

Re: PROPOSED CIVIC COMPLEX IN NEW WESTMINSTER

On January 24, 1977, Council during inquiries referred to staff the attached undated article that appeared in a recent edition of The Vancouver Sun. Following are comments from the Director of Planning on the proposed development in New Westminster and the regional town center in Burnaby:

- "1. The Livable Regional Program has designated two Regional Town Center locations as having priority, and to be self sustaining by 1986. One is Burnaby Metrotown, the other is the New Westminster core. The Civic Complex proposal is consistent with the above program and priorities.
2. Major public buildings can and should act as a catalyst in fostering private investment interest in the area.
3. We have concluded that although some feeling of competitiveness exists, it should not be fostered as the development of New Westminster can only help to solidify the regional decentralization program and provide increased support for a light rapid transit link between Vancouver and New Westminster, which is needed to provide public transit access to Burnaby Metrotown.
4. The other way of looking at the matter of competition is to recognize that there is only a limited amount of public sector investment capital and only a certain need for special facilities, e.g., courthouse, government offices, etc. There are therefore some implications for our own Metrotown.
5. The proposal is not unexpected as the Provincial Government is a major land holder in the area (i.e., former I.C.B.C. site) and is able to initiate development discussions without the need for major land assembly.
6. Burnaby as part of its program will also be soliciting active support and investment from the various Provincial and Federal agencies.
7. Provided no other work items are given priority we expect to submit our report on the Burnaby Metrotown in March, 1977."

This is for the information of Council.

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Plan for civic complex announced in New West

Sun Victoria Bureau

VICTORIA — The B.C. Development Corporation plans a \$20 million to \$60 million civic and commercial complex for New Westminster, Ray Loewen (SC-Burnaby-Edmonds) told the legislature Thursday.

He said the project, still in its early planning stages, will be located on a site originally intended as a headquarters building for the Insurance Corporation of B.C. at Carnarvon and Sixth.

Loewen said it will likely include a major hotel, a new court house, a professional offices building, a convention and cultural centre and shops.

Loewen said he was making the announcement on behalf of Economic Development Minister Don Phillips, chairman of the BCDC.

He said the project could cost \$40 million to \$60 million in its first stage. Over a 10-year period, including offshoot development, it could involve expenditure of \$300 million to \$400 million, he said.

"The project, in fact, is planned to create as much additional development as possible," he said.

Phillips said later the project is still in its early planning stages and he had no further details to release. He said the BCDC is not negotiating with ICBC to have the land for the project turned over.

Project manager Robert MacIntyre also said there were no details available on the project.

"We're just beginning our meetings with the Greater Vancouver regional district, the New Westminster municipal authorities and the provincial government. I wouldn't want to say anything until we define the type of development."

MacIntyre said the BCDC had its initial meeting to discuss the project 10 days ago and will have a statement on the complex "in two or three weeks."

"We want to be somewhat discreet with our information," he said, "because of our position we can't just start talking about

it. If we were private developers we could shoot for a little more from the hip in this matter."

New Westminster Mayor Muri Evers said in a Thursday telephone interview from Ottawa, where he is attending a meeting of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, that he is "quite confident" some sort of development will go ahead on the site, although he does not know what it will include.

He said that while the city has held preliminary discussions with the BCDC, there have been no definite decisions on what might go into the area. Further talks with the BCDC are set for Feb. 10, he said.

Evers said he thought some of the details and figures released by Loewen were "a little premature."

When decisions are made, they will be announced in a joint statement by the BCDC and the city, he said.

He said the government's decision not to put the ICBC headquarters on the site might turn out to be a blessing in disguise.

While the ICBC centre would have provided about 1,300 jobs, the proposed new development will be more diversified, and attract more employees, more tourists and more business, he said.

Loewen said the initial architectural plans will be finished in six weeks with final plans being finished in six months.

He said he expects construction to be under way in nine to 12 months, and the first stage completed in three years.

He said the project will coordinate individual projects within the complex into "one beautiful over-all town centre plan."

Loewen asked ICBC to turn over its property as quickly as possible and urged the government to include a new court house.

"I also appeal to (Provincial Secretary) Grace McCarthy to become part of this over-all plan by providing the necessary encouragement for a possible Queen Elizabeth type of cultural centre," he said.