

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS 1995 DECEMBER 12

FROM: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM
STRATEGY COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: BURNABY TOURISM STRATEGY - 1996 IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Council approve the Burnaby Tourism Strategy Implementation Program for 1996 as outlined in this report.
2. THAT provision be made in the 1996 Annual Budget to cover the costs of the 1996 Tourism Implementation Program as outlined in Section 6.0 of this report.

R E P O R T

1.0 SUMMARY:

This report provides a review of the progress made to date on the 1995 Tourist Strategy Implementation Program and recommends the continuation of the program through the end of the 1996 Calendar year. The main elements of the 1995 program include the operation of a Seasonal Tourist Information Centre in the Metrotown Retail Complex, a Primary Tourist Infocentre in City Hall, a marketing and promotion plan and the involvement of a community based Tourism Resource Group. The 1996 program proposes to continue with the main elements of the 1995 Program with some modifications.

2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

- 2.1 On 1993 March 08, Council completed its review of the Burnaby Tourism Strategy Report at which time they concurred with the approach described for tourism coordination and promotion. Council then authorized staff to develop an implementation plan for further submission to the Executive Committee of Council.
- 2.2 On 1995 February 13, Council approved a program for implementing the Burnaby Tourism Strategy for the 1995 calendar year which has been pursued as planned and summarized in this report.

:	COPY	-	CITY MANAGER
r		-	DIRECTOR FINANCE
		-	DIR. PLNG. & BLDG.

3.0 INTRODUCTION:

Since the City's 1995 Tourist Strategy Implementation Program will end in the near future, it is now appropriate to provide a review and assessment of the program in order to plan for the next year of operation and allocate the appropriate resources. This report will describe the primary elements of the 1995 Program and outline a proposed Program and budget for 1996.

4.0 1995 TOURISM IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM - SUMMARY:

A description and status of each element of the 1995 Implementation program is provided as follows:

4.1 Seasonal Tourist Infocentre - Metrotown

- Established at the Burnaby Community Information Booth located on the pedestrian walkway linking Eaton Centre Metrotown and Metrotown Centre (refer to attached photo sheet).
- Operated exclusively as the "Burnaby Tourist Infocentre" from June 01, 1995 through September 04, 1995 seven days per week from 11:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- Staffed by four Auxiliary City employees; two from BCIT, one from VCC (all enrolled in tourist related programs at these institutions) and another part time employee from the Burnaby Heritage Village and Carousel.
- The City obtained a Provincial Government Grant of \$1,248 under the "Student Summer Works '95 Program" to help offset staffing costs of the Tourist Infocentre.
- Infocentre staff provided information, advice, suggestions, directions, etc. on a variety of tourist related topics covering Burnaby events, attractions, facilities, as well as those around the Lower Mainland and B. C.
- A wide selection of key Province wide tourist oriented brochures, information items, attractions, maps, ferry and bus schedules, etc. were racked at the Infocentre free of charge.

- A visually prominent section of the rack space at the Infocentre was specifically devoted to Burnaby facilities and attractions, and featured a brochure produced under this program providing a map and information about a variety of Burnaby facilities and attractions.
- A general statistical profile of the Tourist Infocentre visitors is outlined as follows:
 - a) An average of 57 "visitor parties" per day (over the June 01 to September 04 period) were provided with specific services by staff at the Tourist Infocentre. Using a figure of 1.91 persons per visitor party, an average of 109 persons were specifically served per day with a total of 10,464 at the Tourist Infocentre from June 01, 1995 through September 04, 1995.
 - b) The total number of people who used the Tourist Infocentre (including those who may have only picked up various brochures but did not specifically request information or assistance of staff) averaged approximately 349 per day or a total of 33,494 from June 01, 1995 through September 04, 1995.
 - c) Approximately 47.1% or almost one half of the Infocentre visitors originated from outside of the Lower Mainland. Visitor origin from outside of the Lower Mainland has been determined as follows:
 - 9.9% from other parts of B. C.
 - 26% from other parts of Canada
 - 18.9% from the USA (and Mexico)
 - 22.5% from Asia/Oceania
 - 17.7% from Europe
 - 4.8% from other parts of the world
 - d) Of the remaining 52.9% Infocentre visitors from the Lower Mainland, a significant number do not reside in Burnaby.
- It is important to note that our statistics do not include additional visitors to the Infocentre when it was not staffed, that is, in the early morning and evenings when the retail complex is open. Thus, the statistics outlined above are considered to be on the conservative side.

4.2 Primary Tourist Infocentre (City Hall)

- Initiated in 1995 September and located adjacent to the General Information Counter on the Main floor of City Hall.
- Provides a tourist information service throughout the year but primarily during non-peak periods when the Metrotown Infocentre is not open.
- Includes a public information service with display of promotional materials, brochures, etc. in a brochure rack provided by Interwest Brochure Marketing Inc. free of charge. The top two rows of the brochure rack are reserved for Burnaby based attractions, hotels, etc.
- Existing City staff at Information Counter respond to general visitor enquiries.

4.3 Tourism Resource Group

- On 1995 May 09, the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy Committee approved Terms of Reference and general operating guidelines for the establishment of a "Burnaby Tourism Resource Group."
- The Tourism Resource Group is to be comprised of representatives of the key stakeholder interests in the local tourism industry and who possess a wide range of experience, knowledge, abilities and business connections. The Resource Group will provide task specific advice and assistance to the City (the "Client") who will be responsible for implementing Burnaby's Tourism Program.

4.4 Marketing and Promotion

- One of the key promotion elements to the 1995 Program has been the production and distribution of the "Burnaby Visitors' Guide" (copy of brochure provided to members of Council).
- A total of 100,000 Burnaby Visitors' Guide brochures were produced for the City by Hine Design Inc. and distributed by Interwest Brochure Marketing Inc. to over 270 established tourist outlets throughout the Lower Mainland (for a six month term ending in January 1996) as our primary market area.

- The Visitors' Guide was also distributed to all of the Travel Infocentres around the Province and to B. C. Tourism offices in Victoria, Los Angeles, London, Tokyo, Taipei and Australia. The brochures were also distributed to all libraries and recreation centres throughout the City.
- The Visitors' Guide has proven to be a useful multipurpose brochure given the number that have been picked up from the various tourist outlets in the region and from the City's Infocentre in Metrotown, City Hall, etc.
- The other key promotion element of the 1995 Program was the operation of the Burnaby Tourist Infocentre in Metrotown. Promotion of the Infocentre and its services included press releases appearing in the two local newspapers, three Chinese daily newspapers and an article in the summer issue of the "Focus" newsletter published and distributed (55,000 copies) by Eaton Centre Metrotown.
- Promotional signs for the Infocentre were strategically placed throughout the Metrotown Retail Complex.
- Letters were mailed to numerous restaurants, hotels, attraction operators, etc. in Burnaby announcing the opening of the Burnaby Tourist Infocentre in Metrotown. Each operator was invited to display their promotional literature, brochures, etc. at the Infocentre free of charge.

4.5 Tourism Coordination

- The overall coordination function has been provided by existing City staff from the Planning and Building Department who have worked together with other relevant City Departments and external organizations including Tourism Vancouver and the Provincial Government.

4.6 1995 Program Budget - Summary

- The approved budget for the 1995 Implementation Program with the major program elements is outlined in the table below. The total expenditures for the 1995 Program are on target with the \$33,000 allocation.

BUDGET SUMMARY - 1995 PROGRAM

PROGRAM ELEMENT	COSTS
Tourist InfoCentre (Metrotown)(Seasonal)	\$17,000.
Tourist InfoCentre (City Hall) (Primary)	\$ 0.
Tourism Advisory Committee	\$ 1,000.
Marketing and Promotion	\$15,000.
Tourism Coordination	\$ 0.
TOTAL COSTS	\$33,000.

5.0 PROPOSED 1996 TOURISM IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM:

5.1 The 1995 Implementation Program has provided a valuable service to the City's tourist industry by raising Burnaby's profile both within and outside of the community and offering residents and visitors with considerable information and advice. It is recommended that the City continue to provide this service for 1996 utilizing all of the Program Elements outlined in the previous section.

However, the City can be more aggressive in its tourism effort and provide a greater level of service by making several strategic adjustments to the program elements with some modest increases to the budget. Such adjustments are recommended as follows:

5.2 Seasonal Tourist Infocentre - Metrotown

The Metrotown Tourist Infocentre was an essential and successful element to the City's program and provided an important service to the public. The Infocentre served a significant number of visitors and residents and should continue during the peak tourist season in 1996. In general, the hours of operation in the summer of 1995 were very responsive to the needs of the public.

However, there appears to be a need to extend the services provided at this high profile location beyond the June 1 through Labour Day period. Many enquiries were received at the Infocentre through much of September and are expected in the late spring when people are planning for their summer holidays. It is therefore recommended that the Metrotown Infocentre be open from 1996 May 1 through September 30. This would increase the operating costs of the Infocentre by approximately \$7,000 (from \$17,000 in 1995 to approximately \$24,000 in 1996).

5.3 **Burnaby Visitors' Guide**

It is projected that the 100,000 copies produced will be depleted by the Spring of 1996. This brochure has been well received by the general public and should be reproduced for 1996. The brochure can be produced and distributed again in 1996 using the 1995 format (with necessary refinements) for similar costs.

It is recommended that the brochure continue to include a small amount of corporate advertising to help offset production and distribution costs as was incorporated in the first edition. Such advertising should be very discrete in nature without becoming a dominant feature of the brochure and should be offered only to those businesses that relate to the tourist industry or have a significant corporate profile in Burnaby. This effort will also help to encourage cooperation between the City and the business community towards realizing the mutual benefits provided by the local tourism industry.

Burnaby's profile and image can be further enhanced through this brochure by improving its quality with more colour and photography, better paper stock, a larger format and wider distribution. Such distribution could include the B. C. Ferries, selective regions of B. C. and Washington State, the Vancouver International Airport, etc. It is estimated that such improvements could be made by increasing the budget for this program element from \$15,000 (allocated in 1995) to \$20,000. This is considered to be a worthwhile effort and should be considered in connection with the 1997 Tourism Program.

5.4 **Tourism Resource Group**

As outlined above, the general terms of reference and operating guidelines for this group have been established. The purpose of this group should be to assist in the implementation of specific tourism related objectives or tasks that will benefit the community at large as well as the interests of the group members. Such specific tasks could include the following:

1. Promote and market Burnaby attractions and facilities to its own residents, eg. "Be a tourist in your own community".
2. Promote and market Burnaby as a host community for sports tournaments such as hockey, baseball and soccer and incorporate a package of tourist related promotions (eg. accommodation, Burnaby Village Museum, restaurant discounts, etc.).
3. Promote and market Burnaby attractions and facilities to tie in with the 1997 B. C. Summer Games to be held in Burnaby.

The City's primary role would be that of a catalyst and facilitator for the specific task(s) at hand. Key community based stakeholders would be asked to serve on the Resource Group for a limited period of time in order to assist the Committee with the identification, development and implementation of the specific project task. It is intended that the private sector would generally provide the monies required to launch appropriate marketing campaigns, etc. associated with the tasks since they would benefit most directly from such efforts. The City's financial contribution to this Program Element would be minimal and not exceed \$1,000.

6.0 PROPOSED 1996 PROGRAM BUDGET - SUMMARY

A summary of the proposed 1996 Program compared with the approved budget for 1995 is outlined below.

PROGRAM BUDGET SUMMARY

PROGRAM ELEMENT	BUDGET COSTS	
	1995 PROGRAM	1996 PROPOSED PROGRAM
Tourist InfoCentre (Metrotown)(Seasonal)	\$17,000.	\$24,000.
Tourist InfoCentre (City Hall) (Primary)	\$ 0.	\$ 0.
Tourism Advisory Committee	\$ 1,000.	\$ 1,000.
Marketing and Promotion	\$15,000.	\$15,000.
Tourism Coordination	\$ 0.	\$ 0.
TOTAL COSTS	\$33,000.	\$40,000.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS:

- 7.1 The tourism industry will likely continue to experience considerable growth in 1996 as it has during the last few years and represents an important sector in our local and Provincial economy. Tourism has many direct impacts on Burnaby based businesses but also provides numerous positive spinoffs on the local arts, culture and recreation pursuits throughout the community. The City has taken an important positive approach in supporting and promoting tourism in the community through its 1995 Tourism Implementation Program.

- 7.2 In order to continue to enjoy the benefits provided by this industry, it is recommended that Council approve the proposed Tourism Implementation Program for 1996 as outlined in this report and make the necessary provisions in the 1996 Annual Budget to cover the costs of the program elements.

Respectively submitted,

Councillor D. Drummond, Chairman

Councillor D.R. Corrigan, Member

Councillor L. Rankin, Member

PS/ds

cc: City Manager
Director Finance
Director Recreation and Cultural Services

Burnaby Tourist Info Centre Metrotown

