

ITEM 3

MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 78

COUNCIL MEETING Nov. 25/74

Re: Traffic Delays at the Sperling Avenue, Douglas Road
and Cariboo Road Railroad Crossings

At the October 28, 1974 meeting of Council, it was mentioned that approximately 85% of the trains that utilize the Burlington Northern tracks through Burnaby are operated by the Canadian National Railway. It was suggested that the Municipality's efforts to alleviate the traffic problems that frequently occur at the level crossings at Sperling Avenue, Douglas Road and Cariboo Road should therefore be directed to the Canadian National Railway as principal user of the tracks, and to Burlington Northern Railway as owner of the tracks. It was understood that staff would look into this matter and report accordingly.

Mr. D. H. Burns, Superintendent for Burlington Northern, in a letter dated November 11, 1974 to the Municipal Manager, confirmed that approximately 85% of the trains that use the subject crossings are operated by Canadian National, and approximately 15% by Burlington Northern. Mr. Burns in his correspondence also pointed out that the company that operates the train is "generally" responsible and should be held accountable for movement and related delays that may occur; responsibility in this regard apparently does not as a general rule lie with the company that owns the track (Mr. Burns does not elaborate on what is meant by the word "generally").

Council will also be interested in knowing that Mr. Burns in a letter dated October 29, 1974 to the Manager describes in detail the manner in which a Burlington Northern train on October 15, 1974 during a pick-up prevented three Canadian National trains from getting by, and how this occurrence caused a 45 minute traffic delay at the Sperling Avenue crossing. Mr. Burns in this regard advised that:

"We do have instructions out to our crews that when they cannot proceed further, they are to clear crossings that they have blocked. By copy of this letter to the C.N. Operations Manager, I know that he will take up the matter with the respective crews.

You may be interested to know that we are presently working with the Canadian National on a series of improvements in this entire area that, among other things, will permit trains to pick-up at New Westminster and clear the main line while they are doing so. This should avoid the domino effect that the present trackage structure produces at certain times."

Mr. Burns also pointed out that in his opinion, "The only realistic solution is to establish overpasses or underpasses with respect to crossing at grade."

In the future, the Canadian National Railway will be included in the referral of all problems concerning delays and the backup of traffic at the three subject crossings.

This is for the information of Council.