting sentencing in the case after pleading guilty to assault causing bodily harm and assault with a weapon, for striking Dixon's son Aaron with a 1.2-metre piece of wood.

RCMP officers were called after Saturday's attack but couldn't find the culprit, he said. Videotapes from the bus were given to police.

The union has repeatedly called for more Transit police on buses to provide better security to drivers and passengers.

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