

ITEM	9
MANAGER'S REPORT NO.	8
COUNCIL MEETING	94/02/14

TO: CITY MANAGER 1994 FEBRUARY 09
FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING Our File: 08.815
SUBJECT: CORRESPONDENCE RELATED TO TAXI STANDS
PURPOSE: To respond to a letter of inquiry from Bonny's Taxi Ltd.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT a copy of this report be sent to Bonny's Taxi Ltd., 5525 Imperial Street, Burnaby, B.C., V5J 1E8, and to Burnaby Select Taxi Ltd., 6081 B East Hastings Street, Burnaby, B.C., V5B 1R8.

R E P O R T

This department has been requested to respond to a letter of enquiry dated 1994 January 27 from Mr. Gunter Schlieper, General Manager of Bonny's Taxi Ltd., which was on the Council agenda of 1994 February 07. Mr. Schlieper requests the assistance of the City in achieving taxi stands at SkyTrain Stations and other desirable locations. He requests that the provision of taxi stands be made part of our community planning.

The matter of taxi stands had been previously raised in 1991 and was discussed in detail in a report submitted to Council on 1991 April 02. A copy of this report which continues to remain relevant is attached. Council at that time adopted the report recommendation that the proposed taxi stand program for the City as outlined in Section 4.0 of the report, regarding on-site taxi stands, on-street stands, on-street dispatch areas and public telephones, be approved.

While the City cannot require taxi stands and related provisions on existing private shopping centre zoned sites, a commitment for the provision of taxi stands could be obtained for example at the time of rezoning for major changes and/or additions to a shopping centre. No major shopping centre proposals have been made since 1991 but staff intend to establish a taxi stand prerequisite should such rezoning proposals be received. Otherwise, staff would continue to encourage such provisions on a voluntary basis.

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As indicated in the 1991 report, taxi companies remain at liberty to continue to define their own on-street dispatch areas on an informal flexible basis without special signage provided these locations do not become a nuisance or safety hazard. Regarding signed on-street taxi stands, Engineering staff intend to evaluate such taxi stands by collecting data on their frequency of use through the establishment of trial locations for some on-street taxi stands. These would be selected by the Engineering Department in consultation with the taxi companies.

While it is desirable to accommodate taxi stands at SkyTrain stations, the station locations are constricted and should also meet needs for safe pedestrian access, bus and handidart access, and drop-off and pick-up convenience to the public. Within apartment areas, the maximization of on-street resident parking is also desired. SkyTrain stations within Burnaby, except the Metrotown Station, have five-minute waiting spaces for the convenience of the public which may also be used by taxis. There is some concern that restricted on-street taxi stands, if established, should not appear to be underutilized bringing into question the value of such provisions. The discussion of trial locations for on-street taxi stands would include possible ones at SkyTrain stations.

In Burnaby, there continue to be two taxi companies, Bonny's Taxi with 98 licences and Burnaby Select Taxi with 4 licences. While it is desirable for both Burnaby taxi companies to cooperate when jointly available taxi stands are provided on private property, shopping centre owners may choose to make specific arrangements with only one of the two taxi companies. Any taxi stands on public property would be available to both taxi companies.

It continues to be desirable to encourage appropriate taxi stand provisions for the use of taxis as an important alternative mode of convenient transportation for Burnaby citizens and workers. Staff will endeavour to promote the provision and use of taxi stands as outlined in this report and the previous 1991 report.

This is for the information of Council.



D. G. Stenson
Director
Planning and Building

KI:lf
Attachment
cc: Director Engineering
Director Finance

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TO: MUNICIPAL MANAGER 1991 MARCH 20

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING & BUILDING INSPECTION

SUBJECT: TAXI STANDS

PURPOSE: To outline a program for the provision of taxi stands at major public and private developments in Burnaby.

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RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) THAT the proposed taxi stand program for the Municipality, as outlined in Section 4.0 of this report, regarding on-site taxi stands, on-street taxi stands, on-street dispatch areas and public telephones, be approved.

R E P O R T

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

Council at its meeting of 1989 January 09 adopted the following motion in response to a discussion regarding taxi services in Burnaby:

"THAT Planning Department staff be directed to address the issue of providing taxi stands in the development and/or redevelopment of commercial, recreational and public facilities in Burnaby including Skytrain stations".

In response, on 1989 August 11, the Municipal Manager submitted a report from the Director Planning and Building Inspection and recommended:

"THAT the proposed program for the provision of taxi stands and improved taxi service related to major public and private developments in Burnaby as outlined in Section 4.0 of the report be approved".

The report, however, was tabled to allow interested parties to appear before Council to respond to the report. A delegation from Burnaby's larger taxi company, Bonny's Taxi, appeared before Council on 1989 September 05. The points raised by the delegation and Council were further studied by staff.

In line with the discussion, this report builds upon the previous one, further refining various issues and options. Section 4.0 proposed the pursuance of several measures concerning the provision of taxi stands related to major public and private developments in Burnaby. These measures cover:

- a) on-site taxi stands
- b) on-street taxi stands (based on the findings of a pilot study to be conducted by the Engineering Department)
- c) on-street dispatch areas
- d) public telephone contact with taxi companies

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2.0 BACKGROUND

At present, no municipalities in the Lower Mainland have specific taxi-stand policies. In Burnaby, there are currently two taxi companies, Bonny's Taxi with 98 licences and Burnaby Select Taxi with four licences. These companies are free to pursue the following approaches:

- a) To negotiate on-site taxi stands with property owners/developers/managers of facilities such as shopping centres or hotels.
- b) To wait on-street except where stopping is prohibited.

3.0 ISSUES

The planned provision of taxi stands involves questions of policy, location and exclusivity that need to be resolved before a particular taxi stand program is finalized.

3.1 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The provision of taxi stands reflects, in part, two of Burnaby's policies.

3.1.1 Supporting Burnaby Based Businesses

- a) by increasing taxi companies' proximity to potential customers and
- b) by providing a legitimate taxi waiting area.

3.1.2 Improving Taxi Service

- a) by improving taxi convenience and availability at major communal facilities and
- b) by reducing the response time from central dispatch areas.

3.2 LOCATION OF TAXI STANDS

Taxi stands, which can take various forms, are usually found in convenient, central locations with a large, predictable flow of potential customers. Typically, these locations include intercity bus and rail termini, airports, hospitals, hotels and entertainment complexes. Staff have identified several Burnaby locations that may be suitable for the provision of taxi stand amenities including:

a) Shopping Centres

- i) Metrotown - Metrotown Centre
 - Eaton Centre
 - Station Square
 - Old Orchard
- ii) Middlegate.
- iii) Brentwood Mall
- iv) Lougheed Mall
- v) Kensington Square

b) Skytrain Stations

- i) Patterson
- ii) Metrotown
- iii) Royal Oak
- iv) Edmonds

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c) Educational Institutions

- i) S.F.U.
- ii) B.C.I.T.

d) Seniors' Housing Concentrations

(Planning Study Areas with over 65 populations - of 1000 + related to 1986 Census and 2001 Projection)

- i) Richmond Park
- ii) Maywood
- iii) Garden Village
- iv) Cascade/Schou
- v) Marlborough
- vi) Cameron
- vii) Sussex Nelson (1986 Census only)
- viii) Burnaby Heights
- ix) Willingdon Heights (2001 projection only)

3.2.1 On-Site Taxi Stands (Direct Service)

Typically, on-site taxi stands occupy two parking spaces at the main entrance to a communal facility such as a shopping centre or a hotel. The two spaces allow the stand to be more regularly served, as the second taxi immediately fills the space vacated by the first. By bringing customers and businesses together, such stands are usually mutually beneficial to both the site owners and the taxi companies. The taxi stand, therefore, should be provided as a public service at no cost.

Problems, however, arise when:

- a) there is inadequate on-site space for such stands, e.g. at existing Skytrain stations;
- b) such stands reduce site parking ratios below minimum standards;
- c) fees are charged by either the site-owner for providing the space or the taxi company(ies) for providing the service;
- d) such stands are infrequently served, thereby wasting valuable space and discouraging potential customers; and/or
- e) such stands are found in the emergency fire lane area, an inappropriate location unless coordinated with the Fire Department.

On-site taxi stands must also meet basic design criteria such as clear signage, adequate and attractive lighting, and the availability of a nearby covered waiting area.

3.2.2 On-Street Taxi Stands

On-street taxi stands have three purposes which sometimes overlap:

- a) to serve adjacent facilities with insufficient on-site space, e.g. transit stations;
- b) to serve several neighbouring facilities generating heavy use and high turnover; e.g. medical-dental centres or performing arts complexes, and
- c) to act as dispatch waiting areas in key parts of the Municipality, such as those with high concentrations of residents over 65 years old.

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The Engineering Department's Traffic Division staff currently do not favour designating on-street taxi stands unless a need can be demonstrated, and note that:

- a) taxis already have the same right as other cars to park on-street or to use designated drop-off and pick-up areas;
- b) if the street is so busy that parking is difficult, then the space would probably be better used for short-stay public parking rather than being reserved for occasional use by waiting taxis.

The Planning & Building Inspection Department agrees that, overall in the Municipality, there are sufficient parking rights and space for taxi companies to continue to define their own dispatch areas on an informal, flexible basis without official designation. If these areas become a nuisance or hazard, the locations can be revised. Taxi companies, of course, also have the alternative of acquiring their own land to be used as dispatch waiting areas.

However, to provide a reasonable public service of accessibility, staff would support an evaluation of on-street taxi stands on busy streets where both taxi use and parking area are in high demand. These on-street stands would have at least two spaces in recognition of the two companies currently operating in Burnaby. To collect data on frequency of use for such stands, a pilot study in Metrotown is proposed.

3.2.3 Direct Line Telephones

Direct line telephones, as a means of facilitating taxi service, offer prompt, simple contact between taxi companies and customers. Such phones are usually found in areas with very high but irregularly timed demand such as at various Canada Safeway locations. Where provided these phones are paid for by the taxi company.

Another less expensive option is prominently affixing the Burnaby taxi companies' telephone numbers, in conjunction with the transit information number, on standardized signs at public pay phones located near a reasonable taxi drop-off and pick-up area, such as at SkyTrain stations.

3.3 EXCLUSIVITY OF TAXI STANDS

To be useful, the space at taxi stands needs to be filled at specified times by regular, reliable taxi-cabs that may or may not be competing to provide improved service. Taxi stands may be used:

- a) By solely one company: in such cases the company would negotiate directly with the property owner and may either be paid a small fee for maintaining the stand, as with some hotels, or pay a small fee for the use of the space, as with some malls.

Municipalities do not generally have the power to control other businesses on private land such as by prohibiting taxi brokers from entering into exclusive concession agreements with owners of hospitals, hotels and similar facilities. It is also noted that municipalities cannot assign a part of a highway or public place for exclusive use as a taxi stand by a particular individual or firm.

- b) By both Burnaby-based companies: in such cases, either both companies have negotiated with property owners, or the stands are on public property. The costs of any Municipal intervention may be reflected in higher licence fees.

Allowing access to both companies is the fairer option. However, having solely one company responsible for the proper use, especially frequency of service, of on-site taxi stands located on private property avoids practical problems of operation.

4.0 TAXI STAND PROPOSALS

It is proposed that taxi stands in Burnaby be pursued in the following manner:

4.1 ON-SITE TAXI STANDS

That the developers/owners

- a) of the following major shopping centres:

- i) Metrotown
 - Metrotown Centre
 - Eaton Centre
 - Station Square
 - Old Orchard

- ii) Middlegate
- iii) Brentwood Mall
- iv) Lougheed Mall
- v) Kensington Square

- b) and of major new public and private developments of sufficient size and high traffic demand to warrant taxi stands,

be asked now or as part of the development approval process during rezoning to provide at least one designated taxi stand space, preferably two in high use areas.

These taxi stands should be desirably provided:

- i) at no cost
- ii) in a convenient location
- iii) by arrangement with at least one, preferably both, licenced Burnaby taxi companies. A co-operative approach is favoured; however, if joint negotiation is not possible, then one company may provide the service.

Where these conditions are met, a parking exemption would be granted to allow the one or two taxi stand spaces to be counted as parking spaces in parking ratio calculations.

Additional taxi stand space may be negotiated between the developer/owners or other shopping centres and a licenced Burnaby taxi company.

The usefulness of existing stands and the feasibility of new ones should be reviewed periodically.

4.2 ON-STREET TAXI STANDS

That the Director Engineering be authorized to conduct a pilot study of a two-space stand in an appropriate Metrotown location. The test location would be determined in consultation with the taxi companies.

That the information gained from this study be used to determine the feasibility of other on-street stands, especially in busy areas.

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4.3 ON-STREET DISPATCH AREAS

That the taxi companies continue to define their own dispatch areas on an informal flexible basis without special signage in convenient but inconspicuous locations, and that if these areas become a nuisance or hazard their location be reviewed.

4.4 PUBLIC TELEPHONES

That the operator of SkyTrain, the developer/owners of major shopping centres in Burnaby, and the administration of B.C.I.T. and S.F.U. be requested by the Municipality to allow taxi companies either:

- a) to arrange and pay for the installation of direct line phones;

or

- b) to affix, prominently, small standardized signs produced by the Municipal sign shop and made available at cost with their telephone numbers, in conjunction with the the transit information number, at public pay phones located near a reasonable taxi drop-off and pick-up area.

If the owners/operators prefer to produce their own suitable signs, they may instead provide ones of their choice.


A. L. Parr
Director Planning &
Building Inspection

ALP
FA:lf/ap

cc: Chief Licence Inspector

Director Engineering
Attention: Traffic Division