

TO: CITY MANAGER 1993 JULY 21

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING & BUILDING

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE AND EDUCATION CENTRE

PURPOSE: To report on the feasibility of establishing an Environmental Resource and Education Centre in conjunction with other agencies and outline a proposed course of action for establishing a centre.

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**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. **THAT** Council approve the proposed course of action for establishing an Environmental Resource and Education Centre as outlined in Section 7 of this report.
2. **THAT** a copy of this report be sent to the Burnaby School Board.

**R E P O R T**

1. **BACKGROUND**

The Burnaby School Board has approached Council informally about the possibility of establishing an Environmental Resource and Education Centre to be jointly operated by the Burnaby School Board and the City of Burnaby. A centre, to be located at a suitable site within the City, would provide opportunities for school children and others to learn about environmental issues and visit the Burnaby recycling depot and the GVRD compost demonstration garden. A centre would also provide an opportunity for the City to address the goal of promoting Burnaby's commitment to sustainable development and environmental protection as outlined in Burnaby's draft State of the Environment Report and the Burnaby Tourism Strategy.

ITEM	18
MANAGER'S REPORT NO.	45
COUNCIL MEETING	93/07/26

CITY MANAGER  
 ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE AND EDUCATION CENTRE  
 1993 JULY 21 . . . . . Page 2

At the regular Council meeting of 1993 February 22 Council adopted a motion directing City staff to report on the feasibility of establishing an Environmental Resource and Education Centre in cooperation with various agencies. This report provides Council with information on a suitable site, facility and servicing, operating arrangements and recommends a course of action for Council's approval.

2. SITE

The vacant city-owned site adjacent to the Burnaby Recycling Depot at 4800 Still Creek Avenue would be a suitable location for the Environmental Resource and Education Centre. This location provides excellent access to the recycling depot and the compost demonstration garden. Services (hydro, water, sewer) could be readily extended to the centre. There is also adequate space for automobile and bus parking on this site.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE AND EDUCATION CENTRE

Buildings

BCIT has indicated that it has several portable buildings that could be made available for the centre. The buildings are expected to become available over the next few months as their occupants move into new buildings on the BCIT campus. City and School Board staff have toured the portable buildings and concluded that they would be appropriate for relocation to the Still Creek site for use as the Environmental Resource and Education Centre.

The portable building proposed to be used as the centre is a "double" (20 ft. x 52 ft.) unit that is about 10 - 12 years old. The building has been well maintained and is in good condition. The interior walls would be reconfigured according to a floor plan that includes classroom, display, office, storage and washroom space. The date a suitable building would be available remains to be confirmed.

Relocation

The portables presently located at BCIT could be readily relocated to Still Creek Avenue by a suitably equipped truck. Several firms in the Lower Mainland have the appropriate equipment and can be contracted to relocate portable buildings.

ITEM	18
MANAGER'S REPORT NO.	45
COUNCIL MEETING	93/07/26

**Site Preparation and Foundation**

To facilitate the set up of the relocated buildings on City property, site preparation work including base preparation will be undertaken. Parking, area for vehicular and pedestrian circulation, and landscaping will be provided.

**Servicing**

The portables will require connection to hydro, water and sewer. These services are presently available to the site and can be readily extended to service the buildings. For building security, perimeter fencing around the site would be required.

**Furnishings**

For instructional purposes, the buildings should be furnished with tables or desks and chairs for 25-30 students and their teacher, a blackboard, bulletin boards, shelves and bookcases. The School Board has indicated that they will provide furnishings as they are available from existing inventory. Audio-visual equipment including an overhead projector, slide projector and VCR can be provided as components of specific displays and projects.

**4. IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE**

The following implementation schedule is proposed for making the Environmental Resource and Education Centre operational.

- Finalize arrangements August 1993
- Site servicing and preparation August 1993
- Building relocation August/September 1993
- Floor plan modification/furnishings September 1993
- Opening of centre October 1993

**5. OPERATING ARRANGEMENTS**

The set-up and operating of the Environmental Resource and Education Centre will be undertaken through a partnership between the Burnaby School Board and the City of Burnaby. Staff from the City and School Board will work together to develop operating arrangements for the Environmental Resource and Education Centre that are acceptable to both partners. The arrangements will address maintenance, utility bills, hours of operation, access, programming, third party use of the facility, insurance, liability, etc. The Burnaby School Board has adopted a "discussion draft" of an agreement which can serve as a basis of discussion between the City and the School Board in developing a final agreement.

ITEM	18
MANAGER'S REPORT NO.	45
COUNCIL MEETING	93/07/26

Other public and private sector organizations may express interest in participating as partners in the Environmental Resource and Education Centre. The role of future partners will be addressed in the operating agreement.

**6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The estimated cost of relocating one of the portable buildings from BCIT, site preparation, service connections, building reconfiguration and perimeter fences is in the order of \$35,000.00. In the event that a used portable building is not available within the appropriate timeframe, a new, suitably configured modular unit could be acquired, sited, serviced and made ready for use for approximately \$42,000. Operating costs are expected to be nominal for both alternatives, however, the long term building maintenance costs are expected to be lower for a new modular unit.

Various sources of funding from public and private agencies will be pursued. This project is not included in the current year's budget. A financing source will be recommended once the details of a cost sharing agreement have been established.

**7. CONCLUSION**

City staff in collaboration with representatives of the Burnaby School Board have developed a proposed course of action for establishing a cooperatively operated Environmental Resource and Education Centre. The proposed centre would be located on Still Creek Avenue on City owned property immediately to the west of Burnaby's recycling depot and across the street from the GVRD compost demonstration garden.

The following course of action is recommended:

- 1) THAT Council endorse in principle the plan of establishing the Environmental Resource and Education Centre in Burnaby in partnership with the Burnaby School Board;
- 2) THAT staff be authorized to work with the Burnaby School Board, BCIT, and other interested partners to develop an overall plan to finance the capital cost required for the project; and

ITEM	18
MANAGER'S REPORT NO.	45
COUNCIL MEETING	93/07/26

3) THAT staff report back to Council upon the completion of cost sharing plans and an operating agreement, identifying the City's contribution required and responsibilities associated with the project.

*B. Runk*  
for D. G. Stenson  
Director Planning & Building

*SG*  
SG/rm

cc. Director Engineering  
Director Finance  
Director Administrative & Community Services  
City Solicitor

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