

# Richmond Food Bank Relocation Project

## Final Project Report

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DATE: 19 June 2014

SUBJECT: Final Report: Richmond Food Bank Relocation Project

The above team has created the attached report to present the results of our undertaking of the Richmond Food Bank Relocation Project to our community partner, the Richmond Food Bank and the UBC APSC 461 administrators. The Richmond Food Bank currently faces a serious lack of parking at its warehouse location on distribution days. The project entailed looking at creative and various solutions to the Richmond Food Bank limited parking.

This report fulfills the requirement of submitting a project proposal and will also serve to outline the measures we have taken throughout the term. By working together the past couple of weeks we have attempted to integrate with our community partner to understand their circumstances. We visited the food bank several times to see the problem first hand and survey the clients and volunteers. The results of our work is two-fold: we propose that the RFB consider a potential new location which we consider equally accessible, and that the concurrently lobby the City of Richmond to allow them some leniency on the street parking (can take several forms). The proposed solutions demonstrate the research and planning that has been completed to further the combined goals of education through service learning and the relief of the parking issues at the Richmond Food Bank. The report also contains supporting information for the recommendations that we have developed.

We hope that this attached document and the work we have done form a compelling argument to undertake the solutions we present within the report.

**Abstract**

The Richmond Food Bank Society provides food support and other ancillary community services to those in need in the greater Richmond community. The warehouse is located on Cedarbridge Way in the City Centre neighbourhood in the heart of Richmond. They currently face a lack of parking for their clients on distribution days, and they are conscious of the expiry of their lease in two years. In furtherance of the registered charity's mission they have identified that parking poses a serious obstruction to the convenience and accessibility of their services. Due to the limited resources of all of the stakeholders, a solution is being proposed to adapt the warehouse location, and to seek for some parking support from the city of Richmond. The new warehouse and the suggestions for the city of Richmond are proposed based on research performed over the months of May and June including surveys of several of the food bank stakeholders.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Richmond is a middle class city with a population of over 150,000 citizens. Over the past 30 years the city has grown largely through immigration. Today approximately 60% of the city was born outside of Canada [1]. Residents of Richmond range from being some of the wealthiest in the lower mainland, to being completely homeless. Six percent of adults do not have any income, and 23% have an income of less than \$10,000 per year (less than \$833 per month)[2]. The City Centre neighborhood is the most populous with 20% of the Richmond population living within its boundaries. The neighborhood has the lowest household income in the city with many residents living below the poverty line [2]. The Richmond Food Bank (RFB) is located in the centre of the neighborhood, and the heart of the city.

The RFB mission statement is *“To be a caring organization that provides food assistance, advocacy, and related support for community members in need”*[3] and to fulfill this purpose each week provides food and other services to over 1500 people. The core of their operations are “distribution days” where 50 volunteers serve as many as 200 families who visit the warehouse in the span of several hours. To support the aim of the RFB they wish to provide unrestricted access to their warehouse, which is manifested as a central location, public transit accessibility and free parking. The current space cannot handle the volume of vehicular traffic during its distribution days. Specifically, limited parking in the warehouse area is proving to be limiting the accessibility of its services.

The RFB's struggle with parking is a major issue: there are 22 free parking spots available at the current location and it must serve 200 families that visit each distribution day. Restrictions on the parking impede the fulfillment of the organization's core mission. The problem is exacerbated by the parking needs of the volunteers and staff, many of whom are seniors who drive and for whom accessibility is an important factor for their civic engagement. The alternatives to being able to park gratis are either to pay for the city metered parking on the street or to chance a fine from the City of Richmond. Since the clients are already in financial need the metered parking may be an equivalent obstruction to access in much the same way as the fines. As a consequence of the risks taken by many clients, the distribution days result in clients receiving fines for illegal parking. This has an immediate negative influence, as clients may be discouraged from returning, and also through the word of mouth transmission of critical reviews of the RFB. As a result, access to additional parking has been sought from neighboring

businesses and local churches. This method has had some success with providing additional regular access to free parking. However these spots still leave the fundamental problem unresolved: some of the businesses offering parking are seasonal, and other spots do not address the issue for clients/volunteers who have mobility issues. The RFB also has limited resources and cannot afford the additional costs of paying for the metered parking for its clients/volunteers as it survives entirely on donations from the community and partner organizations.

The RFB is also dealing with the upcoming expiry of their lease in 2016. Since they have no guarantee that they will be able to renew the lease, our community partner is looking for potential locations to relocate. The current location adequately serves their community for most of the year, but there are peak seasons (Christmas, Thanksgiving) when the warehouse cannot store all of the goods and services that are donated. They are also conscious that other locations present the opportunity of having more parking spaces. The RFB has approached the University's Community Based Experiential Learning (CBEL) programs to solicit potential solutions to the problems. Our group has come up with two possible solutions, which can be used separately or collectively to provide for the short and long term parking needs.

## **2.0 PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT**

Poverty is one of the main causes for hunger in Canada [9]. Although Canada is a first-world country, hunger can still be a very visible problem in populous places such as Richmond. The existence of the RFB plays a major role in combating and relieving hunger in the Richmond community. After considering the above issues in addition to the parking and the lease expiry problems, we got a better understanding of the purpose and role we played in this project.

Since the solution needs to be able to satisfy all the different stakeholders, it is imperative that we can connect to them in order to understand their priorities and how they are impacted by the problem. This can be challenging because as engineers we are all prone to seek technical solutions based on our own observations. Additionally many of the stakeholders have different backgrounds and cultures so it may be difficult for us to relate to all of them. Interacting with our stakeholders was a very sensitive issue, as their use of the food bank can be a very emotional and personal situation.

The purpose of the project is to ultimately facilitate the RFB in carrying out their mission statement by providing a sustainable solution to the parking issue so that the different stakeholders such as the volunteers and the clients can have better accessibility and convenience.

### **3.0 PARTNER ORGANIZATION, PARTICIPANTS, AND COMMUNITY**

The RFB is a charity organization with a number of stakeholders who are affected by its operations, and by the proposed solutions we have developed. These stakeholders were considered at length in order for us to come up with positive and meaningful solutions that have limited adverse side effects. The stakeholders include staff, volunteers, clients, the City of Richmond, and the community in which the Food Bank is located.

As the mission of the RFB is focused on providing for those in need, clients are considered to be the most important stakeholder of the organisation. The RFB serves food to over 1500 clients a week so they are the party that suffers the most from the parking problem, through limited access and the risk of parking fines [3]. There are many reasons for which a client needs to drive: some clients have physical disabilities, some have children with them, some live in areas with no public transportation and some are receiving a weeks worth of groceries and need a car to transport it all. According to the RFB statistics, 15% of the clients are long-term users and 32% of the clients are children [3]. The clients also have the potential to be negatively affected by a change of location. It was imperative that we limit the possible downside to this stakeholder.

The volunteers play an important role in the operation of the RFB. The RFB has over 180 regular volunteers who come every week. The volunteers are performing a civic service and may be choosing the organization they volunteer based on location, or ease of access. On a distribution day, there are up to 50 volunteers [3]. Around 90% of the volunteers are seniors, so driving is definitely a preferred method of transportation as it is a lot more convenient. Due to the fact that there is a limited amount of free parking, those who do not get a spot are forced to park somewhere further away from the RFB. The volunteers are in charge of the preparation and distribution of the food. These works include a lot of heavy lifting and the set up for distribution can add several hours to the regular three hours of distribution. At the end of distribution process, a lot of them are tired but some still have to take a long walk to where they

parked their car in order to go home. We were mindful that not only are the volunteering affected by parking, but that they will also be affected by the potential warehouse relocation.

There are a total of six staff members at the RFB and are in charge of the operation of the Food Bank. The parking and the move also affect the staff members since they are daily users, and they try to commute to the food bank by methods other than driving to free up parking for clients.

The City of Richmond is also invested in the project. They are in charge of the street parking regulations and by-laws, including the zones and times of paid street parking. They are also the ones who issue parking tickets in the RFB's community. Since some of the project solutions could potentially involve the City of Richmond, parking revenues and some deliberation may be at stake for the city.

Lastly, the community in which the RFB is located definitely needs to be considered for the success of the project. The RFB affects more than the people that use it; it indirectly impacts the community in which it is located. The current location is near other social services and organizations that are geared towards serving the community, and by moving to a new location it may affect the ability for other groups to connect to their clients in the community. Another minor consideration is that a negative perception usually comes with the Food Bank because of the stigma associated with its clients. The RFB and its clients may be unwelcome in a community that is trying to develop affluence.

#### **4.0 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT**

Based on our understanding of the issues the RFB is facing, the main objective of the project was to propose a solution to the short term parking issue, and the long-term lease expiry. In addition, it is imperative to propose a solution that meets the key technical concerns of the relevant stakeholders. Thus, the objective is to find a solution that has the following attributes: abundance of parking stalls, accessibility to public transportation, proximity to other social services, and sufficient warehouse size. By finding an appropriate solution, we believe we held paramount RFB's mission and vision of serving those in need of assistance.

In line with the project's main objective, the measurable goals of the project fall under two categories. The first rigidly defined goal was to increase the number of parking spots shared amongst the staff, volunteers, and clients available at the RFB warehouse from 22 spots to 50 spots. The second goal of the project was more flexible: to research a location or region within the City of Richmond that is appropriate and practical for the RFB to relocate to. In addition to being consistent with the first goal of having 50 parking spots, the new warehouse location needs to be within five to ten minute walking distance from public transportation and be at least 4500 square-feet in building area. Furthermore, the location needs to be financially feasible for the RFB to lease; the lease should cost at most \$9000 per month. These target values were obtained by trying to exceed the figure for the current warehouse location of the RFB, as given to us by our community partner.

In order to meet the objectives and goals of the project and congruous with the purpose of CBEL, we need to develop a positive relationship with the stakeholders of the RFB and the project. Throughout the duration of the project, we need to be integrated into the communities so that we can obtain a thorough understanding of the interests and concerns of the clients, volunteers, and staff members of the RFB. By doing so, we can better propose solutions that prioritize the interests of the stakeholders.

## **5.0 APPROACH & METHODS**

### **5.1 Approach**

In order to propose a suitable solution that could meet the goals of the project, we decided the most appropriate approach was to involve the relevant stakeholders throughout the duration of the project. By integrating the stakeholders into the project, we better understood their concerns and needs. When brainstorming for possible solutions, we ensured the ideas were in their best interests.

As the first step of integrating the stakeholders, we had a meeting with Hajira, the volunteer coordinator, and other staff members of the RFB. Using lessons from lecture, we communicated openly with them, raising questions and obtaining feedback and comments. Not only did we get a better understanding of our role in the project and the key issues of the RFB in the meeting, we began to develop a working relationship with the staff members by conducting ourselves professionally and respectfully. In addition, we made an effort to make a donation of



food from their list of “most needed items” as a sign of our commitment to assisting the RFB in serving those in need.

The volunteers are the backbone of the RFB and are an important stakeholder for our project. We wanted to get their view and opinions of the issues of the RFB. We conducted interviews with several of the volunteers and learned about some of the parking incidences they had previously experienced, including paying for parking violations and having to park several blocks away. Furthermore, we volunteered on a distribution day as we felt it was important for us to experience the issue ourselves. We saw first hand many people were lining up to access the RFB and the parking lot was congested and inadequate.

During another distribution day, we wanted to get the clients' perspective on the issues of the RFB so we conducted surveys and interviews with many of the clients. The purpose of the survey was to understand the different methods of transportation the clients use to access the RFB and also where the clients commute from. Similar to the interviews we had with the volunteers, the interviews we conducted with the clients also resulted in stories and experiences with inadequate parking and parking fines.

## 5.2 Methods of Delivery

There are three methods of delivery of our solutions to the RFB. The final report acts as the main method of presenting our research and our proposed solutions. The report is to be presented to the RFB for their information and analysis. Secondly, a website is created to document the project and summarize our findings so that stakeholders who are interested in the project can easily access it on the Internet. Thirdly, we will make a presentation of our solutions to the RFB.

## 6.0 RESULTS

### 6.1 Interview Results

In order to obtain a better understanding of the parking issue, we decided to carry out face-to-face interviews with the key stakeholders. Throughout the interview, we acquired their opinions of all potential issues which they may have experienced or foreseen in the RFB. The questions were not limited to the inadequate parking problem, instead we used open ended questions focusing on a) the major barriers that keep people from using food banks, b) factors

that hinder their access to the food bank, and c) aspects of the food bank where they would like to see improvement. Refer to Appendix A-4 for interview questions.

The responses we received from the interviews were extremely valuable to us and facilitated numerous meaningful discussions about the possible solutions to those concerns. From our perspective, this was an important development in our critical thinking skills because the variety of responses raised several interesting points. For instance, some suggested that the current RFB location has a lack of public transit, while others find it accessible with only a seven-minute walk to the Lansdowne sky train station. The major thing we learned is that people have unique views of the problems --- what matters to one may not be the same to others. Hence as researchers, it is hard to satisfy everybody but we have to depict the crucial matter in the situation to achieve equilibrium.

#### 6.1.1 Staffs

When discussing about the parking issues with the staff members, we suggested the possibility of improving or changing the distribution process to minimize the clients' visit duration. An efficient method of delivery should reduce the amount of traffic to the RFB at a time and free up more parking spots. However, it appears that the expiring lease is more of a concern to the staff. They reminded us that the warehouse owner might sell the property due to the rising rental and lease prices in Richmond. As a result, the RFB will need to relocate. In their mind, it is critical to plan ahead and begin scouting for new sites that address many of their criteria. Otherwise, the RFB would risk relocating to a location that could prevent it from providing effective services to those in need.

The staff also mentioned that while the current warehouse size is adequate for normal operations, the warehouse is often insufficient during peak seasons, such as Christmas and Thanksgiving. Thus, a larger warehouse is preferred. We raised the point that a larger warehouse may lead to a more expensive monthly lease rate but the staff assured that they are not concerned financially. Finally, the staff informed us that the current location has close proximity to several municipal welfare services. Many of the RFB's clients are referred by these welfare services; it will be advantageous for the new location to be easily accessible by these organizations.

### 6.1.2 Volunteers

From the interview results, having access to free parking near the RFB is crucial for the volunteers who drive on distribution days. When questioned about pay parking, the volunteers showed reluctant responses. As a result, the volunteers have looked for different ways to avoid paying for parking. Some decided to come early in the morning to make sure to get a free parking spot, and some indicated parking several blocks away.

Though many like the freedom of driving to the RFB, a significant portion of them is not against the idea of using public transit and carpooling. This piece of information allowed us to consider organizing a carpooling program as a potential solution. However, a few volunteers suggested that using public transit is not feasible. The possibility to having to change transit and the high cost of public transportation are the two main deterrents. In terms of cost, buying a monthly bus pass is more expensive than paying for street parking twice a week. Another issue volunteers suggested to us that contributes to the parking issue is the slow registration process. All the registration information at the RFB is paper based, and it takes a significant amount of time to find the existing records for the clients. Once the registration process is done, the food distribution takes relatively less time to complete. Based on this, a more efficient registration process may improve the parking issue.

When inquired about the possible location change, many volunteers have responded that the current location is quite good, since it is close to City Center. However, one of the volunteers expressed dislike toward the current location since it is only close to the Lansdowne sky train station and there are no other public transit options. The volunteer explained that the need to transfer between transit systems is a serious inconvenience to clients who have disabilities, as it can add to their commute time. Most of the volunteers who participated in the interview were not aware that the lease would expire in two years.

### 6.1.3 Clients

In general for clients of the RFB, public transit accessibility is more important than having more parking spots. A client told us that it usually takes her around 20 minutes of commuting on public transit and an additional 10 minutes of walking to get to the RFB. Even though the client suggested the 30-minute commute as reasonable to her, it highlights the inconvenience for clients to access the RFB by public transportation. For the clients who drive,

the limited parking availability and the risk of receiving parking tickets are the main concerns. In order to get a better food selection, many clients choose to come into the RFB early and wait over two hours before the distribution actually starts. In doing so, if they do not get one of the free parking spots, they either need to pay for the parking or take their chances for a parking ticket.

## 6.2 Surveys Results

The purpose of the survey questions (see Appendix A-5) is twofold: to gather information on how people are accessing the RFB and where they come from. This helps us to know the geographic distribution of the stakeholders so a better location can be selected. It also gives us an idea of how many people coming to the RFB require parking spots. Our survey targeted mainly on the volunteers; a recent survey was also conducted by the RFB, which provided us the similar information about the clients. Figure 1 and Table 1 summarize the combined results of the surveys.

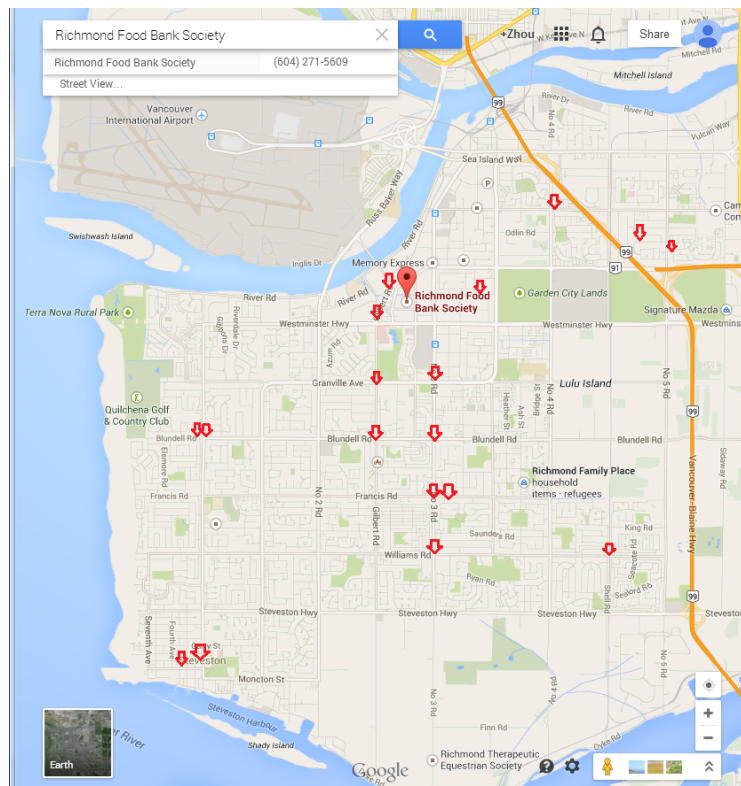


Figure 1. Origins of Stakeholders.

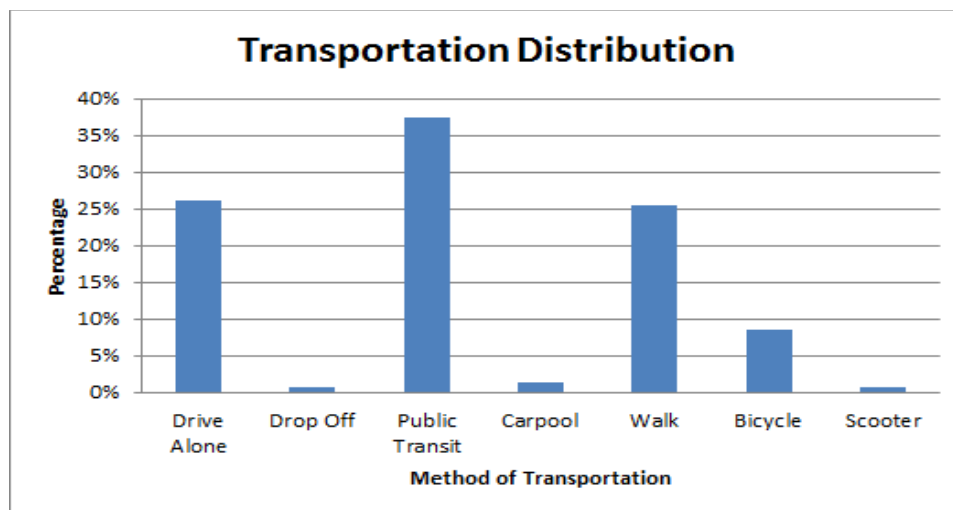


Table 1. Transportation Distribution of Stakeholders.

Based on the results of the survey, we concluded two main points. First, as indicated by the red arrows in the map of Richmond in Figure 1, people who access the RFB (the red pin in Figure 1) come from all over Richmond; however, there appears to be a slight concentration of those who commute from Richmond's City Centre region. Secondly, as shown in Table 1, 27% of those surveyed access the RFB by means of a car. That is, 600 households and 180 volunteers access the RFB on a weekly basis. Assuming each household owns a car and volunteers drive alone, then that is nearly 300 cars over the two distribution days. This statistic highlights the severity of the inadequate parking spots at the RFB. Also, as 37% of members access the RFB by public transits, we considered public transit accessibility when looking for possible new locations.

The staff members, volunteers, and clients were very supportive of our interviews and surveys. They responded with valuable input about the issues the RFB is facing from their own perspective and what is important for the RFB to encourage more people to be able to access their services.

### 6.3 Proposed Solutions

In summary, we are trying to address two issues, the short-term inadequate parking spots and the long-term lease expiry within two years. Through our investigations, relocating the RFB to a new location with sufficient parking could solve both issues. However such a location needs to be carefully chosen, since we would like to keep the RFB close to public transits and

other community services. While looking for such a new locations, we also felt that it would be beneficial for RFB to form partnership with the municipal government to resolve the parking issue. It would open up more options for RFB to relocate.

### 6.3.1 New Location

We developed a loose selection criteria of potential locations by incorporating all of the points presented in Sections 6.1 and 6.2. Using this criteria, we decided to look for a new warehouse location that would be located at or near the City Centre neighborhood and meet the parking demands of the RFB while providing reasonable access to public transit. In addition, the warehouse size should be similar or larger than the current one. To do so, we used two different approaches. First, we found all the zoned areas of Richmond where the RFB could legally operate using the City of Richmond's interactive zoning map [4]. Then we searched the Internet for warehouse listings on realtor websites and online classifieds that would meet all the criteria of the new warehouse location. For ones that we thought were potential relocation sites, we drove to the location to scout the area and the listed building.

After scouting several potential locations, we found a location as shown in Figure 2 as the red star that fits most of the selection criteria. The address of the location is 8791 Beckwith Road, Richmond.

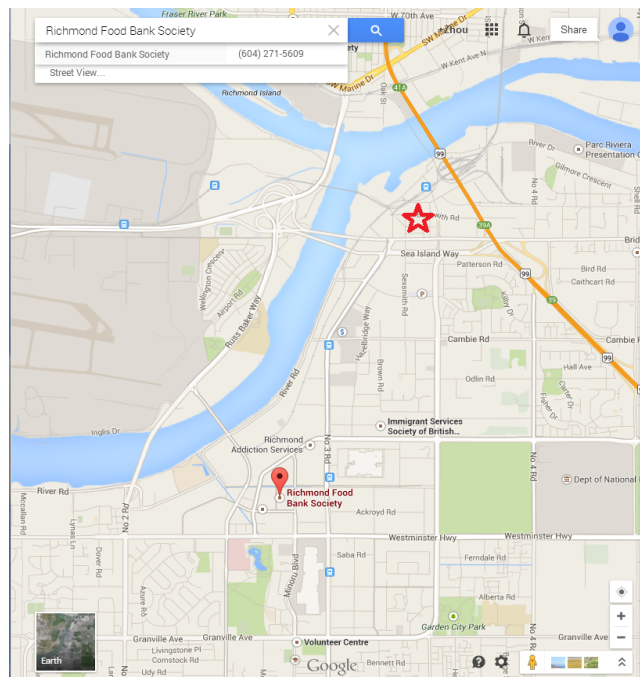


Figure 2. 8791 Beckwith Road Warehouse Location (Red Star)

This new location belongs to Light Industrial zoning and RFB fits in the usage criteria. The warehouse size is 6200 SF, which is a 25% increase compared to approximately 5000 SF of the current location. The extra space will help RFB to store more food during peak seasons. It is a five-minute walking distance to the Bridgeport sky train station (Figure 3) and a major bus loop (Figure 4). This will reduce the need to change transit and make the location more accessible to those who take public transit.

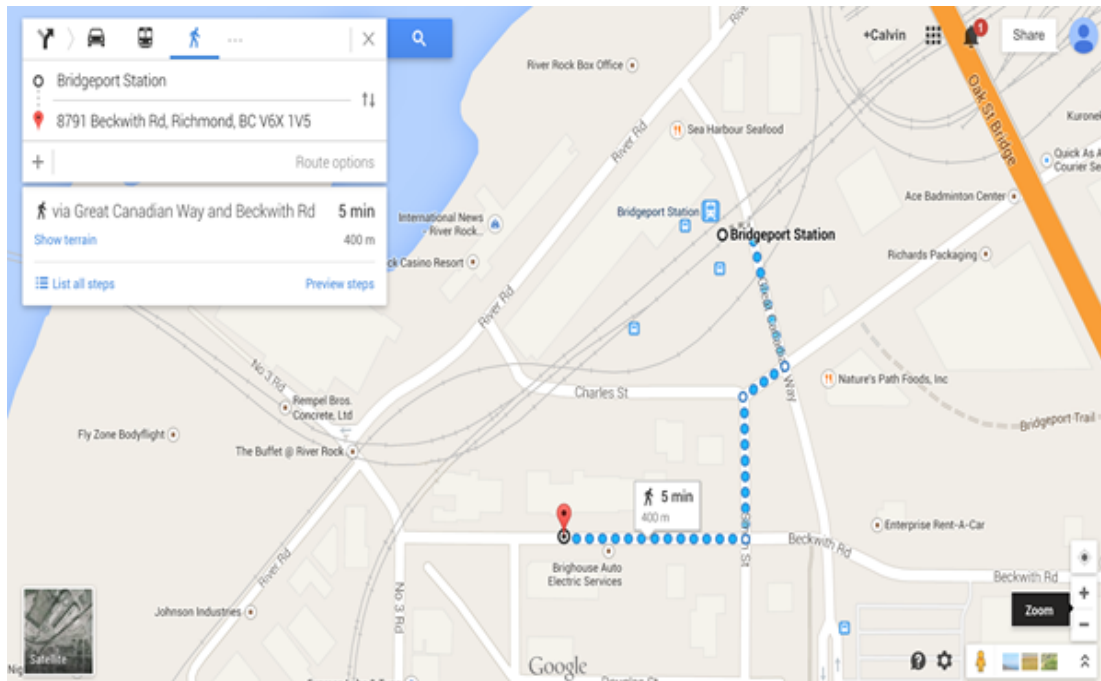


Figure 3. Distance Between Bridgeport Station and 8791 Beckwith Road.

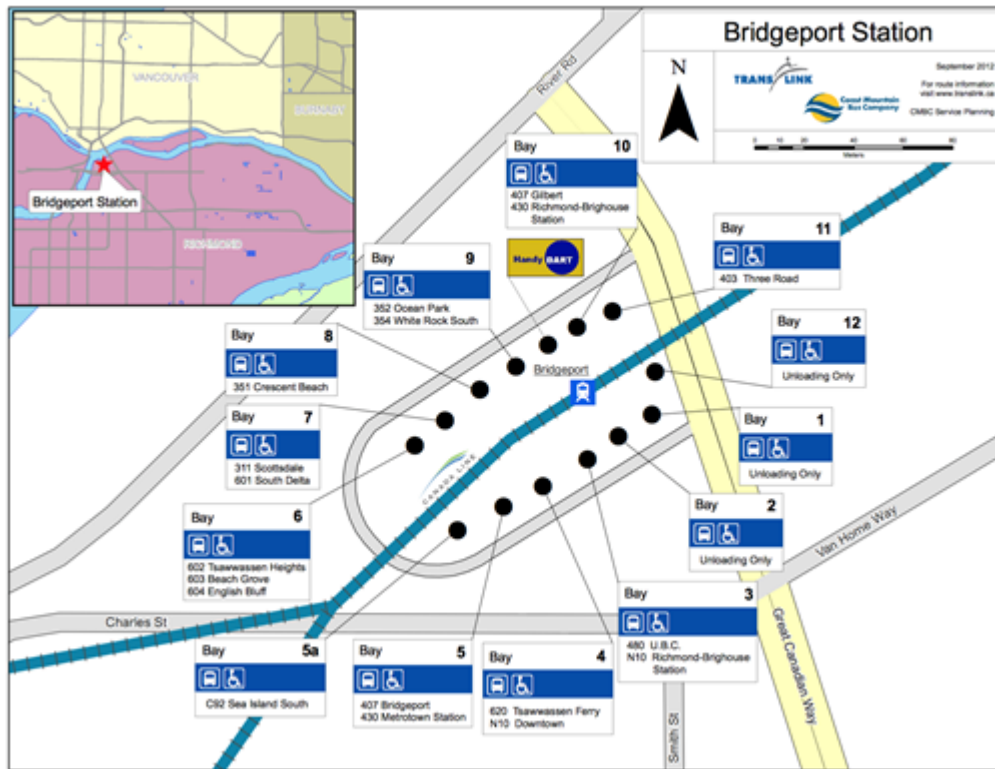


Figure 4. Bridgeport Station Bus Loop.

Our onsite scouting shows there are sufficient parking spots nearby; it should easily facilitate 80 and more cars. The cost of lease, including cost of operations, will be approximately \$7000 per month which is less than the \$9000 per month lease cost of the current location. The downside of the new location is that it is located in the Light Industrial zoning area; there is not many community services nearby. However the Bridgeport sky train station is only two stations away from the Richmond Center station which makes it very accessible through public transit. This allows the RFB to maintain close proximity with other welfare services, which are scattered within the Richmond Center area. The new location enables us to achieve our project goals by solving the short term parking issue and long term lease expiry issue.

### 6.3.2 Government Partnership

At the current location of RFB, there are street parking available. However they are all pay parking enforced by Richmond City Hall. If those pay-parking spots could become free for the RFB community members during distribution hours, it would greatly ease the parking issue. We know that RFB operates independently of the government, so it would be tricky to setup such partnership. The partnership might need to explicitly state the operational independency of



RFB. There are already some interests within the RFB to talk to City Hall on this matter. We would like to propose different forms of partnership with which RFB could approach City Hall.

#### 6.3.2.1 Parking Permits

In this option, we proposed to obtain certain number of parking permits (zone 3) from Richmond City Hall. Those parking permits could be given out to clients, staff and volunteers during distribution days, so that they can park along the streets.

#### 6.3.2.2 Removal of the Parking Meter

The City Hall could also change the by-law to remove the parking meters from the location where the RFB is located. It would not be a completely removal of parking meters. The parking issue at RFB only occurs during distribution hours (11am to 1pm on Wednesdays, 11am to 1pm and 6pm to 7pm on Thursdays). By restricting free parking to these hours, it would not only ease the parking condensation, but also avoid other non-stakeholders to use the spots for the whole day. It would introduce minimum impact to government income from parking fee and parking tickets.

#### 6.3.2.3 Financial Aid to Waive the Parking Tickets

Lastly, Richmond City Hall could provide the RFB financial aids. If the parking violators are clients at RFB during the distribution days, then the RFB could submit a waiver form for the tickets on the clients' behalf. There will be no direct financial donation to RFB from the City Hall, but the ticket waiver will allow the RFB to encourage more clients to come.

The RFB could approach the City Hall with any of the above methods of partnership. We believe any one of the methods can help the RFB to solve the parking issues. If the partnership can also be maintained after relocation, it will remove the adequate parking spots as a criterion for searching new location. It is also possible for the RFB to form alliances with other non-profit organizations to campaign a change proposal to municipal government to encourage more people who are in need to use RFB.

## 7.0 DISCUSSION

As presented in the previous section, a large percentage of clients from the RFB drive on distribution days. By extrapolating our survey data we can see that with approximately 600

household (1500 people) served per week, more than 150 cars will need parking spots (from previous section). It is important to note that the 150 parking spots are not needed at once. Rather, they are distributed over two distribution days (six hours total), which means that they need close to 25 parking spots per hour on average. Of the 22 parking spots, 14 of which are taken by the volunteers and staff of the RFB, only eight spots remain for clients. The RFB also have approximately 180 volunteers coming in every week, and most of them drive alone. The 14 volunteer parking spots are definitely not enough. This is a meaningful illustration of how severe the problem is.

This introduces many difficulties for the clients. The clients are delayed because they will have to wait for available parking spots. If parking spots are not available, they might be inclined to park on reserved spots for other businesses. They may also park on the streets which is a paid-parking zone. However, many clients do not wish to pay to park when they are coming for assistance from the food bank. There have been instances where clients have parked without paying and received parking tickets. Both of these options are deterrents for the clients that drive and the nature of this problem goes directly against the RFB's vision.

Many of the clients who were interviewed stated that they would not be able to access the RFB if they could not drive. There were clients who arrived more than two hours early just to secure a parking spot in order to be able to receive their week's grocery. This means that these clients spend a considerable and valuable amount of time waiting for the Food Bank. Another significant problem that reduces efficiency at the RFB is the check-in/registration process. The clients have commented that they have seen long lineups due to the slow process of checking-in and registering. Currently, the RFB uses manual registration cards that are arranged based on their address. The client tickets based on their family size, disabilities, and personal needs. However, this process usually quite slow since the address must be manually sorted through and picked out. This introduces a slow-moving queue at entrance, but a less-congested lineup inside the food bank.

Furthermore, the volunteers face problems due to the lack of parking stalls. There are only 14 parking spots reserved for the staff and volunteers, but there are over 180 volunteers who assist the RFB weekly. They work over five hours on distribution days and the majority of them are elderly volunteers. It is inconvenient for them to walk a distance to access their cars

after an exhausting day. There are some new volunteers who take up some of the 8 stalls reserved for the clients which further complicates the situation.

The staff is concerned about the lease expiry; the lease of the current warehouse expires in two years, and they want to keep a backup option for relocation if their current landlord is hesitant on renewing the lease. The staff views the parking problem as a secondary short-term issue, whereas the lease expiry is a long-term concern. As such, the solution to the parking issue can be incorporated in the long-term solution of lease-expiry. This means that the short-term parking issue might not be solved, but in the long run, it can be solved if a suitable location is found for relocation.

The current location of the RFB is quite accessible, both by SkyTrain (seven minute walk from Lansdowne Station) and Bus (three minute walk from Elmbride Way, seven minutes from No. 3 Road). As such, a significant portion (37%) of the clients of the RFB take public transit on distribution days. Due to this convenient location, clients from further distances can come to the RFB without much hassle. Not only does it attract more clients, the proximity to public transit aids the parking stall problem since clients who don't need to bring their cars can easily take the SkyTrain or bus to come to the RFB. The majority of the clients surveyed live in Richmond City Center and in the general vicinity, which is where the RFB is located. This means that the location of the RFB in the City Center area is critical since a large portion of the clients is situated in the region.

## **8.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In section 4 we described how we set out to increase the number of parking spots in the short term, and also do some research to be able to confidently recommend potential new locations to the staff of the RFB. By performing the research into Richmond, public transit, the stakeholders of the RFB we proposed two solutions to the staff, lobbying the city of Richmond to solve the immediate problem of the limited parking, and the proposed location for the Lease expiry. With these solutions we achieved our desired level of success. The real success beyond our basic goals will only be seen if the RFB chooses to adopt our suggestions and if they work out in time.

Our purpose for taking on the CBEL project and the purpose of this project as we outlined in section 2 was to have an impact on the community in need, to help those who are unable or struggle to help themselves. We tried to take on the values of the RFB while performing this project and I think in the end even if the solutions we proposed aren't adopted, that we will still have achieved some measure of success. Even if all that we advanced for the cause was that we ourselves, and the people we will share our story with will become more informed on the problem of poverty and the current state of affairs here locally, but also globally.

Our project objectives developed as we became more informed, and engaged our stakeholders. By proposing our two solutions we hope that the RFB and the other stakeholders will benefit and will be able to better cope/serve those who are hungry. More concretely we acknowledge that the food bank does not solve poverty and hunger by itself. There may be some root cause like the systematic exploitation of other by the rich, but it may also be a systematic or “adaptive” problem as defined by Ronald A. Heifetz [10]. Instead attempting to solve this problem the RFB attempts to treat the symptoms of poverty and of inequality. As we learned during our time working on the project and as can be seen by our proposed solutions, just because we cannot guarantee to have solved the problem, no kind gesture is in vain.

## 9.0 REFERENCES

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## APPENDICES

### A-1 Food Bank Facts

- For every \$1 we spend, we collect and distribute \$6 worth of food
- We have provided weekly service to Richmond since 1983
- We serve over 1500 people and give out 30 000 lbs of food every week
- 55% of our clients are temporary users, most of whom are suffering through a crisis
- 32% of our clients are children
- 30% could be self-sufficient, but have cost of living concerns
- 15% are long-term users with multiple barriers to employment, including chronic illness, mental health problems, or disabilities
- We provide food to the other community meals in Richmond, including Bethel Church, St. Albans, and Gilmore, as well as providing food for other agencies serving low-income Richmond residents
- We have over 180 regular volunteers who come every week; in addition, many groups come to volunteer during the winter and summer months

### A-2 About hunger in Canada

Many people do not realize the extent of hunger's reach in this country. Each month, close to 850,000 Canadians are assisted by food banks, and 36.4% of those helped are children and youth.

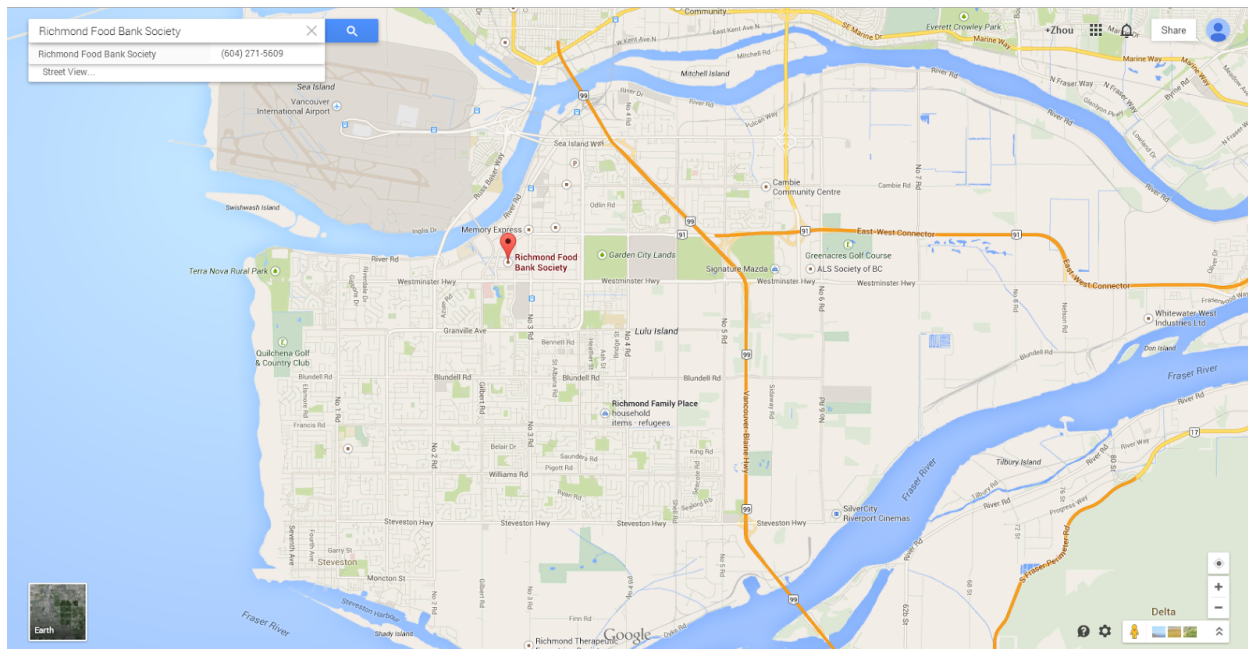
The problem of hunger is a persistent one, with food banks providing comparable levels of food and other assistance for the better part of a decade.

Who is turning to food banks? There is no single, typical profile. The people helped include families with children, employed people whose wages are not sufficient to cover basic living essentials, individuals on social assistance, and Canadians living on a fixed income, including people with disabilities and seniors.

Consider these figures from HungerCount 2013:

- 36.4% of those turning to food banks are children and youth
- 4.3% of adults helped are over age 65
- 11.3% of people assisted are Aboriginal
- 50% of households helped receive social assistance
- 11.5% have income from current or recent employment
- 16.4% receive disability-related income supports
- 8% of food banks ran out of food during the survey period
- 50% of food banks needed to cut back on the amount of food provided to each household

### A-3 Map of Current Richmond Food Bank Location



### A-4 Interview Questions

1. How do you get to Richmond Food Bank? How long does it take?
2. Which part of Richmond do you come from?
3. What do you perceive as the biggest problem at Richmond Food Bank?
4. What may stop you from coming to Richmond Food Bank?
5. What do you think stop others using Richmond Food Bank?
6. Any suggestions you could give to Richmond Food Bank?
7. Is parking an issue to you?
8. Would you still come to Richmond Food Bank if you need to carpool or use public transit?
9. Where would you suggest as a new location to Richmond Food Bank?

**A-5 Survey Forms**

## **RICHMOND FOOD BANK SURVEY**

A survey to help the Richmond food bank plan for the future.

**What region of Richmond are you living in?**

If living outside of Richmond please select 'Outside of Richmond'

- ☐ Blundell
- ☐ Bridgeport
- ☐ West Cambie
- ☐ Steveston
- ☐ Seafari
- ☐ Shellmont
- ☐ Hamilton
- ☐ Gilmore
- ☐ Thompson
- ☐ Sea Island
- ☐ East Richmond
- ☐ East Cambie
- ☐ City Centre
- ☐ Broadmoor
- ☐ Outside of Richmond

**What method would you regularly use to commute to and from the Richmond Food Bank?**

- ☐ I drive myself/ my family
- ☐ I carpool with another client/volunteer
- ☐ I use public transit
- ☐ I walk
- ☐ I ride a bicycle
- ☐ Other:

**What is your relationship with the Richmond Food Bank Society?**

- ☐ I am a Volunteer
- ☐ I am a Staff member
- ☐ I am a Client