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Gerry McGeough, Senior Heritage Planner
Community Services Group, City of Vancouver
453 West 12th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4

April 25, 2006

Dear Mr. McGeough

Re: 2400 Motel, Kingsway

We are writing to express our concern about the future of the 2400 Motel, which we believe is seriously endangered. The Motel was added a number of years ago to the City's Property Endowment Fund for future re-sale as a development site. Located a block east of Kingsway and Nanaimo, the Motel is within the so-called 'Norquay Neighbourhood Centre', for which public consultation has commenced.

The 2400 Motel is not listed on the Vancouver Heritage Register. Unless the heritage significance of this site is recognized, it will very likely be identified as a prime candidate for redevelopment. Foreshadowing this, the City has already approved rezoning the nearby Eldorado Motel to redevelop this site as a mixed-use development.

The 2400 Motel represents an original example of 1940s motor inn/motor court architecture. As the late 1940s and 50s ushered in an age of unprecedented mobility, auto-courts sprung up across North America to capture the market for highway-oriented accommodation. Built in 1946, this site is a Kingsway icon, and is simply the best remaining motor court in the Lower Mainland.

Typical of the early motels, the 2400 was built as a cluster of cottages on a lawn around a central office, with a freestanding roadside neon sign to attract passing motorists. An early example of the trend to modernism, the Motel's 'streamline moderne' design — most notable in its flat-roofed office building — evokes the new post-war world of speed and personal mobility.

The 2400 Motel has been scrupulously maintained over the years and is virtually unchanged. While motor courts across North America have fallen victim to the wreckers ball, a recent trend has seen some of the better examples being upgraded and restored as sought-after tourist destinations filling a growing niche demand for unique accommodation and non-generic travel experiences.

We can envision a number of ways that the economics of heritage retention could be enhanced through creative applications of density on this site, or by transfers of density to other sites in the Norquay planning area. It is therefore imperative that the 2400 Motel be evaluated without delay. As City Council has recently approved in principle the proposed VHR upgrade, the 2400 would be an ideal pilot for application of a community-values based process.

Sincerely,

Donald Luxton, President

cc. Richard Keate, Vancouver Heritage Commission
Ann McAfee, Director of City Plans
June Christy, Planner, Norquay NCDP