

CITY OF BURNABY

COMMUNITY POLICING COMMITTEE

*HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR
AND COUNCILLORS*

C

**SUBJECT: CONDITIONS FOR APPROVAL OF ELECTRONIC BINGO AT
PROPOSED FUTURE LOCATION OF BURNABY BINGO
COUNTRY**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT** Council approve the inclusion of electronic bingo at the proposed new location of Burnaby Bingo Country Highgate Village (Middlegate Shopping Centre redevelopment) provided that:
 - a) no more than 146 hand-held units and no more than 150 Starship terminals are available on the premises;
 - b) no more than 40 cards per hand-held unit and per Starship terminal are allowed during any one bingo game;
 - c) players are limited to using one hand-held unit or one Starship terminal during any one bingo game;
 - d) hand-held units and Starship terminals are programmed to preclude personal play and the play of games other than bingo;
 - e) the bingo hall does not operate outside the hours of 10 a.m. to 12:30 a.m. Sunday through Thursday, and 10 a.m. to 1 a.m. Friday and Saturday;
 - f) the proponent will be required to seek Council approval for the installation of electronic bingo at any future Burnaby location of Burnaby Bingo Country; and
 - g) the proponent will be required to seek Council approval for the continued availability of electronic bingo in the Highgate Village bingo facility should the bingo license be transferred to an owner or operator other than Burnaby Bingo Country in the future.
2. **THAT** Council be requested to eliminate the requirement for Burnaby Bingo Country to obtain Council approval on a biennial basis to continue to offer hand-held units, should the above conditions be approved.

COPY: CITY MANAGER
DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
DIRECTOR FINANCE
OIC, RCMP
CITY SOLICITOR

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3. **THAT** copies of this report be forwarded to:
- a) Mr. Alan Dyck, Burnaby Bingo Country;
 - b) Mr. Bill Sidhu, British Columbia Lottery Corporation;
 - c) Ms. Lynn Parkin, President, Lower Mainland Charities Association;
 - d) Mr. Dale Bosa, Bosa Properties; and
 - e) the Social Issues Committee.

REPORT

The Community Policing Committee, at its meeting held on 2003 June 12, received and adopted the attached report recommending conditions under which electronic bingo could be supported at the proposed new location of Burnaby Bingo Country in Highgate Village (Middlegate Shopping Centre redevelopment).

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor Doug Evans
Chair

Councillor Colleen Jordan
Vice Chair

Councillor Pietro Calendino
Member

TO: COMMUNITY POLICING COMMITTEE 2003 May 28
FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING OUR FILE: 17.812
SUBJECT: **CONDITIONS FOR APPROVAL OF ELECTRONIC BINGO AT PROPOSED
FUTURE LOCATION OF BURNABY BINGO COUNTRY**
PURPOSE: To recommend conditions under which electronic bingo could be supported at the proposed new location of Burnaby Bingo Country in Highgate Village (Middlegate Shopping Centre redevelopment).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT** Council be requested to approve the inclusion of electronic bingo at the proposed new location of Burnaby Bingo Country in Highgate Village at 7185 Kingsway provided that:
 - a) no more than 146 hand-held units and no more than 150 Starship terminals are available on the premises;
 - b) no more than 40 cards per hand-held unit and per Starship terminal are allowed during any one bingo game;
 - c) players are limited to using one hand-held unit or one Starship terminal during any one bingo game;
 - d) hand-held units and Starship terminals are programmed to preclude personal play and the play of games other than bingo;
 - e) the bingo hall does not operate outside the hours of 10 a.m. to 12:30 a.m. Sunday through Thursday, and 10 a.m. to 1 a.m. Friday and Saturday;
 - f) the proponent will be required to seek Council approval for the installation of electronic bingo at any future Burnaby location of Burnaby Bingo Country; and
 - g) the proponent will be required to seek Council approval for the continued availability of electronic bingo in the Highgate Village bingo facility should the bingo license be transferred to an owner or operator other than Burnaby Bingo Country in the future.
2. **THAT** Council be requested to eliminate the requirement for Burnaby Bingo Country to obtain Council approval on a biennial basis to continue to offer hand-held units, should the above conditions be approved.
3. **THAT** copies of this report be forwarded to:
 - a) Mr. Alan Dyck, Burnaby Bingo Country;
 - b) Mr. Bill Sidhu, British Columbia Lottery Corporation;
 - c) Ms. Lynn Parkin, President, Lower Mainland Charities Association;
 - d) Mr. Dale Bosa, Bosa Properties; and
 - e) the Social Issues Committee.

REPORT

1.0 BACKGROUND

Burnaby Bingo Country, located in Midlegate Shopping Centre, currently offers electronic bingo in two forms: hand-held units and Starship terminals. In approving electronic bingo, Burnaby City Council imposed a number of conditions, one of which requires Burnaby Bingo Country to seek Council approval should it wish to include Starship terminals at any future Burnaby location.

At its meeting of 2003 May 26, Council approved a recommendation from the Community Policing Committee that approval in principle be given for the inclusion of electronic bingo at the proposed new location of Burnaby Bingo Country in Highgate Village. This preliminary indication of City support was requested by the Highgate Village developer in order to finalize building plans and other documentation required for advancing the rezoning. The subject rezoning is expected to go to Public Hearing on 2003 July 22. The approval in principle was recommended given the dependence of local charitable organizations on gaming revenues for sustaining their services in the community, and the lack of negative neighbourhood impacts generated by bingo, both in Burnaby and in other local municipalities. Moreover, Burnaby Bingo Country had indicated that it could not advance the rezoning application for the building addition to accommodate the bingo facility without having some assurance that electronic bingo would be supported by the City. The approval in principle was recommended on the understanding that a future staff report, outlining conditions under which electronic bingo could be supported, would be submitted in advance of the Public Hearing report for the bingo hall rezoning.

This report outlines those conditions for support.

2.0 CONDITIONS FOR SUPPORT

Staff believe there is merit in allowing electronic bingo at the proposed new location of Burnaby Bingo Country in Highgate Village, as long as appropriate conditions governing its operation are established and respected. Staff propose conditions which are similar to those currently in place, and which would govern the following operational elements:

- the number of electronic devices made available;
- the number of cards permitted to be played on an electronic device during any one bingo game;
- the number of electronic devices a player is permitted to operate during any one bingo game;

- the mode of bingo play and the types of games programmed into the electronic devices;
- the hours of operation of the bingo facility; and
- requirements for ongoing approval for electronic bingo should Burnaby Bingo Country relocate, or should the bingo license for the proposed new bingo facility be transferred to another owner or operator.

2.1 Number of Electronic Devices

At present, Burnaby Bingo Country has approval from Council to offer up to 146 electronic hand-held units and 96 electronic Starship terminals. The management of Burnaby Bingo Country has indicated it would like to continue to offer the same number of hand-held units in the proposed new bingo hall, but would like the option to expand the number of Starship terminals up to 150, as the market demands.

With respect to hand-held units, experience at bingo halls in British Columbia suggests a decline in their usage once Starship terminals are introduced, because the terminals are more attractive and easier to use. With this in mind, and given the lack of negative impacts generated by the hand-held units, staff see no reason not to allow up to 146 of the units in the proposed new bingo facility.

With respect to the number of Starship terminals, staff at British Columbia Lottery Corporation (BCLC), which is responsible for managing and conducting bingo in commercial bingo halls, advise that the Corporation's ratio for the number of Starship terminals allowed in a bingo hall is approximately one-third of seating capacity.¹ The seating capacity of the proposed new bingo hall at Highgate Village is 550, which is up from 440 in the existing facility. Based on the BCLC ratio, the proposed new bingo hall would be able to accommodate up to 183 terminals, considerably more than the 150 which Burnaby Bingo Country is requesting to install.

In other Lower Mainland bingo halls, the number of Starship terminals offered ranges from 96 in Maple Ridge to 192 in Vancouver, Surrey and Abbotsford. The average number offered in the seven Lower Mainland halls is 149. In light of the foregoing, staff believe that Burnaby Bingo Country's request to expand its Starship inventory up to 150 terminals in the proposed new 550 seat hall could be supported.

¹Given the expense of supplying and installing the terminals, BCLC staff note that it is unlikely that the ratio of Starship terminals to patron seats would be allowed to exceed one-half.

2.2 Number of Cards Per Machine Per Game

At this time, the maximum number of cards which BCLC allows to be played on an electronic machine during a bingo game is 40. BCLC staff advise that no increase in this limit is contemplated at present. Council currently allows Burnaby Bingo Country to offer up to 36 cards per electronic hand-held unit and up to 40 cards per Starship terminal during any one bingo game. Staff recommend that, at the proposed new location of Burnaby Bingo Country, the limit for the number of cards to be allowed during a game on either type of electronic device be standardized at the current Provincial maximum of 40.

2.3 Number of Electronic Machines Per Player Per Game

Council currently allows only one hand-held unit and only one Starship terminal to be used by a bingo player during any one bingo game at Burnaby Bingo Country. Staff recommend maintaining these limits, and clarifying that only one electronic device - be it a hand-held unit or a Starship terminal - can be used by a player during a game.

2.4 Type of Electronic Games Permitted

Electronic bingo devices can be programmed to offer a wide range of games of chance which are based on playing cards or fruit or other motifs (similar to video lottery terminals or VLTs). To date, however, BCLC has allowed only bingo to be programmed. Current Council approval for electronic bingo at Burnaby Bingo Country precludes the play of games other than bingo on the electronic devices, and continued adherence to this condition is recommended.

Both the hand-held units and Starship Bingo terminals can also be programmed to preclude the play of bingo in personal play mode. In personal play mode, a player plays against the computer, which generates different combinations for each player engaging in personal play. Players play at their own speed, without reference to called games which are taking place in the bingo hall. In this respect, the terminal in personal play mode remotely resembles a VLT. For both hand-held units and Starship terminals, Burnaby Council has withheld approval for personal or stand-alone play. Staff recommend that the aforementioned electronic devices continue to be programmed to preclude personal play. It should be noted that, in the view of staff, Starship terminals used in personal play mode would bring the operation under the zoning category of "gaming house", rather than "gaming facility", for which it is currently being rezoned. Therefore, notwithstanding the staff recommendation, personal play would not be permitted on Starship terminals under the proposed zoning designation.

2.5 Hours of Operation

BCLC permits licensed commercial bingo halls to operate between 9 a.m. and 2 a.m., seven days per week, subject to local bylaws. BCLC staff advise that no commercial hall operates for the full seventeen hours allowed per day; most operate for about twelve or fourteen hours, usually between 11 a.m. and 1 a.m., depending on the night of the week. The hours of operation at Burnaby Bingo Country are currently 10 a.m. to 12:30 a.m., seven days a week. The management hopes to maintain similar hours at the proposed new location. Staff recommend that Burnaby Bingo Country be allowed to operate between the hours of 10 a.m. and 12:30 a.m. Sunday through Thursday, and 10 a.m. and 1 a.m. Friday and Saturday in the proposed new location. These hours are consistent with other entertainment venues in the neighbourhood, such as restaurants, neighbourhood pubs, and cabarets.

2.6 Changes to Location or Owner/Operator of Proposed Bingo Facility

The recommendations to support electronic bingo in Highgate Village with the conditions outlined above are based, in part, on the management record of Burnaby Bingo Country and on the proposed location of the facility in a large, high-density mixed use complex. It cannot be assumed that such support would be warranted should a different location for a bingo facility be suggested, or should a different owner/operator approach the City. Staff recommend, therefore, that a requirement for re-approval be established should Burnaby Bingo Country relocate, or should the bingo license for the proposed new bingo facility at Highgate Village be transferred to another owner or operator.

3.0 ONGOING APPROVAL FOR ELECTRONIC BINGO

As noted above, Council approval for the ongoing availability of hand-held bingo units at Burnaby Bingo Country has been required on a biennial basis. This requirement was introduced in 2000, when the use of the hand-held units was first approved, because of Burnaby's lack of experience with electronic bingo, and the City's wish to monitor any impacts on the community.² Similar requirements for ongoing approval were not imposed for Starship Bingo when the Starship terminals were approved in 2003 January because the neighbourhood impacts of electronic bingo were deemed to be negligible, and because the capital outlay associated with the installation of the terminals is considerable.

²In December 2002, Council approved the availability of hand-held units for a further two year period, until December 31, 2004.

BCLC staff advise that Burnaby is the only municipality in British Columbia which requires bingo proponents to seek approval on a regular basis in order to continue offering any form of electronic bingo. It should be noted that Burnaby does not, as a matter of policy, impose such time-limited approval on any other type of entertainment use. Based on the foregoing, and to help ensure that Burnaby Bingo Country - and the charitable organizations associated with it - are competitive with other bingo halls in the region and with other forms of entertainment in Burnaby, staff recommend that requirements to seek approval for ongoing availability of electronic bingo be dropped once Burnaby Bingo Country commences operations in its proposed new location in Highgate Village. This recommendation assumes the conditions on operational parameters outlined above are adopted.

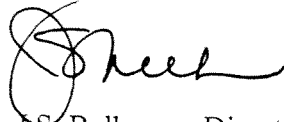
4.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Burnaby Bingo Country has indicated that, in its proposed new facility at Highgate Village, it would like to continue to offer up to 146 hand-held units and to expand its inventory of Starship terminals to 150. Given the dependence of local charitable organizations on gaming revenues for sustaining their services in the community, and the lack of negative neighbourhood impacts generated by electronic bingo, staff believe that this request can be supported as long as Council is able to control the operational parameters of electronic bingo.

Assuming Council approval for the proposed bingo facility in Highgate Village is given, and assuming Burnaby Bingo Country commences operations in that new facility in future, staff recommend the following conditions be imposed on electronic bingo:

- no more than 146 hand-held verifiers and no more than 150 Starship terminals shall be made available on the premises;
- no more than 40 cards per hand-held unit and per terminal shall be allowed during any one bingo game;
- players shall be limited to using one hand-held unit or one Starship terminal during any one bingo game;
- hand-held units and Starship terminals shall be programmed to preclude personal play and the play of games other than bingo;
- the bingo hall shall not operate outside the hours of 10 a.m. to 12:30 a.m. Sunday through Thursday, and 10 a.m. to 1 a.m. Friday and Saturday;
- the proponent will be required to seek Council approval for the installation of electronic bingo at any future Burnaby location of Burnaby Bingo Country; and
- the proponent will be required to seek Council approval for the continued availability of electronic bingo in the Highgate Village bingo facility should the bingo license be transferred to an owner or operator other than Burnaby Bingo Country in the future.

Should these conditions be approved, staff further recommend that the requirement for Burnaby Bingo Country to obtain Council approval on a biennial basis to continue to offer hand-held units be eliminated.



J.S. Belhouse, Director
PLANNING AND BUILDING

JS/sla

cc: City Manager
Deputy City Manager
Director Finance
OIC - Burnaby RCMP
City Solicitor

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