

CITY OF BURNABY

A

FINANCE AND CIVIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR  
AND COUNCILLORS

**SUBJECT: BURNABY TOURISM PROGRAM  
STATUS REPORT AND PROPOSAL FOR 2004**

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT Council approve the City's Tourism Program for 2004 as outlined in Section 5.0 of this report.

REPORT

The Finance and Civic Development Committee, at its meeting held on 2004 February 26, received and adopted the *attached* report providing a review of the 2003 City based Tourism Program which includes the operation of a seasonal Tourist Information Centre in Metrotown, the distribution of a Burnaby Visitors' Guide, the limited tourist information service provided at City Hall and the provision of "Visitors" information on the City's official Web site.

Respectfully submitted,

Mayor Derek R. Corrigan,  
Chair

Councillor Dan Johnston,  
Vice Chair

Councillor Nick Volkow,  
Member

COPY: CITY MANAGER DEPUTY CITY MANAGER DIRECTOR FINANCE DIRECTOR PLNG. & BLDG. DIR. PARKS, REC. & CULT. SERVICES
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2004 JANUARY 29

**TO: FINANCE AND CIVIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING**

**SUBJECT: BURNABY TOURISM PROGRAM  
STATUS REPORT AND PROPOSAL FOR 2004**

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**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. **THAT** the Finance and Civic Development Committee approve the City's Tourism Program for 2004 as outlined in Section 5.0 this report.

**R E P O R T**

**1.0 SUMMARY**

This report provides a review of the 2003 City based Tourism Program which includes the operation of a seasonal Tourist Information Centre in Metrotown, the distribution of a Burnaby Visitors' Guide, the limited tourist information service provided at City Hall and the provision of "Visitors" information on the City's official Web site. The proposed program for 2004 reflects the impact that the renovations to the Metropolis at Metrotown shopping centre will have on the operation of the City's seasonal Metrotown Tourist Infocentre and acknowledges the imminent establishment of the Tourism Burnaby association.

**2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 In 1994 Council adopted the "Burnaby Tourism Strategy" as a guide for promoting and expanding the local tourism industry and on 1995 February 13 approved a city based program for implementing the strategy for the 1995 calendar year. The City's Tourism Program has been administered by the Planning and Building Department since 1995. The City's program has been modestly expanded over the years to widen the distribution of the Burnaby Visitors' Guide, extend the seasonal operation of the Metrotown Tourist Infocentre from three to five months and add a "Visitors" information component to the City's Web Site. The 2004 Provisional Operating Budget for the City's Tourist Program is \$51,000.

2.2 On 2003 December 15, Council gave Final Adoption of the Hotel Room Additional Tax Levy Bylaw which requests the imposition of an additional accommodation tax pursuant to the Hotel Room Tax Act. This Bylaw was initiated by the Burnaby Board of Trade in consultation with local hotels to develop a business plan for the creation of a non-profit society to be named Tourism Burnaby formed with the mandate to create and administer a multi-niche tourism promotion program for Burnaby. Tourism Burnaby will be financed by the 2% Hotel Room Tax and is expected to be operational by the summer 2004.

**3.0 2003 CITY TOURISM PROGRAM SUMMARY**

The 2003 Burnaby Tourism Program included the following components which have been provided by the City.

**3.1 METROTOWN TOURIST INFOCENTRE**

The Burnaby Community Information Booth, located on the pedestrian walkway linking Metropolis at Metrotown and Metrotown Centre, operated exclusively as the “Burnaby Tourist Infocentre” from May 01 through September 30 seven days per week generally between 10:00 am and 6:00 pm and until 8:30 p.m. on Thursday and Friday evenings. The Infocentre was staffed with 4 Auxiliary City employees who provided the general public with information, advice, suggestions, directions on a variety of tourist related topics covering Burnaby events, attractions and facilities around the Lower mainland and the Province.

The Infocentre was clearly identified as the “Burnaby Tourist Infocentre” with large banners and a wide selection of prominent Burnaby and Province-wide tourist brochures, information items, attractions materials, maps, ferry and bus schedules, etc. that were racked and dispensed to the general public free of charge. Burnaby-related attractions, brochures and the Burnaby Visitors’ Guide were allocated to the most visible sections of the display racks. Additional brochures promoting community and regional events were also prominently displayed and supplied free of charge by Certified Folder Display Inc.

The five month operation of the Infocentre provided a key role in the 2003 Program since it has a highly visible location in the Metrotown Retail and Entertainment Complex which has a significant regional profile as a shopping and visitor destination and provides a useful service to tourists and local residents. While thousands of tourists and residents were provided with service during 2003, the total figures were slightly below that of 2003 likely as a result of concerns over international terrorism and the SARS epidemic which reduced overall travel.

### 3.2 CITY HALL TOURIST INFORMATION

This is a limited tourist information service provided at the Information Desk on the main floor of City Hall. It contains the display of tourist related information and brochures from a display rack located in the lobby area which are provided free of charge by Certified Folder Display Inc. City staff at the Information Desk responded to a variety of general City related enquiries by phone and in person on a year round basis and also answer basic tourist-related questions.

The extent of this tourist service is considerably less than provided at the Metrotown Infocentre and is focused primarily on Burnaby events and attractions. Enquiries on events and attractions outside of Burnaby are referred to other agencies such as Tourism Vancouver and Tourism B.C. who are better equipped to respond.

### 3.3 BURNABY VISITORS' GUIDE:

The display and distribution of the Burnaby Visitors' Guide (copy of brochure *attached*) was a key component of the 2003 Program. During 2003, approximately 100,000 copies of the Burnaby Visitors' Guide were distributed and displayed throughout Greater Vancouver and B.C. by Certified Folder Display Inc. This distribution includes 270 established tourist outlets throughout the Lower Mainland, the Vancouver International Airport, the Cruise Ship Terminal at Canada Place, the three most traveled B.C. Ferry routes; Nanaimo-Tsawwassen, Swartz Bay-Tsawwassen, and Horseshoe Bay-Nanaimo, selected Tourist Infocentres around British Columbia, the complete Washington State Ferry System including all ferry runs and Terminals with display facilities and the I-5 Corridor in Northwest Washington State extending through Bellingham and Seattle. This also includes approximately 200 display locations at hotels, visitor centres and car rental agencies throughout northwest Washington (excluding the I-5 Rest Stops).

This brochure was also distributed to the Metrotown Tourist Infocentre, all Burnaby Libraries, Recreation Centres, Burnaby Village Museum and Carousel and other community facilities, selected Burnaby hotels, numerous organizations and associations who requested copies for upcoming events, individuals (residents and non-residents) for friends and relatives and for non-residents planning personal travel.

### 3.4 BURNABY CITY WEB SITE - "VISITORS" INFORMATION

The "Visitors" component was added to the City's official web site in 1999, includes much of the information contained in the Burnaby Visitors' Guide and is updated on a continual basis. It continues to be one of the most utilized sections of the web site.

**4.0 EXISTING SITUATION**

4.1 At the present time, \$51,000 has been allocated for the City's Tourism Program in the 2004 Provisional Operating Budget of which approximately \$22,000 is allocated to the printing and distribution of the Burnaby Visitors Guide and \$28,000 to staffing the Metrotown Tourist Infocentre during its May through September operation. The City currently has approximately 27,000 remaining copies of the Burnaby Visitors' Guides in its inventory which will satisfy a portion of the distribution program requirements for 2004. Updating and additional brochure printing is necessary to complete the usual distribution program for 2004.

4.2 On 2003 December 15, Council gave Final Adoption to Rezoning Reference #02-27 which involves the Phase 2 integration and renovation of the Metrotown Centre and Metropolis shopping centres. This project is currently under construction and is expected to be completed by the middle of 2005. A portion of this project involves the construction of a two storey retail connection between the two shopping centres which will replace the above ground pedestrian walkway that connects the two centres where the Burnaby Community Information Booth is currently located and from which the Metrotown Tourist Infocentre operates. The shopping centre owners have provided for the redesign and installation of a new Burnaby Community Information Booth to be located at a prominent location further east in the complex on the upper level near the new food court area. The completion date for the new relocated Information booth may not be until the fall of 2004.

Since the area of the shopping centre where the current Tourist Infocentre is located will be under construction during its usual May through September operating period, access to the Metrotown Tourist Infocentre in its current location will be somewhat disrupted which is when the majority of visitors and residents in the shopping centre will utilize the tourists services provided.

4.3 As outlined in Section 2.2 above, the recent Council approval of the 2% Hotel Room Tax and the creation of the new Tourism Burnaby association will likely be implemented in the near future. Tourism Burnaby is expected to become operational in the summer of 2004. As a result, the City will be working with Tourism Burnaby towards defining their respective programs that are mutually supportive and complimentary.

**5.0 PROPOSAL FOR 2004 CITY TOURISM PROGRAM**

The Planning Department advises that due to the renovation of the Metropolis at Metrotown shopping centre and its impact on the operation of the Metrotown Tourist Infocentre as outlined above, some adjustments to the 2004 Tourism Program are required. These adjustments are proposed as follows.

5.1 METROTOWN TOURIST INFOCENTRE

Since the Infocentre operates on a seasonal basis from May through September and will be disrupted due to the shopping centre renovations, it is recommended that this service be temporarily suspended during 2004. The operation of the Infocentre can resume in 2005 once the new Burnaby Community Information booth is completed in its new location. This temporary suspension will reduce the Tourism Program budget by approximately \$28,000 which covers staff costs and will aid in the required reduction of the Department's 2004 Annual Operating Budget and related Annual Tax Draw.

5.2 BURNABY VISITORS' GUIDE PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION

Approximately \$22,000 has been allocated to update, reprint and distribute the brochure to the full extent of the program (as outlined in section 3.3 above). In this regard, it is recommended that the City maintain the same brochure production and distribution program through the balance of 2004.

5.3 CITY HALL TOURIST INFORMATION

This service will be retained in its present form which includes the current limited service available in the lobby of City Hall through the staff at the Information Desk and the continued display of tourist brochures in the display rack provided by Certified Folder Display

5.4 BURNABY WEB SITE - VISITORS SERVICES

Since the City's Web site continues to provide a useful service to the general public and the tourist industry, it is recommended that the City continue to operate the City's "Visitors" component of the web site which will be updated and monitored on a continual basis.

6.0 FUTURE TOURISM PROGRAM

The future of the City's Tourism Program beyond 2004 will to a certain extent depend on the work of Tourism Burnaby once this new association becomes operational. It is expected that the tourist related services provided by the City and Tourism Burnaby will be mutually supportive and complimentary and that together they will enhance and broaden the local tourist industry in Burnaby. It will be important to ensure that the efforts of each organization are not duplicated and that the total level of service will be improved. It is also important to ensure that the appropriate organization is allocated those services that they are best equipped to deliver.

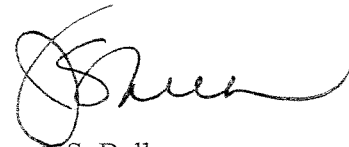
The City will have representation on Tourism Burnaby's Board of Directors and along with the Provincial Government will be reviewing its annual report to ensure that its funds have been expended in accordance with its business plan.

This Department is looking forward to working with Tourism Burnaby towards the continued growth and success of the local tourist industry.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

In view of the foregoing, the City's Tourism Program for 2004 will be more modest in scope than during 2003 due to proposed temporary suspension of the Metrotown Tourist Infocentre caused by the current renovations of the Metropolis at Metrotown shopping centre. This measure is considered to be temporary for 2004 and the Tourist Infocentre service will be resumed in 2005 in an appropriate manner. All other components of the 2004 program are intended to be maintained at the 2003 levels. Further details regarding the future working relationship between the City's Tourism Program and Tourism Burnaby's business plan will be determined once the new association becomes operational and will be the subject of further reports to the Finance and Civic Development Committee and Council.

Unless otherwise directed, staff will pursue the proposed limited Tourism Program for 2004 as outlined in Section 5.0 of this report.



J. S. Belhouse  
Director Planning and Building

PS/dbh  
Attach.

cc.. City Manager  
Director Finance

