

TO: CITY MANAGER 2002 MARCH 06
FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING OUR FILE: 17.465
SUBJECT: STATUS OF CASCADE REPLACEMENT PROCESS
PURPOSE: To provide a status update on the process of replacing the Cascade Residence.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT** Council send a letter to Keith Anderson, Vice President, Community Care and Seniors' Health with the Fraser Health Authority, to
 - a) express the City's strong opposition and concern over the Health Authority's decision to cancel the Cascade Residence replacement facility being planned for the New Vista site,
 - b) request that, if the cancelled New Vista facility is deemed not viable, the Health Authority provide assurances that another replacement facility will be developed in Burnaby,
 - c) seek a commitment that the Health Authority will develop a strategy for replacing and expanding the stock of Continuing Care facilities, and related services and facilities, to meet the needs of Burnaby's aging population over the medium and longer term, and
 - d) offer support to the Health Authority, as appropriate, in securing additional resources from the Ministry of Health for development of necessary care facilities and related services for the local seniors population.
2. **THAT** Council send a letter to the Ministers of Health Services and Health Planning, expressing the City's grave concerns over the cancellation of the Cascade replacement facility, and urging that additional resources be provided to enable the Fraser Health Authority to develop appropriate facilities and services to meet the needs of Burnaby's frail seniors population.
3. **THAT** a copy of this report be sent to the Community Issues & Social Planning Committee and the Burnaby MLAs.

REPORT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

At its meeting of 2002 February 11, Council requested staff to prepare a report on the status of the Cascade Residence replacement process. This report responds to that request. It consists of three parts: i) background on the Cascade Residence and the replacement process, ii) an update on the current status of the process, and iii) discussion and recommendations.

2.0 BACKGROUND

The Cascade Residence is a 205-bed Extended Care facility located at Burnaby Hospital. It consists of two buildings - one that was built in the 1950s and the other that was built in the 1970s. The Residence is institutional in nature, features multi-bed wards, and falls far short of current standards for accessibility or privacy. The Burnaby Hospital, in its 1991 Master Plan, recommended that the Cascade Residence be upgraded or replaced. In 1999, the Simon Fraser Health Region (SFHR), in *The Road Ahead* strategic plan for Continuing Care Residential Services, also recommended that priority be given to closing and replacing the Residence.

In 2000 March, SFHR announced its intention to close the Cascade Residence. In conjunction with BC Buildings Corporation, the Health Region issued a request for submissions from parties interested in developing a replacement facility, consisting of 150 multi-level care beds and 50 Assisted Living units. City Council showed a strong interest in the process and requested and received several reports on the matter. Council also expressed concerns to the SFHR over such issues as:

- the net loss of licensed care facility beds that would result for Burnaby;
- the affordability, quality controls, and adequacy of Assisted Living (e.g., how could this unlicensed alternative serve the needs of seniors assessed at the Intermediate Care 2 level?);
- implications of the public-private partnership (P3) approach for the Cascade replacement facility; and
- future prospects for additional Continuing Care facility development for Burnaby.

In 2000 November, the Health Region announced that the New Vista Society had been selected to develop the Cascade replacement facility. New Vista initiated a rezoning application for the development (Rezoning Reference #00/36) in 2000 December. The Public Hearing for the application was held on 2001 August 28, and Council granted Second Reading to the rezoning bylaw on 2001 September 10.

In 2001 October, the Health Region placed a 90-day moratorium on the Cascade replacement. The moratorium was initiated to enable the SFHR Board to assess its overall financial situation and to determine a future course of action. In 2001 December, the Province announced that it would be amalgamating health regions in BC, reducing the number from 52 to 6. Through the amalgamation process, the Simon Fraser Health Region was merged with the Fraser Valley and South Fraser Health Regions to form the Fraser Health Authority (FHA), an authority serving roughly 1/3 of the province's population.

3.0 CURRENT STATUS

On 2001 March 1, FHA officials formally notified City staff that the Cascade Residence replacement facility at New Vista had been cancelled. The decision was attributed to the financial constraints facing the Health Authority. Another contributing factor was that projected construction costs for the replacement facility were exceeding the funding allocation for the project.

Since the announcement was made to replace the existing Cascade Residence, the number of residents in the facility has been declining. As of 2002 February 27, Cascade was accommodating 158 residents. 30 were on a wait list for placement in alternate facilities - 13 in the Simon Fraser area and 17 in other areas. Because of the province-wide nursing shortage, coupled with the uncertainties regarding the Cascade Residence, the FHA is not accepting new admissions into Cascade.

The Health Authority is nearing completion of its Clinical Services Directional Plan, a comprehensive plan covering the broad scope of services under the FHA's jurisdiction. In 2002 April, the Health Authority Board is expected to receive the Directional Plan and make budgetary decisions accordingly. At that time, an announcement should be made about the fate of the existing Cascade Residence. Health Authority officials have declined to speculate on what the Board's decision may be, or on what would be the consequences if the Cascade Residence was closed. As noted, however, the facility falls far below current standards for care facilities and cannot be staffed at full complement. Therefore, even if a decision was made to retain the Residence, this would be, at best, a stop-gap measure. A longer term strategy would still be required.

4.0 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Significant time, energy, and resources have gone into planning for the replacement of the Cascade Residence. The planning process has involved a heavy commitment from Health Authority staff, the New Vista Society, and other groups submitting proposals for the development opportunity. It has also involved a commitment from the City (e.g., assistance with the rezoning and plan development, preparation of reports regarding the Cascade replacement, and scrutiny of the process by Council).

It is appreciated that the FHA currently faces major financial challenges and that cancellation of the Cascade replacement is but one of many difficult decisions it will need to make. That said, the cancellation decision raises serious concerns. It will prolong the uncertainty and anxiety faced by current residents of the facility and their families. It will also increase apprehension about the Health Authority's ability to respond to future Continuing Care needs in Burnaby - particularly given that:

- the local population is aging - particularly amongst the 80+ year group that constitutes the majority of Continuing Care facility residents, and
- the majority of Burnaby's care facilities are acknowledged by the FHA to require major upgrading or replacement.

Further, it is recognized that the Health Authority is striving to keep seniors out of facilities for as long as reasonably possible through provision of Home Care, home support, transitional care, and other services. The Health Authority is also pursuing development of Assisted Living beds as an unlicensed alternative to care facility placement.

The fact remains, however, that a portion of seniors will continue to require placement in a care facility. Given the foregoing, it is recommended that Council send a letter to the Fraser Health Authority which:

- a) expresses the City's strong opposition and concern over the Health Authority's decision to cancel the Cascade Residence replacement facility,
- b) requests that, if the facility is deemed not viable, the Health Authority provide assurances that another replacement facility will be developed in Burnaby,
- c) seeks a commitment that the Health Authority will develop a strategy for replacing and expanding the stock of Continuing Care facilities, and related services and facilities, to meet the needs of Burnaby's aging population over the medium and longer term, and
- d) offers support to the Health Authority, as appropriate, in securing additional resources from the Ministry of Health for development of necessary care facilities and related services for the local seniors population.

It is also recommended that Council send a letter to the Ministers of Health Services and Health Planning, expressing the City's grave concerns over the cancellation of the Cascade replacement facility, and urging that additional resources be provided to enable the Fraser Health Authority to develop appropriate facilities and services to meet the needs of Burnaby's frail seniors population. As well, it is recommended that a copy of this report be sent to the Community Issues & Social Planning Committee and Burnaby's MLAs.

Staff will continue to keep the Community Issues & Social Planning Committee and Council apprised on further developments regarding the Cascade Residence.



J.S. Belhouse, Director
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