

CITY OF BURNABY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT &  
TOURISM STRATEGY COMMITTEE

HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR  
AND COUNCILLORS

Re: Burnaby Tourism Strategy - 1996 and 1997  
Implementation Program

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. THAT Council approve the Burnaby Tourism Strategy Implementation Program for 1997 as outlined in the attached report.
2. THAT provision be made in the 1997 Annual Budget to cover the costs of the 1997 Tourism Implementation Program as outlined in Section 5 of the attached report.

**REPORT**

At its meeting on 1997 January 13 the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy Committee adopted the *attached* report providing a review of the 1996 Burnaby Tourism Implementation Program and recommending that the Program be continued through 1997 in a similar manner. The components of the 1997 Program include the operation of a Seasonal Tourist Information Centre in the Metrotown retail complex, a Tourist Information service in City Hall and a marketing and promotion plan.

In order to continue to achieve the benefits derived from the tourism industry the Economic Development and Tourism Committee recommend Council approve the Burnaby Tourism Strategy Implementation Program for 1997.

Respectfully submitted,

His Worship, Mayor D.P. Drummond  
Chair

Councillor D.R. Corrigan  
Member

Councillor L.A. Rankin  
Member

COPY - CITY MANAGER
- DIRECTOR FINANCE
- DIRECTOR PLNG. & BLDG.
- DIRECTOR REC. & CULT. SERV.

**TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM STRATEGY COMMITTEE**

**FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING**

**SUBJECT: BURNABY TOURISM STRATEGY - 1996 AND 1997 IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM**

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1996 November 05

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. **THAT** the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy Committee approve the Burnaby Tourism Strategy Implementation Program for 1997 as outlined in this report.
2. **THAT** provision be made in the 1997 Annual Budget to cover the costs of the 1997 Tourism Implementation Program as outlined in Section 5 of this report.

**R E P O R T**

**1.0 SUMMARY:**

This report provides a review of the 1996 Burnaby Tourism Implementation Program and recommends that the Program be continued through 1997 in a similar manner. The main components of the 1997 Program include the operation of a Seasonal Tourist Information Centre in the Metrotown Retail Complex, a Tourist Information Service in City Hall and a marketing and promotion plan.

**2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

On 1995 December 18, Council approved the Burnaby Tourism Strategy Implementation Program for the 1996 calendar year which has been pursued as planned and summarized in this report.

**3.0 1996 TOURISM IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM - SUMMARY:**

The status of each component of the 1996 Implementation Program is outlined as follows:

3.1 SEASONAL TOURIST INFOCENTRE - METROTOWN:

- Located within the Burnaby Community Information Booth on the pedestrian walkway linking Eaton Centre Metrotown and Metrotown Centre and operated exclusively as the "Burnaby Tourist Infocentre" from May 01 through September 30 seven days per week during peak visitor hours generally between 11:00 am and 5:30 pm.
- Staffed by four Auxiliary City employees who worked on a shift basis. Two of the four staff worked at the Infocentre in the summer of 1995. Two are graduates of BCIT, one from VCC (all in tourist related programs) and another has worked part time at the Burnaby Village Museum and Carousel for a number of years. Together, the staff spoke Cantonese, Italian and Indonesian as well as English.
- 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 the Province.
- The Infocentre was clearly identified as the "Burnaby Tourist Infocentre" with large banners and a wide selection of key Burnaby and Province-wide tourist brochures, information items, attractions materials, maps, ferry and bus schedules, etc. that were racked and dispensed free of charge. Burnaby-related attractions, brochures, the Burnaby Visitors' Guide were allocated to the most visible sections of the display areas.
- Additional brochures and posters promoting community and regional events were also prominently displayed at the Tourist Infocentre.
- The City obtained a Provincial Government grant of \$2064 under the "Student Summer Works '96" Program which helped offset a portion of the Infocentre staffing costs.

3.2 TOURIST INFORMATION SERVICE - CITY HALL:

- This limited tourist information service was introduced in 1995 September at the General Information Desk on the main floor of City Hall and has continued since that time.
- This service is provided by existing City staff at the Information Desk whose primary responsibility is to respond to a variety of general City related enquiries by phone and in person. Thus, the extent of service provided to tourists is considerably less than at the Metrotown Infocentre due to the current allocation of staff resources and the limited demand for tourist services at this location.

- Limited tourist information services which focus primarily on Burnaby are available throughout the year at City Hall primarily during the non-peak tourist periods when the Metrotown Infocentre is closed.
- Tourist-related promotional materials, brochures, etc. are displayed in a brochure rack located next to the information desk which has been supplied by Interwest Brochure Marketing Inc. at no cost to the City or the parties displaying their promotional materials.

### 3.3 MARKETING AND PROMOTION:

- One of the key promotional elements of the 1996 Program is the production and distribution of the 1996 Burnaby Visitors' Guide (copy of brochure attached)
- A total of 100,000 Burnaby Visitors' Guide brochures (2nd edition) were produced in 1996 for the City and distributed as follows:
  - a. To approximately 270 established tourist outlets throughout the Lower Mainland for a six month period (May through October), to selective Tourist Infocentres around the Province and to the Vancouver International Airport for a 12 month period from February '96 through February '97. Distribution provided by Interwest Brochure Marketing Inc.
  - b. On the three most heavily-travelled B.C. Ferry routes between Nanaimo and Tsawwassen, Swartz Bay and Tsawwassen, and Horseshoe Bay and Nanaimo. Distribution provided by Vancouver Island Tourist Services Ltd.
  - c. To all Burnaby Libraries, Recreation Centres and other community facilities. Distribution provided by the City.
  - d. To hundreds of members of the public (residents and non-residents), and various organizations and associations who requested copies of the brochure for upcoming events, for friends and relatives and their own travel purposes. Distribution provided by the City.
- The Burnaby Visitors' Guide is 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 Tourist Infocentre.
- The five month operation of the Metrotown Tourist Infocentre which served many thousands of tourists as well as Burnaby residents has provided a key promotional role in the 1996 Program. Its location in the Metrotown Retail Centre which has a significant regional profile as a shopping and visitor destination has well served the interests of tourists and local residents.

Promotion of the Tourist Infocentre itself included press releases appearing in the two local newspapers, an article in the 55,000 copy summer issue of the "Focus" newsletter published and distributed by Eaton Centre Metrotown and promotional signs for the Infocentre strategically placed throughout the Metrotown Retail Complex.

- Letters were mailed to numerous restaurants, hotels, attraction operators, etc. in Burnaby inviting their display of promotional literature, brochures etc. at the Infocentre free of charge.

#### 3.4 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.

#### 4.0 METROTOWN INFOCENTRE VISITOR PROFILE:

4.1 During 1996, the Metrotown Tourist Infocentre operated for 5 months (May 01 through September 30) which was two months longer than the June 01 to September 04 period during 1995. The months of May and September are considered "shoulder" months when the number of tourists are expected to be less than the "peak" months of June, July and August.

4.2 Staff maintained a daily tabulation of the people who were provided with service at the Infocentre. Many customers were provided with detailed information by staff while others simply picked up brochures and pamphlets without asking questions of staff.

Information pamphlets and brochures were also available during mall hours in the early morning and evening when the Infocentre was not staffed. Thus, the statistics outlined below are considered to be on the conservative side.

#### 4.3 1996 VISITOR STATISTICS - (MAY 01 - SEPTEMBER 30):

- During the May 01 through September 30 period, an average daily total of approximately 92 persons were provided with specific services by staff at the Infocentre with a total of approximately 14,076 persons over this period.
- During the May 01 through September 30 period, an average daily total of 276 people used the Tourist Infocentre (including those who may have only picked up various brochures but did not specifically request information or assistance from staff) with a total of 42,268 people over this period.
- Approximately 51.8% or just over half of the Infocentre users originated from outside of the

Lower Mainland. Visitor origin from outside of the Lower Mainland has been determined as follows:

- 12.8% from other parts of B.C
- 18.2% from other parts of Canada
- 15.8% from the USA and Mexico
- 26.5% from Asia/Oceania
- 24% from Europe
- 2% from other parts of the world

4.4 1996 VISITOR STATISTICS - "SHOULDER" MONTHS (MAY & SEPTEMBER):

- During the months of May and September, an average daily total of 81 persons were provided with specific services by staff at the Infocentre with a total of approximately 4952 persons over these two months.
- An average daily total of 239 people used the Tourist Infocentre (including those who may have only picked up various brochures but did not specifically request information or assistance from staff) with a total of 14,584 during this two month period.
- Approximately 50.65% or just over half of the Infocentre users originated from outside of the Lower Mainland. Visitor origin from outside of the Lower Mainland has been determined as follows:
  - 12.4% from other parts of B.C.
  - 17.2% from other parts of Canada
  - 17.3% from the USA and Mexico
  - 27.3% from Asia/Oceania
  - 23.5% from Europe
  - 1.5% from other parts of the World

4.5 GENERAL COMMENTS:

- When comparing 1996 visitor statistics with 1995, it is appropriate to examine the two corresponding June 01 to September 04 periods. In this regard, the general number of people provided with service at the Infocentre over the two periods were very similar. However, a slight decrease in the overall and daily number of visitors was recorded during the 1996 period. This decrease is primarily due to staff being unable to record all of the visitors since they were often occupied with a significant increase in telephone requests. In addition, visitors were not recorded on numerous occasions during the June-August period in 1996 when, as a cost saving measure, only one staff person was on duty at the Infocentre.

- While May and September were not as busy as the "peak" months of June, July and August, a substantial number of people were provided with service at the Infocentre. As outlined above, a total of 4,952 persons or an average of 81 per day were provided with specific service from staff during the "shoulder" period while a total of 14,584 persons or an average daily total of 239 used the Infocentre service during this period. These figures represent an approximate 19% decrease from the peak period.
- During the peak months of 1996, a slightly greater number of visitors originated from outside of the Lower Mainland compared to 1995. More visitors came from other parts of B.C., Asia/Oceania and Europe and fewer from the US/Mexico and other parts of Canada during 1996 compared with the same period in 1995.
- During the shoulder months of 1996, there was a small increase in visitors originating from US/Mexico and Asia/Oceania when compared to the peak months. In addition, the number of persons originating from outside of the Lower Mainland remained at just over 50%.

**5.0 PROPOSED 1997 BURNABY TOURISM PROGRAM:**

- 5.1 The 1996 Burnaby Tourism Program continues to provide a valuable service to the City's tourist industry by providing residents and visitors with considerable tourist related information and advice. It also assists in raising Burnaby's profile as a visitor destination.
- 5.2 The Burnaby Visitors' Guide and the Metrotown Tourist Infocentre are the two cornerstones of the program. The longer operation of the Metrotown Infocentre from May 01 through September 30 is considered to be a success in view of the significant number of people provided with service during both the peak and shoulder periods and the fact that the origin of those served from outside of the Lower Mainland remained at just over 50% as outlined above. It is therefore recommended that the Metrotown Infocentre operate again from May 01 through September 30 during 1997.
- 5.3 It is suggested that the Tourist Information Service at City Hall continue to operate during 1997 as described in Section 3.2 above. It will continue to offer limited services during regular City Hall office hours at the Information Desk and will focus primarily on providing information about Burnaby facilities, attractions and events. Requests for more detailed information or information related to attractions, events, etc., outside of Burnaby will be referred to Tourism B. C., Tourism Vancouver or other relevant agencies that are best equipped to provide such services.

**5.4 BURNABY VISITORS' GUIDE - PROPOSED REPRINT:**

It is projected that the current supply of the Burnaby Visitors' Guide will be depleted in the near future which will require a reprint in 1997. Since Burnaby will be hosting the B.C.

Summer Games in 1997 July, the Visitors' Guide can help to facilitate and promote the event and showcase the City's attractions to its many participants and attendees. The Visitors' Guide format should be similar to the current brochure with limited and discrete advertising from Burnaby based tourist related businesses to help offset the production costs. However, it would be appropriate at this time to enhance the Guide by using full colour printing, an upgraded paper stock and a larger print run (200,000 copies). It is estimated that this would add an additional \$10,000 to the budget for this item.

5.5 PROPOSED 1997 PROGRAM BUDGET - SUMMARY:

The proposed budget for the 1997 Tourism Program compared with the approved budget for 1996 is illustrated in the table below.

**PROGRAM ELEMENT BUDGET COSTS**

PROGRAM COMPONENT	APPROVED 1996 PROGRAM	PROPOSED 1997 PROGRAM
Metrotown Tourist Infocentre	\$24,000	\$24,000
City Hall Tourist Service	\$0	\$0
Marketing and Promotion (Visitors Guide production and distribution)	\$15,000	\$25,000
Tourism Resource Group	\$1,000	\$0
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	<b>\$40,000</b>	<b>\$49,000</b>

6.0 **CONCLUSIONS:**

6.1 The City's Tourism Implementation Program in 1996 continued to provide a valuable support service to the local tourism industry which represents an important business sector of Burnaby's local economy. The Program provides a useful service to Burnaby residents planning to travel around the Province and to local residents and visitors who are provided with information about facilities, attractions and events found within the City of Burnaby.

62 Tourism has many direct benefits on the local business community and also provides numerous positive spinoffs on the local arts, culture and recreation pursuits throughout Burnaby.



6.2 In order to continue to achieve the benefits derived from the tourism industry, it is recommended that approval be given to the proposed 1997 Tourism Implementation Program as outlined in this report and make the necessary provisions in the 1997 Annual Budget to cover the costs of the Program.



Don Stenson,  
Director Planning and Building

PS/ds

Attachment

cc: City Manager  
Director Finance  
Director Recreation and Cultural Services

