

Re: BRENTWOOD TOWN CENTER - WESTERN SECTOR  
COMMUNITY PLAN #9A

ITEM	20
MANAGER'S REPORT NO.	75
COUNCIL MEETING	Nov. 22/76

Following is a report from the Director of Planning regarding Community Plan #9A.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT the Director of Planning's recommendations be referred to the Advisory Planning Commission for study and recommendation.

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PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
NOVEMBER 17, 1976

TO: MUNICIPAL MANAGER  
FROM: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING  
SUBJECT: BRENTWOOD TOWN CENTRE - WESTERN SECTOR  
COMMUNITY PLAN #9A

A. BACKGROUND

On 23 February 1976, Council received Manager's Report #12, Item 16: Brentwood Town Centre - Western Sector - Community Plan #9A. The plan considers the area bounded by Lougheed Highway, Gilmore Avenue, Douglas Road, Halifax Street and Rosser Avenue. The plan proposes changes in land use and vehicular and pedestrian circulation which will be implemented as a result of individual rezonings in a similar manner to other community plans. The plan was thus prepared to provide a guide or framework for future redevelopment of the study area.

B. PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

Since Council considered Community Plan #9A in February, Council and the Planning Department have received questions and comments with respect to the Plan. Two meetings have been held by the Advisory Planning Commission to consider the Plan. By instruction of Council, the Planning Department has met with all interested property owners within the affected area. Meetings have been held with Thompson, Berwick, Pratt and Partners and its engineering consultant to furnish them with information to aid their analysis. These consultants were commissioned by the Burnaby Chamber of Commerce on behalf of many of the property owners. Council has received the consultant's report. The Plan has also been discussed with the Fire Department.

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As all comments and submissions have now been received, the purpose of this report is to discuss in a comprehensive manner the issues raised and to recommend any appropriate adjustments to Community Plan #9A.

C. DISCUSSION OF INDICATED CONCERNS

A discussion of the comments received from the various parties follows. Areas of consideration can be divided into three categories: implementation, land use and traffic. Each of these areas will be discussed in turn.

Generally, the comments received were requests for further explanation and clarification of the Plan rather than opposition or suggestions for radical changes. It is agreed by all that the area does require a guide plan to direct future redevelopment. Further, it is agreed, due to the area's location with respect to major traffic routes and to Brentwood (a second level core in Burnaby's core area hierarchy), that an intensification of higher quality land uses is desirable both to serve and receive benefit from the Town Centre Area, Brentwood Shopping Centre and Brentwood Apartment Study Area. As stated in the Thompson, Berwick, Pratt and Partner's report: "Community Plan #9A is viewed as an extension to Brentwood, complementing decisions already taken affecting immediately adjacent areas" (T.B. & P., P.2).

(a) Implementation

(i) The Indicated Concerns

Generally, concern was expressed as to the timing of the changes in land use and traffic circulation suggested in the Plan. Would overall area rezonings be initiated by the Municipality or would rezonings occur as initiated by the private sector in accordance with the Plan? Particularly concerned were property owners in the western edge of the study area who wish to maintain presently viable businesses. Concern was expressed by property owners on the western arm of the proposed Buchanan cul-de-sac in regard to their dependence on property owners to their east developing first in order that Buchanan Street would reach these more westerly properties.

(ii) Departmental Comment

This Community Plan will be implemented in a similar manner to other community plans, that is, through individual rezonings initiated by the private sector in accordance with the Plan. As is normal with rezonings, specifics of the rezoning proposal will be resolved at the time the application is made, with prerequisites to rezoning being determined by Council. The Plan provides general land use, building bulk and site configuration guidelines to direct private development.

It is anticipated that the western edge of the study area will be the last to develop as it contains many viable small businesses. In fact, the Community Plan recommends that much of this existing development remain. The potential for a consolidation of four relatively small lots at the south-east corner of Gilmore and Halifax has been accommodated and suggested

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in the Plan. This consolidation would occur at the initiative of the property owners. The Plan indicates that the existing bowling alley site has a potential for office use. However, until a change of use is proposed, the bowling alley is a valid recreational asset to the area. Further, as the bowling alley site is a viable redevelopment site on its own as described in the Plan, an expansion of this use would not interfere with any future desirable consolidations.

It is strongly expected that development along the western arm of the proposed Buchanan Street cul-de-sac will occur from east to west. The Planning Department has received numerous inquiries concerning the development of properties abutting the eastern portion of this cul-de-sac. If, however, development initially occurs at the western end of the cul-de-sac, then interim access could be provided from Halifax Street or, possibly Loughheed Highway (subject to the approval of the Department of Highways).

(b) Land Use

(i) The Indicated Concerns

Generally, all parties agreed that the study area is well suited to the uses proposed in the Community Plan due to its central location with respect to the G.V.R.D., accessibility via major traffic routes (Loughheed Highway and 401), benefit received from and given to Brentwood Shopping Centre and proximity to future higher density residential areas. Concern was expressed over the subdivision pattern proposed; the statement being that it "makes little allowance for present land subdivision and ownership pattern" (T.B. & P., P. 1). The desire for a flexible development control approach was expressed with "guidelines specifying uses, recommended density and the environment to be achieved." (T.B. & P., P. 5, P. 18-19). Some property owners expressed a desire for a greater density (a Floor Area Ratio of 1.5-1.75 rather than 1.0 as recommended in the Plan). Sites 4 and 7, it was felt, should have the potential for office development. Site 10 should have the potential for light manufacturing.

(ii) Departmental Comment

Our report on Brentwood Western Sector did not include a detailed economic study of the impact of proposed land uses on property values. It was encouraging that Thompson, Berwick, Pratt & Partners' analysis concluded that the land uses proposed would be desirable from many points of view, economically viable, result in no decrease in land values and "quite possibly might entail meaningful increases for specific properties" (T.B. & P., P. 19).

One of the major influences which led to the proposed subdivision was existing land subdivision and ownership. Only two consolidations involving differing owners are proposed; the majority of development sites are formed by subdivision of land in single ownership. Thus con-

flicts between owners are minimized. However, flexibility of the subdivision pattern is desirable; if several property owners were willing to work together, then comprehensive, larger scale developments could result. ("as long as a major facet of the plan .... pedestrian activity ... results." (T.B. & P., P. 18-19). The Plan as recommended shows the most facile (with respect to land assembly) subdivision pattern. Another major factor shaping future subdivision and responding to existing subdivision is the recommended road pattern. This pattern will be discussed in the following section.

The development control approach suggested in the consultant's report was recommended in our initial report. The future rezoning proposals (to be initiated at the time of redevelopment) would be to Comprehensive Development District (CD) utilizing appropriate zoning guidelines. Utilizing CD zoning, the Municipality has control over "uses, recommended densities and the environment to be achieved", while providing some flexibility with respect to the applicable bulk regulations and mixture of land use.

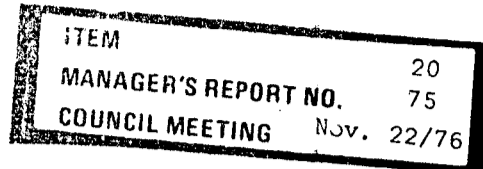
The recommended density as controlled by Floor Area Ratio (F.A.R.) is 1.0 with a maximum height of four storeys. An increase in proposed density would increase the number of vehicles in the area and create traffic congestion. In terms of urban design, this density will result in an appropriate scale of development. The resultant floor space will support a large enough population to provide a lively, urban pedestrian setting. And, according to Thompson, Berwick, Pratt and Partner's analysis, will result in an economically viable development - "Larger buildings, say over 100,000 square feet, have elsewhere in Burnaby proven to be slow in filling up with tenants. With smaller buildings (less than 30,000 square feet) it can be difficult to create the identity and quality levels necessary to achieve adequate rental rates (T.B. & P, P. 17). A further consideration limiting the recommended density in this area is the diluting effect that a higher density may have on the Metrotown Area. That is, the location for concentrated high density commercial land uses.

Site 4 was designated in the Plan as suitable for mixed office/warehouse development. Site 7 was designated for warehouse development with ancillary offices. These uses were suggested due to the proximity of the two sites to industrial uses across Halifax Street and to the west. Industrial access would be off Halifax while private automobile access would be off Buchanan Street cul-de-sac. It was envisioned that the office component would front on Buchanan. However, while this proposal is still valid, it is equally valid to develop totally office uses. In this instance, Halifax Street would form the boundary between office and industrial uses. We agree with the consultant's analysis that the guidelines for Site 10 should be amended to include light manufacturing uses. The recommended land uses described in the Community Plan can be amended to reflect these options.

(c) Traffic

(i) The Indicated Concerns

The Advisory Planning Commission approved in principle all of the recommendations related to land use.



Following are the comments of the Commission with respect to traffic which were submitted to Council on 12 April 1976:

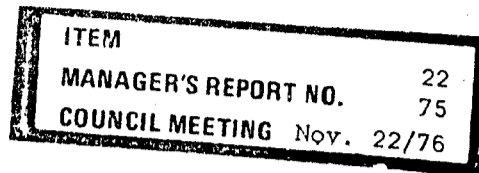
1. That the question of the ever increasing traffic flow in a vital and centrally located area in the Municipality be considered.
2. That the matter of emergency vehicles (fire, ambulance, police) gaining access to the proposed T-shaped cul-de-sac during peak traffic periods be studied more fully.
3. That the effects of added traffic and resulting traffic congestion at the major intersection of Willingdon Avenue and Lougheed Highway receive further study.
4. That further investigation be done to seek ways of alleviating the pressure of commercial vehicle traffic in the area (large trailer rigs, tanker trucks hauling flammable liquids).
5. That it must be kept in mind that Willingdon Avenue is the only major arterial north-south route in Burnaby other than Boundary Road.

The traffic analysis conducted by Thompson, Berwick, Pratt and Partner's consultants, Zoltan Kuun Associates, Consulting Engineers, made a number of recommendations and proposed a variety of alternate traffic networks. The study stated that the intensification of land use within the Study Area will increase the load on the surrounding streets. "The resultant extension of the evening peak period, however, is only partially due to the proposed development: regional traffic growth will have a greater effect on it." (T.B. & P., P. 30) "It is anticipated that future traffic on Lougheed Highway will be strongly influenced by so-called external to external flows between the City of Vancouver and eastern Municipalities". (T.B. & P., P. 47). The study recommended that Halifax Street be connected to First Avenue in Vancouver to reduce west flowing traffic on Lougheed Highway, that Madison Avenue be connected through from Lougheed Highway to Halifax Street, that the proposed westerly extension of Buchanan Street be eliminated, and that synchronization of traffic signals along Lougheed be pursued. The study stated that the closure of Douglas Road through the Study Area would not create any difficulties.

(ii) Departmental Comment:

The proposed development plan incorporates revisions of the historical street pattern that are designed to separate local and regional circulation; to separate incompatible circulation as related to different land uses; to enhance the character of the area as a pedestrian-oriented enclave; and to allow compatible vehicular and pedestrian circulation.

In this regard warehousing and light industrial uses would have access off Halifax Street and the majority of office uses would have access off Buchanan Street which would connect via Madison Avenue to Lougheed Highway. The main pedestrian circulation spine would be along Buchanan Street connecting to the Brentwood



Town Centre Study Area and Brentwood Shopping Centre and Apartment Study Area beyond. The Buchanan Street/ Madison Avenue road arrangement will provide access to the office enclave off Loughheed Highway at one controlled point rather than at several individual driveway points as would otherwise result. In this manner, regional traffic flow will be less disrupted while the historic connection to Loughheed Highway which the properties have enjoyed will be maintained. While not directly within the terms of reference of the Study Area, the possibility of a connection of Halifax Street to First Avenue is being pursued by the Planning Department as stated in our initial report. Thus in designing the recommended street pattern the development of an identifiable, economically viable pedestrian oriented office enclave was achieved while also considering other goals related to regional traffic flow. 172

The Community Plan takes into account the comments of the Advisory Planning Commission. Floor Area Ratios have been kept to a maximum of 1.0 to minimize traffic volumes generated by the Study Area. Traffic from the office enclave has been directed to a controlled point rather than several crossings of Loughheed Highway. The possibility of reducing west flowing traffic on Loughheed Highway is being pursued by considering a connection of Halifax Street to First Avenue. No scheme (excluding lowering allowable floor areas) can reduce the impact of east flowing traffic on Loughheed Highway at Willingdon Street, as this is the only easterly route connecting to the 401 or points east on Loughheed Highway. However, as stated in the T.B. & P. report, this is a regional traffic consideration not totally influenced by the Study Area. The Plan alleviates the pressure of commercial vehicles within the area by recommending office land use with industrial land uses gaining access off Halifax Street. The major commercial traffic generated by the existing hotel may well be reduced as expansion and upgrading of its facilities occur as recommended. The Fire Department was contacted to comment on the Plan with respect to fire protection. The Department recommended that a fire truck access be provided from Rosser Avenue or Halifax Street to Buchanan Street. This access will be shown on the Plan and be implemented at the time of rezoning in conjunction with a development proposal.

Thompson, Berwick, Pratt and Partner's consultant's study suggested that Madison Avenue connect Loughheed Highway to Halifax. This proposal is not recommended as it would encourage (especially if the First Avenue connection is achieved) a great volume of traffic through the Study Area, destroying the major goal of developing a unified, pedestrian oriented office park. Further, all east bound traffic would still have to travel through the Loughheed/Willingdon intersection. Synchronization of traffic signals along Loughheed Highway is recognized as being highly desirable and has been pursued by the Municipality with the Department of Highways for a number of years. Efforts are continuing in this regard.

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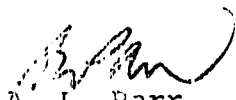
D. SUMMARY

Community Plan #9A was prepared to act as a guide plan or framework for redevelopment of the Study Area, which will occur as a result of individual rezonings. Council and the public will have an input into the rezonings in the normal manner through Public Hearings and By-law Readings. The Plan was considered and commented on by the Advisory Planning Commission, affected property owners, a consulting firm and the Fire Department. Generally, all concerned support the concept but desired clarification of certain aspects, suggested some alternative approaches and questioned some details. These issues are discussed in detail in this report. The Community Plan as proposed best resolves all concerns expressed and, when implemented, will provide an attractive office enclave complementing development existing and envisioned within the Brentwood Town Centre, Brentwood Shopping Centre and Brentwood Apartment Study Area.

E. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended THAT:

1. Council approve the following amendments to Community Plan #9A:
  - (a) The guidelines for Site #4 be amended from "Proposed Mixed Office/Warehouse Development" to "Proposed Mixed Office/Warehouse or Office Development".
  - (b) The guidelines for Site #7 be amended from "Proposed Warehouse Development" to "Proposed Warehouse and/or Office Development".
  - (c) The guidelines for Site #10 be amended from "Proposed Warehouse Development" to "Proposed Warehouse and/or Light Manufacturing Development".
  - (d) A fire truck access be delineated to connect Buchanan Street to Rosser Avenue or Halifax Street, subject to the approval of the Fire Department.
2. Council adopt Community Plan #9A as described in Manager's Report No. 12, Item 6, Brentwood Town Centre - Western Sector - Community Plan #9A and as amended above as a guide for development in the study area.

  
A. L. Parr  
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING

CBR:vap