TO:       CITY MANAGER                        2000 DECEMBER 05
FROM:     DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING
RE:       REVISED DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE DEER LAKE
           BUSINESS CENTRE/PARK
PURPOSE:  To seek Council approval for a finalized revised development plan for the Deer Lake
           Business Centre.

RECOMMENDATION:

1.       THAT the finalized Deer Lake Business Centre Development Plan as attached be
         approved as a basis for future planning and development of the area.

REPORT

1.0       BACKGROUND:

On 2000 October 02, Council received a report from the Executive Committee of Council regarding
a revised draft Plan for the Deer Lake Business Centre, located north of City Hall. Council instructed staff
to send the report out to the property owners and residential tenants in the area and to report back with
comments received and to prepare a final version of the Plan. Council further instructed staff to advance
a process to offer the sites for sale upon adoption of a finalized Plan.

The purpose of this report is to inform Council about the input received from the property owners and
residential tenants; to propose some refinements to the draft plan with regard to site size and alignment
of Ledger Avenue and to provide a finalized Development Plan. A further report on the disposition of
the lands in the area will be brought forward early in the new year.

2.0       COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT PLAN AND RESULTANT ADJUSTMENTS:

Information packages with the draft version of the Plan were sent to 140 property owners and residential
tenants in and adjacent to the study area on October 20 with a request that comments be returned by
November 10. Perhaps due to the limited nature of the land use change and the fact that the lands are
predominantly owned by the City, response was limited.

One person, a residential tenant expressed concern about the length of tenure they might expect in an older
City rental home. Staff also met with a potential development group who expressed an interest in the
Plan. The comments included a concern that the density of 1.5 FAR proposed may not be achievable in
all cases due to the desire to have some surface parking and that other successful business parks of this
type, such as Willingdon Business Park were developed to a 1.0 density. They also suggested that the
requirement for 35% of the sites to be landscaped would limit surface parking. This group also stressed
the need for detailed design guidelines to ensure a compatibility of design and landscaping that is
comparable to the guidelines found in other business parks of this type.

In response to the points raised and refinement of the plan, the recommended lot assembly pattern has
been altered to allow slightly larger, more flexible development sites, more in keeping with the larger
office floor plates that are desired in the market for contemporary business parks. This, in turn, has resulted in a revision to the plan to re-align Ledger Avenue to make it more of a central feature roadway, to reduce the existing steep grade, to shorten the road slightly and to create a stronger image for the business park.

Another point that was brought up in the course of staff review is the need to improve the geometry of the Canada Way/Norland Avenue intersection by dedication of a strip of land on the vacant Deer Lake Centre lands on the east side of Norland. A widening along Canada Way is also required. This will improve the intersection.

The finalized Deer Lake Business Centre Development Plan is attached for Council’s consideration and approval.

3.0 NEXT STEPS:

It is proposed that the City continue to assemble underdeveloped lots in this area to facilitate the implementation of the Plan and to support the City’s considerable investment in land in the area.

Upon Council approval of this development plan, staff will proceed with the preparation of a further report that will address the proposal call process for the disposition of City properties.

The submission from developers in response to the proposal call for the sale of City lands for development would include conceptual design guidelines for the overall proposal. Detailed design guidelines, comparable to those in Willingdon Business Park, Glenlyon Estates and Discovery Place, as part of a suitable plan of development would be pursued in conjunction with the initial rezoning of the subject lands. It is expected that the finalization of the sale of City lands would be a prerequisite of this rezoning.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS:

The approval of this finalized Development Plan for the Deer Lake Business Centre will allow the City to take the first step required to begin the development of a strong office park that will accommodate the rapidly growing demand for office park space in the City that is not able to be met in other areas which are approaching capacity. This area plan is in keeping with the objectives of Burnaby’s Official Community Plan. This type of quality development will have many positive benefits to the City and will bring many more jobs into the City in an area with growth capacity and existing infrastructure.

D.G. Stenson
Director Planning and Building

BR: gk
Attach
P:\Bill Deer Lake Business Centre Cover Rpt
cc: Director Finance
City Solicitor
Director Engineering
ctor Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services
DEER LAKE BUSINESS CENTRE
REVISED DEVELOPMENT PLAN

1.0 BACKGROUND

A revised development plan for the lands proposed for office redevelopment bounded by Norland Avenue on the west, the Trans-Canada on the east and north and Canada Way on the south (refer to attached Sketches #1 and #2) is outlined. The total area of properties in the study area is approximately 13.9 ha (34.3 acres).

The first Central Administrative Area Development Concept Plan (refer to attached Sketch #5) was approved by Council in 1974. It has served as the guide plan for the office area east of Norland Avenue as well as the Institutional area west of Norland Avenue that has been largely developed for senior’s housing. The 1974 Plan called for the development of moderate scale office buildings within a park-like setting that was intended to create a link with the Municipal Complex to the south and the Burnaby Lake Sports Complex to the north-east. That development concept proposed a maximum building height of up to six storeys on the higher, south-westerly portions of the area with lower buildings closer to the Trans Canada Highway. Site coverages were limited to 20% for sites with buildings of four to six storeys and range up to 40% for sites with buildings of one to two storeys. Surface parking was limited to 10% of the net remaining site area after the exclusion of building and driveway site coverage, with the remainder of parking being underground. A public north-south walkway within a 20 ft. wide easement located between Norland and Ledger Avenues connecting southward to the Canada Way pedestrian overpass was part of the pedestrian network. Under these guidelines, the highest density developments constructed to date are the two Deer Lake Centre office buildings and Sperling Plaza, both with an Floor Area Ratio of 1.2.

Burnaby’s Official Community Plan approved in 1998, designates this area for “suburban office uses” as a complement to other business centres such as Discovery Place, Lake City and the Big Bend intended for mixed office or high-tech industrial/research developments.

2.0 CURRENT SITUATION AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

2.1 EXISTING DEVELOPMENT

The existing zoning of the developed office building sites is CD (Comprehensive Development) while most of the undeveloped areas are zoned R4 (see attached Sketch #3). The rate of development has been slow in the past ten years as attention has shifted to some of the major office parks in Burnaby which have been growing very quickly–at a growth rate of 392,000 square feet of gross building floor area per year averaged over the past four years. This rate appears to be escalating.
At present there are ten office buildings in the study area occupying approximately 40% of the total land area (see Sketch #2). Office users in the area include the Loewen Group, the Pipefitter’s Union, the Operating Engineer’s Union, Dairyworld, British Columbia Buildings Corporation, the Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, YMCA and VanCity Credit Union. There are also 13 detached houses in the study area. The current property ownership is outlined in the attached Sketch #4. At present, commercial, recreational and support facilities for office workers are very limited in the area. Within each of the Deer Lake office buildings there are coffee shops. The Burnaby Winter Club provides fitness and ice-based recreational opportunities as well as food services.

2.2 LAND ASSEMBLY PROGRAM

The City is continuing to pursue the Central Area land assembly that has been on-going since 1969. The purpose of the assembly has been to acquire land in order to develop an administrative office complex in line with the 1974 Central Administrative Area Development Concept Plan. The properties currently owned by the City are indicated on Sketch #4 and comprise 8.5 ha (21 acres), over 60% of the 34 acres in the area. The City is the predominant owner of the undeveloped properties.

2.3 SURROUNDING CONTEXT

The Deer Lake Business Centre is situated in proximity to the sports fields and facilities at the Burnaby Lake Sports Complex and Eight Rinks Ice Sports Centre. The Justice Building, City Hall, the Shadbolt Centre for the Arts, Deer Lake Park and the Gallery at Ceperley House are situated to the south across Canada Way within a five minute walking distance via the pedestrian overpass. The uses to the west across Norland Avenue include the Korean Church, which provides a daycare, and the Dania Society seniors housing and care facilities.

2.4 TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

2.4.1 Roadways

The area is situated near the geographical centre of the City and is convenient to the Trans-Canada Highway via Sprott Street and via Kensington Avenue. The area is served by a network of arterial streets including Kensington Avenue, Canada Way, Lougheed Highway, Sprott Street, Norland Avenue and Deer Lake Parkway.

It is proposed that Ledger Avenue be re-aligned where it runs parallel to the Trans-Canada Highway to provide larger more suitable development sites and to reduce the grade of the roadway. This reconstruction of Ledger Avenue will improve circulation in the area and will
assist in creating a strong centrally located roadway for the business park area (refer to attached Sketch #6).

2.4.2 Transit

The main internal street will be the re-aligned Ledger Avenue which provides access to both Canada Way and Norland Avenue. Transit services are available on Norland Avenue, Canada Way and at the City Hall bus loop/interchange which provides links to Metrotown SkyTrain, the Lougheed SkyTrain line and Simon Fraser University.

2.4.3 Pedestrian/Cycling

Pedestrian linkages are provided including the Canada Way overpass that connects City Hall and Deer Lake Park, sidewalks on Canada Way, Norland Avenue and the completed part of Ledger Avenue. The area has two urban trails (pedestrian/cycling) nearby which at this time do not extend to the study area. The first urban trail is on Kensington Avenue in the Sports Complex and the second is along Deer Lake Parkway, south of City Hall. With some additional linkages, these urban trails will be extended to serve people working in or passing through this area on foot or by bike. Canada Way, Norland Avenue, Sprott Street and Kensington Avenue are designated for development as cycle roads.

2.5 SITE CONDITIONS AND VIEWS

This area slopes gently to the north-east down to the freeway. There are views to Burnaby Lake, Burnaby Mountain, Capitol Hill and the mountains beyond. The study area is highly visible from Canada Way, Sprott Street and the Trans Canada Highway. There are groupings of mature deciduous and coniferous trees in several locations and along portions of the Trans-Canada Highway edge. Stormwater drainage from this area is collected near where Ledger Avenue presently parallels the highway and passes in a culvert under the highway and flows to Burnaby Lake.

2.6 VISUAL IDENTITY FOR DEER LAKE BUSINESS CENTRE

In addition to the City Hall and the Justice Building, prominent buildings in the area include the Sperling Plaza office buildings, the Winter Club, the two Deer Lake Centre buildings, the Operating Engineers offices, the Loewen Corporation building and the Dairyworld buildings. The pedestrian overpass of Canada Way is a primary landmark and helps provide a visual identity to the area. The remaining mix of uses presently include residential dwellings, as well as smaller buildings such as VanCity Credit Union, the YMCA and the IBEW buildings, and a number of large vacant parcels.
The key visual gateways are at Norland/Canada Way, Ledger/Canada Way, Norland/Sprott and Canada Way/Kensington. As business centres benefit from strong visual identities, views of the area from the perimeter roads need to be attractive and provide a visual cohesiveness, scale and quality to identify the area as a distinct business centre.

3.0 POLICY FRAMEWORK/DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES FOR THE AREA

The purpose of the Plan for this area is:

- To widen the range of business centre options available in the City and develop the area in a matter that is complementary to other office parks in the City.

- To promote the development of a strong unified business centre/office park suitable for high technology and office businesses within a consistent quality landscaped setting.

- To provide commercial support facilities for businesses and persons working in the area.

- To compliment existing development such as the Burnaby Lake Sports Complex, Deer Lake Park, the Justice Building and City Hall.

4.0 DEVELOPMENT PLAN

In line with the designation of this area as a business centre in the City’s adopted Official Community Plan (1998), this updated Plan is proposed for the “Deer Lake Business Centre” bounded by Norland Avenue, the Trans-Canada Highway and Canada Way as outlined in the attached Sketch #6. The components of the Plan are described in greater detail in the following sections.

In pursuing a new development plan for the Lake City Business Centre, the introduction of two new Business Centre zoning districts, B1 Suburban Office and B2 Urban Office, is being considered. The B1 and B2 Districts have maximum Floor Area Ratios of 1.0 and 1.5 respectively which are in line with the proposed densities of this plan. Therefore, it is contemplated that both the B1 and B2 Districts would be incorporated into the Deer Lake Business Centre Development Plan when the B1 and B2 District schedules are finalized and created in bylaw form.

The concept plan is intended to stimulate development of an attractive contemporary business centre that capitalizes on its location and “campus-like” image (similar to Burnaby’s other successful business parks). A re-aligned Ledger Avenue will serve as a central internal roadway. The plan provides an appropriate density and urban form framework to make the
centre financially attractive, to achieve the optimum development and to encourage the creation of a cohesive office “neighbourhood” that takes advantage of the area’s unique attributes. Successful redevelopment will provide increased employment opportunities and an improved tax base for the City. The development process will require careful and consistent consideration of site planning, density, landscaping concept, building design and vehicular and pedestrian movement. One of the keys to successful redevelopment of the area is the pursuance of an integrated planning and architectural approach similar to those in other business parks which encompass a large central assembly of lands. Redevelopment would be accomplished through adoption of a revised guideplan and implementation through CD zoning.

4.1 DENSITY AND LAND ASSEMBLIES

With respect to density, it is proposed that the higher lands closer to Norland Avenue in the centre of the area be developed to a Floor Area Ratio of up to 1.5, while some of the smaller lots in areas overlooking the highway to the east be developed with an Floor Area Ratio of 1.0. This will allow a slightly higher density with some corresponding building height increase on the higher lands in the southwest sector in order to maximize views to the east and enable building heights to step down as the sites get closer to the highway to the east. It is more difficult to create the park-like landscaped setting and terraced moderate building scale characteristic of successful business centres at an Floor Area Ratio of 1.5, and consequently, potential developers may wish to pursue a slightly lower Floor Area Ratio, say, in the range of 1.2.

The area also needs to be developed to a minimum substantial scale and density. New buildings should be desirably in the range of 100,000 sq. ft. of gross floor area each, although some smaller sites may be available. The sites designated for maximum Floor Area Ratios of 1.0 and 1.5 would also be expected to accommodate minimum Floor Area Ratios of 0.8 and 1.0 respectively.

Guideline recommended site assemblies are outlined in Sketch #6 based, in part, on the extent of existing office development. Other combined larger site assemblies may also be pursued.

The Operating Engineers Building, centrally located in the area, has an outdated appearance and detracts from efforts to create a new contemporary business centre. This issue will need to be addressed in the long term. The integration of the Operating Engineers building and properties (Site 6 and part of Sites 14) including a surface parking area on the east side of Ledger Avenue is one of the keys to the regeneration of the area as a successful business centre.
It is proposed that:

a) A maximum density of 1.0 Floor Area Ratio apply to the net site areas of Sites 1, 2, 8, and 13 (refer to Sketch #6).

b) A maximum density of 1.5 Floor Area Ratio apply to the net site areas of Sites 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15 (refer to Sketch #6).

c) Minimum densities of 1.0 Floor Area Ratio and 0.8 Floor Area Ratio be provided.

d) A maximum density of 1.2 Floor Area Ratio be maintained for the currently developed Site 7 (Sperling Plaza).

e) An institutional use be retained reflecting the current use on Lot 9 (YMCA).

4.2 COMMERCIAL SERVICES

One of the primary needs in an office area is convenience services for the businesses and their employees. These may include restaurants and coffee bars with outdoor seating, fitness facilities, banking facilities, travel agencies, printing facilities and related services. Child care facilities may also be useful for workers with families. An assembly hall, meeting space or conference facility would be considered an asset to the area.

It is proposed that the portion of the corner of Ledger Avenue and Roberts Street as outlined in Sketch #6 be developed with street-fronting convenience commercial facilities. A special urban design plaza feature is proposed at the corner of this activity node. The objective for this area is to create a compact but active pedestrian-oriented street with features such as special paving, pedestrian lighting and continuous weather protection canopies. This commercial “street” feature will serve the offices in the day but could also see evening use of facilities such as restaurants, fitness centre, etc. This area will be linked to the pedestrian network. Limited commercial convenience facilities outside this primary activity node will also be permitted provided they are of a secondary nature. The YMCA, currently a provider of recreational facilities is proposed to be retained across the street at the corner of Ledger and Canada Way.

It is proposed that:

a) Street and pedestrian-oriented convenience commercial facilities and related facilities be provided at-street level with office development above at the corner of Ledger Avenue and Roberts Street as indicated in Sketch #6.
4.3 BUILDING HEIGHTS AND APPEARANCE

In order to provide a balanced scale for new buildings and to maintain views to the north and east from this area, it is proposed that, in general, building heights up to four storeys be permitted with some building terracing to soften building massing. In the centre of the precinct, taller buildings may be permitted up to six storeys, subject to an appropriate terraced building form. Building forms should relate closely to natural grades and complement nearby buildings and be stepped down at the entry points to the area and at the edges of the study area to soften the scale of buildings.

In general, a contemporary high-tech architectural appearance is desired, but one that differentiates this area from other business centres. For example, a formal architectural approach could reflect the proximity of the area to Burnaby’s City Hall and cultural precinct to the south. There needs to be some commonality of architectural features that tie the buildings together as a family of buildings. Detailed design guidelines for buildings, landscaping, signage, parking areas, street frontages/urban design and related issues are required to ensure a consistent quality of office park. The assembly of lands for development would also permit and promote the achievement of a campus concept of planned building relationships.

Signage in the area should be discreet and in keeping with established City guidelines for other business parks. Any skysign is subject to specific rezoning and needs to be related to a major head office user.

It is proposed that:

a) **Building heights of up to four storeys be permitted for buildings on all sites with some building terracing desired to soften building massing in particular on sites fronting or viewed from the Trans Canada Highway.**

b) **Increased building heights of up to six storeys may be permitted on sites where 1.5 Floor Area Ratio is proposed inclusive subject to significant terracing of the fifth and sixth storeys.**

c) **That detailed design guidelines be prepared before development commences to ensure a quality and consistency of design that is comparable to other business parks in Burnaby.**
4.4 SITE COVERAGE

One of the key considerations in a suburban office park is the provision of landscaping and open space between buildings. The landscaping, trees and open areas help define the sense of quality, ambience and park-like settings for office buildings which set these types of office parks apart from urban town centre office building settings.

In order to preserve space for planting, landscaping and walkways, it is proposed that a maximum building site coverage of 50% be permitted with a maximum combined area of 65% of the site to be permitted to be covered with buildings, driveways and parking.

It is proposed that:

a) A maximum building site coverage of 50% be permitted.

b) A maximum site coverage of 65% be permitted for the combined site coverage of buildings, surface parking and driveways.

4.5 BUILDING SETBACK AND LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

To achieve a high-quality landscaped setting commensurate with the desired “office park” environment, minimum building setbacks in line with the M5 District are indicated. The urban streetscape design in the area of the corner of Ledger Avenue and Roberts Street would accommodate continuous weather protection canopies and outdoor café and restaurant seating.

Existing trees and quality vegetation needs to be identified and protected and retained where possible while allowing for appropriate redevelopment. Significant larger new deciduous and coniferous tree plantings are desired. A natural landscape buffer strip should be provided along the Trans-Canada Highway frontage within the site. This area should also incorporate a stormwater retention facility.

It is proposed that:

a) Existing trees and vegetation be protected and retained wherever possible.

b) High-quality office park landscaped settings be provided.

c) Minimum building setbacks be provided in line with the M5 zoning district.
4.6 STREETSCAPE AND MAJOR OPEN SPACES

An integrated concept for streetscape and major open spaces is proposed. Gateway landscaped open spaces which may include special features such as fountains and paved plazas are indicated at the intersections of Norland and Ledger, Ledger and Canada Way, and Canada Way and Norland. An urban streetscape treatment with separated sidewalks, pedestrian lighting and street trees is desired. Ledger Avenue is to be emphasized as an arterial road with landscaping, walkways and appropriate visual presence. Stamped concrete boulevards would be appropriate along the convenience commercial activity node street frontage. Specially designed pedestrian gathering areas and sitting areas are desired where the pedestrian trails converge and in the area of the commercial corner at Ledger Avenue and Roberts Street.

Any existing overhead wiring along streets in the area should be undergrounded on a site-by-site basis where feasible through the rezoning process. Overhead wiring lines include those on the east side of Norland (located in the sidewalk), on the east side of Ledger, on the north-east side of the Ledger curve, and on the south side of Roberts.

It is proposed that:

a) Gateway landscaped open spaces be provided at the intersections of Norland/Ledger, Ledger/Canada Way and Canada Way/Norland at the entry points to the area.

b) Attractive pedestrian-oriented streetscapes be provided on all streets in the area.

c) Overhead wiring be placed underground.

4.7 TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING

The existing road pattern for this area is basically established in the Burnaby Transportation Plan. On-street parking would be considered where practicable. The entry points into the area are at Ledger/Norland, Canada Way/Norland (existing traffic signal) and Ledger/Canada Way. Streets within and abutting the area are to be upgraded as necessary. The Sprott Street exit from the Trans Canada Highway eastbound direction needs to be realigned and signalized. This will improve the safety of the existing intersection to Norland and this access point to the study area. The three primary gateway entry points should be designed to visually support the integrated business centre concept and assist in directing people into the area.
Ledger Avenue needs to be re-aligned and constructed to a full finished standard with a 12.2 m (40 ft.) wide pavement to also accommodate on-street cyclists and complete boulevard works. It is desirable that Ledger Avenue be realigned where it currently parallels the Trans-Canada Highway to provide a gracefully curving street as a central feature of the business park.

Opportunities to implement cycling provisions including widening dedications should be pursued on the designated cycle roads of Norland Avenue, Sprott Street, and Canada Way. New buildings would be expected to provide bicycle parking and change facilities for cyclists. A road widening along Norland Avenue and along Canada Way is required to improve the geometry of the intersection.

The present Burnaby Winter Club site is a key property in the area but is hampered by having vehicular access only to Canada Way which is considered difficult. A vehicular and pedestrian access easement would be desirable across the east portion of the lot to the north, occupied by the Sperling Plaza office development to provide a driveway from the Winter Club site to the cul-de-sac on Roberts Street.

In line with the current business centre office developments, developers usually provide parking ratios of a minimum one (1) parking space for each 37 m² (400 sq.ft.) of gross floor area or higher. This parking ratio is similar to the minimum parking requirements outlined in new draft B1 and B2 Business Centre zoning districts. Major office developments will require the engagement of a transportation consultant to assess the parking and traffic needs of each development through the rezoning process. The Ministry of Transportation and Highways’ approval will be required for any rezoning application in the area.

It is proposed that:

a) Improvements to the road network and boulevards be pursued including the realignment of Ledger Avenue as illustrated in Sketch #7.

b) Improvements to accommodate bicycle access into the area and bicycle provisions within proposed developments be provided.

c) A secondary vehicular access from Roberts Street across Site 7 into Site 8, the present Burnaby Winter Club site, be indicated as desirable prior to any redevelopment of Site 7.
d) Off-street parking to a minimum required standard of one (1) parking space for each 37 m² (400 sq.ft.) of gross floor area for offices be provided.

4.8 PEDESTRIAN NETWORKS

A public pedestrian network should be provided in line with the attached Sketch #8. Separated sidewalks should be provided wherever possible. A pedestrian signal may be warranted in future at the Norland/Ledger intersection. It is proposed that the walkway previously outlined in the 1974 Plan continue to be developed - a north-south route located midway between Norland and Ledger Avenues. This walkway would be a lighted five foot wide concrete standard protected by a larger easement.

Access to the Canada Way pedestrian overpass continues to be emphasized. This overpass accesses the City Hall, the City Hall bus loop, and Deer Lake Park to the south. The existing Canada Way Pedestrian Overpass Development Cost Charge is maintained.

It is proposed that:

a) A public pedestrian network as outlined in Sketch #8 be provided.
Deer Lake Business Centre
(Part of Central Administrative Area)
Existing Land Use

2000 November

Sketch #1
Deer Lake Business Centre
(Part of Central Administrative Area)
Existing Development
Deer Lake Business Centre
(Part of Central Administrative Area)
Existing Zoning

2000 November  Sketch #3
Central Administrative Area Development Plan Concept

February 1974  Sketch #5

- Office - Administrative
- Community Institutional

* Current Road Pattern Indicated 2000 November
Deer Lake Business Centre  
(Part of Central Administrative Area)  
Proposed Development Plan  
(Site Assemblies Indicated)  

2000 November  Sketch #6
Deer Lake Business Centre
(Part of Central Administrative Area)
Traffic Circulation/Road Classification

2005 November  Sketch #7

- Open Space System and Buffers
- Freeway
- Primary Arterial
- Secondary Arterial
- Local Road
- Traffic Signal (Existing)
- Traffic Signal (Future)
- P Indicates Pedestrian Signal
Deer Lake Business Centre  
(Part of Central Administrative Area)  
Pedestrian/Cycling Circulation  

2000 November  Sketch #8