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Real Estate Round-Up

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Burrard lands Furry Creek deal

**Burrard International Holdings Inc.** will pick up the second stage of the Oliver's Landing development at Furry Creek under a court-approved plan of reorganization for **United Properties Ltd.**

The Vancouver-based developer sought protection from creditors last July under the Companies Creditors Arrangement Act.

Its plan of reorganization was approved on March 26.

On March 25, Burrard International agreed to purchase Oliver's Landing for \$600,000 cash plus assumption of a \$4.5-million mortgage held by **Tanac Development Canada Corp.**

In October 1999, Burrard International bought the **Furry Creek Golf & Country Club** from Tanac, which went into receivership last year leaving 600 acres of the Furry Creek site undeveloped.

Burrard's deal with United is set to close by April 30, at which time United president **Victor Setton** said he would be able to make a formal announcement about United's reorganization.

Although the plan provides for the company's continuing operation, Setton said it was too early to say what would be left of the company after the terms of the reorganization are fulfilled in about a year's time.

He would say only that the sale of the company's assets will provide sufficient funds to repay United's creditors.

"My main concern right now is not what's left over at the end of the day but more what needs to be done," he said.

In addition to the sale of Oliver's Landing, United's Whistler conference centre sold to Strata Corp. 2940 on April 1 for \$1.1 million. United has also received a \$10.1-million offer for Sunset Highlands, a development near Horseshoe Bay, from an unnamed buyer.

United's various projects in the U.S. will also be sold under the plan of reorganization.

## Developers eye agricultural reserve

Municipalities are reconsidering the place of agricultural land in their communities as the province moves ahead with changes to governance of the Agricultural Land Reserve.

Chilliwack Mayor **Clint Hames** said his city has been able to work around the reserve's existing boundaries for the past 30 years, seeking exclusions on a case-by-case basis.

But a new strategy proposes having the Land Reserve Commission, the B.C. government body that oversees the ALR, approve development of some tracts.

This would help municipal planning and speed the approval process for developers when they decide to move forward with projects.

"We believe it's time to look at [the 1972] boundaries, rationalize them and say, 'What do we need for the next 30 years?' rather than this piece-meal approach," he said.

Chilliwack has not decided how much land is being considered for exclusion but Hames said it will probably be in the half-kilometre corridor that separates Chilliwack from Sardis.

The land would be for commercial and light industrial use.

Hames added that, given current expectations of needs, development would cost only \$120 million if done in the valley while hillside development would cost \$291 million.

Abbotsford is also considering seeking exclusions from the land reserve to bolster its stock of developable land.

Similarly, Burnaby is considering an amendment to its community plan that would see 40 acres of zoned industrial land currently in the ALR shifted to commercial zoning.

This could see the 80-acre site, located in the Byrne Road and Marine Way area, become home to big-box retail stores and other projects. However, an exclusion for the land's removal from the ALR would have to be sought first.

The municipalities' plans coincide with a move by the province to open the door to greater local jurisdiction over the land reserve.

On April 15, the legislature gave first reading to a bill that would effect this and other changes in how the Land Reserve Commission goes about its work.

Commission CEO **Kirk Miller**, who joined the organization in 1976, noted that applications for exclusion usually surge following any change seen to affect the organization's workings.

"When there's a change in government or even, to a lesser extent, a change in minister, there's always an increase in applications," he said.

While the current discussions are garnering attention, he said they have not yet resulted in an increase in exclusion applications.

### Strata owners reject purchase bid

A potential purchaser for 100 strata units in Vancouver's Westin Grand hotel has walked away from the deal after several suite owners balked at the purchase offer.

**Angus Wilkinson, principal of Tyne Hospitality** in Vancouver and a consultant on the deal, said discussions with suite owners at the 207-room hotel fell through when eight owners rejected a local purchaser's offer that was about half the price they paid for the suites in 1996. The bid was slightly below the 61-cent-on-the-dollar value the B.C. Assessment Authority tagged on the suites and well under the 80-cent rate the owners were looking for, Wilkinson said.

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