



City of  
**Burnaby**

Planning and Building Department

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## **INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** CHAIR AND MEMBERS  
COMMUNITY HERITAGE COMMISSION

**DATE:** 2021 April 14

**FROM:** DIRECTOR BUILDING AND PLANNING

**FILE:** 77000 01

*Reference: Heritage General*

**SUBJECT: HERITAGE PROGRAM UPDATES**

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This memorandum provides updates on heritage initiatives advanced through the Community Heritage Commission (CHC).

### **Chinese Canadian History Project: Farm Tour Map**

At its 2019 June meeting, Council approved a recommendation from the Community Heritage Commission to undertake a multi-year project to research the history of Chinese Canadian contributions to the history of Burnaby. The outcome of the project was identified as publication of three resources: a Chinese Canadian History in Burnaby resource guide for use in schools and by the general public; a farm tour map of Big Bend to include the history of Chinese Canadian market gardens; and, a book to capture and share the stories of Chinese Canadian contributions to the community's history. The project began in 2020, and the resource guide is nearing completion.

Staff has initiated work on the farm tour map of Big Bend, with the goal of officially launching the map in the spring of 2022. All active farms that can be visited by the public will be invited to participate. Photographs, descriptions, and visitor information for the farms will be included in the publication. The map will be published as a printed hand out, and will also be available for download as a PDF. A digital StoryMap version will also be developed.

### **Heritage Signs: Heritage on the Heights**

As part of the regular work of the heritage program, staff monitor the condition of interpretive heritage signs previously created through projects of the Community Heritage Commission. Recently it was noted that the "Heritage on the Heights" signs installed in 2002 required repair. In response, the bases were repainted, and the signs were re-designed to enable standard signs printed at the City Sign Shop to be mounted on the bases. The signs printed by the City Sign Shop include an anti-graffiti layer and are easy to replace if they are stolen or damaged. The sign content was

edited and re-designed to fit the revised sign format and conform to the City's corporate brand standards. Proofs of the revised signs are ***attached*** for the information of the Community Heritage Commission (see ***Attachment #1***).

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'E.W. Kozak', is positioned above the printed name.

E.W. Kozak, Director  
PLANNING AND BUILDING

LC:sa

***Attachment***

cc: Acting City Manager  
City Clerk

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# Regent Theatre

The Regent Building was once home to a movie theatre.

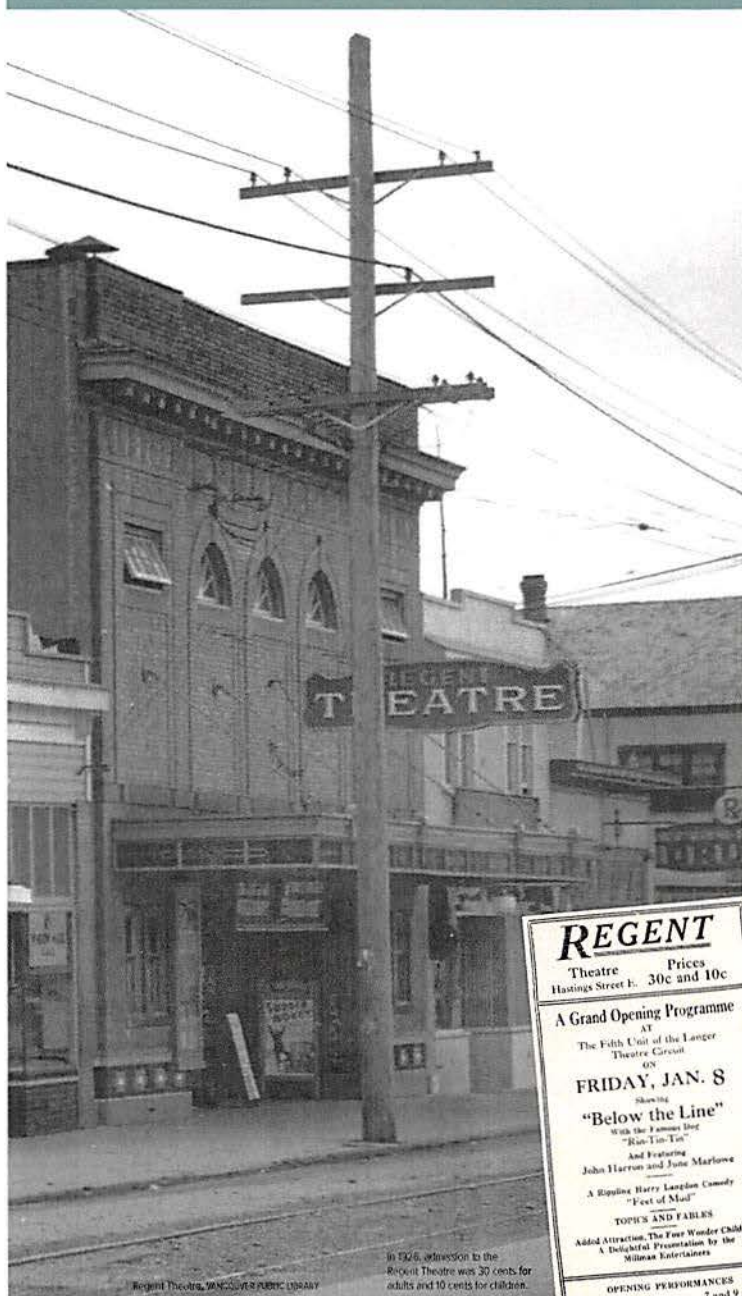
HERITAGE ON THE HEIGHTS

## EARLY THEATRES

North Burnaby's first theatre was the Heights Theatre which opened in 1923 on Hastings Street at Ingleton. It soon faced competition from the Regent Theatre which opened in 1926 at 4012 Hastings Street. The Regent put the Heights Theatre out of business when they installed the latest technology to play "talkies" (movies with sound) in 1930. The Heights Theatre building then became Culley's Hall, where patrons were entertained with live vaudeville performances, sports events and public talks.

## MORE THAN MOVIES

The Regent Theatre was an important landmark in the neighbourhood: it played many current movies of the day, held children's matinees and special theme nights with prizes, and hosted travelling entertainers and local talent. It was also a venue for local events, including Victory Bond drives during the Second World War. The theatre closed in 1957, but the Regent building still stands, hidden behind a modern façade.



Regent Theatre, UNBC/COVER PUBLIC LIBRARY

In 1926, admission to the Regent Theatre was 30 cents for adults and 10 cents for children.



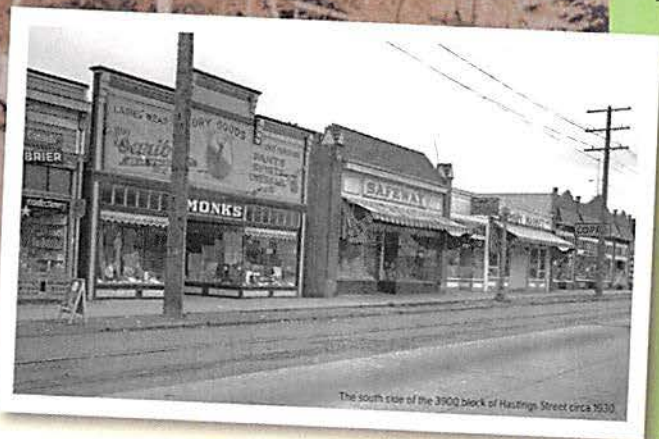
North Burnaby Juvenile Band outside the Regent Theatre in 1930. CITY OF BURNABY ARCHIVES, 412-001



# Hastings Street

Burnaby's Hastings Street was built to serve industry, but a busy neighbourhood soon grew around it.

HERITAGE ON THE HEIGHTS



## BEGINNINGS

The Hastings-Barnet Road was constructed in 1903, stretching from Barnet to Cassiar Street, where it connected with Vancouver's Hastings Street. Construction of the new road enabled the B.C. Electric Railway Company to install power poles along the route to deliver the hydro-electricity it generated at the Buntzen Lake power station to its customers in Vancouver. The new power station had been completed in 1903, with powerlines stretching across Burrard Inlet to Barnet.

## BUSY NEIGHBOURHOOD

North Burnaby was slow to develop at first, but by 1912 was becoming a busy neighbourhood with a mix of homes and shops along the Hastings-Barnet Road, and many houses under construction on suburban lots to its north. Many purchased land in anticipation of being able to ride the Hastings streetcar line, which was extended from Boundary Road to Ellesmere Avenue in 1913, allowing convenient travel from downtown Vancouver.



# Confederation Park

Confederation Park was built by volunteers.

HERITAGE ON THE HEIGHTS



Crowds at the official opening of the Confederation Park playground on June 25, 1927. CITY OF BURNABY ARCHIVES: 425.001

## BEGINNINGS

In 1909, Capitol Hill was hastily surveyed by a developer who sold the lots to individual property owners, many of whom purchased lots without visiting them first. Some soon discovered their lots could not be developed, including those on the steep slopes of Rainbow Creek's deep ravine. The Municipality of Burnaby became the owner of these lots when the property owners were unable to pay their taxes, and in 1922 Burnaby decided to use its land on the Rainbow Creek ravine to create a park.

## PLACE TO PLAY

North Burnaby residents raised money in the 1920s to purchase playground equipment for the 26 acre park, and volunteers cleared the land, planted trees, and seeded grass. The park officially opened in June 1927, and was named Confederation Park in honour of the 50th anniversary of the creation of Canada. By 1929 the Municipality had added an additional 90 acres to the park, and filled in much of the Rainbow Creek ravine to create a level site.



Above left: Program for a picnic and sports day at Confederation Park in August 1930. BURNABY VILLAGE MUSEUM: BVM584.44.57  
Above right: A fundraiser for playground equipment was advertised in the Burnaby Broadcast in February 1927. BURNABY VILLAGE MUSEUM

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# Fire Hall No. 1

North Burnaby was home to Burnaby's first fire hall.

HERITAGE ON THE HEIGHTS



The second and ultra-modern Fire Hall No. 1 was built at Hastings Street and Willingdon Avenue in 1947 and demolished in 2001.

## BEGINNINGS

Until the 1920s, the Municipality of Burnaby did not employ firefighters. Residents and business owners fought fires themselves or got help from the Burnaby Municipal Police. Sometimes fire departments from surrounding municipalities assisted with large fires. Residents of North Burnaby began petitioning Burnaby Municipal Council to create a fire department. As a result, a brick pump house building at Carleton Avenue and Eton Street was converted to Burnaby Fire Hall No. 1 in 1925.

## MODERN FIREHALL

In 1947, North Burnaby's fire hall was replaced with a purpose-built hall at the northwest corner of Hastings Street and Willingdon Avenue. The building received awards for its architectural design, and was considered the most modern fire hall in British Columbia when it opened. When a new Fire Hall No. 1 was opened in 1971 in Central Burnaby, North Burnaby's fire station became Burnaby Fire Hall No. 5. The fire hall that stands today at the corner of Carleton Avenue and Hastings Street was constructed in 2001.



# Gilmore Avenue School

North Burnaby students have been attending school on this site for over a century.

HERITAGE ON THE HEIGHTS



Gilmore Avenue School students in the early 1920s. BURNABY VILLAGE MUSEUM, INV94.273

## BEGINNINGS

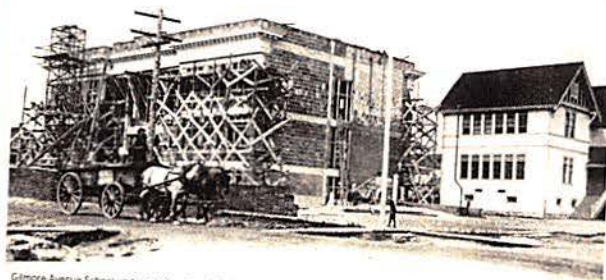
The first classes on this site were held in tents while the school was under construction. In 1911, the Vancouver Heights school opened on this lot. The population of the area was growing quickly, mainly because of development of a large subdivision in the north-west corner of Burnaby featuring lots with great views, and modern services including water and electricity. The developer called the subdivision Vancouver Heights to emphasize the views, and proximity to Vancouver.

## BRICK BUILDING

North Burnaby's burgeoning community soon outgrew the Vancouver Heights school, and an architecturally-designed brick addition was built. When the addition opened in 1915, the school was renamed Gilmore Avenue School. A north wing was built in 1924, and a south wing was added in 1929. In 1981, the school was designated Gilmore Community School with the mandate to serve the needs of the Heights neighbourhood.



Lapel pin: BURNABY VILLAGE MUSEUM, BV05.215



Gilmore Avenue School under construction, 1915. The original Vancouver Heights School is on the right side of the photograph. CITY OF BURNABY ARCHIVES, 204.285



# Hastings Streetcar

Streetcars brought public transportation to North Burnaby in 1913.

HERITAGE ON THE HEIGHTS

## BEGINNINGS

North Burnaby residents had access to public transportation early in the community's development. By 1909, a streetcar from Vancouver travelled as far as Boundary and Hastings. In 1913, the B.C. Electric Railway Company built the "Hastings Streetcar Extension" along Hastings Street in Burnaby between Boundary and Ellesmere Avenue at Capitol Hill. Passengers could now travel from Capitol Hill to downtown Vancouver on public transit, though they had to disembark at Boundary to change streetcars.

## GROWTH

North Burnaby's streetcar attracted residents to the neighbourhood, and helped Hastings Street develop as a vibrant business district. The Hastings streetcar in Burnaby operated until January 15, 1949 when the service was closed and replaced with buses. The Vancouver section remained in operation until 1955. A population boom in Burnaby after the Second World War led to development of suburban housing between Hastings and Lougheed and brought an increase in automobile use.



Workers installing track in 1913. The plank road is Hastings Street. City of Burnaby Archives JIM PHILLIPS PHOTO. 479.021



Original opening of the Hastings Streetcar Extension in 1913. BURNABY VILLAGE MUSEUM. BVO01.53821

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