

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

*HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR
AND COUNCILLORS*

**SUBJECT: COMMUNITY BENEFIT TO BE DERIVED THROUGH REZONING
REFERENCE #09-24, METROTOWN TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT
PLAN**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Council approve, in principle, non-profit community programming space, as outlined in Section 3.1 of this report, as the community benefit to be achieved through a proposed density bonus to Rezoning Reference #09-24.
2. THAT Council authorize staff to work with the developer on a preliminary design concept for the proposed non-profit community programming space, as outlined in this report.

REPORT

The Community Development Committee, at its 'Open' meeting held on 2010 January 26, received and adopted the *attached* report recommending a community amenity to be derived through a density bonus to Rezoning Reference #09-24 at Bennett Street and Nelson Avenue.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor C. Jordan
Chair

Councillor D. Johnston
Vice Chair

Councillor P. Calendino
Member

Copied to:	City Manager Deputy City Manager Director Engineering Director Finance Director Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services City Solicitor Director Planning and Building
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TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

DATE: 2010 January 22

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING

FILE: REZ#09-24

SUBJECT: **COMMUNITY BENEFIT TO BE DERIVED THROUGH REZONING REFERENCE #09-24, METROTOWN TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

PURPOSE: To recommend a community amenity to be derived through a density bonus to Rezoning Reference #09-24 at Bennett Street and Nelson Avenue.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT** the Committee request Council to approve, in principle, non-profit community programming space, as outlined in Section 3.1 of this report, as the community benefit to be achieved through a proposed density bonus to Rezoning Reference #09-24.
2. **THAT** the Committee request Council to authorize staff to work with the developer on a preliminary design concept for the proposed non-profit community programming space, as outlined in this report.

REPORT**1.0 BACKGROUND**

At its meeting of 2009 November 23, Council considered an initial report on Rezoning Reference #09-24, a multiple-family residential development at the corner of Bennett Street and Nelson Avenue (see *Sketch 1, attached.*) The proposed development consists of a high-rise residential building, street-fronting townhouses, and underground parking.

The initial zoning report noted that the developer, Polygon Development 226 Ltd., proposes to utilize the community benefit bonus provisions available in the Zoning Bylaw. In doing so, the development would achieve an additional FAR of 0.40. This would result in a community benefit valued at approximately \$2,721,600, based on a buildable value of \$70 per square foot. The final amount will be determined once final plans have been prepared.

The site, which is located in the Metrotown Regional Town Centre, is currently occupied by a tire store and a vacant lot. An existing apartment tower is located immediately to the west of the subject site, and Bonsor Park is located immediately to the south. Across Bennett Street to the north is Metropolis Mall, and a three-storey commercial building, while across Nelson Avenue to the east are older low-rise apartment buildings.

This report seeks support in principle for an on-site community amenity to be pursued through Rezoning Reference #09-24, and authority for staff to work with the developer on a preliminary design concept and cost estimate.

2.0 CONTEXT FOR SELECTION OF A COMMUNITY BENEFIT

2.1 Burnaby's Community Benefit Bonus Policy

Burnaby's Community Benefit Bonus Policy allows the City to accept the following community benefits in exchange for a density bonus:

- community amenity: a facility or treatment which enhances the desirability/liveability of a property and/or the local community;
- affordable or special needs housing: housing which is affordable to low- or moderate-income households, or which has features which the private market generally does not or cannot provide; or
- cash contribution-in-lieu: funds which are deposited in the relevant town centre community benefit account or in the city-wide housing fund for future use.

Staff maintain an inventory of possible community benefits which respond to the social, cultural, recreational, and environmental needs in each of Burnaby's four town centres. In identifying an appropriate community benefit to be associated with any given rezoning, staff assess community benefit options against a number of criteria, including:

- response to need;
- compatibility with the host development and/or the neighbourhood;
- ability to overcome any challenges with the project (e.g., phasing, property acquisition); and
- presence of unique circumstances or factors which favour one particular community benefit over another (e.g., ability to attract matching funds, developer interest in specific on-site benefit, completion of long-term City vision, requirements for funds for a future amenity).

2.2 The Site

The subject site for this density bonus represents a unique opportunity to obtain a freehold City-owned site¹ - fronting on Nelson Avenue - in a very desirable location in Burnaby's Regional Town Centre, and to provide an on-site amenity which can serve the local community. The developer is amenable to an on-site community benefit. The site, in the Metrotown core, is adjacent to Bonsor Park and Bonsor Recreation Complex, and offers easy pedestrian access to the Maywood and other surrounding residential areas and the Expo SkyTrain line.

2.3 Demographic and Social Profile of Local Community

The Metrotown Town Centre and other neighbourhoods in close proximity to the subject site are comprised of a number of Census Tracts, some of which are home to residents with a wide range of social needs.

¹ To achieve a freehold City site, the City would likely need to grant the developer an easement for underground parking under the City-owned structure for the life of the development.

Compared to other Census Tracts in Burnaby, the residents of several of the tracts near the subject site score highest on a number of risk factors including low-income among the general population, 0 to 5 year olds, and seniors. In addition there are high concentrations of lone parents, children, seniors, new immigrants, and residents speaking a language other than English at home.

Other residential neighbourhoods with relatively easy access to the site share some of the same characteristics related to service needs as these Census Tracts. In fact, compared to Burnaby's other three quadrants, the southwest quadrant has the highest concentration of new immigrants, children, seniors – including those aged 80+ years, lone parent families, persons with a mother tongue other than English, and low-income families. The southwest quadrant also has the lowest average household income, and the highest percentage of renters paying more than 30% of income on rent.²

3.0 SELECTION OF A COMMUNITY BENEFIT

3.1 Recommended Community Benefit

Given the strategic location of the site in the Metrotown Town Centre, and the level of need in the residential areas surrounding the site, staff recommend, in principle, that an on-site building designed as community program delivery space for a non-profit organization(s) be pursued. Such a facility could house a variety of flexible multi-use spaces, that could accommodate a wide range of programs designed to respond to local social needs. While, as outlined below, there are other non-profit spaces pending in the Metrotown area, neither are of the size that can potentially be realized on this unique site.

Preliminary design development for such a facility, which balances achievable floor area, parking requirements and cost, will need to be undertaken to determine the suitable size and form of the building which can be realized on the site. At this point, it is anticipated that a building in the range of 6,000 to 8,500 square feet – with associated surface and potential underground parking – may be achievable. It should be noted that allocation of funds to the project from the Metrotown Community Benefit Fund may be sought for this project, subject to completion of the preliminary design concept and associated cost estimate. The Metrotown Fund currently has unallocated assets of \$1.5 million.

With approval in principle for the proposed use of the site, staff would work with the developer on a preliminary design concept and cost estimate for the facility. Staff would report back to the Committee on the results of this work with information on facility size, design elements, and associated cost estimate.

3.2 Other Options Considered

Staff did consider other on- and off-site options for the community benefit, such as affordable or accessible housing units, a licensed group child care centre, improvements to Bonsor Recreation Complex and Bonsor Park and receipt of cash-in-lieu. However, given the community needs

² Policy-makers have agreed on the figure of 30% of gross income as an upper threshold for what a household should have to pay for housing. Housing costs above 30% mean that other basics such as food and clothing must be sacrificed.

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#09-24, Metrotown Town Centre Development Plan
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summarized above and the unique advantages of pursuing an on-site amenity in conjunction with this particular development, those options were considered less attractive than the one proposed in this report.

3.3 Other Resources in the Local Community

The locational options for non-profit organizations wishing to provide programming services to the residents of Metrotown are limited given the high cost of land and property leases in the area. While a few organizations, such as the South Burnaby Neighbourhood House, manage to maintain a physical presence in the area, that organization and others share limited programming space at Maywood Community School, and use community meeting rooms available at the Bob Prittie Metrotown Library and in Metropolis Mall to hold public events. Such rooms are neither available nor suitable, however, for the delivery of services and programs. To support organizations in the area, the City has negotiated, through the rezoning process, four non-profit office/programming spaces, with a potential total of 14,500 sq. ft. in Metrotown. Two of the spaces, accounting for 4,000 sq. ft., have been occupied for several years by Burnaby Family Life Institute and the Burnaby Multicultural Society. The other two spaces – 4,400 square feet at Telford Avenue and Central Boulevard (Rezoning Reference #08-05) and 6,100 square feet at Kingsway and Willingdon Avenue (Rezoning Reference #05-48) – are still pending and are in the rezoning process. The Telford Avenue space is at grade level, while the Willingdon Avenue space is on the third floor of a mixed use high-rise tower. The two potential pending spaces together with the subject space would add a significant active programming and program administration component to the City's inventory of amenity facilities in Metrotown for non-profit organizations. Their particular focus would be determined more specifically as the projects advance.

4.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The applicant for Rezoning Reference #09-24, a multiple-family residential development proposed for 4860 Bennett Street and 6535 Nelson Avenue, has expressed interest in pursuing a density bonus. Given the strategic location of the site in the Metrotown Town Centre and adjacent to several residential neighbourhoods with high social needs, staff believe that the density bonus presents a unique opportunity to address a broad range of local community needs through the provision of non-profit community programming space. The focus of the space would be on the active use of the space for community program delivery. The developer is amenable to an on-site amenity of this nature.

Preliminary design development, which balances achievable floor area, parking requirements and cost, will need to be undertaken to determine the ultimate size and form of the building which can be achieved on the site. With Committee and Council approval in principle to advance this proposal, staff would work with the developer to achieve a suitable design that addresses key issues in relation to the site area and other considerations.

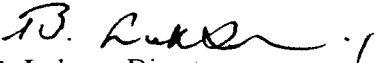
It is recommended that:

- 1) the Committee request Council to approve, in principle, non-profit community programming space, as outlined in Section 3.1 of this report, as the community benefit to be achieved through a proposed density bonus to Rezoning Reference #09-24; and

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From: *Director Planning and Building*
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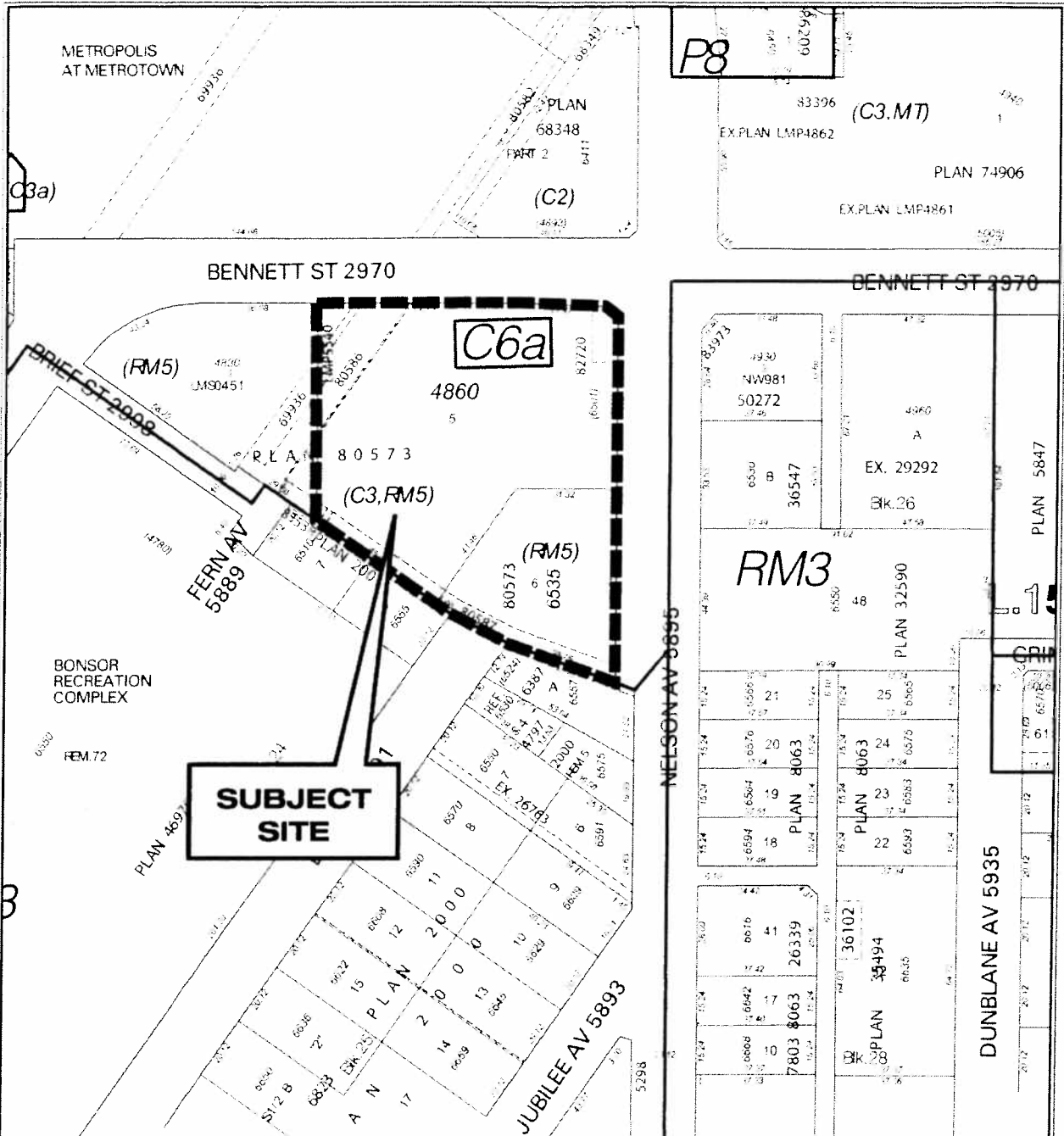
- 2) the Committee request Council to authorize staff to work with the developer on a preliminary design concept for the proposed non-profit community programming space, as outlined in this report.

On completion of the preliminary design work, staff would report back to the Committee and Council on the size, design elements, and cost estimates for the proposed community programming space, and seek the necessary approvals for further advancement of the proposal.


B. Luksun, Director
PLANNING AND BUILDING

JS/sla/jc/sa
Attachment

Copied to: City Manager
Deputy City Manager
Director Engineering
Director Finance
Director Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services
City Solicitor



PLANNING & BUILDING DEPARTMENT




DATE:
2009 11 03

SCALE:
1:2000

DRAWN BY:
rcn

REZONING REFERENCE #09-24

 4860 Bennett Street,
6535 Nelson Avenue

Sketch #1