

ITEM	10
MANAGER'S REPORT NO.	20
COUNCIL MEETING	1978 03 13

Re: INDUSTRY AND THE LIVABLE REGION:
GUIDELINES FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Following is a report from the Director of Planning on the G.V.R.D.'s guidelines for industrial development that were discussed at a Special Meeting of Council on 1978 February 15.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Council endorse in principle the document Industry and the Livable Region: Guidelines for Industrial Development on the basis of the comments as contained in the Director of Planning's report; and
2. THAT a copy of this report be forwarded to the G.V.R.D. Board.

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PLANNING DEPARTMENT
1978 MARCH 08

TO: MUNICIPAL MANAGER
FROM: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING
SUBJECT: INDUSTRY AND THE LIVABLE REGION:
GUIDELINES FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

A. BACKGROUND

The Municipal Council, at a Special Meeting on 1978 February 15, referred the report Industry and the Livable Region: Guidelines for Industrial Development to staff for review and comment.

B. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

In giving an overall assessment of this document, Planning Department staff agree in principle with the report's primary objective of establishing a general framework and strategy for accommodating present and future industrial development within the region. It is considered a useful document in consolidating a set of generally acceptable regional objectives related to industrial development that can be reflected in the preparation of complementary Municipal plans and initiatives for industrial development.

In reviewing this report, it has been assumed that the guidelines included are not intended to diminish the primary responsibility of the member Municipalities for the planning and development of industrial areas within their boundaries. Rather the report provides a desirable regional perspective and a basis for regional technical assistance or direction to the Municipality when requested.

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C. COMMENT ON INDIVIDUAL RECOMMENDATIONS

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Recommendation 1 — Define Policies for Development

The Municipality of Burnaby has recognized the strategic importance of industrial activity within its planning programs and has reflected many of the policies for regional industrial development as outlined on page 14 of the report. Staff, however does have some concern with policy #2 which proposes:

"An overly flow of suitable industrial land onto the market should be ensured through coordinated efforts of the G.V.R.D. and its member municipalities".

While it is agreed that there should be an adequate supply of serviced industrial land available within the region to meet growth demands, staff does not concur with the principle that there should be a concerted effort to ensure that there will be an excessive supply of industrial land on the market at any given time. It is appreciated that such an approach is possibly intended to help lower industrial land costs within the region, however it is our belief that such an excess could result in substantial holding costs on serviced marketable land for industrial developers, either private or public, which in turn could be expected to be passed on to the industrial land consumer. This Department would propose that this policy be altered to read as follows:

"An adequate flow of suitable industrial land onto the market should be ensured through coordinated efforts of the G.V.R.D. and its member municipalities to meet the industrial land requirements of the region at any given time. In addition there should be a designation of those reserve industrial lands which have a capability to be readily serviced to meet any peak periods of demand that may occur".

Recommendation 2 — Establish an Industrial Development Commission

In considering this aspect of the report, there is agreement in principle that there should be a regional role in the industrial development process. There is a consensus, however, that this role should reflect responsibilities at the regional level which would primarily deal with technical research and information services and an advisory function to member Municipalities with respect to industrial land supply and demand factors prevalent within the region and their relationship to industrial growth targets for each Municipality. On the basis of the perceived role, staff believes that this service would best be included as an expanded function of the G.V.R.D. Planning Department rather than through the establishment of an Industrial Development Commission.

Recommendation 3 — Establish a Set of Overall Employment Targets

Planning Department staff participated in the preparation of the employment target figures for Burnaby as shown in Table I, page 22 of the report and supports their use as a guide to desired directions of regional employment growth.

Recommendation 4 — Establish a Set of Industrial Employment Targets

Staff would support the adoption of the recommended industrial employment targets as outlined in Table 2, page 28 of the report for planning purposes.

The relative decline of Burnaby's percentage of total industrial employment (from 13.7 per cent of the regional total in 1971 to 12.4 per cent in 1986) reflects a more rapid growth of the more outlying suburban areas plus a relative increase in commercial/office employment for Burnaby in the corresponding period.

Recommendation 5 — Prepare for Industrial Land Needs in Advance

Planning Department staff have previously reviewed the figures as outlined in Table 4, page 34 with Regional District staff and would support the figure of 700 acres as indicated for the Municipality of Burnaby. While changes in employment density levels and the composition of the industrial mix to be provided in the Big Bend industrial development areas may to some degree alter these land requirements, they are considered appropriate for planning purposes.

Recommendation 6 — Protect the Natural Environment

There is general agreement with the proposals to ensure that industrial development is not detrimental to the natural environment of the region. On Page 41 of the report reference is made to an important open space area in the western part of the Big Bend area of the Municipality and that the Municipality may wish to review the adopted Development Plan for the Big Bend in view of the considered importance of this area. Reference to this area was made in the report entitled Lower Mainland Natural Areas Inventory, prepared in 1977 March. The pertinent section of the report relating to this area has been included as an attachment to this report.

The report identifies the Big Bend as an important area of open space with excellent potential for hiking, riding, picnicking, fishing and general access to the river. In the preparation of the Big Bend Development Plan this potential was recognized and incorporated within the plan with the result that major sections of the area, previously held for industrial purposes, were redesignated for park and public use. The Riverway Sports Complex, the proposed Riverway Golf Course, a major foreshore park incorporating a significant conservation area within the Sussex bog are evidence of this commitment. In addition, the Corporation has and will be taking measures to help maintain and expand agricultural uses in the Big Bend area. The plan that evolved represents a degree of balance of major land use categories within the area that recognizes the natural assets of the area yet at the same time provides a rational industrial land bank reserve to meet the present and future needs of this Municipality. To accommodate the 700 acres of industrial land as designated for Burnaby, the Municipality is going to have to depend on the Big Bend area to meet this and future additional growth. Staff feel very strongly that open space provision in the Development Plan has responded to the assets of the area more than adequately, including a substantial proportion of the area outlined in the Natural Areas Inventory report. As such, it is our recommendation that Council indicate that the Municipality has reviewed the plan in light of this information and that no revisions to the plan are to be made at this time.

Another concern relates to an item on page 41 of the report where it is recommended that the area generally east of Byrne Road be approved as an industrial area for immediate development. A development timetable for any industrial area must relate to adjacent development patterns, existing land use, land ownership, special land use designations, availability of services, etc. A very large section of the land east of Byrne Road is included within the Agricultural Land Reserve and not designated for priority development on the basis of available services. A generalized development program for the Big Bend area is being formulated by this Department. Staff would therefore not concur with the recommendation submitted for a priority development of those lots generally east of Byrne Road. Such a priority designation should only evolve in the context of all contributing variables affecting the entire Big Bend area.

Recommendation 7 — Identifying Sites Ready for Immediate Development

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Staff would concur with the recommendations as outlined on page 47 of the report on the understanding that any increase in the density of development would not be at the expense of other local planning considerations (e.g. aesthetics, environmental factors).

Recommendation 8 — Identifying Areas for Further Study

On the basis of the comments relating to Recommendation 6 above, staff would recommend that the Sussex bog area shown on Map 3, page 55, not be the subject of an industrial potential evaluation.

Recommendation 9 — Remove Sites no Longer Realistic for Industrial Development

Staff would concur with the recommendations as outlined on page 59 of the report.

Recommendation 10 — Protect Existing and Proposed Industrial Areas from Urban Encroachment

As in previous sections, there is general agreement with the sentiments expressed. However, land use control within major land use categories, including industrial, is a local zoning responsibility of the Municipality and staff at this point would not wish to endorse a blanket restriction on uses in industrial areas which could have present or future adverse ramifications to the Municipality. It is recommended that this whole question be the subject of further review by the Technical Planning Committee of the G.V.R.D.

Recommendation 11 — Expand Investigation of Regional Goods Movement System

Staff regard this to be a priority item and would endorse the recommendations as outlined on page 70 of the report.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended:

1. THAT Council endorse in principle the document Industry and the Livable Region: Guidelines for Industrial Development on the basis of the comments included within this report item.
2. THAT a copy of this report be forwarded to the G.V.R.D. Board.


A. L. Parr
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING

JSB/ds
attachment
cc Land Agent
Municipal Engineer
Parks and Recreation
Administrator

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EXCERPT FROM THE REPORT LOWER MAINLAND NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY
REPORT

NAME: Big Bend

NUMBER: 8

CLASSIFICATION: 3 VW, 3 RW

MAP REFERENCE: 92-G-2-e, 92-G-3-h

SIZE AND LOCATION: 180 ha (450 a) of lowland adjacent to the North Arm of the Fraser River east of Boundary Road in southwest Burnaby; also note two smaller but similar units to east identified as 3 ObW and 3 VW.

STATUS: Shoreland area and approximate western half are Municipal (Burnaby) land; the remainder is private.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION: Burnaby, Field Checks, Air Photos, Terry Taylor of Vancouver Public Library.

NATURAL FEATURES: marsh and bog vegetation, riverine wildlife habitat

DESCRIPTION: A relatively large area of Fraser River floodplain; dyked, but left with natural vegetative cover. Vegetation communities include: cattail marsh, lodgepole pine-Labrador tea bog, spirea bog, and cottonwood floodplain forest. Relatively unique occurrence of plants such as Lycopodium obscurum. Excellent song bird habitat, small mammals and birds of prey, shorebirds and herons along Fraser River and a few ducks in drainage canals. Close to 5 km of shoreland running east from foot of Boundary Road is through relatively natural vegetation; is also adjacent to attractive forest communities on Lulu Island across Fraser River.

EVALUATION: The Big Bend is a very important area of open space, natural vegetation, and wildlife habitat adjacent to Vancouver, Burnaby and New Westminster. Excellent potential for hiking, riding, picnicking, fishing and access to river. The District of Burnaby has proposed the area of bog for park. The G.V.R.D. and funding agencies should support Burnaby in obtaining small private holdings for access easement; park area should be enlarged beyond municipal plans recognizing regional importance of this natural area; and propose that recreational use of this area be in accordance with preserving natural vegetation and wildlife values.