

TO: CITY MANAGER

2003 JUNE 4

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING

SUBJECT: REZONING REFERENCE #02-27
Integration and Renovation of Metropolis and
Metrotown Centre Retail/Office Complexes

PURPOSE: To provide Council with information in response to the issues and questions raised at the 2003 April 29 Public Hearing with respect to the subject rezoning application.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That a copy of this report be sent to all those who submitted correspondence and made submissions to the 2003 April 29 Public Hearing for Rezoning Reference #02-27.

R E P O R T

1.0 BACKGROUND

Council, at its regular meeting of 2003 May 05, gave Second Reading to the subject rezoning bylaw and requested a report in response to the issues and questions raised at the 2003 April 29 Public Hearing with respect to the subject rezoning application. The subject site proposed for rezoning are illustrated on attached Sketch #1.

Three Burnaby residents appeared at the Public Hearing and three letters from Burnaby residents were received. Two of the speakers live in an apartment tower located on the south side of Bennett Street between the Sears Auto Centre and the Bonsor Recreation Centre. One of the three speakers also wrote one of the letters.

2.0 GENERAL DISCUSSION

The following responds to the issues and questions raised at the Public Hearing.

2.1 Inquiry Regarding Existing Above-Ground Pedestrian Connection Between the Parkade and Zellers.

Regarding the status of this pedestrian connection, this facility was originally constructed to provide access and entry to the second level of the former Woodward's department store from the top level of the parkade. This skywalk was closed along with the store entry/exit in

March of 1997. The current tenant, Zellers does not wish to reopen this connection for a variety of business and security reasons. Zellers has four entry/exits which includes three from the interior of the mall and one from the exterior. The retention of this pedestrian structure allows this link to be reopened at a future date should Zellers or new tenants of the Zellers' space so desire.

2.2 Concerns raised by the Two Residents of the Bennett Street Apartment Tower.

Concerns were expressed about the proposed new loading bays and its driveway entrance from Bennett Street, lighting and signage.

The underground location of the new loading area for the relocated food court with an access driveway from Bennett Street as proposed by the applicant has been reviewed by staff and is considered to be the most appropriate location for this facility. The proposed loading area will be entirely underground, hidden from the public view and located in close proximity to the relocated food court area. Appropriate landscaping will continue to be provided adjacent to Bennett Street.

The use of the proposed new driveway will be restricted to commercial vehicles, provide access only to the new underground loading area and will be posted with signs to clearly identify its function. The proposed new underground loading area should not generate an appreciable increase in traffic volume or noise. Mall customers will continue to use the existing driveway entrances located on Bennett Street just west of Nelson Avenue and adjacent to the Firefighters Club. The proposed new underground loading area and its access driveway are not considered to increase pedestrian safety concerns. The configuration of the driveway access should not result in any truck turn around movements using the driveway at the Bennett Street residential tower.

The proposed underground loading area will accommodate 3 loading bays for commercial vehicles, a compactor and a recycling bin. This facility should not create an odour problem since the compactor must be self contained should it contain food waste and will be emptied on a regular basis.

In reference to lighting, the applicant will be responsible for installing additional Metrotown pedestrian lighting along portions Kingsway, Bennett Street and Central Boulevard adjacent to the site in order to meet the current boulevard standard in the core area of Metrotown. Pedestrian lighting will be provided within the proposed new exterior plazas and along major outdoor pedestrian routes throughout the development site as a part of the overall physical improvement program for the shopping centre. This lighting will enhance the overall appearance of the shopping centre, improve the visual integration of the two malls and enhance the usability and safety of the Metrotown pedestrian network.

In reference to signs, the applicant has prepared a Comprehensive Sign Plan (CSP) for the entire retail/office complex which has been reviewed by staff and includes a wide range of signs which reflect the unique nature and importance of this regionally significant Metrotown core development in Burnaby's downtown. The sign plan includes the addition of some of the Metropolis type signs (approved through Rezoning Reference #4/97) to the exterior of the Metrotown Centre portion of the complex which will provide a fresh and integrated approach to the exterior of the complex. The signs proposed for the Kingsway side of Metrotown Centre will be similar in nature to the Kingsway portion of Metropolis. However, the proposed building signs for Bennett Street in particular will generally be less in number, smaller in size and more discrete to reflect the lower commercial profile of this street frontage.

More specifically, the proposed signs for the Bennett Street frontage include retaining two existing mall identification signs at the two mall entrances and the existing "Bay" anchor tenant sign (size and location to remain the same), a slightly larger shopping parkade entry sign adjacent to the Firefighters Club and three new small pedestrian-scaled advertising graphic panels (4 ft. by 6 ft. in size) to be located outside of the easterly mall entrance.

2.3 Metrotown Bus Loop

Two speakers at the Public Hearing and two of the submitted letters expressed concerns about the Metrotown bus loop and its lighting, general appearance, security and presence of criminal activity.

In reference to lighting and general appearance, staff have met with the applicant and Translink to discuss the issues raised at the Public Hearing regarding the bus loop facility and outlined a number of possible measures to improve the situation. A study of the existing light levels, provision of increased lighting, added and upgraded seating and additional weather protection were some of the potential upgrading measures that were discussed. It was also suggested that a co-operative, cost-sharing approach be established as soon as possible between the relevant parties to implement the appropriate measures. In response to this matter, the applicant indicates that they will initiate immediate improvements to include:

- Commission an evaluation of lighting levels within the bus loop area;
- Engage an electrical consultant to propose necessary lighting improvements;
- Supply and install additional required lighting to the queuing areas of the bus loop;
- Commission and light a coloured mural for the north wall of the bus loop.

This work would be completed prior to the occupancy of proposed Phase II development which includes the two-level retail connection, exterior plaza enhancements and reconfiguration of the parking, loading and driveways. The other related concerns regarding

the provision weather protection and additional seating for transit users will be explored with the other relevant parties including Translink.

In reference to concerns about criminal activity and security, staff raised this issue with the applicant, Translink, the RCMP and the Burnaby-New Westminster Task Force on the Sexual Exploitation of Children and Youth. The RCMP have indicated that they do not have any concrete information on the recruitment and exploitation of youth at the bus loop. The Transit security who also monitor the bus loop do not have any empirical data which would suggest that this is a regular occurrence. The Task Force, which assists the Community Policing Committee of Council noted that the situation at the bus loop should be monitored further.

A program to implement specific upgrading measures for the Bus Loop will require further study and review by the applicant, Translink and other interested parties. The applicant's improvement proposal as outlined above is welcomed and will represent the first step in formalizing a specific implementation program involving the relevant parties. It is suggested that a further report be submitted to Council once an implementation program has been prepared. The resolution and conclusion of the bus loop issues and resulting upgrading requirements will be identified in the further report and any additional prerequisite conditions determined. Such prerequisites would relate to the Phase II rezoning which involves the two-level retail mall connection, replacement of the two existing food courts with retail stores, additions and renovations to exterior plazas.

2.4 Bike Racks, Bike Storage Lockers and End-of-trip Facilities.

Two of the submitted letters expressed concern about the use and security of these facilities.

Consistent with Burnaby policy, the subject expansion/integration project will provide a total of 102 bike racks and 72 bike storage lockers and two separate end-of-trip facilities which include male and female showers, dressing rooms, lockers and bathrooms. The bike racks and bike storage lockers will be located in close proximity to the mall and office building entrances and will serve the needs of employees and the general public. The shopping centre operators will be responsible for the ongoing operation and security of the bike racks and bike storage facilities. A daily fee will be charged to use the bike storage lockers which will have a lock and key. The immediate area will be patrolled by shopping centre security staff on a regular basis. The mall operators indicate that they have not had any security problems to date with these lockers.

There are two proposed locations for the end-of-trip facilities. One will be located in the P1 Parking Level of Metrotown Centre and the other within the P1 Parking Level of Metrotower III. These facilities will be utilized exclusively by the employees of the shopping complex and the office tenants who will have a key or access cards to enter these facilities which will be locked at all times. The mall security personnel will regularly patrol the area.

3.0 CONCLUSION

This report responds to the various concerns raised at the 2003 April 29 Public Hearing. In reference to the Metrotown bus loop, further examination of the situation will be undertaken by the applicant, Translink and the City and a specific upgrading program will be established and outlined in a further report to Council. The implementation of this program will then be established as a prerequisite condition of the Phase II rezoning. The applicant will be proceeding with satisfying the prerequisite conditions of the Phase I rezoning involving the relocated food court and associated underground loading area in the near future and subject rezoning bylaw amendment for Phase I appears elsewhere on this Agenda for Third Reading.

This is for the information of Council.

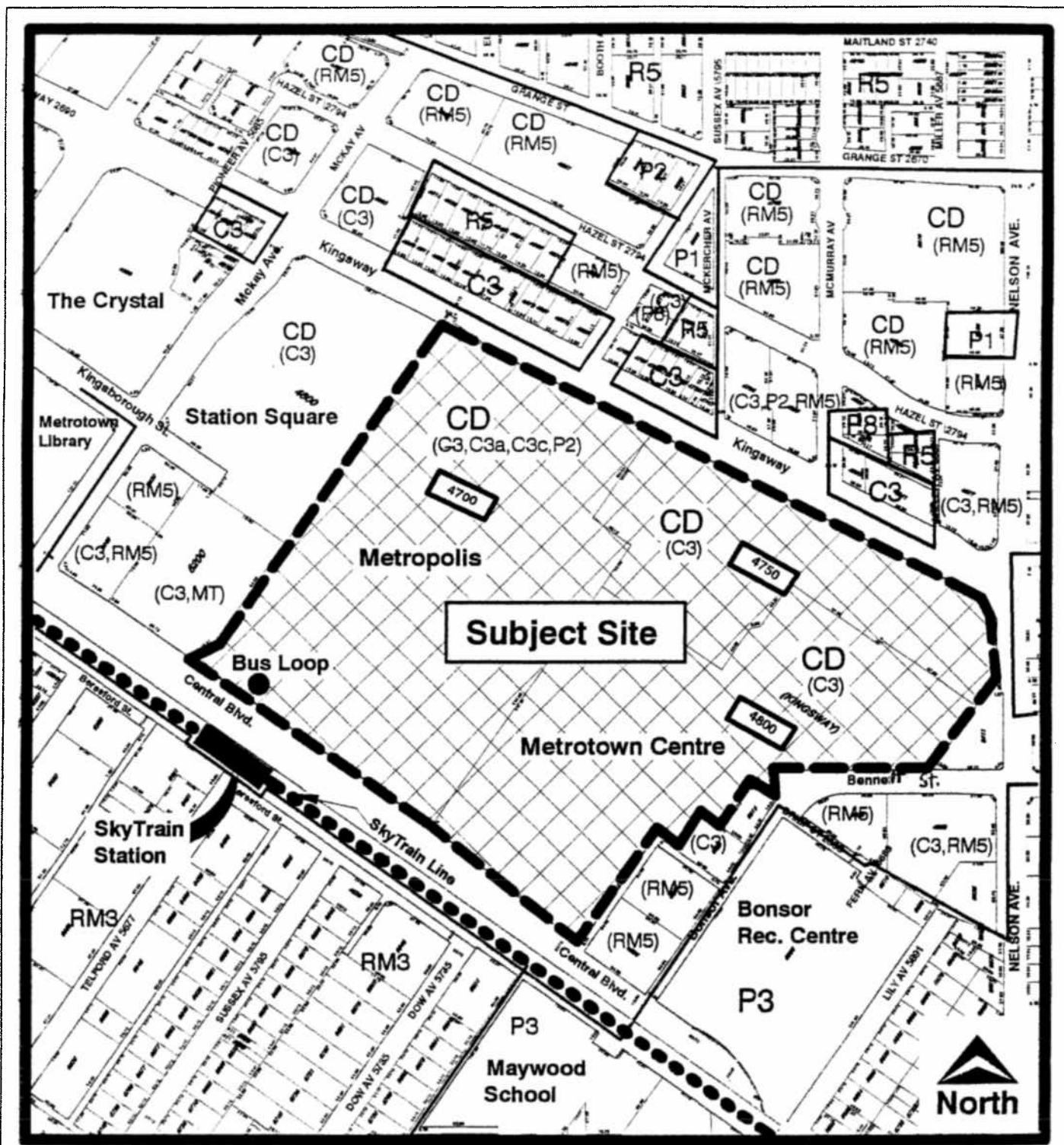


J. S Belhouse
Director Planning and Building

PS:gk
Attach

cc. Director Engineering

P:\Gulzar\Phil Sanderson\Rez 02-27\Public Hearing Issues Report.wpd



Planning And Building Department

Scale: N.T.S.

Drawn By: J.P.C.

Date: July 2002

REZONING REFERENCE 02 -- 27

4700,4750,4800 Kingsway

Sketch # 1