

TO: CITY MANAGER 1996 DECEMBER 27

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING

SUBJECT: OFFICE USE IN INDUSTRIAL ZONING DISTRICTS

PURPOSE: To respond to comments made to Council by a delegation regarding permitting office use on an M2 zoned property.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT Council receive this report for information purposes.

R E P O R T

1.0 BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 On 1996 December 9, Council received a delegation from Mr. Sean Ungemach, Tops Realty Corp., the applicant for Rezoning Reference #49/96. Mr. Ungemach stated the reasons for applying for rezoning to the M5 District and asked Council to reconsider the November 12 rejection of the rezoning request.

Council did not reconsider the rezoning, but asked staff to provide a further report responding to the delegation's comments, with reference to the land use policy issue rather than the specific rezoning application.

This report is in response to that request.

2.0 GENERAL DISCUSSION:

- 2.1 The policy issues related to principal office use in industrially zoned areas are concerned with both the effect on the stock of industrial zoned lands and the effect on areas that are zoned or designated to permit office use.

Business and professional offices are permitted as a principal use in most commercial zoning districts and the M5 Light Industrial District. The designated Town Centres in Burnaby, such as Metrotown and Edmonds, as well as other commercially zoned areas of Burnaby, are intended to provide office employment in proximity to the amenities and transportation available in commercially zoned areas, and particularly in Town Centres.

Business and professional offices are also a permitted principal use in the M5 Light Industrial District which provides the accommodation of light industrial uses, encourages a high standard of development and is particularly designed to be located adjacent, or in close proximity to residential areas with a minimum of conflict.

The M5 District was specifically created to provide a zoning district that encouraged high quality development, differentiating development and uses in that zone from the general character of the other industrial zoning districts. The M5 Light Industrial District is the base zoning for the high quality, Comprehensive Development zoned industrial business parks in Burnaby, such as Willingdon Green and Slough Estates. It provides for the location in Burnaby of quality business parks in high-quality industrial settings, as a component in the total spectrum of business opportunities

In general, lands zoned or designated for general office use provide a concentration of employment-intensive and public service-type office uses in commercial centres, where a range of complementary urban support services is available, or in recognized office/industrial business parks. On a broad policy basis, permitting general office use in M1 - M4 zoning districts would erode Burnaby's industrial land base, which is intended to maintain a diversity of industrial activity (i.e. manufacturing, warehousing, service establishments) and would tend to de-stabilize the overall industrial base. A consistent, co-ordinated approach to the location of business and professional offices in Burnaby is supportive of Burnaby's planned commercial areas and its high quality business parks.

- 2.2 The other effect of permitting office use in areas not zoned for general office use is on the surrounding industrial zoned area itself. Business and professional offices do provide a different type of use from other industrial uses permitted in the M1 - M4 zoning districts, such as manufacturing and warehousing. Business and professional office uses are generally more publicly oriented and more intensive a land use than other industrial land uses. By contrast, the limited selection of office uses permitted in the M1 - M4 Districts is restricted to those which are clearly accessory to principal industrial uses and to office uses that have an industrial character such as drafting and surveying offices.


The uses in the M1 - M4 zoning districts generally focus on manufacturing and warehousing and the types of vehicles, industrial equipment and activities associated with these uses may vary considerably from those in high quality business parks, which are of a greater intensity and public orientation. Development standards in the M1 - M4 zones are generally lower than the M5 District and not considered suitable for general office development.

- 2.3 A number of comments made by the delegation related to the past development of the property and the owners' difficulty in leasing the office space they had created for a specific qualified user, accessory to the permitted principal industrial use. While one can sympathize with the owners' situation, staff could not recommend rezoning which was contrary to the above policy considerations because a property owner had created a situation where it is difficult to lease to the users permitted under the current zoning.

The delegation also stated that the main floor warehouse businesses are all acceptable under the M5 zoning bylaws and that there would be no change in the use of or "chemistry" of the building and no impact on the surrounding neighbourhood. The general notion of there being no change with rezoning to M5 is not accurate in terms of potential. As previously discussed, the whole range of business and professional offices is permitted in the M5 District, but not the M2 District. Business and professional offices include doctor's offices, realtors' offices, accountants' offices and lawyer's offices. Permitting these activities as a principal permitted use could alter land use relationships as discussed in Section 2.2.

3.0 SUMMARY:

- 3.1 Development in Burnaby is best served by orienting general office use to commercial zoning districts and the M5 Light Industrial District where amenities and public transportation are available, or where high quality business parks are developed. In addition, the types of vehicular traffic, certain of the manufacturing uses permitted, and the development standards in the M1 - M4 zoning districts may not be compatible with general office use.



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