



Corporate *NO: R212*

Report *COUNCIL DATE: October 1, 2001*

REGULAR COUNCIL			
TO:	Mayor & Council	DATE:	September 20, 2001
FROM:	General Manager, Planning and Development	FILE:	0065-012; 2350-008; 2012-002 (C.3)
SUBJECT:	Douglas Border Crossing Redevelopment- 2001 Feasibility Study Update		

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning & Development Department recommends that Council:

1. Receive this Report as information; and
2. Direct the City Clerk to forward a copy of this report to the Federal Government, the Friends of Peace Arch Park, the Peace Portal Golf Course, and the Semiahmoo First Nations.

INTENT

At the May 8, 2000 Regular Council Meeting, Council received a joint staff report (Corporate Report R106) providing information on the proposed Federal Government's preliminary redevelopment plans for the Port of Douglas (Peace Arch) Border Crossing station. Council subsequently requested continued consultation by the Federal Government with Surrey and other stakeholders, including the Friends of Peace Arch Park and Peace Portal Golf Course.

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Council on the redevelopment plans and on-going stakeholder consultation for the Port of Douglas Border Crossing.

BACKGROUND

In late 1998, Canada Customs & Revenue Agency (CCRA) contracted Public Works Canada to undertake a feasibility study of the Douglas Border Crossing facilities to determine the operational state of the port, and potential for future expansion. The feasibility study indicated that the Douglas Border station does not meet the current or future operational needs, and identified three (3) redevelopment options (A, B and C) to accommodate the present and future expansion needs of the Douglas port.

The 1998 feasibility study recommended Option A (Appendix II) as the most cost-effective option to accommodate the long-term operational needs of the Douglas port. However, a number of concerns were identified by Douglas residents (Friends of Peace Arch Park) and City staff in relation to the impact of the proposed expansion (Option A) on the Douglas area located immediately adjacent to the Border crossing, as follows:

- Potential closure of Peace Park Drive to Highway 99;
- Increased volume of traffic between the Douglas Border Station and Pacific Highway Border Station;
- Required acquisition of several properties fronting the north side of Peace Park Drive adjacent to the border crossing;
- Required acquisition of a portion of Peace Portal Golf Course; and
- Encroachment on a large portion of Peace Arch Park.

In light of these concerns from Surrey and the surrounding community, the Federal Government undertook a new feasibility study to re-examine development options for the Douglas Border Crossing, and made a commitment to ensure continued public consultation with all stakeholders in order to address the community's concerns.

DISCUSSION

2001 Feasibility Study

The second feasibility study recently completed by CCRA examined various redevelopment options for the Douglas Crossing to address the community's concerns, while allowing for the construction of a new port facility to meet the future operational and functional requirements of the port. Other key objectives identified in this process were to complete the redevelopment in a relatively short time frame (2 years) and to minimize operational difficulties during the construction phase to reduce disruptions to tourism and the surrounding neighbourhood.

To address the majority of the concerns, the 2001 Feasibility Study focused only on those options that are confined to the existing Federal lands, thereby requiring little or no property acquisition, and minimizing encroachment on Peace Arch Park. The study resulted in the preparation of a revised (conceptual) redevelopment plan, with the following features (Appendix I):

- The site plan is generally confined to the existing Federal lands;
- A new smaller (2,000 sq. metre/21,500 sq. foot) building with reduced on-site functions;
- A proposed building height of 2 storeys with underground parking;
- A temporary facility will be required during construction;
- The existing access/egress from Peace Park Drive to Highway 99 is maintained; and

- Encroachment on Peace Arch Park is substantially eliminated.

Public Consultation and Outstanding Issues

The new redevelopment plan was presented to the public in a Public Information Meeting held on July 21, 2001 in South Surrey. Additionally, a stakeholder pre-meeting was held on July 20, 2001 to provide preliminary information and obtain feedback from specific stakeholders that are directly affected by the plan, including the City of Surrey, Friends of Peace Arch Park, Ministry of Highways, BC Parks (Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection), and Peace Portal Golf Course. Separate discussions with the Semiahmoo First Nation were also held.

In general, the new plan resolves many of the key concerns previously identified by the stakeholders, including maintaining access from Peace Arch Drive to Highway 99, and minimizing encroachment on Peace Arch Park. Although several outstanding issues remain to be resolved (below), there is general agreement amongst the majority of stakeholders, including the Friends of Peace Arch Park, that the new plan is a substantial improvement from the previous plan.

Nevertheless, continued consultation is required with several stakeholders to address outstanding issues towards the completion of the final redevelopment plan. Some of the key remaining issues are as follows:

· *Peace Arch Park Encroachment:* A very small portion of Peace Arch Park (approx. 15 sq. metres/160 sq. ft.) will be affected under the new concept. This encroachment is minimal; therefore the impact on Peace Arch Park is negligible. CCRA representatives have indicated that only a grassed area will be affected, and most of this grass will be reinstated. Additional improvements, such as additional landscaping screening, are proposed to be completed along the park edge adjacent to the redevelopment to mitigate possible impact from increased Border traffic.

· *Semiahmoo First Nation Lands:* Although the proposed Border Station will be confined to the existing Federal lands, a temporary facility will be required to be constructed to allow uninterrupted operation of the Border during the anticipated 2-year construction phase (Appendix I). The temporary facility will impact a portion of the Semiahmoo First Nations lands west of Highway 99 on a temporary basis, but this area will be reinstated following completion of the permanent facility. Federal staff advises that additional consultation with the Semiahmoo First Nation will be required to obtain the necessary approvals.

· *Peace Portal Golf Course Land Acquisition:* Representatives from the Peace Portal Golf Course acknowledge that the new plan is an improvement from the previous plan, as it reduces the impact and land acquisition from the Golf Course. However, they continue to raise concern regarding the required property acquisition from the Golf Course property, and resulting impact on their operation. Consultation and negotiation with the Golf Course is ongoing to address their concerns.

· *Environmental Impact Assessment:* CCRA representatives advise that a full environmental review will be completed as part of the redevelopment of the Border Crossing, including a review of air quality issues.

· *Outstanding Site Planning, Design & Operational Issues:* Numerous site planning and related issues will have to be resolved as part of the completion of a final plan, including overall building design, pedestrian safety, traffic impact analysis, and development phasing. Representatives of CCRA have committed to continuing consultation with all affected stakeholders to address these and other related site planning and operational issues throughout this process prior to approval of a final plan. As such, Council and other stakeholders will have another opportunity to provide input prior to finalization of the plan.

CONCLUSION

The Federal Government recently completed a second Feasibility Study for the redevelopment of the Douglas Border Crossing and presented a conceptual redevelopment plan at public and stakeholder meetings. The new redevelopment plan is generally confined to the existing Federal lands, thereby minimizing the need for land acquisition and encroachment on Peace Arch Park. In addition, the plan maintains the existing access from Peace Park Drive to Highway 99. As a result, the plan generally addresses many of the concerns that were previously raised by the various stakeholder groups, including the City of Surrey and the Friends of Peace Arch Park.

Several outstanding issues, including impact on Peace Portal Golf Course and temporary encroachment on a portion of the Semiahmoo First Nations lands, still need to be resolved and will require on-going consultation and negotiation with these stakeholders. Representatives of CCRA have advised that the Federal Government remains committed to continued consultation with all stakeholders to address these and other redevelopment issues associated with the Border Crossing redevelopment to ensure that local interests are addressed as part of this process.

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General Manager

RCA/kms Planning and Development

Appendix I: 2001 Douglas Border Feasibility Study- Preliminary Redevelopment Plan

Appendix II: 1998 Feasibility Study - Option A

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