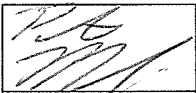




**TOWN OF COMOX
PLANNING REPORT**

TO:	MAYOR AND COUNCIL – COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
FROM:	MARVIN KAMENZ, PLANNER
	PETER MAROHNIC, PLANNING TECHNICIAN
SUBJECT:	Rezoning Application No. RZ 09-2
	Drive thrus
MEETING DATE:	APRIL 8, 2009


Submitted by


Concurrence


Approval

Planner's Recommendation:

- 1) That staff be directed to amend Town of Comox Zoning Bylaw 1377 to prohibit drive thrus in:
 - a) All zones other than the C3.1: Arterial Commercial zone. (Maps 1, 2 and 3 identify all C3.1: Arterial Commercial zoned properties); and
 - b) All parcels zoned C3.1: Arterial Commercial which are located on Comox Avenue east of the Anderton intersection or within Development Permit Area 7: Downtown. (This would prohibit drive thrus on those C3.1 zoned parcels shown shaded and outlined in bold on Maps 2 and 3.)
- 2) That staff be directed to approach the City of Courtenay, Town of Cumberland, and Comox Valley Regional District regarding a joint ban on drive thrus.

Background:

On March 4, 2009 Council referred the following resolution to the April 8, 2009 COW meeting:

“That the Zoning Bylaw be amended to prohibit drive thrus in all zones in the Town of Comox”

Drive thrus are currently regulated under Town of Comox Zoning Bylaw 1377. For instance a drive thru in conjunction with a restaurant is only permitted under the C3.1: Arterial Commercial zone where a ‘drive thru restaurant’ is a permitted use. (Maps 1, 2 and 3 identify all C3.1: Arterial Commercial zoned parcels.)

Beyond ‘drive thru restaurants,’ a drive thru in combination with another use is permitted in any zone allowing the use and accessory structures. For example, a financial institution with a drive thru is permitted in any zone where a financial institution and an accessory structure is permitted. Consequently, in the C4.1: Core Commercial zone (downtown) a drive thru financial institution is permitted.

The Town of Comox has agreed to monitor its impact on greenhouse gas emissions and to work to create more sustainable development through agreements such as the BC Climate Action Charter and the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Comox Valley.

Discussion:

Drive thru support a car oriented culture as they are a convenience to those who own and operate vehicles. By encouraging vehicular modes of transit their cumulative impact on the environment and human health should consider both the pollution drive thrus generate through idling vehicles and the negative impact they have on healthier forms of transportation (i.e. anti-motivation for walking and cycling). Drive thrus pose health and safety risks for pedestrians through increased vehicular traffic, noise, and pollution. For the above mentioned reasons drive thrus conflict with areas where a pedestrian orientation is desired or exists such as on Comox Avenue east of the Anderton intersection or in Development Permit Area 7: Downtown. Map 2 shows outlined in bold those C3.1: Arterial Commercial zoned parcels on Comox Avenue east of the Anderton intersection. Map 3 shows outlined in bold the C3.1 zoned parcels in DPA 7.

There are concerns over banning drive thrus in all zones. For example a perspective new business (i.e financial institution) may not locate in Comox if a drive thru is not permitted, but rather it may service the local market by locating in Courtenay. Therefore, prohibiting drive thrus may place Comox in a competitive disadvantage in attracting new business and employment. By locating in Courtenay, the new business (i.e. financial institution) may cause Comox residents to drive to Courtenay to utilize the business' services and drive thru. This could result in a larger carbon footprint than a Comox resident using a drive thru in Comox.

The concerns mentioned above may not be significant if Courtenay also banned drive thrus as Comox/Courtenay represent the majority of the market. It is possible that Courtenay would be concerned with highway commercial drive thrus and would; therefore, require Cumberland and the Comox Valley Regional District to also prohibit drive thrus.

Council may wish to direct that staff undertake initiatives beyond the Planner's Recommendation, such as:

- Retain drive thrus as a permitted use on parcels where they currently exist and prohibit drive thrus elsewhere. This would permit future phases of 1966 Guthrie Road (Shoppers Drug Mart) to include drive thrus.
- Identify specific parcels on a site specific basis to permit drive thrus.

MAP 3

