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City wants to lure car dealerships to new area; [Final Edition]

Julie MacLellan. *Burnaby Now*. Burnaby, B.C.: Aug 28, 2004. pg. 4

Abstract (Summary)

The city is hoping that a proposed auto mall near the new Costco site will encourage car dealerships to move away from potential development sites in the Brentwood town centre area.

He said covenants will be registered on the auto mall lots to restrict car dealerships to those relocating from existing locations within the Brentwood town centre area.

[Jack Belhouse] said the city hasn't heard any concern about the viability of restricting the auto mall use to existing dealerships. But he noted that, if it proved not to be viable, council could examine the covenant in future.

Full Text (329 words)

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The city is hoping that a proposed auto mall near the new Costco site will encourage car dealerships to move away from potential development sites in the Brentwood town centre area.

A rezoning that will pave the way for a new Costco, restaurant and gas bar in the Still Creek area has been expanded to include two new lots for future auto mall development.

The rezoning proposal will be up for public hearing on Sept. 28.

Jack Belhouse, the city's director of planning and building, noted in a report to council that staff support the auto mall because it's desirable to free up the existing car dealership sites for new development in the town centre area.

He said covenants will be registered on the auto mall lots to restrict car dealerships to those relocating from existing locations within the Brentwood town centre area.

Coun. Lee Rankin, however, questioned whether that restriction would, in fact, be viable and whether new auto dealerships would simply end up in the vacated properties.

Belhouse said the city hasn't heard any concern about the viability of restricting the auto mall use to existing dealerships. But he noted that, if it proved not to be viable, council could examine the covenant in future.

He also suggested it's not likely that new car dealerships will end up in the vacated spots in the town centre area.

In fact, two of the sites in question are currently involved in discussions regarding high-density development - which is what's motivating the owners to leave in the first place.

Coun. Dan Johnston questioned what provisions the city can build in to ensure that a smaller site doesn't become a "secondhand, Kingsway-style auto dealer."

Belhouse said all the sites will require a substantial capital investment and are not likely to result in used-car sales.

The rezoning will also include properties related to the reconfiguration of the city works yard and the protection of one three-acre property as a city-owned conservation area.

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