

RE: LETTER FROM MICHAEL J. AUDAIN, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, POLYGON PROPERTIES LIMITED, SUITE 1604, 1166 ALBERNI STREET, VANCOUVER, B.C., V6E 3Z3, (ITEM 5e); AND MR. PAUL MANNING, VICE PRESIDENT, CORPORATE RELATIONS, BRITISH COLUMBIA PLACE, 650 WEST GEORGIA STREET, VANCOUVER, B.C. V6B 4N9 (ITEM 5b), WHICH APPEARED ON THE COUNCIL AGENDA 1982 MARCH 15 PROPOSED B. C. PLACE DEVELOPMENT

MUNICIPAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT the recommendations of the Director Planning & Building Inspection be adopted.

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PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
 1982 March 16

TO: MUNICIPAL MANAGER  
 FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING & BUILDING INSPECTION  
 SUBJECT: PROPOSED B.C. PLACE DEVELOPMENT

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Council indicate to the B.C. Place Corporation, the G.V.R.D. Board and the City of Vancouver its serious concern with respect to the likely implications the proposed seven million square feet of office space at B.C. Place will have on the Livable Region Program, particularly in relation to the proportion of employment prospects in Regional Town Centres and its balance of jobs to labour force and transportation objectives.
2. THAT Council request the B.C. Place Corporation and the City of Vancouver to support the Livable Region Program by substantially reducing the provision for commercial office space at B.C. Place.
3. THAT Council request the City of Vancouver to support the objectives of the Livable Region Program by considering reducing the amount of its office zoning potential elsewhere in the downtown core by an equivalent amount mutually agreed to at B.C. Place, by the City of Vancouver and B.C. Place, with the provision of housing opportunities being given priority as the principal replacement use.
4. THAT a copy of this report be forwarded to The Greater Vancouver Regional District Board, the Minister responsible for B.C. Place (Hon. Stephen Rogers), the City of Vancouver and Mr. M. Audain of Polygon Properties.

REPORT

1.0 SUMMARY

Appearing on the agenda of 1982 March 15 was a letter dated 1982 March 04 from Mr. M. J. Audain of Polygon Properties Limited expressing his concern that the large amount of office space projected in the conceptual plan for B.C. Place could have a serious negative impact on commercial development in regional town centres such as Metrotown. This report provides an overview of the B.C. Place project and responds to the concern as outlined in Mr. Audain's letter. In addition, this report provides an initial response to Mr. P. Manning's letter appearing on the 1982 March 15 Agenda.

## 2.0 OVERVIEW OF B.C. PLACE

The project covers 232 acres of B.C. Place Development Area lands on the North Shore of False Creek extending from Hornby Street in the West to Quebec Street on the East. The lands are currently zoned Urban in the Official Regional Plan. Of the total 232 acres, 35 acres and 86 acres have been designated for transportation and open space/public facilities respectively leaving a net developable area of 111 acres. The net developable area of 111 acres is comprised of 80 acres residential and mixed residential/commercial, 19 acres commercial (office) and 12 acres "future Urban" (primarily commercial office). A summary of the major development components within these areas is as follows:

- A major office commercial core in the vicinity of the B.C. Place Stadium. The concept plan calls for up to 7.7 million square feet of office, commercial and local service space on 30 acres of land over the next twenty years.
- Residential development of up to 12,000 units with an average density between 125 and 150 units per acre accommodating over 20,000 people in a full range of housing types.
- Development of a 60,000 seat stadium occupying about 20 acres between the Cambie Street Bridge and the Georgia Viaduct.
- One or two first class hotels near the stadium.
- A variety of "people places" at a Provincial Public Park possibly including the B.C. Forest Foundation Centre, the Vancouver Arts Science and Technology Centre, a "Children's World", a waterfront theatre, etc.
- An upgraded transportation infrastructure involving public transit, rapid transit, local and major parks and parking.

### 2.1 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT TIMING

Construction of the B.C. Place Stadium is under way with completion scheduled for mid-1983. The proposed timetable for the residential and commercial components is as follows:

	Pre Expo (1982-1987)	Post Expo (1988-1996)	Total
Residential	up to 4,500 units	5,500-750 units	12,000 units
Major Office Space	3.0 million sq. ft.	4.0 million sq.ft.	7.0 million sq.ft.
Hotel	800 - 1,000 rooms		1,000 rooms
Local Retail	50,000-100,000 sq.ft.	100,000 sq.ft.	200,000 sq. ft.
Other Commercial	200,000 sq.ft.	300,000 sq.ft.	500,000 sq. ft.

### 3.0 REGIONAL IMPLICATIONS

#### 3.1 BALANCE OF JOBS TO LABOUR FORCE

The Livable Region Program, as one of its major objectives, promotes a balance of jobs to labour force in each part of the region to reduce commuting time and transportation costs. A continuing problem is the very high concentration of jobs in the Vancouver City area while most of the residential growth is occurring outside in the suburban Municipalities of Delta, Surrey, Richmond and Coquitlam.

There is already an imbalance of jobs to labour force within the City of Vancouver, especially in the downtown area. In 1976 the ratio was 3.66 workers to every member of the labour force resident in downtown Vancouver. That figure had increased to an estimated 4.64 in 1980. The aim of the Livable Region Program has been to reduce the ratio by 1986 by emphasizing more residences downtown and more jobs in the suburbs. B.C. Place's projected office space, if realized,

would result in an additional 30-35,000 workers in the downtown peninsula. Assuming 10,000 people (or about one-half of the projected population of B.C. Place) will be in the labour force, there would be a net increase in jobs over resident workers of between 20,000-25,000 thereby compounding the jobs to labour force imbalance in the Vancouver downtown area and the outlying areas of the Region. From this perspective, more housing rather than office opportunities should be an objective at B.C. Place and/or adjacent areas.

### 3.2 REGIONAL TOWN CENTRES

The regional town centres element of the Livable Region Program, which includes the Burnaby Metrotown area, was proposed to bring shopping and cultural facilities, and most particularly, jobs closer to where people live. The GVRD, in reviewing the B.C. Place proposal, have concluded that commercial development of the magnitude proposed will reinforce the downtown's role as the preferred location for commercial office uses and cultural and entertainment activities. It is expected the B.C. Place will be competing with regional town centre locations offering sites with lower rents and/or higher amenities than the downtown core area. In the opinion of GVRD Planning Staff the possibility of developing four regional town centres and achieving a better distribution of employment opportunities throughout the region is called into question by the scale of the B.C. Place office component when combined with the expected rate of office development elsewhere in the downtown over the next 10-15 years. Over the last decade, downtown Vancouver added more office space than all other central municipalities combined - almost 5.5 million square feet. If decentralization of significant office development to regional town centres is to occur then coordinated policy assistance from all levels of government will be needed to counteract the continuing trend towards the centralization of office related employment opportunities in the Vancouver City core area. The injection of the B.C. Place office development, as an additional inner core location for office development, in our opinion, will only accelerate this trend and undoubtedly have an adverse affect on this Municipality's attempts to develop the office space component of the Metrotown Development Plan.

The reason for our concern is that B.C. Place will not create any significant employment that will change the regional demand for office space. Rather, B.C. Place will represent an increase in the supply of office space both in the downtown area and the region as a whole. As such B.C. Place therefore provides for office developments that will replace development that could occur elsewhere in the region. It has been estimated that to the year 2,000 the region could expect an increased demand for office space in the order of 48 million square feet. With seven million square feet being proposed at B.C. Place, this equates to approximately 14.6 percent of all office development in the region over the next twenty years. Alternatively expressed, City of Vancouver staff have indicated that seven million square feet of office space equates to about 8 to 10 years of office space demand for the downtown core. By way of comparison, the Burnaby Metrotown Development Plan had provided an estimated 1996 office space target of 2.6 million square feet. The development of the office space component at B.C. Place to the magnitude proposed should be a concern not only to this Municipality for the reasons cited but to the Region as a whole.

### 4.0 PAST AND PROPOSED ACTIONS

At their meeting of 1981 July 14 and 1981 July 29 the GVRD Planning Committee and Board respectively moved to take several steps to help ensure that the regional implications associated with the B.C. Place project are more fully understood by all those involved in the planning process for the development. As a result of discussions with B.C. Place officials, there is apparently a willingness to limit the committed office development to a potential of 2.5-3 million square feet in the area surrounding the new stadium, leaving a decision on the remaining four million square feet in the "future urban"

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area until after Transpo 86. B.C. Place describes their attitude as "agnostic" on the question of whether significant office development can be attracted to regional town centres. City of Vancouver staff generally support the 2.5-3 million square feet office figure in the viaduct area but propose residential rather than office development for the "future urban" area.

In view of the preceeding, it is recommended that the Burnaby Municipal Council indicate its concern to the GVRD, the City of Vancouver and B.C. Place Corporation about the magnitude of the proposed office space component at the development. More specifically it is recommended that Council advise that from a policy viewpoint it would prefer to see the office component potential substantially reduced to at least the 2.5 million square feet ceiling mentioned, but that this represent the final rather than first stage total for the project. It is further recommended that if the City of Vancouver considers this site to represent a beneficial office development area within the downtown area, then the City of Vancouver be requested to consider its office zoning potential elsewhere in the core area by an equivalent amount provided for at B.C. Place with housing opportunities being given priority as the replacement use. This would not alter the magnitude of the downtown core office space but at least such an approach would not further compound the problems of realizing office space decentralization particularly in regional town centres.



A. L. Parr  
DIRECTOR PLANNING &  
BUILDING INSPECTION

JSB/nb