

**SUBJECT: BARNET MARINE PARK HERITAGE PROPERTIES:
THE NICHOLS CHEMICAL COMPANY HOUSES**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT the Master Plan for Barnet Marine Park not be amended at this time.
2. THAT a staff review of use and conservation options for the Nichols Chemical Company houses be undertaken at a time when the Master Plan details are developed
3. THAT a copy of this report be forwarded to Council and, that Council be asked to forward a copy of this report to the Community Heritage Commission

REPORT

BACKGROUND

Barnet Marine Park has a significant heritage which dates back to 1889, with the siting of the Barnet sawmill by the North Pacific Lumber Company and the establishment of the Barnet mill townsite and CPR station. In 1905 the Nichols Chemical Company located directly east of the Barnet sawmill, in close proximity to easy waterfront and rail linkages. The lack of adequate housing in the area led to the development of an adjoining townsite of approximately ten houses, of which three remain today. The Nichols Chemical Company site was acquired by the City in 1992, and is notable because it constitutes the most eastern park access and foreshore lands in the park.

On 1998 March 12 the Community Heritage Commission recommended to Council that the heritage value of the Nichols Chemical Company Houses be recognized, and that Parks and Planning Department staff proceed with a review of conservation options for their retention. This report will identify the original intentions for this area according to the park master plan and make recommendations regarding a process for developing a revised master plan and potential conservation options.

SITE CONTEXT AND PROGRAM

The waterfront lands of Barnet Marine Park are formed by a narrow strip of foreshore north of the CP Rail right-of-way, and two protruding land nodes which provide the main water opportunities. The largest and most centrally located of these land nodes is the former site of the Barnet Mill and the Texaco tank farm, which has been developed as the park's main beach and recreation area.

Directly to the east and adjoining this central activity area are the foreshore lands of the former Bestwood Mill and Nichols Chemical Company. This 9 acre/ 3.65 hectare area is shown on the current master plan as the future site of a Marina and public boat launch, extensive support and storage facilities including a restaurant and boat shop, a waterfront observation deck, foreshore parking, and a vehicular and pedestrian railway overpass (Attachment #1). The upland portion of the site, where the three Nichols Chemical Company Houses are located, is identified as the major vehicular access and parking lot to service these foreshore activities.

Although the placement of the Nichols Chemical Company Houses offers easy access from the Barnet Highway and views of Burrard Inlet, they are not well located vis a vis the park master plan. In their current context the houses are directly adjacent to and partially in conflict with proposed parking lots, away from feature recreational areas, and peripheral to the overall park development. Within this context the houses offer little or no apparent programming potential. However, the master plan is at a very conceptual design stage and many of the particular details are yet to be refined. Recognizing the desire to preserve and find acceptable reuse of heritage buildings in general, it may be possible to find uses that would incorporate the buildings into the park. However given their current location, such uses are likely to be peripheral to the main function of the park and perform only a minor role if the current plan is implemented. Alternately, it is possible that future use of the houses may require that they be moved to locations more compatible with park activities, while still respecting their historical context and meaning.

**NICHOLS CHEMICAL COMPANY HOUSES:
A PROCESS FOR MASTER PLAN REVIEW AND CONSERVATION OPTIONS**

In the absence of a Heritage Resource Management Plan (HRMP), staff recommend the following process to facilitate the identification of specific Conservation options for the Nichols Chemical Company Houses. These steps should take place during the Barnet Marine Park Master Plan review.

1. identify goals and objectives for heritage preservation in the park
2. inventory and analyze heritage resources within the park
3. develop Conservation Options; specifically, Parks and Planning Department staff will review options for the retention of the Nichols Chemical Company houses as follows:
 - *Identify programming options & opportunities*
 - *Identify Marketing options and opportunities*
 - *Identify Interpretive Potentials*
 - *Develop Site specific planning options, and*
 - *Establish a budget and financial plan c/w phasing and priorities*

FUTURE STEPS AND SCHEDULE

Detailed site review and design development for the Marina complex and east park area is part of a long term plan and beyond the current five year program. It has always been anticipated that these plans would be produced through a joint venture with the business community at a time when there is market demand for additional Marina amenities. It should be noted that staff are presently considering alternative park development opportunities along Burrard Inlet which could have significant implications for the programming of this site.

The schedule for a Barnet Marine Park master plan review can be established as soon as the issue of the Marina and associated programming is confirmed. In the interim period, because the Nichols Chemical Company houses have no impact on current park use, they may continue to be situated within the park and utilized as rental properties.

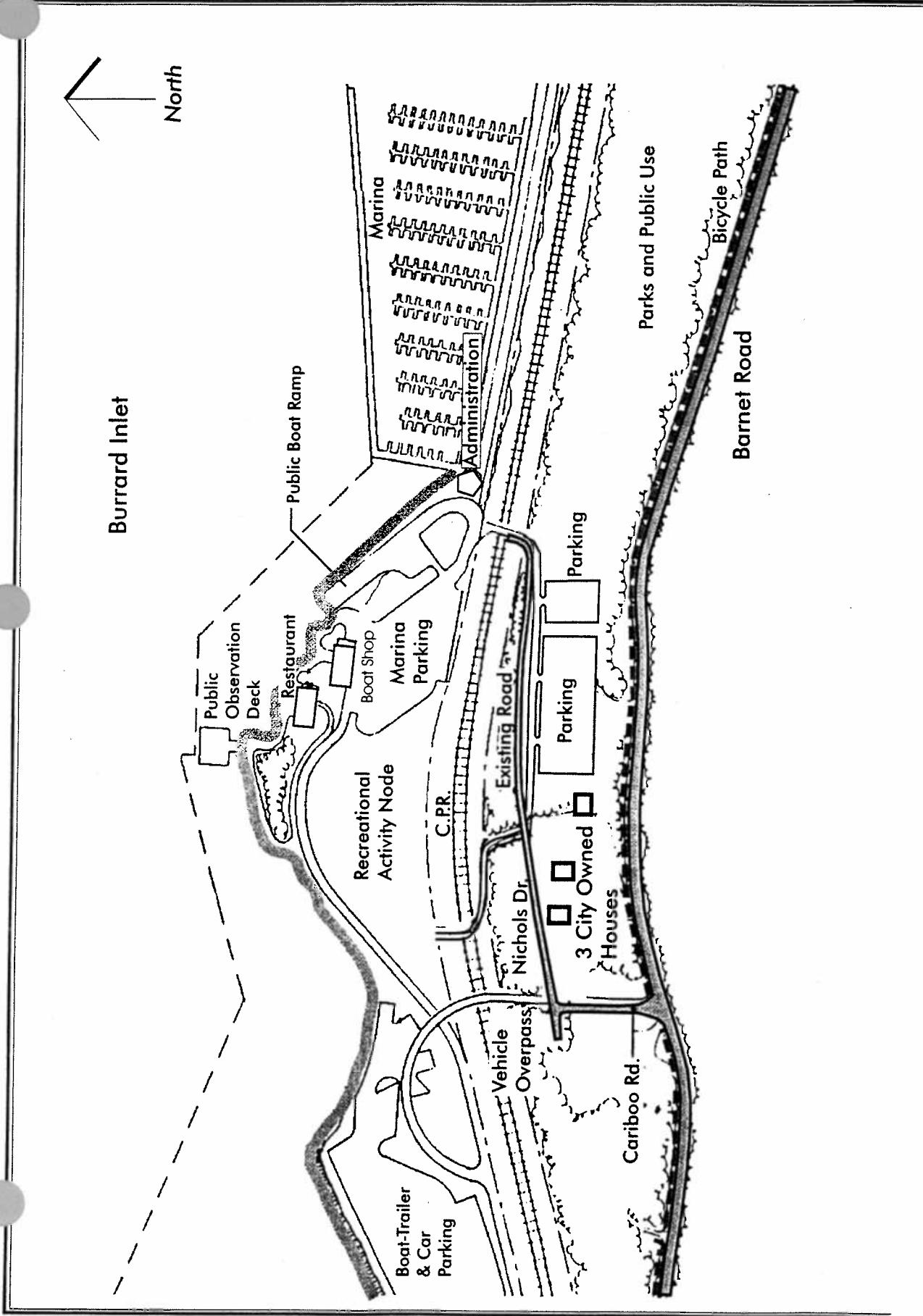
H.M.

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Attachment

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cc: Director Planning and Building
Director Finance
Director Engineering



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 Dwg. # O.P. 15-2-122s
 Date: June, 1998
 Scale: nts
 Drawn by: HD

Nichols Chemical Company Houses



