

TO: CITY MANAGER 1997 JANUARY 16

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING OUR FILE: 15.312

SUBJECT: ITEM OF CORRESPONDENCE FROM MR. LEMKE  
REGARDING METROTOWN

PURPOSE: To respond to a letter from Mr. Lemke regarding Metrotown.

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. THAT a copy of this report be sent to Mr. B. Lemke, 4692 Rumble Street, Burnaby, B.C., V5J 2A7, and to SkyTrain (B.C. Transit), 6800 - 14th Avenue, Burnaby, B.C., V3N 4S7.

**REPORT**

On the Council Agenda is an item of correspondence received from Mr. Ben Lemke listing a number of concerns relating primarily to the Metrotown core area. This is in response to Mr. Lemke's letter.

**A. Access for Pedestrians, Bicycles, Strollers and Handy Cart Devices**

Metrotown has a high level of access for pedestrians, persons with strollers and handy cart devices, and bicycles. Metrotown also has a particularly high volume of such usage. While, significant expenditures have been made to date to improve accessibility and provide bicycle amenities, the City continues to pursue further improvements regarding accessibility and bicycle provisions with the cooperation of developers and within budgeting constraints. A recent example is the Metrotown Bike Route project which is currently being implemented with Provincial cost sharing.

Mr. Lemke also refers to a fence barrier along the hedge within the civic facilities' site on the west side of McKay Avenue. The fence was provided to discourage mid-block crossings of McKay Avenue, by a minority of pedestrians in the area, which is a safety concern. It also reduces damage to the hedge and grassed areas. Pedestrians are encouraged to use the well-marked and convenient pathways which are linked to the Kingsborough Street and Central Boulevard intersections of McKay Avenue.

**B. B.C. Parkway under SkyTrain Line**

The B.C. Hydro right-of-way under the SkyTrain, a former railway line, is designated as the B.C. Parkway accommodating a developed pedestrian trail and cycling path. The maintenance of B.C. Parkway is the responsibility of B.C. Transit, although the edge boulevard and boulevard trees on the south side of Central Boulevard are maintained by the City. It is a well-used amenity that, in general, appears to be kept in a neat condition. There are some un-parklike aspects to the right-of-way such as the remnant gravel rail bed which would require a substantial upgrading and expenditure program. If there are some localized specific problem areas, once identified, staff would address these in areas of City jurisdiction or bring them to the attention of B.C. Transit. It is noted that as part of the Metrotown Bike Route project a paved linkage at the signalized Central Boulevard and McKay Avenue intersection is being pursued which would also be available for pedestrians and rectify an existing deficiency.

It is also acknowledged that the at-grade landing of the Metrotown SkyTrain Station within the B.C. Hydro right-of-way is unpaved and rough in locations. In light of the large number of SkyTrain users accessing this landing and linkage within the right-of-way, SkyTrain (BC Transit) is requested to pursue paving improvements in this landing and linkage area.

In the long term and subject to funding priorities, the B.C. Parkway area through Metrotown remains an opportunity for park and recreational use at a higher level of urban design which can be a unique amenity for non-vehicular users in the area.

**C. Existing Buildings and Vacant Lots**

There are relatively few areas in Metrotown with vacant lots or existing older buildings in transitional areas. Concerns in this regard should be diminished with the current active rezoning of three such sites in Metrotown with construction expected to follow within the year.

The Chief Environmental Health Officer has also responded as follows:

“Mr. Lemke’s comment regarding garbage and construction waste on vacant lots is general in nature and does not include any information on these vacant lots. As a standard practice, Environmental Health Services responds to all complaints respecting accumulation of garbage or construction waste on a vacant lot. Upon receiving a complaint, Environmental Health Services staff will inspect the subject site to determine whether the site is in compliance with the Burnaby Unsightly Premises Bylaw and will undertake appropriate corrective action(s) when required.”

**D. SkyTrain Security**

B.C. Transit is aware of concerns regarding security which have been expressed from time-to-time or arising out of specific incidents. The City of Burnaby has also encouraged B.C. Transit to establish bike lock-up facilities at SkyTrain Stations. It is suggested that Mr. Lemke's concerns be passed on to B.C. Transit/SkyTrain by copy of this report.

**E. Traffic Conflicts at Kingsborough Street**

Mr. Lemke indicates a traffic conflict at the Kingsborough Street ramp entrance to Eaton Centre on the Station Square site. As indicated by Mr. Lemke, there is a covered pedestrian walk around the ramp that does not conflict with the ramp entry and which continues to be available for pedestrians. However, the pedestrian crossing with stop signs across the ramp entry recognizes a strong pedestrian usage and while giving some priority to pedestrians over vehicles, has functioned reasonably for some time.

**F. Pedestrian Circulation**

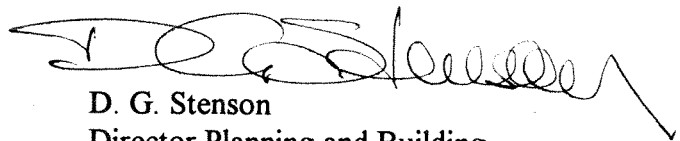
There are major pedestrian accesses linking the three Metrotown core developments including pedestrian bridge connections which have few conflicts with vehicles and do not require pedestrians to necessarily use the Kingsway and Central Boulevard sidewalks. However, as in any urban area, there will be the crossing of pedestrian and vehicular traffic at intersections and major driveways along such fronting streets as Kingsway and Central Boulevard. Technical traffic improvements are ongoing and instituted wherever possible.

**G. Sitting Areas**

There are many plaza and landscaped areas with benches and restaurants/cafes with outdoor seating. These types of provisions will continue to be encouraged in existing and proposed developments.

The letter from Mr. Lemke is appreciated. The City continues to pursue improvements to Metrotown to benefit residents, employees and visitors.

This is for the information of Council.



D. G. Stenson  
Director Planning and Building

KI:lf

cc: Director Engineering  
Director Recreation & Cultural Services  
Chief Environmental Health Officer

