

CITY OF BURNABY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT &
TOURISM STRATEGY COMMITTEE

HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR
AND COUNCILLORS

Re: 1998 and 1999 Proposed Burnaby Tourism Program

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Council approve the Burnaby Tourism Program for 1999 as outlined in the attached report.
2. THAT provision be made in the 1999 Annual Budget to cover the costs of the 1999 Tourism Program as outlined in Section 5 of the attached report.

REPORT

At its meeting on 1998 November 23 the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy Committee adopted the *attached* report providing a review of the 1998 Burnaby Tourism Program and recommending that the Program be continued through 1999 in a similar manner. The main components of the 1999 Program include the operation of a seasonal tourist information centre in the Metrotown retail complex, a modest tourist information service in City Hall and a marketing and promotion plan. Included in this year's budget are the costs for design, reprinting and distribution of a revised 1999 Burnaby Visitors' Guide.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor D.N. Johnston
Chair

Councillor D.R. Corrigan
Member

Councillor C.M.H. Redman
Member

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

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

1998 October 28

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING

SUBJECT: 1998 AND 1999 PROPOSED BURNABY TOURISM PROGRAM

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy Committee recommend that Council approve the Burnaby Tourism Program for 1999 as outlined in this report.
2. THAT provision be made in the 1999 Annual Budget to cover the costs of the 1999 Tourism 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 1998 Burnaby Tourism Program and recommends that the Program be continued through 1999. The main components of the 1999 Program include the operation of a seasonal tourist information centre in the Metrotown Retail Complex, a modest tourist information service in City Hall and a marketing and promotion plan.

2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On 1995 February 13, Council approved the first City operated Tourism Strategy Implementation Program for the 1995 calendar year which was based on its review of the Burnaby Tourism Strategy Report. The City's Tourism Program has operated for four consecutive years and the 1998 Program is summarized in this report.

3.0 1998 TOURISM PROGRAM - SUMMARY:

The 1998 Tourism Program included the following components:

3.1 *Burnaby Tourist Infocentre - Metrotown:*

The Burnaby Community Information Booth is located 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 generally between 11:00 am and 5:30 pm which are the peak visitor hours.

Four Auxiliary City employees staffed the Infocentre on a shift basis. Three were students of BCIT in the Marketing and Tourism Management course and the fourth has previously worked at another tourist infocentre.

Staff at the Infocentre 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.

3.2 *Tourist Information Service - City Hall:*

This is a limited tourist information service that was introduced in 1995 September at the Information Desk on the main floor of City Hall and has continued on a year round basis 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 visitors is considerably less than at the Metrotown Infocentre due to the current allocation of staff resources and the limited demand for visitor services at City Hall.

Visitor information services at City Hall focus primarily on Burnaby events and attractions. Enquiries on events and attractions outside of Burnaby may be referred to other related agencies such as Tourism Vancouver and Tourism B.C. who are better equipped to respond to such enquiries.

Promotional materials, brochures, etc. are displayed in a brochure rack located near the information desk.

3.3 *Marketing and Promotion:*

An important component of the 1998 Program is the display and distribution of the Burnaby Visitors' Guide (copy of brochure attached).

A total of 190,000 copies of the full-colour Burnaby Visitors' Guide (1997, 3rd edition) were produced, distributed and displayed as follows:

- a. At approximately 270 established tourist outlets throughout the Lower Mainland for a six month period (May through October).
- b. To selected Tourist Infocentres around the Province of B.C.
- c. At the Vancouver International Airport (Domestic and International Terminals) for a 12 month period.
- d. At the Cruise Ship Terminal at Canada Place from May 15 through September 15.

*Distribution for items "a" through "d" provided by Interwest Brochure Marketing Inc.
- e. On the three most travelled B.C. Ferry routes; Nanaimo-Tsawwassen, Swartz Bay-Tsawwassen, and Horseshoe Bay-Nanaimo. Distribution was provided by Vancouver Island Tourist Services Ltd.
- f. At all Burnaby Libraries, Recreation Centres Burnaby Village Museum and Carousel and other community facilities. Distribution was provided by the City.
- g. In Burnaby Hotel lobbies and rooms.
- h. Over 3,000 brochures were sent to various organizations and associations who requested copies for upcoming events, and to individuals (residents and non-residents) for friends and relatives and for planning personal travel.
- i. On the complete Washington State Ferry System which includes all ferry runs and terminals with display facilities from April 01 through September 30. Service provided by Certified Folder Display Service Inc. This was the first time that the brochures were displayed on this venue and the display service provider reported that the Burnaby Visitors' Guide was very well received with considerable consumer interest.

The Burnaby Visitors' Guide continues to be a useful, multipurpose brochure in view of the number that have been picked up from the various tourist outlets in the region and from the City's Tourist Infocentres. The current supply of Burnaby Visitors' Guides is expected to last through 1998. However, reprinting the brochure will be required for 1999. The cost of minor design modification and reprinting the Visitor's Guide is reflected in the 1999 Provisional Budget.

The five month operation of the Metrotown Tourist Infocentre which served many thousands of tourists as well as Burnaby residents provided another important promotional role in the 1998 Program. Its highly visible location in the Metrotown Retail Centre which has a significant regional profile as a shopping and visitor destination, continues to provide a useful service to tourists and local residents. Promotion of the Metrotown Tourist Infocentre was also included in the 55,000 copy August issue of the "Focus" newsletter published and distributed by Eaton Centre Metrotown.

The Burnaby Visitors' Guide will also be added to the City's Web Site in the near future.

3.4 *Tourism Coordination:*

The overall coordination function continues to be provided by existing City staff from the Planning and Building Department who work together with other relevant City Departments and external organizations including Tourism Vancouver and the Provincial Government (Tourism B.C.).

4.0 **METROTOWN INFOCENTRE VISITOR PROFILE:**

4.1 The Metrotown Tourist Infocentre operated for a 5 month period from May 01 through September 30 during 1996, 1997 and 1998. In terms of visitor volume, June, July and August are traditionally considered the "peak" visitor period while May and September constitute the "shoulder" period when visitor volume tends to decrease.

Infocentre staff maintained a daily tabulation of customers who were provided with service at the Infocentre. Many customers received personalized service where staff provided advice, detailed information, brochures, maps, etc. while others simply picked up brochures and pamphlets from the display racks without asking questions of staff.

Customers were also able to pick up pamphlets and brochures from the Infocentre display rack during other mall hours (in the early morning and evening) when the Infocentre was not staffed. Thus, the statistics outlined below do not necessarily include the total number of Infocentre customers.

4.2 *1998 Visitor Statistics - Five Month Period (May - September):*

During the May 01 through September 30 period, an average of approximately 119 people per day received personalized service from Infocentre staff, for a total of approximately 18,191 people over this five month period.

An average of approximately 511 people per day 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 approximately 78,155 people over this period. 45

Approximately 57% or just over half of the Infocentre users originated from outside of the Lower Mainland. The origin of visitors from outside of the Lower Mainland is outlined as follows:

- 38.2% from other parts of B.C
- 9.8% from other parts of Canada
- 12.4% from the USA and Mexico
- 25.9% from Asia/Oceania
- 9.3% from Europe
- 4.3% from other parts of the world

4.3 *1998 Visitor Statistics - "Shoulder" Months (May and September):*

During the months of May and September, an average of 77 people per day received personalized service from Infocentre staff with a total of approximately 4,688 persons over these two months.

An average of 401 people per day 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 24,444 during this two month period.

Approximately 57% or just over half of the Infocentre users originated from outside of the Lower Mainland. Visitor origin from outside of the Lower Mainland is as follows:

- 34.8% from other parts of B.C.
- 10.6% from other parts of Canada
- 14.8% from the USA and Mexico
- 20.5% from Asia/Oceania
- 15.5% from Europe
- 3.8% from other parts of the World

4.4 *General Conclusions:*

As outlined above, the total number of people provided with service at the Metrotown Tourist Infocentre for the five month period (May through September) is estimated at approximately 78,155 or approximately 511 people per day. This represents a 54% increase over the 1997 figures.

The number of people serviced on a daily basis during the "Shoulder" period (May and September) was approximately 31% less than the June through August period but 33% higher than the 1997 "shoulder" period. This suggests that the Infocentre continues to provide a worthwhile and increasing level of service during the "Shoulder" months of May and September.

Infocentre statistics also illustrate that a slightly greater percentage of Infocentre users were non-local in 1998 (57%) than in 1997 (54%). While the Infocentre continued to provide services to visitors from around the world, more non-local Infocentre users originated from other parts of B.C., Asia/Oceania and other parts of the world and less from other parts of Canada, USA, Mexico and Europe when comparing 1998 with 1997.

5.0 PROPOSED 1999 BURNABY TOURISM PROGRAM:

- 5.1 The 1998 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 operation of the Metrotown Infocentre from May 01 through September 30 continues to provide a useful service to the many residents and visitors who were provided with information and advice during both the peak and shoulder periods. It is therefore recommended that the Metrotown Infocentre operate again from May 01 through September 30 during 1999.
- 5.3 The Tourist Information Service at City Hall should also continue to operate in 1999 as described in Section 3.2 above by offering limited services during regular City Hall office hours and focussing 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 should 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:***

As referenced above, 190,000 copies of the full-colour Burnaby Visitors' Guide were produced in 1997 which satisfied the City's needs through 1997 and 1998. However an updated Burnaby Visitors' Guide will need to be produced and printed for 1999. It is recommended that the distribution network used in 1998 as outlined in Section 3.3 above be used in 1999 and that 150,000 Burnaby Visitors' Guide brochures be printed. The costs of the brochure design, reprinting and distribution are reflected in the 1999 Provisional Budget as outlined below and account for the proposed additional \$13,500.

5.5 *Proposed 1999 Program Budget - Summary:*

The proposed budget for the 1999 Tourism Program compared with the approved 1997 and 1998 Annual Budgets is outlined below.

PROGRAM ELEMENT BUDGET COSTS

PROGRAM COMPONENT	APPROVED 1997 PROGRAM	APPROVED 1998 PROGRAM	PROPOSED 1999 PROGRAM
Metrotown Tourist Infocentre (Staff and operating costs)	\$24,000	\$22,330	\$22,815
City Hall Tourist Service	\$0	\$0	\$0
Marketing and Promotion (Visitors Guide production and distribution)	\$25,000	\$18,500	\$ 32,000
Public Relations and Association Membership	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
TOTAL COSTS	\$50,000	\$41,830	\$55,815

The amount of \$55,815 has been included in the 1999 Provisional Operating Budget. With adoption of the recommendations of this report, staff will maintain this provision in the 1999 Annual Operating Budget submission as well.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS:

6.1 The City's 1998 Tourism Program continues 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. 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.

CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE ECONOMIC
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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 1999 Tourism Program as outlined in this report and to make the necessary provisions in the 1999 Annual Budget to cover the costs of the Program.



D. G. Stenson
Director Planning and Building

PS/ds

Attachment

cc: City Manager
Director Finance
Director Recreation and Cultural Services

