

RE: LETTER FROM POLYGON PROPERTIES LIMITED WHICH APPEARED ON THE AGENDA
FOR THE COUNCIL MEETING OF 1984 FEBRUARY 27 (ITEM 4f)
PUBLIC WORKS CANADA - PROPOSAL FOR OFFICE SPACE

MUNICIPAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION:

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

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TO: MUNICIPAL MANAGER
1984 February 28

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING &
BUILDING INSPECTION
Our Ref:

SUBJECT: PUBLIC WORKS CANADA - PROPOSAL FOR OFFICE SPACE

RECOMMENDATION

1. THAT a copy of this report be forwarded to Mr. M.J. Audain of Polygon Properties Ltd.
2. THAT a copy of this report be forwarded to Mr. Bruce Angus, Director General, Pacific Region, Public Works Canada.

SUMMARY

This report responds to a concern about locational restrictions placed on proposal calls for federal office space raised by Mr. M.J. Audain of Polygon Properties Ltd. in a letter received by Council on 1984 February 27. Following their review of the locational advantages unique to Metrotown, it is indicated that Public Works Canada has agreed to re-examine the merits of the Burnaby Metrotown location with Fisheries Canada to determine whether it could suit their specific requirements. Reference is also made to an upcoming study of potential suburban sites for federal office development by Public Works Canada in which Municipal staff will be maintaining a close liaison to provide information relevant to Burnaby in general and Burnaby Metrotown in particular.

R E P O R T

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Appearing on the Council agenda of 1984 February 27 was a letter from Mr. M.J. Audain of Polygon Properties Ltd, expressing concern about locational restrictions placed on proposal calls for federal office space. Of particular immediate concern is the fact that approximately 100,000 sq. ft. of office space is to be tendered for Fisheries Canada in April with preference being assigned to locations within the City of Vancouver. Mr. Audain's position is that this locational restriction makes a Burnaby based bid uncompetitive and at the same time does nothing to promote public sector office decentralization in regional town centres as is proposed in the G.V.R.D.'s Livable Region Program.

2.0 MUNICIPAL POLICY POSITION

Mr. Audain's desire to see the federal and provincial governments take a more leading role in decentralizing their respective office requirements to regional town centres, including Burnaby Metro-town, is one that is shared and reflected within the policy position adopted and conveyed by this Municipality.

On many different occasions since the adoption of the Burnaby Metrotown Development Plan, both Council and Municipal staff have provided federal and provincial officials with updated particulars of the Burnaby Metrotown area to help promote the area as a strategic location for appropriate public sector office facilities. In addition, in its various briefs relating to B.C. Place and the Vancouver Coreplan, the Municipality has joined with the G.V.R.D. in consistently speaking out for a larger share of provincial and federal office development in regional town centres as an aid to the office decentralization objectives of the Livable Region Program. The recent selection of the Burnaby Metrotown area as the location for the G.V.R.D. headquarters building is consistent with this objective of establishing a public sector office presence in the area.

3.0 PUBLIC WORKS CANADA POSITION

As a result of a meeting with Public Works Canada on 1984 February 27 to discuss this situation, it was confirmed that they are well aware and are generally supportive of both the Burnaby Metrotown objectives and the office decentralization goals embodied within the Livable Region Program. However, from their perspective, accommodation space requirements for federal facilities fall into two categories - special purpose and general office - that dictate differing locational criteria.

In many instances, the special purpose facilities have specific locational requirements that are defined by the user departments. For example, in the case of the Fisheries Canada facility as mentioned by Mr. Audain, that department has specifically defined a Vancouver location because of their close working relationship with other government departments, commercial fishermen, and cannery and logging companies which are already situated within the City of Vancouver. Other special purpose facilities such as the Teleglobe and Health and Welfare buildings that are being constructed in the Willingdon Green Executive Park have different locational requirements such as microwave reception and good regional access and are tendered accordingly. The current policy of the Federal Government is that specific Treasury Board approval is required for a federal facility to be situated in a downtown rather than a suburban location. This approval has been obtained in the case of the Fisheries Canada facility. However following a review of the relative locational advantages of Metrotown with respect to its regional centrality, excellent downtown accessibility following completion of the ALRT facility and availability of quality office accommodation, the Public Works Canada representatives have indicated that they will re-examine the merits of the Burnaby Metrotown location with Fisheries Canada to determine whether it could suit their requirements.

It is within the general office category that the greater potential for decentralization exists. Current projections from Public Works Canada indicate a possible need for approximately 200,000 sq. ft. of suburban federal office space by 1990. This reflects a phased federal policy of consolidating up to 1 million square feet of downtown related federal office space within federally owned buildings and then locating additional space requirements in suburban locations.

To assist this strategy, the Program, Planning and Coordination Division of Public Works Canada is embarking on a study of potential suburban sites for federal office development which will include the Burnaby Metrotown area. Municipal staff have already provided updated materials to the study group and will be maintaining a liaison with them to ensure that the appropriate information is made available as required.

4.0 SUMMARY

Mr. Audain's concerns with respect to the tendering of the Fisheries Canada space requirements have been conveyed to Public Works Canada. As a result they have indicated they will re-examine the merits of Metrotown location with Fisheries Canada prior to the tender call. If considered suitable, then the locational terms of reference for this tender call can be altered. In addition, Municipal staff have requested Public Works Canada to advise us directly of all future proposal calls in order that we may review with them the locational criteria and whether a Burnaby location could be considered appropriate.

On the larger question of suburban office space development, staff is encouraged that Public Works Canada is now developing a timing and locational strategy under which this can occur. It is recognized that fiscal and political considerations will likely affect the growth of federal office facilities within the Vancouver region. However it is considered important to take this opportunity to work closely with Public Works Canada in the development of their suburban federal office space strategy to ensure that the locational advantages associated with Burnaby Metrotown can be given a high profile.



A.L. Parr
DIRECTOR PLANNING &
BUILDING INSPECTION

JSB/mcb

