

TO: CITY MANAGER

1998 NOVEMBER 16

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING

SUBJECT: FOREST LAWN CEMETERY
MASTER PLAN SUBMISSION

PURPOSE: To provide Council with information and comments on a Master Plan submitted for Forest Lawn Cemetery.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** Council receive this report for information purposes.

R E P O R T

1.0 BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 On 1996 August 26, during the Inquiries portion of the regular Council meeting, information was provided to Council that a swath of trees along Moscrop Street had been removed up to the edge of a watercourse (small tributary feeding into Creek #3, Beaver Creek which enters Deer Lake) which traverses Forest Lawn Cemetery. Council indicated that it was incumbent upon themselves to consider the future of the cemetery lands and its interface with the abutting residential neighbourhoods, and indicated that they wished to be informed of the intentions of the property owner concerning long term and immediate plans for the lands. Staff were directed to initiate dialogue with the cemetery operators to determine the specifics of their overall master plan.
- 1.2 Information on a Master Plan was also requested by Council on 1996 September 9 in connection with concerns that arose at the Public Hearing for Rezoning Reference #29/96, which involves rezoning a portion of 3789 Royal Oak Avenue to P4 Cemetery District to permit construction of an office building, accessory to the cemetery use. At that time, the rezoning was referred back to staff for a report.

On 1996 December 16, a further report was submitted to Council which specifically responded to the concerns expressed at the Public Hearing for Rezoning Reference #29/96. These concerns focused on development and changes along Woodsworth Street. At that time, Council adopted the recommendation to add two prerequisite conditions to the completion of the rezoning and the rezoning bylaw was subsequently given Final Adoption on 1997 December 15.

Over that time and subsequently, staff have been working with Forest Lawn Cemetery regarding the development of a generalized Master Plan for the cemetery site. This report provides information to this effect.

2.0 GENERAL DISCUSSION:

2.1 Prior to discussing the overall Master Plan, some information is provided on the clearing of trees up to the edge of a watercourse along Moscrop Street, which precipitated Council's concerns regarding the edge conditions of the site. The cemetery cleared the trees in 1996 in order to install a subsurface drain system to manage extensive surface water runoff and stated that they were unaware at that time that they were required to consult the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Ministry of Environment regarding development adjacent to the creek on the site. After visiting the site with Planning and Environmental Health staff, the operators' landscape architect submitted a replanting plan, incorporating native materials and sediment control measures for the area, which was approved by staff and has now been fully implemented satisfactorily.

2.2 The overall Forest Lawn Memorial Park site is 109.8 acres in size, with approximately 80.5 acres having been developed to date, including the works yard facilities, crematorium and parking areas (see **attached** Sketch #1). A Master Plan was last prepared for Forest Lawn in 1984; therefore, in order to provide Burnaby with a current Master Plan, updating of the pertinent information on demographics and demand for different types of interment was necessary to provide a land development plan. Forest Lawn has submitted a master plan report with background information and staff have had numerous discussions with the operator on the updated Master Plan for the site. The Master Plan basically deals with the roughly 29.3 undeveloped acres (see **attached** Sketch #2).

Forest Lawn has interments in mausoleums, niches and in-ground burial plots. The zoning of the site (P4 District) requires crematoria and mausoleums to be located at least 30m (98.4 ft.) from any lot line and 61m (200 ft.) from a lot in an agricultural or residential district, but does not expressly require a setback for in-ground burial plots. According to the Master Plan report, of the 29.3 acres remaining undeveloped, 11.9 acres are beyond the 200 ft. setback required for mausoleums and crematoria.

2.3 In terms of the overall plan for the site, in the roughly 11.9 acres beyond the 200 ft. setback, the Master Plan shows 346,000 sq.ft. being developed as building footprint for mausoleums. A further 17.4 acres of the site available for development are within the 200 ft. setback. All of this area, as well as an additional 2.8 acres for a total of 20.2 acres, are intended to be developed with in-ground burials and niches. Based on Forest Lawn's calculations of the purchase rate for plots and the current unsold plots, it is estimated that Forest Lawn may no longer be able to provide in-ground burials in approximately eight years, with Ocean View Cemetery potentially reaching its capacity at an earlier date.

- 2.4 With respect to the timing of the development of the mausoleums, Forest Lawn plans to develop a mausoleum immediately west of the existing crematorium at the north end of the site. This would be the next mausoleum proposed to be developed. Future additional mausoleum sites are shown just north of the 200 foot setback line along Moscrop Street, to the east and west of the creek discussed in Section 2.2 which traverses the cemetery. Development adjacent to the creek will be in conformance with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Ministry of Environment leave strip requirements.

Forest Lawn is currently adding lawn crypts along Royal Oak Avenue toward Moscrop Street. In addition to this small area being developed with in-ground burials, these are also shown in the master plan along Moscrop Street and Woodsworth Street (excluding the site rezoned through Rezoning Reference #29/96), as well as along all of the westerly property line abutting Greentree Village which is not already developed with in-ground burials. These areas are to be largely bordered by a 2 foot wide cedar hedge along the westerly property line and a laurel hedge along Woodsworth Street and a small amount of screening existing along Moscrop Street.

- 2.5 With respect to the development of in-ground burial sites to within 2 feet of the property lines, staff have expressed concern that this represents loss of an environmental amenity. The elimination of existing forested areas around 100m (328 ft.) in width along the western property line represents a significant loss of natural forested habitat which may provide a vegetated connection or wildlife corridor particularly for birds to the western forested area of Deer Lake Park. This forested area, which is comprised primarily of second growth alder, currently provides a buffer between the cemetery and the residential area of Greentree Village. Staff have suggested that a north/south vegetated corridor be preserved with potential augmentation of the planting in the buffer to reduce the risk of blow down and to enhance diversity. It was originally suggested that a 60 foot wide buffer area be protected. Forest Lawn's landscape architect has indicated that due to the species and condition of the trees within this forested area, a much greater width of corridor would need to be preserved in order to protect the integrity of the forested area and prevent trees being blown over. Burnaby's Arborist has assessed this forested area and concurs that a 60 foot wide buffer area would be inadequate to protect the inner forest. It is recommended that at least 50% of the existing width be protected and that other protective measures be taken.

Forest Lawn has indicated that they are not amenable to maintaining such a wide vegetated corridor due to significant loss in potential revenue and the fact that Forest Lawn would reach its capacity at an earlier date if significant forested areas are protected. Forest Lawn feels that they are providing a public amenity due to the lack of a civic cemetery in Burnaby and the remaining undeveloped cemetery lands should be developed as efficiently as possible. They feel that the proposed cedar hedge bordering the Greentree Village development would provide adequate screening.

Staff acknowledge the service function that is provided by Forest Lawn Cemetery and the need for useable cemetery land that will satisfy public needs. A balance should be achieved between providing this service to the public as a commercial business and functioning compatibly with adjacent land uses, as well as respecting broader environmental amenities.

- 2.6 While staff recognize the utility of developing cemetery lands for lawn crypts for in-ground burial in light of the regulations restricting mausoleums and the demand that exists for in-ground burial, the loss of significant forested area is also of great concern in terms of it being an environmental amenity and providing buffering/screening for abutting residents. It does appear, however, that Forest Lawn's Master Plan proposal is not at variance with the present regulations in the Burnaby Zoning Bylaw and that there are no additional requirements of the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks or the Department of Fisheries and Oceans which would prohibit the removal of the forested area discussed in Section 2.5.

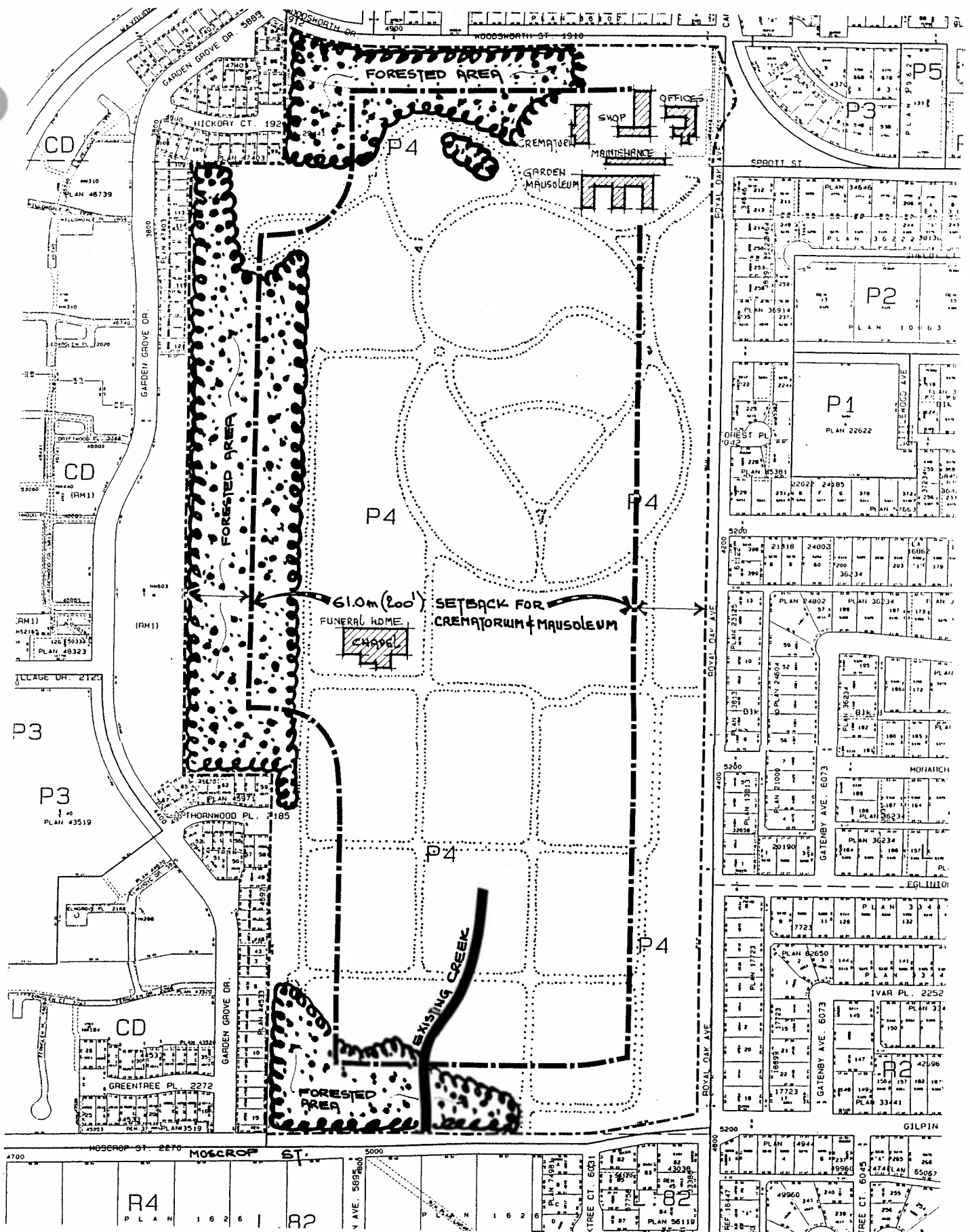
This report is provided for the information of Council and to facilitate Council discussion on Forest Lawn's future plans. With regard to riparian areas, staff have notified Forest Lawn that all development adjacent to watercourses must be in conformance with the requirements of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Ministry of Environment. Unless otherwise directed by Council, staff will continue to process any applications for the development of Forest Lawn under current regulations.



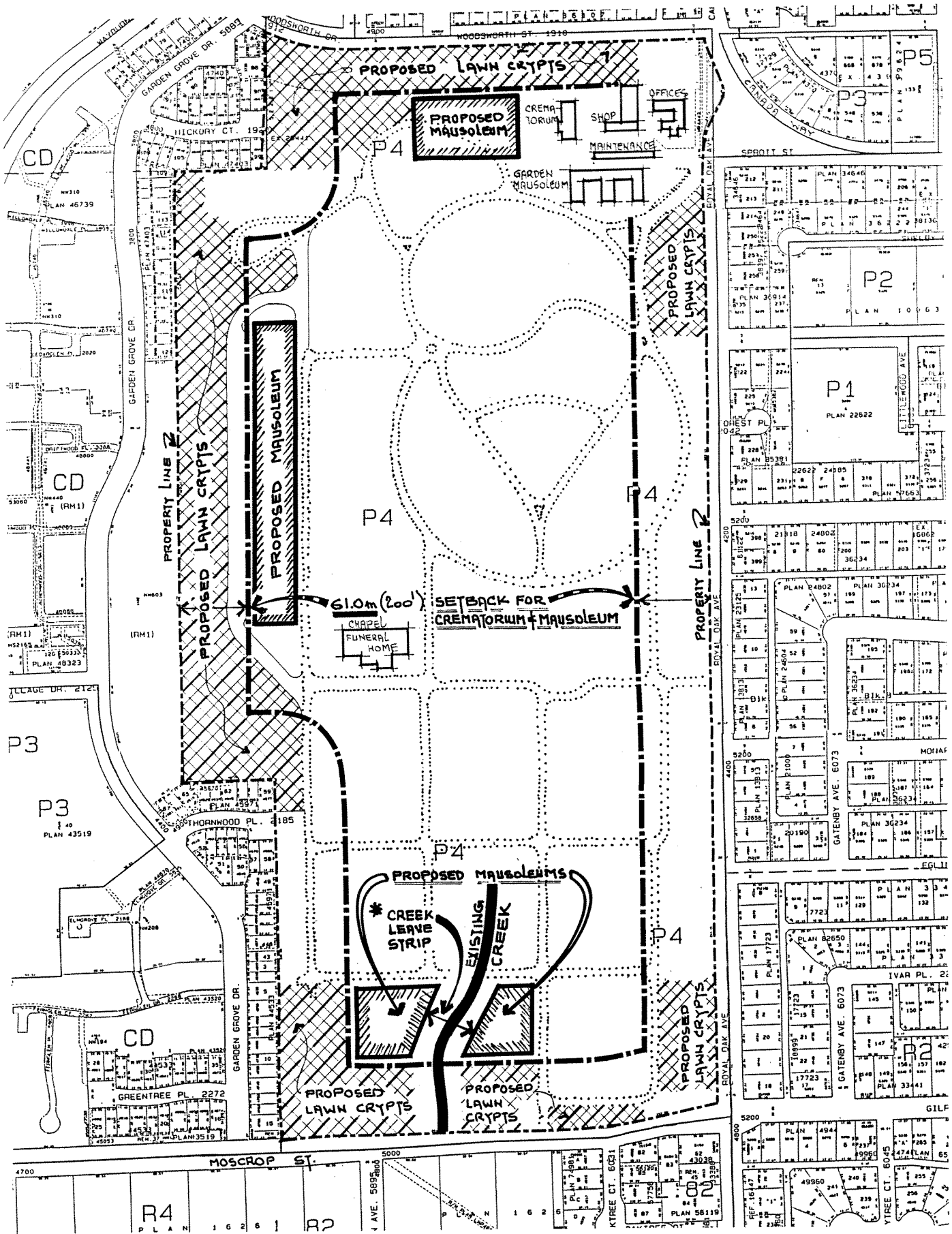
D. G. Stenson
Director Planning and Building

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Atts.

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FOREST LAWN MEMORIAL PARK
"EXISTING DEVELOPMENT"



FOREST LAWN MEMORIAL PARK

112 "MASTER PLAN"

SKETCH # 2