



MEMORANDUM

September 15, 2005

TO: Mayor Campbell and Councillors

CC: J. Rogers, City Manager
B. MacGregor, Deputy City Manager
S. Baxter, City Clerk
J. Forbes-Roberts, General Manager, Community Services
A. McAfee, Director of City Plans
L. Beasley, Director of Current Planning
C. Gray, Director of the Housing Centre
J. Brooks, Director of Social Planning
S. Harvey, Managing Director of Cultural Services
T. Timm, General Manager of Engineering Services
B. Maitland, Director of Real Estate Services
K. Bayne, Director of Financial Planning and Treasury
F. Connell, Director of Legal Services

FROM: P. Mondor, Rezoning Planner

SUBJECT: 1133 West Georgia Street: Rezoning from DD to CD-1
RECOMMENDATION: COMMUNITY AMENITY CONTRIBUTION

This memo reports to City Council on the matter of the Community Amenity Contribution, which was not yet concluded when staff completed their report on this application and when Council referred the application to a Public Hearing.

RECOMMENDATION

- G. THAT City Council accept the property owner's offer of a community amenity contribution of \$12.5 million, such offer to be secured prior to enactment of the CD-1 By-law, at no cost to the City and on terms and conditions satisfactory to the Director of Legal Services, and subject to the following allocation:
- (i) transfer of heritage bonus density, with a value of \$5 million, from a suitable donor site,
 - (ii) cash payment of \$1.2 million for the undertaking of public realm improvements in the Bute Street High Street character area and pedestrian corridor, similar to Triangle West standards, subject to a staff report back to City Council on the details of the proposed expenditures, and

- (iii) cash payment of \$6.3 million to be subject to a future allocation by City Council to amenities in the area surrounding the site and in the downtown, such as childcare, affordable housing and cultural infrastructure, after a staff report back to City Council.

BACKGROUND

In the report **1133 West Georgia Street: Rezoning from DD to CD-1** (report dated July 08, 2005), staff advised that negotiations in respect of a community amenity contribution were not yet concluded and therefore that staff would report their recommendations on this matter at the Public Hearing.

DISCUSSION

The City's Financing Growth Policy anticipates the offer of a community amenity contribution (CAC) from the owner of a rezoning site to address some of the costs of growth. Such CACs are evaluated by the City staff in light of the increase in land value, or 'land lift', expected to be generated by rezoning approval.

The owner of the site, West Georgia Holdings Ltd. (Holborn Group), has recently offered a CAC of \$12,500,000, as follows:

- the purchase and transfer of heritage density from a suitable donor site, with value of \$5,000,000, and
- cash contribution of \$7,500,000.

Staff in Real Estate Services have advised the percentage of the land lift being offered to the City is comparable to other recent Downtown rezonings, after taking account of the extraordinary demolition costs which are anticipated for the existing 9-storey building on the site that underwent seismic upgrading several years ago.

Staff **RECOMMEND** (E. above) that this offer be accepted, as proposed, and that the \$7.5 million cash CAC be allocated as follows:

- cash payment of \$1.2 million for the undertaking of public realm improvements in the Bute Street High Street character area and pedestrian corridor, similar to Triangle West standards, subject to a staff report back to City Council on the details of the proposed expenditures, and
- cash payment of \$6.3 million to be subject to future allocation by City Council to amenities in the area surrounding the site and in the downtown, such as childcare, affordable housing and cultural infrastructure, after a staff report back to City Council.

Bute Street Public Realm Improvements

The rezoning site is located within half a block east of the Bute Street High Street character area and pedestrian arterial corridor which extends from Robson Street down to Harbour Green Park and serves Coal Harbour, Triangle West and West End residents. It is also one of the busiest pedestrian streets within Triangle West with over 800 pedestrians in the afternoon peak hour near Georgia Street. This is greater than the volume of vehicles on the street at

about 450 - 750 vehicles in the afternoon peak hour. The additional pedestrian and vehicular traffic demand which will be generated by the proposed development at 1133 West Georgia Street can be offset through public realm improvements providing additional pedestrian capacity on Bute Street.

Support for this proposal is found in three City policies:

- The Triangle West Policies, and related public realm design guidelines, seek to ensure that the waterfront is highly accessible to pedestrians from a variety of points in the downtown, with primary access from Bute Street (among others);
- The Downtown Transportation Plan identifies Bute Street as a pedestrian arterial between the West End and Coal Harbour neighbourhoods; and
- The Bute Street High Street policy identifies a Bute Street Neighborhood Centre Character Area to provide local services and shopping for the neighbouring high density residential neighbourhood.

Staff in Engineering Services and Planning, including staff from the Downtown Transportation Plan Implementation Team and Greenways, undertook a review of all applicable pedestrian priority measures that would be appropriate for Bute Street, and also the applicable Triangle West Streetscape design standards for sidewalk treatment. Additional consideration was then given to how best to define the route as a "Pedestrian Arterial", and then further how to define the "Character Area" and neighbourhood shopping centre within the arterial. The result of the study was a comprehensive schematic plan of improvements that ranged from changes in parking regulations, street geometry, paving treatments, public art and way-finding signage.

The total cost for the creation of a Pedestrian Arterial and Character area on Bute Street was estimated to be 1.2 million dollars, excluding portions of the public realm improvements that will be provided by private site developers as they redevelop. Details of expenditures will be reported back to City Council in the normal way before the public realm improvements are undertaken.

Other Public Benefits

An inter-departmental staff committee, including staff in the Housing Centre, Social Planning, Cultural Affairs, Engineering Services and Parks & Recreation, recommend that the balance of the funds, \$6.3 million, be allocated to amenities in the area surrounding the site and in the downtown, such as childcare, affordable housing and cultural infrastructure, subject to a staff report back to City Council. Staff note that there are needs and opportunities in the Triangle West and Coal Harbour neighbourhoods, for example, the child care, affordable housing and school which are to be developed next to the Coal Harbour Community Centre.

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