

NO: R129

COUNCIL DATE: June 12, 2017

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council** DATE: **June 7, 2017**

FROM: **General Manager, Planning & Development** FILE: **6520-20**
(Sunnyside Heights)

SUBJECT: **Sunnyside Heights NCP Build-Out and Elementary School Capacity**

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning & Development Department recommends that Council:

1. Receive this report as information; and
2. Withhold consideration of development applications that require an amendment of the Sunnyside Heights Neighbourhood Concept Plan (NCP) for a period of up to six months while a preferred location for an additional elementary school in the NCP area is identified and incorporated into a revised NCP for Council's approval.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to:

- Provide Council with an update on the build out of the Sunnyside Heights NCP and the implications for elementary school capacities within the NCP; and
- Seek approval from Council on a recommendation to withhold consideration of development applications that require an amendment of the Sunnyside NCP for up to six months while a preferred location for an additional elementary school is identified and incorporated into a revised NCP for Council's approval.

BACKGROUND

The Sunnyside Heights NCP, including a land use plan (Appendix "I"), was approved by Council in November 2010. The residential land use designations in the plan provided a full range of housing types including apartments, townhouses, small lot single family dwellings, and suburban single family dwellings. Residential unit projections were estimated to be approximately 4,250 units at full build out. Based on these estimates and on formulae for student yields for various housing unit types, it was determined that one elementary school was required in the plan area. A site for this school was identified in the northern end of the plan, and the Surrey School District was able to secure land for this school in 2012. Funding for the construction of this school is one of the highest priority capital requests of the School District, and it is expected that Provincial funding will be announced in the near future, with the school to be completed and open in 2020.

Over the past five years, the Sunnyside Heights NCP has experienced significant development activity. Appendix “II” shows areas that have been approved for development, as well as areas currently under a development application. Of the estimated NCP capacity of approximately 4,250 units, 1,138 units have been approved and 1,543 units are currently under application in Sunnyside Heights. This translates to approximately 63% of the expected dwelling units in the plan either being approved or in-stream as part of the development process.

To date, the approved and in-stream applications have generally conformed to the densities established in the Sunnyside Heights NCP; however, there have been some minor adjustments in the form of housing. Essentially, townhouse projects have been proposed in areas of the plan where either apartments or townhouses were permitted. These adjustments in housing form result in a larger number of family-oriented housing units and a corresponding increase in the number of school-aged children. In addition, staff has recently received a number of applications for amendments to the NCP for densities that exceed those in the plan. These applications, along with the adjustments in the form of housing mentioned above, have led to concerns about elementary school capacities within the NCP and in the surrounding Grandview Heights area.

DISCUSSION

To meet the growing population in the Grandview Heights area the Surrey School District has secured a high school site near 26 Avenue and 168 Street, along with funding for its construction which is expected to begin in the Fall of 2017. In addition to the elementary school site within the Sunnyside Heights NCP, there are also plans to expand the existing Pacific Heights Elementary School on 26 Avenue at 172 Street. Even with these new and expanded schools, School District staff are of the opinion that another elementary school will be needed to accommodate the growth in and around the Sunnyside Heights NCP, particularly if the NCP is amended to allow for higher densities.

As housing prices rise across the region and the City, there is a growing demand for more affordable family-oriented housing options such as townhouses, smaller lot size housing, and single family homes with secondary suites. Trends in other Surrey neighbourhoods show that more families are living in townhouses and in secondary suites, and that those families are staying in these units longer than they may have in the past.

These market and demographic trends also appear to be reflected in the build-out of the Grandview Heights area. As noted above, staff has received requests for density and unit types changes from those originally planned. The requested changes in Sunnyside Heights are described below.

Proposals for Density Changes in Sunnyside Heights NCP

Recent modifications to planned densities in Sunnyside Heights include proposals for both decreased as well as increased density. These changes are most notable in the Multiple Residential 30-45 units per acre (u.p.a.) Designation and the Suburban Designations (1-2 u.p.a. and 2-4 u.p.a.).

- **Multiple Residential (30-45 u.p.a.)**

This designation was intended to accommodate a mixture of apartments and townhouse residential types. Development applications have proposed densities ranging between 30

to 35 u.p.a. with a built form of stacked or back-to-back townhouses rather than apartments. These building forms correspond with the lower end of density range of this designation and, therefore, these applications do not require NCP Land Use Amendments. However, the resulting housing unit types are more family-oriented than anticipated, resulting in more school-aged children than expected.

- **Suburban Residential (1-2 u.p.a. & 2-4 u.p.a.)**

This designation was intended to allow larger estate home housing types including landscaped planting to provide a buffer between residential and agricultural lands to the south east. Development applications located within designation are proposed for higher density ranging from 6 to 8 u.p.a. and the corresponding built form would result in smaller single family lots instead of larger estate sized lots. The larger number of homes will likely result in more school-aged children than anticipated. These proposals would require an NCP amendment.

School Capacity Implications

The Surrey School District is currently undertaking its annual a review of school needs in Surrey to ensure the demographic forecasting is producing accurate school needs assessments. To respond to recent trends in the family housing market, City and School District staff have adjusted student yield ratios to better reflect the changing family household numbers.

For the Grandview Heights Area, initial forecasts indicate that the expansion of Pacific Heights Elementary School and program movements in the existing Sunnyside Heights Elementary School will be able to accommodate the growth in the North Grandview Heights NCP Area; however, as discussed above, updated student yield ratios are showing a need for an additional elementary school in the Sunnyside Heights NCP.

When the Sunnyside Heights Plan was approved in 2010, the school yield ratios based on the unit projections showed that one elementary school was needed to accommodate students generated from developments within the NCP. This school is designed to accommodate 550 elementary school students. The elementary school site, located along 23 Avenue, has been purchased by the Surrey School District and a project development report is being prepared to support the construction of a new school. It is anticipated that a project agreement with the Ministry of Education will be completed by early Fall 2017, after which a construction schedule and estimated projected completion date will be confirmed.

While the above-noted elementary school site would have accommodated the elementary school needs when the plan was completed, current day school yield ratios and updated density projections from proposed NCP amendments now show that the NCP area will now generate a total of 1,015 students. These updated numbers suggest the need for a second elementary school site in Sunnyside Heights.

Second School Site in Sunnyside Heights NCP

Since a large percentage of the land in the NCP is currently either developed or under application, identifying a suitable and available site for the second school has been challenging. City staff and School District staff have worked together to identify several potential elementary school sites within and adjacent to the NCP area.

Over the past three months, a series of meetings have taken place with City staff, School District staff, and land developers in the Grandview Heights Area. At this time, the School District has met with key developers and land owners to initiate the process of securing an elementary school site.

This process will likely require six months to ensure sufficient time for the School District working with the City, landowners, and developers to secure an elementary school site. This includes the School District identifying a suitable site, preparing a project development report, and negotiating a project agreement for a site acquisition.

NCP Review Process

Over the next six months, staff will conduct a comprehensive land use designation review of the Sunnyside Heights NCP. Staff will continue to work with the School District to determine a finalized location for the second elementary school site and also conduct meetings with developers that are proposing NCP Amendments.

At this time School District and City staff are considering potential elementary schools site locations. The following site selection criteria are being used:

- Relatively flat or gently sloped site to accommodate playing fields and programming.
- Centrally located within or adjacent to Sunnyside Heights NCP.
- Minimum 6-acre net site area.
- Not currently under active development application.
- Not located on an arterial road.
- Not located adjacent to the Hydro Powerline.

Concurrent with the elementary school site selection process, staff will meet with developers that are proposing NCP amendments in order to conduct a comprehensive land use review on sites that are not being considered by the School District. This review will consider and evaluate proposed changes to density and road network layout.

Once a suitable elementary school site is identified, School District staff will prepare a project development report to initiate acquisition of the site. City Staff will prepare a report to Council to show the preferred elementary school location and associated land use changes.

During this six month period, development applications that conform to the Sunnyside Heights NCP would proceed as usual.

CONCLUSION

The Sunnyside Heights NCP was approved by Council in 2010. The plan included a site for one elementary school, which was expected to be sufficient, based on the density and dwelling unit types proposed in the NCP. Since that time, development activity has been proceeding, and approximately 65% of the plan area is either constructed, approved or under development application.

While the densities of this development are generally in keeping with the approved NCP, it is evident that the numbers of school-aged children in the area are higher than anticipated.

Recently, there have been a number of development applications and inquiries seeking to increase residential densities in the remaining undeveloped parts of the NCP area. If these amendments to the NCP were to be approved they would add to the pressure already being placed on the future school capacity. City and School District staff have conducted an analysis and adjusted the projections for student yields in the area. This analysis has established the need for a second elementary school to serve the Sunnyside Heights NCP as well as surrounding areas.

In order to allow for selecting a location for a second elementary school, and in order to adjust the land use plan to respond to a second school location, staff is recommending a six month period in which consideration of development applications that propose an amendment to the Sunnyside Heights NCP be withheld. Development applications that conform to the approved NCP would proceed as usual.

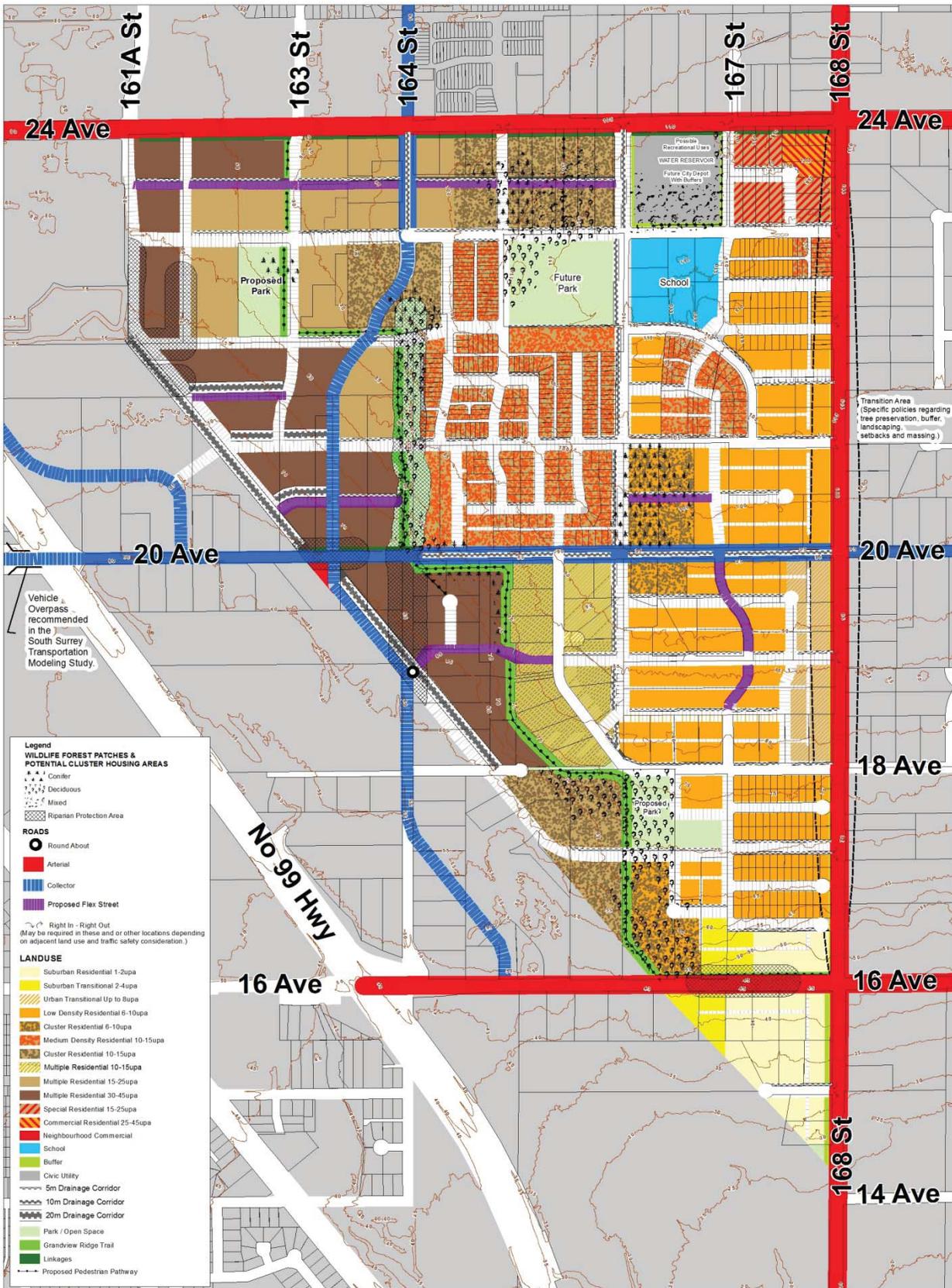
It is recommended that Council:

- Receive this report as information; and
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Original signed by
Jean Lamontagne
General Manager, Planning & Development

DL/ss

Appendix "I" - Sunnyside Heights Neighbourhood Concept Plan – Land Use Plan
Appendix "II" - Approved and In-Stream Applications in Sunnyside Heights NCP



Grandview Heights NCP Area #2 (Sunnyside Heights)

City of Surrey Planning & Development Department

Stage 1 Approved By Council: July 26, 2007
 Stage 2 Approved By Council Nov. 15, 2010
 Last Amended 18 May 2017



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