

TO: CITY MANAGER

FROM: WEB SITE COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: **www.city.burnaby.bc.ca**
(WEB SITE ANNUAL REPORT)

1999 MAY 31

PURPOSE: To provide information to Council on the development and on going operation of Burnaby's web site during the past year.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT this report be received for information.

REPORT

INTRODUCTION

The collection, storage, processing and publication of information is an integral service of local government. Recognizing that an active, up-to-date web site is a fast, accessible and economic way to provide this service in February of 1998 Council directed that a staff committee be established to develop a community based web site for the City of Burnaby. Working with Atomic Crayon Web Design of Victoria our committee completed work on the first phase of the new site by April.

The existing Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services site was linked to the new City site and in early May of 1998 the combined site went live. When the site was first "turned on" it represented approximately 11 megabytes (mb) of information. Today, nearly one year later, it has grown to over 20 mb of information and it keeps on growing.

STRUCTURE AND CONTENT

Burnaby's presence on the wide access arm of the Internet, the World Wide Web (WWW) is actually comprised of three sites. These include the principal City site, the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services site and a site for the Burnaby Public Library. Each site contains extensive information about their respective areas.

By any standards Burnaby's Web Site is big. It is rich with information about all aspects of the City and the City's administration. It was developed and is maintained by a committee that includes representation from major civic departments. The committee meets weekly to direct and enhance the web site.

The site has been designed to closely reflect the structure of the various City departments. The primary navigation icons on the home page are representative of the various departments within City Hall and the site has been developed with a cohesive look to emphasize the inter-relationships between the various departments. There has been a conscious effort to include all aspects of local government and to have a "common look" throughout. This design and structure is intended to make the public better understand and appreciate the inter-relationships between the City's various departments.

A recent major addition to the City site has been the electronic version of Burnaby's Official Community Plan (OCP). Planning Department staff, working through their committee representative have taken more than 100 pages of text, tables and charts, maps and photographs that comprise the OCP adopted by City Council in June of 1998, and have adapted it to the City's web site. This on-line version of the Official Community Plan is informative, appealing to look at, and easy to use. It epitomizes both the role of local government and the use of new Internet technology to provide the community with immediate access to local government information that can affect their day to day life and their long term plans for the future.

- **Quality of Content:**

The quality of the content of Burnaby's web site is a reflection of the quantity of the content. Our web site contains a lot of information. It is useful both to the public, the developer, the businessman, other levels of government, Burnaby City staff and other visitors from far away in cyberspace. This information is contemporary, up-to-date, and easy to access.

- **Public Accessibility and Public Input:**

In order for Burnaby's web site to successfully promote awareness of local government, it was necessary to first promote an awareness of the site itself. Since the site went live in May of 1998, there has been an active campaign of advertising the site. Information cards were printed and placed in all of the City's recreation centres and libraries, and a presentation of the new site was made to the City Council. Articles have also been placed in local newspapers and in the City's Info Burnaby newsletter.

The committee has made a special effort to solicit public input on both the look and the contents of Burnaby's web site. Published articles in local newspapers and City mailers have requested suggestions and comments from the public and any suggestions or comments electronically mailed to the City about the web site are directed promptly to the Web Committee for their review, consideration and response. Many of the suggestions have been implemented or are being implemented. Other suggestions relating to interactive processes may take longer to accommodate but they are all being considered and worked on.

The site provides a great deal of information for City staff. Regulatory bylaws are all posted on the site. The Official Community Plan, information and articles posted in the Building Department area which provide technical and procedural information to both the public and City staff, the Engineering Department's frequently asked questions section, and the posting of the entire Zoning Bylaw are all accessed frequently by staff.

There are a variety of documents and application forms which can be easily accessed and downloaded by the public. These forms include employment applications, applications for various permits and fee information.

- **Appearance and Ease of Use:**

City staff and the staff of Atomic Crayon Web Development have worked hard to give the site a clean, bright and open look while still maintaining open and easy navigation. This has not always been easy to accomplish. Navigation bars and icons that allow you to navigate through a web site do tend to take up a lot of space. When confronting this dilemma a conscious decision was made to sacrifice a certain amount of open space on the site to navigational tools. Burnaby's web site is a good compromise, providing clean lines, lots of pictures, a lot of colour, contrast and change, while still maintaining an ease of use which is second to none.

- **Currency of Information:**

Every effort is made to ensure that the site contains up-to-date, valid information. Each member of the committee is a representative of a department or departments and they are responsible for the information from that department which is posted on the site. This close personal relationship between the information and the department responsible for it helps to ensure its accuracy and relevance.

In addition the staff at Atomic Crayon Web Development have proven to be excellent custodians of the City's information and are quick to point out any stale or contradictory information.

- **Links to other sites:**

Recognizing that we do not have a monopoly on useful information, Burnaby's web site has many direct links to the sites of other government agencies, utility and service providers, information centres, professional organizations and community groups. Using these hyper text links prevents the misinterpretation and duplication of information and saves time and frustration for the user. Burnaby's web site does not provide "advertising" for commercial enterprises or businesses and any links from the Burnaby web site to a commercial site is provided only as a service to the community or to visitors who may wish to visit our city.

- **Cost Effectiveness:**

Burnaby's web site is relatively new and the City has not yet been able to realize all of its potential in the area of cost effectiveness. Still, the initial development costs for the site are rapidly being displaced by savings in printing costs, postage, and staff time. The large volumes of information and the diversification of information available on the site make it very cost effective. For example; staff no longer have to go looking for City Bylaws. Instead of taking

staff time to go to the City Clerk's office to have a printed copy of a bylaw prepared for them they can now go directly to the web site, find the information they need and print or copy the sections that they require. This is also true of printing costs for the various brochures, pamphlets and information articles regularly printed and handed out by the Building Department. These articles are now all available electronically to all members of the public who have access to the Internet. This reduces printing costs and staff time to either mail-out or fax-out these documents to people who need them. The same is true of application forms that are now available on the site. These forms can be downloaded at a remote location, completed and mailed back to the City at virtually no cost to the City.

Information that would otherwise have to be provided by City staff over the telephone can now be obtained by the public directly over the Internet 24 hours a day. Information on garbage pick-up, swimming pool hours, library hours, office hours at the City Hall, etc. are all available on the Web.

- **Next Steps:**

Burnaby's web site has proven to be very effective in providing new and better forms of information, faster and less expensively, to both the City staff and the public. As a result the Web Committee and the members of the public are constantly looking for new and innovative uses for the site.

The Web Committee is currently working on projects such as "*A Citizen's Guide to Burnaby*" which will be available in a number of different languages. The City's Human Resources Department is considering placing their staff training manual on the site. By posting this manual on the Web, it will become available to both City staff and the public and will considerably reduce annual printing costs.

A new "*Visitor's Guide*" area is also currently under construction. This area will provide visitors and potential tourists with information about Burnaby's attractions, shopping, regional transportation systems, accommodations, etc.

A Burnaby R.C.M.P. section of the site is planned for the near future and work has already started on a City staff directory for the site.

Staff hope to soon begin work on an "*on-line*" boutique that will allow shoppers to view and order the many articles of clothing, gifts and souvenirs available from City Hall.

Long term projects include interactive areas on the site which would allow users to pay fees, request specialized property information, apply for and track permits, submit requests or complaints etc.

• **Conclusion:**

The information that we have outlined here barely scratches the surface of Burnaby's web site and more detailed information is available in **Attachment A** at the end of this report.

Burnaby's web site continues to grow, change and mature but it will never be finished and it will never be full. Staff are keenly aware of the opportunities presented by the expanding technology of the Internet and the committee will continue to work toward enhancing and improving the City site.

In conclusion, committee members would like to express their appreciation to Council for initiating development of the City's web site and to Director, Rick Earle, who has provided support and guidance during our start-up period and throughout our first year of operation.

WEB SITE COMMITTEE MEMBERS



for
Debbie Comis
Jim Higgs
Dan Mulligan
Bill Pegler
Robert Renger
Des Solven

WSC/dwm
Attachment

cc City Manager
Director Engineering
Director Finance
Director Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services
Director Planning & Building

ATTACHMENT "A"

This attachment provides more detailed information on the various sections of Burnaby's web site. It also provides statistical information regarding the use of the site.

Mayor and Council provides information on the structure and organization of the elected officials for the City, photographs and information profiles of the Mayor and each of the Councillors. There are also electronic versions of proclamations adopted by Council at regular Council meetings.

City Manager includes a message from the City Manager, organizational value statements of the City, and an organization chart outlining the role of the elected officials and the senior managers of the City. It also explains the roles and responsibilities of the City's two Deputy Managers

City Clerk provides information on the City Council meetings which includes the 1999 Council meeting schedule, Council agendas, Council minutes, information on how to become a delegation before City Council, and information on how to submit a letter to Council. It also provides information on Public Hearings, including the 1999 Public Hearings schedule, Public Hearing agenda, Public Hearing minutes, and information on how to appear at a Public Hearing. Information on Council Committees and how to become a Committee member, Council Committee and support staff and Boards, Committees and Commissions information is also found in the City Clerk area. The Clerks section also provides useful information on the Board of Variance, how to apply for Variance and submission dates for inclusion on the agenda of the Board.

One of the most useful sections of the City Clerk's Area for City staff is the inclusion of approximately 100 of the City's regulatory bylaws on this portion of the City's Web Site. Using the web site's search engine, the bylaws can be easily searched for pertinent sections relating to all aspects of bylaw enforcement. These bylaws no longer have to be printed and circulated to the various departments responsible for their enforcement, which reduces printing costs and saves staff time. They are always up-to-date and are quickly accessible to staff throughout the City.

It also has a brand new "Election 99" area which provides information on the following headings:

- Advance Voting Opportunities
- Special Voting Opportunities
- "Are You On The Voter's List?"
- "Are You Qualified To Vote in the '99 Local Government Election?"
- "Burnaby Voting Places" (complete with a clickable map of the City which takes you to a detailed street map showing the actual address and a colour photograph of the each of the City's 37 voting places).
- "Qualifications to Run for Local Government Office".

Legal and Lands provides background information on the role of the City Solicitor. It also explains the role of the Property Negotiation staff in the acquisition and sale of city-owned property. Information on serviced lots available for sale by the City is also provided.

Human Resources provides business hours, information on how to apply for a job with the City, information on employment opportunities, fire fighting application forms and background information, contact information regarding the employment information telephone line, information on the competition status line, and a general application form which can be downloaded and used for all job vacancies (with the exception of fire fighter vacancies).

Finance includes detailed information on the City budget and a summary of Burnaby's expenditures and revenues, general information about the Finance Department, including a directory of senior staff, information about the Licence Office, including information on Animal Control Services and dog licencing, business licences, related bylaws, the Cat Spay and Neuter Program, commercial vehicle decals, information on how to lay a complaint about properties and businesses in the City, and information on the City rental housing program and property management. Information on property taxation and Burnaby's Purchasing Department is available for taxpayers and businesses alike.

In addition to the Official Community Plan, the **Planning** section of Burnaby's web site includes a variety of maps relating to land use, waterways, green belts, road networks, truck routes, transit concepts and even cycle road maps. Community development plans in their entirety are also included as part of the Planning site. Transportation information on major road networks, proposed high occupancy vehicle networks, long range truck routes, transit concepts and proposed light rail transit routes can be found there as well. There is information on social planning, demographics, population, environmental planning information, a complete list of the Planning Department publications, and trails and cycling information.

An entire unofficial consolidation of Burnaby's Zoning Bylaw can also be found in the Planning section of the web site. This consolidation is routinely brought up to date and because it can be searched more efficiently than the printed version it is extremely useful to staff and to members of the public.

The **Building Department's** portion of Burnaby's web site provides information about the department and the various divisions within the department. Up-to-date electronic copies of all of the Building Department's bulletins and brochures are also available. There is a "What's Happening" area, which provides current information on items of interest to those involved in the construction industry. There are up-to-date tabulation reports which provide month to month information about the type of construction, number of permits, value of construction, etc. that is taking place in Burnaby. All of the Building Department's various application forms are available on the web site in a PDF format which can be printed and mailed in by persons wishing to apply for those permits. There is information on permit fees, an explanation of the various permit types and the requirements for those permits, and copies of all of the pertinent bylaws pertaining to the codes and regulations enforced by the Building Department.

Engineering contains information on the various service divisions of the Engineering department, including development services, the survey division, the environmental services division, the contracts and inspection division, sanitation and recycling information, the traffic section, public works, local improvement programs, the physical plant maintenance division for the City, engineering shops and equipment division, and a complete 1999 garbage and recycling calendar. The Engineering section also has an up-to-date *"What's Happening"* section and a large frequently asked questions section which is useful for both City works and the public alike.

The City's **Fire Department** has its own area on the site which includes a message from the Fire Chief, information on the administration division of the Fire Department, information on staff training, information on the mechanical division of the Fire Department, information on the Operations Division of the Fire Department, statistical information on Fire Facts relating to the Fire Department's activities within the City, detailed background information on the Fire Prevention Division, information on the Fire Department's Public Education program, and an outline of the various City activities undertaken by the Burnaby Firefighters.

The section of Burnaby's web site given over to **Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services** is a web site unto itself. It contains a comprehensive *"What's New"* section, which provides extensive information on community events and programs taking place throughout Burnaby. There is a complete electronic version of Burnaby Parks & Recreation Leisure Guide, which lists all of the leisure activities and parks information for all ages and interests and skill levels. It provides information on how to register for the programs, drop-in schedules and fee information. There is information on all of the City's Parks and Trails, and Picnic sites, there is a complete amenities guide that sets out the type of facilities at each of the various parks around the City, and there is a City map which shows all of the City's major parks and recreation and cultural services centres, with links to the home page for each of those facilities. All of Burnaby's Sports and Recreation facilities and leisure centres are listed on the web site complete with an inventory of the facilities available at each centre, and hours of operation. In addition, there is a calendar of special events which lists month by month all of the recreational and cultural activities that take place around Burnaby throughout the year.

There is a **Library** area on the Burnaby web site which links you directly to the Burnaby Public Library system. This system provides a library catalogue, print information, home library service information, a children and teens section, information on magazine articles, links to selected Internet sites, a special fiction section, information about the library system, annual reports, membership and policy information, hours and locations of the various branches, a site index and much more related library information.

What's New provides an online version of Burnaby's City Newsletter *"Information Burnaby"*. It also provides contemporary information on events taking place around the community, local government initiatives and announcements, and information on changes or improvements that are being regularly made to the web site itself. It also displays the various *"Proclamations"* made by Council throughout the year.

The **Community** Section of the WEB SITE provides a history of the City, the history of the Municipal Hall building, background information on the City's Coat of Arms, a photo gallery of pictures taken around the City, information on the City's Volunteer Services, a list of the Region's Federal and Provincial representatives and a useful set of links to other levels of federal and provincial government agencies and crown corporations.

On Burnaby's site you will also find a **More Stuff** section which has information on the City's Volunteer Services Program, Dog Licencing, filming in Burnaby, freedom of information, a photo gallery, information on the Burnaby RCMP, information on current Y2K issues, information on Burnaby's Emergency Planning, the City's 1999 Garbage and Recycling Calendar and links to the new "Purchasing" and "Elections 99" sections of the web site.

STATISTICS

In the first month of operation we experienced 12 visits per day to the site. From June to December of 1998 we averaged 41 visits per day with a one day high of 68 visits in mid June. Over the course of the first year we had approximately 16,000 visitors. To date in 1999 we have grown to 186 visitors per day and by early May have exceeded the 1998 total of 16,000 visitors to the site.

For the interest of Council, the following statistics show the number of visitors from foreign countries and their originating country from 1999 January 01 to 1999 May 10:

Arab Emirates, United	03
Australia	64
Belgium	81
Brazil	01
Brunei Darussalam	03
Germany	26
Hong Kong	07
Ireland	03
Italy	06
Japan	82
Korea (south)	02
Malaysia	05
Mexico	07
New Zealand (Aotearoa)	09
Norway	10
Poland	04
Russian Federation	03
Singapore	08

Slovak Republic	02
South Africa	03
Spain	03
Sweden	07
Switzerland	04
Taiwan	03
United Kingdom	32
United States	7,175

Visitors from Canada for the same time period total 5,104