

REPORT
Regular Council Meeting
1991 July 08

THE CORPORATION OF THE DISTRICT OF BURNABY
COMMUNITY ISSUES AND SOCIAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR
AND ALDERMEN

RE: METROTOWN CENTRE INFORMATION KIOSK

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Council authorize staff to pursue arrangements for the interim use of the Metrotown Centre information kiosk by community groups and Municipal departments on a short-term, by-reservation basis for promotional purposes.
2. THAT a staff report outlining the final details of the interim arrangement be submitted to Council for its information prior to commencing operation of the kiosk.

R E P O R T

The Community Issues and Social Planning Committee, at its meeting held on 1991 June 26 received and adopted the attached staff report providing an interim plan for the operation of the information kiosk to be provided to the Municipality by Metrotown Centre.

The Committee therefore submits the report for Council's information.

Respectfully submitted,

Alderman E. Nikolai
Chair

Alderman J. Young
Vice Chair

Alderman D. Evans
Member

Alderman D. Lawson
Member

Alderman C. Redman
Member

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AGENDA - 1991 JULY 08
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TO: CHAIRMAN & MEMBERS 1991 June 11
 COMMUNITY ISSUES &
 SOCIAL PLANNING COMMITTEE Our File: 17.822

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING &
 BUILDING INSPECTION

SUBJECT: METROTOWN CENTRE INFORMATION KIOSK

PURPOSE: To suggest an interim plan for the operation of the information kiosk to be provided to the Municipality by Metrotown Centre.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT staff be authorized to pursue arrangements for the interim use of the Metrotown Centre information kiosk by community groups and Municipal departments on a short-term, by-reservation basis for promotional purposes.
2. THAT a staff report outlining the final details of the interim arrangement be submitted to Council for its information prior to commencing operation of the kiosk.

R E P O R T

1.0 BACKGROUND

At its meeting of 1990 October 15, Council considered a report from the Community Issues and Social Planning Committee regarding the design and operation of a kiosk to be provided to the Municipality by Metrotown Centre. The report recommended that:

- (i) the kiosk be used to distribute a mix of Municipal and community-based information;
- (ii) the administration and ongoing operation, including staffing, of the kiosk be carried out by the Municipality; and
- (iii) subject to vetting through the budget process, \$43,000 be made available in 1991 to set up, operate and staff the kiosk during prime shopping hours.

Council adopted the recommendations subject to budgetary considerations. The 1991 budget, adopted in 1991 May, was unable to accommodate Municipal staffing of the kiosk.

The Metrotown Centre information kiosk is expected to be constructed and ready for operation in late July 1991. The 80 square foot kiosk will be comprised of waist-high counters with exterior brochure pockets. Space is being provided for an eventual interactive video monitor; however, funds for the monitor have not been allocated in the 1991 budget.

2.0 OPTIONS FOR OPERATION OF THE KIOSK DURING 1991

Given that funding is not available for Municipal staffing of the kiosk in 1991, staff recommend that a plan be adopted for the interim operation of the kiosk. Options for interim operation are as follows:

Option A - maintenance as static display: use of the kiosk by community groups and Municipal departments as an unstaffed display booth for brochures, posters and other printed matter;

Option B - operation by single community group: operation and staffing of the kiosk by a community group with a mandate to distribute information eg. Burnaby Information and Community Services Society;

Option C - shared Municipal/community use for special promotions: reservation and staffing of the kiosk by community groups and Municipal departments for limited periods for promotional purposes.

The preferred arrangement is Option C, the reservation scheme. It is proposed that for 1991 community groups and Municipal departments be offered use of the kiosk, free of charge, for periods ranging from one-half day to two weeks for promotional purposes (eg. special events such as Access Awareness or Multicultural Week, registration for fall or spring Parks and Recreation programs, etc.) It is assumed that the reservation scheme would oblige users to staff the kiosk during their reservation period for some or all of Metrotown Centre's hours of operation. Kiosk maintenance and coordination of the reservation system would be handled by either a Municipal department or a community group, perhaps aided by a Municipal grant. Staff have contacted a number of community groups on an informal basis to ascertain the level of interest in both the reservation scheme and kiosk co-ordination and have met with positive response.

The reservation scheme offers the following advantages over Option A, an unstaffed, static display:

- a. it incorporates a human element into information dissemination;
- b. it maximizes opportunities for Municipal and community group interaction with the public, offering citizens the opportunity to ask questions and make suggestions for service improvement; and
- c. it may help to reduce the possible litter problem in the pedestrian link which could ensue from a static brochure and poster display.

The reservation scheme also offers the following advantages over Option B, operation of the kiosk by a single community group:

- a. it provides access to a strategically-located information kiosk for a wider range of community groups;
- b. it provides flexibility for groups that require public visibility for short periods throughout the year;
- c. it precludes the need for already financially stretched community groups to seek additional funding or cut back on existing services in order to staff the kiosk full-time.

Depending on whether responsibility for co-ordination of the reservation scheme is taken on by a Municipal department or a community group, a possible drawback to the scheme is the staff time it would involve. Given that the static display option would also require some staff time to maintain the kiosk, staff believe that this possible disadvantage is offset by the positive reflection on the Municipality that a staffed, Municipal/community special promotions kiosk would provide.

3.0 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESERVATION SCHEME

In order to implement the reservation scheme, the following must be carried out:

- a. approaching community groups and Municipal Departments to ascertain their potential interest in utilizing the kiosk on a short-term basis from time to time to promote special events;
- b. approaching Metrotown Centre to ascertain whether the scheme would have a negative impact on any effort the Centre makes to sell booths in the mall for group displays;

- c. Initiating discussions with Municipal departments and community groups to identify an appropriate body to maintain and co-ordinate use of the kiosk;
- d. developing rules and guidelines for use of the kiosk;
- e. developing a kiosk promotional campaign targeted to community groups, Municipal departments and the public; and
- f. evaluating the reservation scheme before adoption of the 1992 Municipal budget.

If sufficient interest in the kiosk is indicated by community groups and Municipal departments, staff propose to begin work on the reservation scheme as outlined above, unless directed otherwise.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Given the imminent construction of the kiosk and the identified advantages of the reservation scheme, staff propose, unless otherwise directed, to approach community groups and Municipal Departments to ascertain their potential interest in using the kiosk on a short-term basis for promotional purposes. If interest in the scheme is deemed sufficient, staff propose to implement the scheme as outlined in Section 3.0 of this report. Staff will report to Council on the final details of the scheme before commencing operation of the kiosk. Staff will also report back to the Community Issues and Social Planning Committee in early 1992 as to the advisability of continuing the scheme or reinstating the request for funding for Municipal staffing of the kiosk.

APL
JLS/db

A.L. Parr
A.L. Parr
DIRECTOR PLANNING &
BUILDING INSPECTION