

ITEM	1
MANAGER'S REPORT NO.	42
COUNCIL MEETING	94/07/11

TO : CITY MANAGER
DATE: 1994 JULY 07

FROM : DIRECTOR RECREATION AND CULTURAL SERVICES

RE : BURNABY LAKE SPORTS COMPLEX - ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION AND
OTHER POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SITES

PURPOSE : To provide Council with a review of the proposed development on
the nearby wildlife habitat and other potential sites for
construction of the fields.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT this report be received for information purposes.

REPORT

At its meeting of 1994 July 06, the Parks and Recreation Commission received the attached staff report on the above subject and adopted the recommendation contained therein.



DENNIS GAUNT
DIRECTOR RECREATION &
CULTURAL SERVICES

tc
Attachment
A/2834

ITEM 11
DIRECTOR'S REPORT NO. 12
COMMISSION MEETING 94/07/06

**SUBJECT: BURNABY LAKE SPORTS COMPLEX - ENVIRONMENTAL
MITIGATION AND OTHER POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SITES**

RECOMMENDATION:

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1. THAT a copy of this report be forwarded to City Council for information purposes.

REPORT

1.0 **BACKGROUND**

Council, at the regular meeting held on 1994, June 13, received a report requesting that a bylaw be brought down to fund Parks and Recreation 1994 Capital Projects. Council deleted project #3 entitled "Burnaby Lake Park - preparation for construction of new fields; geotechnical and environmental review", and referred the same back to the Parks and Recreation Commission with the request that they:

- i) provide a review of the proposed development on the nearby wildlife habitat, and
- ii) include other potential sites for construction of the fields.

Staff have expanded the above issues in relation to the report on the Burnaby Lake Sports Complex, proposed Conceptual Masterplan for new sports fields west of Kensington Avenue as follows. It should be noted that Council has not yet received the detailed staff report which provides extensive details of the proposal.

2.0 **WILDLIFE HABITAT IMPACT MITIGATION**

2.1 **Impact Mitigation Through Park Planning**

This development proposes two tournament baseball diamonds, two tournament softball diamonds, two Class One summer soccer pitches, and one international size football field, totalling seven sports fields. The planning and design objectives were based upon the principles of protecting and enhancing wildlife habitat, and to provide outdoor social gathering spaces and non-sports recreational opportunities to balance with the sports uses.

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The 1976 Burnaby Lake Sports Complex Masterplan for lands west of Kensington Avenue proposed locating sports fields immediately south of Still Creek. On 1989, March 15 and 20 respectively, Commission and Council adopted a recommendation from a Parks and Recreation staff report that a minimum 200 metre wide conservation area will be maintained south of Still Creek. The proposed Conceptual Masterplan establishes its northern boundary at the existing line of preloaded fill constructed by the Engineering Department in anticipation of a new Kensington-Norland connector, in excess of 250 metres from Still Creek. The resulting conservation area is at minimum 45 acres in size (Attachment #1).

The proposed central tournament facility has allowed for preservation of natural pockets throughout the City, offering an improved overall network of refuge for wildlife.

2.2 Impact Mitigation Through Park Design

Approximately 25 percent of the land area within the proposed park boundaries has been damaged or degraded by past and present fill operations. The Conceptual Masterplan proposes to rehabilitate the degraded areas and re-establish habitat by creating lagoon systems and by implementing an extensive reforestation program. Fully one third of the park area will consist of rebuilt habitat and parkland planted with native tree species exclusive of sports field development and complementary to the proposed outdoor social spaces.

In harmony with the above rehabilitation effort is the proposal to develop a closed or semi-closed water supply and recycling system, enabling the creation of the large pond systems whose goal is to increase the diversity of bird, small mammal and aquatic habitat on site. The use of a self-contained water supply system could lessen or eliminate the dependency on the G.V.R.D. drinking water supply for irrigation purposes. The use of recycling and biofiltration treatment techniques for runoff may help reduce or eliminate the introduction of excessive nutrients into the environment and will lessen the need for the construction of an extensive storm sewer system.

Steps shall be taken to protect the existing native buffer on the west side of Kensington Avenue and to extend it into the heart of the park, thus greatly expanding it as a wildlife corridor and enhancing its greenway character. Extensive pedestrian trails and nature interpretation signage will increase user access to and awareness of the existing natural systems and the complementary park development, and will connect to the regional trail network.

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2.3 Preliminary Environmental Overview

A preliminary environmental overview of the proposed park development was conducted recently by Alan J. Whitehead, M.Sc., R.P. Bio. The environmental review found that the site has been altered considerably through logging, ditching, burning and landfill operations. Plants and animal diversity appear to be low as a result of historical practices. Some upland areas are more diverse and retention would be desirable. The proposed pond systems are highly beneficial in terms of water management and wildlife habitat, and are applicable to sustainable water management principles. From an environmental aspect, restoration of the landfill and disturbed areas will increase the diversity of wildlife habitat over the present conditions and will help offset the loss of upland habitat from the development of sports fields. In addition, the report states that replanting of parkland is beneficial to park aesthetics, and is an integral part of creating new wildlife habitat and complementary to non-sports recreation. Recreational opportunities for viewing wildlife also enhanced.

Part of the design process will be to incorporate environmental enhancement measures which will increase native plant and animal diversity over current lands within the complex.

3.0 **OTHER POTENTIAL SITES**

Other sites have been extensively studied for sports field development by Parks and Recreation staff over the past ten years but none match the central location, accessibility and zoning suitable for tournaments and spectator activities as found with the proposed park development. The night illumination necessary to extend the hours of play to meet existing demand for baseball and softball tournaments, as well as summer soccer and football, would not be appropriately placed if constructed in residential neighbourhood parks. It has been the experience of Parks and Recreation staff that residents oppose the above intense activities in neighbourhood parks and school sites. The industrial zoning of the lands adjacent to the proposed sports complex is compatible with the spectator parking and noise associated with tournaments. The site is also ideally located between major vehicular transportation routes, and within walking distance of existing transit and a potential future rapid transit line, and is thus poised to capitalize on sport tourism opportunities.

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The proposed park site is conveniently located at the centre of the City and is more suitable for development and rehabilitation efforts. Other publicly owned lands large enough to accommodate the existing demand for a tournament sports facility consist of relatively untouched wildlife habitat that require protection, and are located at the edges of the City. The option of appropriating developed private residential or industrial properties and converting them to a tournament level sport facility is not viable due to high costs.

4.0 **SUMMARY**

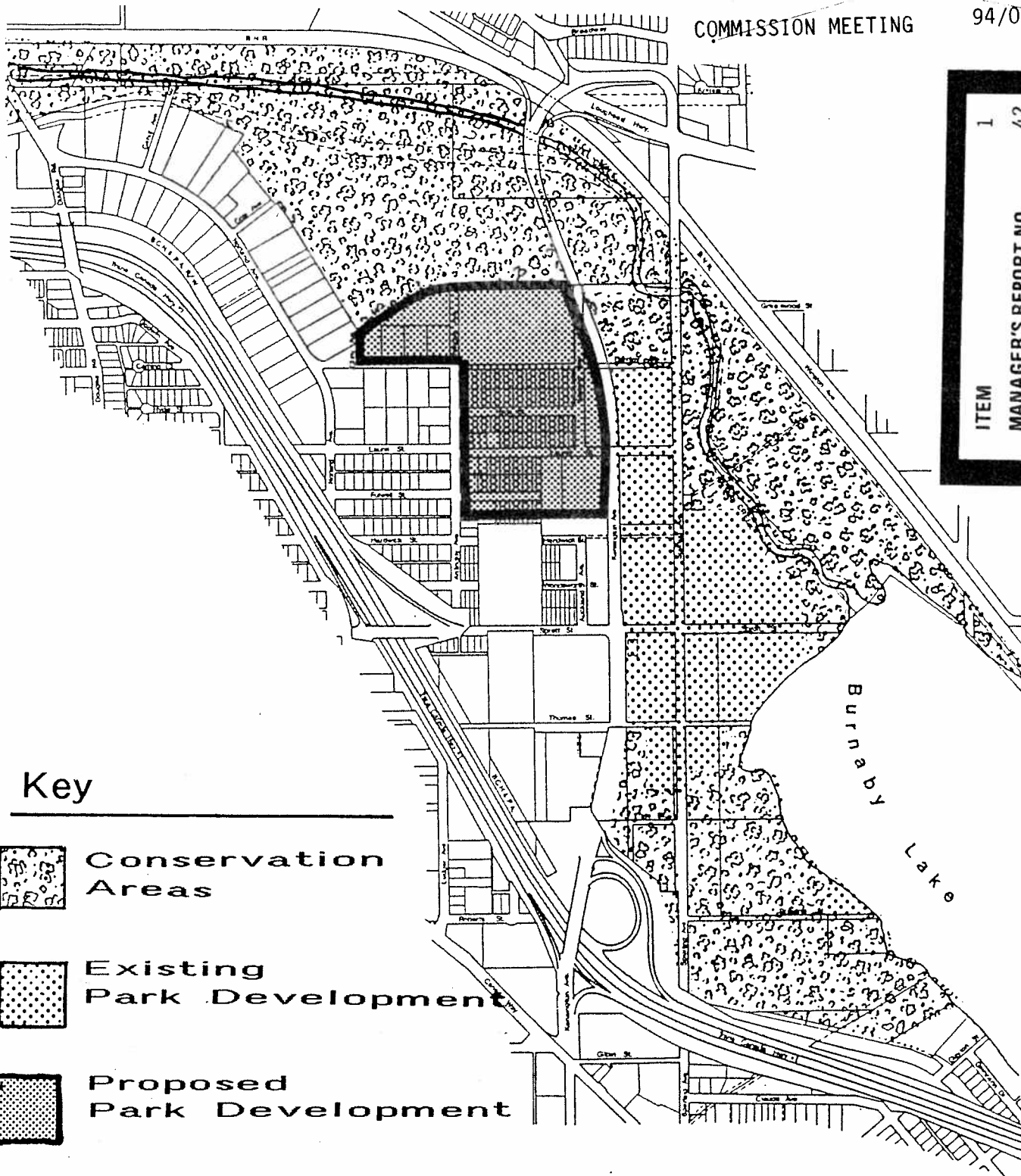
The Conceptual Masterplan proposes to extensively mitigate its impact on wildlife habitat by first recognizing that wildlife protection is largely exercised in planning decisions that look beyond the site, that the land base has been substantially degraded in the past and therein presents an opportunity for development, that rehabilitation must be accompanied by further environmental enhancement, and that the sports use should be balanced with modern social and environmental values and thus be accessible to all age groups and family backgrounds.

Intensifying sports field and park development in the Central Valley west of Kensington Avenue provides the opportunity to conserve untouched primary wildlife habitat in other areas of Burnaby by developing on largely damaged lands adjacent to an industrial area, and protects the natural character of neighbourhood parks.




5.0 **CONCLUSION**

The Parks and Recreation Department have taken extensive measures to protect existing, and create new wildlife habitat with the proposed Conceptual Masterplan. The Central Valley is felt the best suited location in the City of Burnaby to meet the existing demand for tournament baseball and softball facilities and additional soccer and football fields. The preliminary environmental consulting work concurs with the above conclusions.

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Key

-  Conservation Areas
-  Existing Park Development
-  Proposed Park Development

Burnaby Lake – West Sector

Planning and Building Department

