

RE: CLOSED SCHOOL FACILITIES

1. THAT the report of the Director Planning & Building Inspection be received for information purposes.

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TO: MUNICIPAL MANAGER 1982 July 07

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING & BUILDING INSPECTION Our File: 10.101

SUBJECT: CLOSED SCHOOL FACILITIES

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RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT this report be received for information purposes.

SUMMARY:

The report which follows has been prepared in response to a Council request for information on alternative uses for closed school facilities and to assess the impact of the school closures in the South Slope Area.

The various aspects covered in this report include:

1. Background material on the school closure program at the municipal level.
2. The establishment of an on-going liaison with School Board Officials.
3. The involvement of the Parks and Recreation Commission and municipal departments.

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4. A summary of closed school facility users.
5. A review of the school closure situation as it affects the South Burnaby area.

R E P O R T

A. BACKGROUND:

In order to reduce its operating budget in compliance with the Provincial Restraint Program, the Burnaby School Board, on 1982 March 23, made the decision to close five public schools in the municipality (effective 1982 June 30). These include the Burnaby Heights and Royal Oak Junior Secondary Schools, and the Riverside, Riverway West and Sussex Elementary Schools. In addition, it was resolved to explore the potential lease of the closed school facilities to users of a community oriented character on a cost recovery basis that would meet necessary operating expenditures (heat, light and maintenance).

Because of its responsibilities for land use and zoning in the municipality, the Planning & Building Inspection Department was requested to assume the role as the coordinating body for all municipal departmental concerns on the subject of school closures. As a follow-up, information on possible departmental needs for school space was requested.

The Council, on 1982 May 03, received a delegation protesting the closure of a number of public elementary schools in the South Slope Area. Following discussion, the matter was referred by Council for a report on what is proposed for this area in terms of alternative closed school facility uses and measures that could be taken to resolve possible traffic and safety problems arising from the reassignment of pupils to other schools.

B. LIAISON WITH SCHOOL BOARD STAFF:

A liaison has been established with School Board officials in order to obtain information on the program for closed school facilities and to maintain an on-going review of proposals being made for the use of available space. A further objective is to provide a means for assessing the suitability of use proposals in relation to the existing P3 zoning designation of the school sites and their possible impacts on neighbourhood areas.

To assist in this process, a set of guidelines has been drawn up to ensure that proposed users will be of a type which would meet the general zoning intent and be similar in character to activities normally carried on in a school. These include the use of sports fields and gymnasiums for such activities as soccer, baseball, basketball, volleyball, wrestling, boxing, physical fitness etc; meeting space for community organizations and clubs; and such community/educational activities as day care centres, nursery schools and day nurseries, adult education programs, kindergartens, library facilities, vocational training programs, cultural centres (art, drama, music), educational centres for the mentally retarded or physically disabled, church related educational programs, senior citizen activities, municipal office uses etc.

C. THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION AND MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENTS IN THE SCHOOL CLOSURES:

The Recreation and Cultural Services Department has, for some time, been involved in discussions with School Board staff on the possible use of closed school facilities for recreational purposes.

The Parks and Recreation Commission on 1982 May 05 approved the recommendations of a report on school closures from the Director Recreation and Cultural Services.

The following actions have been taken as a result:

1. The forwarding of a copy of the report to the Planning and Building Inspection Department and its transmittal to the School Board to be considered in any reviews on alternative uses of closed school spaces.
2. The use of its contents in a report to Council to convey the Commission's position on the subject.
3. The pursuing by the Recreation and Cultural Services Department of certain potential uses with School Board staff and the reporting back to the Commission on the results of these discussions.

In dealing with the broad implications of the school closures, it was concluded that the loss of space from elementary schools would not unduly affect existing children's recreational programs since these could be carried on in the new schools to which the children are assigned. It was pointed out, however, that the recreational uses being made of secondary school cafeteria and gymnasium spaces, as well as outdoor sports field activities in closed schools, would be very difficult to relocate.

One of the major proposals advanced in the report was to carry out a cost-benefit analysis of using all or a part of the Royal Oak Junior Secondary School as a recreation centre. Following a study of the matter, however, it was decided not to pursue this course of action - a recommendation which was approved by the Parks and Recreation Commission (1982 June 02).

The Recreation and Cultural Services Department is continuing to pursue with the School Board the use of gymnasium and sports field facilities at the Burnaby Heights, Royal Oak and Sussex Schools for both departmental and community group indoor and outdoor recreational programs.

With respect to other municipal departmental needs, the Council on 1982 June 14 gave approval to the proposed relocation of the RRAP site office from 4132 Hastings Street to the Burnaby Heights School and authorized the Municipal Solicitor to negotiate a one year lease with an option for a second year with the Burnaby School Board. No interest has been expressed by other municipal departments in the possible use of space in closed school facilities.

D. SUMMARY OF CLOSED SCHOOL FACILITY USERS:

As noted earlier in the report, five public schools are being closed down by the School Board as a result of the Provincial Restraint Program. Other schools which have been closed previously include Schou Street (1979), Duthie-Union (1980) and Glenwood (1981). The Schou Street School continues to serve as an educational resource centre for the Burnaby School Board. The remaining seven schools are, or will be used for other purposes to varying degrees. A summary of these follows.

| <u>School</u> | <u>Users</u> | <u>Remarks</u> |
|---------------------|--|--|
| (1) Burnaby Heights | Burnaby Association for the Mentally Handicapped | Handicapped training workshops using 5 classrooms. |
| | Burnaby Volunteer Association | Perform a community service function for senior citizens, the physically handicapped, etc. |
| | RRAP Office | Subject to being finalized. |
| | | Approximately 55% of available space at school now committed. |
| (2) Royal Oak | B.C. Telephone Co. | Training centre for an estimated 300 students and staff complement of about 120 (equipment, course development, computer, office, personnel training) Would utilize entire school, but make gymnasium available for community use. The present 100 space parking area to be paved and expanded in accordance with zoning requirements. The sports field to be retained for recreational use. Proposed lease for 16 months - to 1983 December 31. |

| <u>School</u> | <u>Users</u> | <u>Remarks</u> |
|-------------------|--|---|
| (3) Duthie-Union | Capital Hill Day Care Society SFU Archaeological Department | Using 5 rooms on a daily basis Instruction/dis-play/storage - 1 classroom plus. Entire school in use. |
| (4) Glenwood | St. Mathew's Day Care | Pre-school and infant care on a daily basis - using entire school. |
| (5) Sussex | Community Centre College for the Retarded YMCA Day Care Centre Lifeline Society | School program on a daily basis 3 classrooms. Using 2 classrooms on a daily basis. Programs for the aged, battered mothers etc. - 2 classrooms. Further space is still available at this school. |
| (6) Riverway West | St. John Ambulance Society | Provincial and Burnaby training programs on a daily basis - using 6 of the school's 8 class-rooms. |
| (7) Riverside | Kenneth Gordon School for Dyslexic Children | Use entire school for educational purposes on a daily basis. |

E. SOUTH SLOPE SCHOOL CLOSURES: A REVIEW:

The Glenwood Elementary School was closed in 1981, as a part of a program of school closures in the South Burnaby Area. This program has been accelerated by the recent Provincial economic restraint measures with the result that a further three facilities are now to be closed, including the Sussex, Riverway West and Riverside Elementary Schools. The four closed schools in this particular area are shown on the attached map.

The users of these schools, as approved by the Burnaby School Board, are listed in the preceding section of the report. They are of a type that would not differ markedly from the normal activities carried on in a school and their impact on adjacent residential areas should be quite minimal. As mentioned in the table, further space continues to be available at the Sussex School. The Recreation and Cultural Services Department is continuing to pursue the recreational use possibilities of the sports field and gymnasium facilities at this school.

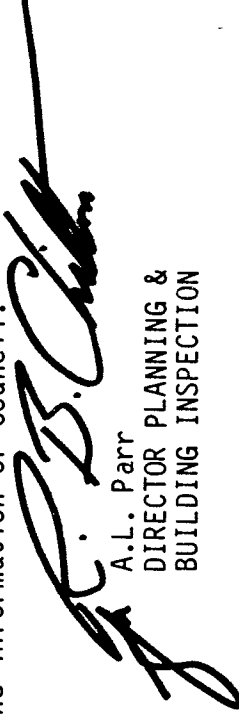
Pupils who formerly attended the Glenwood School have, for the past year, been accommodated at the Clinton Elementary School to the north. In the case of the more recent closures, School Board plans call for pupils from Riverside (about 60) to be bused to Clinton. Approximately 100 pupils from Riverway West will be reassigned to the Nelson and Suncrest Schools on the basis of revised catchment area boundaries. The Sussex School, which has provided accommodation for some 160 pupils, is the largest of the facilities being closed. Most of these pupils will attend the nearby Nelson School in the future, while a number living to the west of the school site will be enrolled at Suncrest.

Student traffic and safety resulting from the school closures has been the subject of discussions between School Board staff and the Traffic Division of the Engineering Department. A considerable amount of research has been carried out on the available walking routes to the Nelson and Suncrest Elementary Schools. This included considering such matters as bus routing, walkway linkages, school crossings and school patrol locations and usage. As a result, a number of steps have been taken to minimize possible traffic and safety problems.

A bus will be available for pupils living in close proximity to the route which will proceed in a westerly direction along Marine Drive to Joffre Avenue and Rumble Street, then travel east on Rumble to drop children off at the Suncrest and Nelson Schools. A chipwalk has been constructed along the north side of Rumble Street from Patterson Avenue to the Suncrest School to facilitate pedestrian movement. In addition, the School Board has made provision for the hiring of two adult school guards who will be stationed at the Patterson Avenue-Rumble Street, and Grey Avenue-Rumble Street intersections.

In summary, an estimated 320 pupils will be displaced by the closure of the Riverside, Riverway West and Sussex Elementary Schools. The remaining schools at Clinton, Nelson and Suncrest presently enrol a total of 733 pupils (1982 May 31) and provide a combined capacity for 1410 pupils, which is considered sufficient for handling the increases envisaged next September.

This is for the information of Council.



A.L. Parr
DIRECTOR PLANNING &
BUILDING INSPECTION

RBC/mcb
Attach:

cc: Director Recreation & Cultural Services
Chief Licence Inspector
Traffic Supervisor
Assistant Director - Long Range Planning & Research

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