



# **Corporate** NO: C421

# **Report** COUNCIL DATE: Apr. 14, 1999

## **COUNCIL-IN-COMMITTEE**

**TO: Mayor & Council**    **DATE: April 8, 1999**

**FROM: General Manager, Planning & Development**    **FILE: 2126-303**

**SUBJECT: Crescent Beach Land Use Study**

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Planning & Development Department recommends that Council:

1. Approve the proposed Crescent Beach Land Use Plan, Urban Design Guidelines and Implementation Measures as presented in Appendix I.
2. Amend the Semiahmoo Peninsula Local Area Plan by adopting the Land Use Designation Map and Policies as contained in the Crescent Beach Land Use Plan (Appendix I).
3. Authorize staff to draft and introduce the appropriate by-laws to amend:
  - (a) The Official Community Plan to designate the City-owned and privately-owned portions of the Wickson Lands to Conservation and Urban respectively;
  - (b) The Official Community Plan to redesignate the northern corner of the Arpeg Farm property from Urban to Conservation;
  - (c) The Official Community Plan to incorporate the Crescent Beach Commercial Area Design Guidelines as supplemental Development Permit Area Guidelines;
  - (d) The Sign By-law in order to respond to the design guidelines on signs for the Crescent Beach Commercial Area; and
  - (e) The Surrey Subdivision and Development By-law in order to permit the existing semi-rural road standards to be maintained.

4. Approve the Beecher Street Beautification Scheme (Appendix II) and authorize staff from the Parks, Recreation and Culture Department and Engineering Department to identify funding sources and seek funding approval for its implementation.

5. Authorize staff of the Planning & Development Department to assist the Crescent Beach Property Owners Association to prepare a publication on the Crescent Beach Neighbourhood Residential Character as outlined in Appendix I to increase public awareness about the architectural and landscaping elements that are characteristic of the area.

6. Authorize staff of the Planning & Development Department to review the following issues and Zoning By-law provisions as they relate to Crescent Beach as follow-up actions from the Land Use Study:

- (a) Residential building height and massing;
- (b) Integrated home/business units in the Beecher Street Commercial Area; and
- (c) Coach houses as accessory uses to single family dwellings.

## **BACKGROUND**

In response to requests from local residents and the Crescent Beach Property Owners Association, the Planning & Development Department undertook a land use study for Crescent Beach. The purpose of the study was to review the existing land uses, to identify planning opportunities and constraints, to formulate a comprehensive land use plan and related policies, to establish urban design guidelines to reinforce and enhance the character of the area, and to identify measures for plan implementation.

## **INTENT**

The intent of this report is:

- 1. To provide an overview of the Crescent Beach Land Use Study, including a summary of the planning process, the policies and proposals of the Land Use Plan, as well as Urban Design Guidelines for the area;
- 2. To seek Council's approval of the Crescent Beach Land Use Plan, including Urban Design Guidelines and plan implementation measures; and
- 3. To identify implementation measures and follow-up actions required.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Study Area**

The Study Area comprises 90.8 hectares (224.4 acres) of lands traditionally associated with the beach and the seaside residential area. Located below the Crescent Heights bluff to the south-east, it is bounded by waters to the north, west and north-east. The area is mainly designated Urban in the Official Community Plan, while the properties along Beecher Street are designated Commercial (Appendix III).

Crescent Beach is a predominantly single family community. Most of the properties are zoned Single Family Residential (RF). Three properties fronting Bayview Street are zoned Duplex Residential (RM-D). Commercial uses are concentrated along Beecher Street, zoned Neighbourhood Commercial (C-5), Comprehensive Development (CD), and Child Care (CCR), and on Sullivan Street near McBride Avenue zoned Local Commercial (C-4). The Crescent Beach Marina, located at the mouth of Nicomekl River, is zoned Marina (CPM). Other land uses include a church on Beecher Street zoned Assembly Hall 1 (PA-1), and Camp Alexandra facilities on Sullivan Street zoned Assembly Hall 1 (PA-1) and Comprehensive Development (CD) (Appendix IV).

Most of the lands are privately owned, with the exception of the beach foreshore, Blackie Spit and Dunsmuir Farms which are owned by the City, and the railway right-of-way which is owned by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corporation.

## **Planning Process and Public Consultation**

Public consultation is an integral part of the planning process. Besides holding public information meetings with accompanying questionnaire surveys to obtain community input, staff worked closely with the Crescent Beach Property Owners Association and its subcommittees throughout the process.

The first public information meeting was held on May 6, 1997 to present background information about the Study Area as well as to identify issues, concerns, and planning opportunities and constraints. About 88 residents attended the meeting, and 160 completed questionnaires were returned. All public input was analyzed and used as a basis to formulate planning objectives, and develop land use and urban design options for the area.

The second public information meeting took the form of a staff presentation on the proposed options for land uses and design guidelines, followed by small group workshops within which 107 residents participated. These workshops were facilitated by staff to generate comments on the proposed options. In addition, 27 completed questionnaires were submitted or mailed in by residents providing their comments after the workshops.

It should be noted that although the area's residential character was recognized, there was no consensus in the workshops on the means to control and to ensure compliance on residential building design. Design control on new homes was not considered to be appropriate by some of the residents. Following discussions with the Crescent Beach Property Owners Association, it was resolved that rather than mandatory design control measures (to be enforced through City by-laws or legal agreements among property owners), general character guidelines should be developed for the residential area for distribution to home-owners and designers as a means to raise awareness about the local area character and design objectives to be used as a reference for home design.

On the basis of the residents' input, a draft preferred land use option, a set of character guidelines for the residential area, and a set of design guidelines for the Beecher Street and Sullivan Street commercial areas were formulated.

The draft land use plan and residential character and urban design guidelines, including a streetscape plan for Beecher Street improvements, were presented to the public in an open house held on November 26, 1998. Approximately 75 residents attended the meeting. Upon request by the Crescent Beach Property Owners Association, a follow-up meeting was held with 80 members of the Association on January 20, 1999 to present the draft land use plan and to discuss the issue regarding residential building height. In addition to verbal comments provided to staff at and after the meetings, a total of 34 completed questionnaires were submitted by the residents subsequent to the meetings. There is a general consensus among the residents on the draft land use plan. With respect to the urban design aspect of the plan, the issue of controlling residential building height has been identified as a significant subject for a future study involving a review of the height restrictions of the Zoning By-law as they apply to Crescent Beach and further public consultation.

The Planning & Development Department has been working closely with the Engineering Department and Parks, Recreation & Culture Department during the plan preparation process.

## **Proposed Land Use Plan**

### Planning Objectives

Based on the public input received, planning objectives were formulated as guiding principles for the Land Use Plan. These principles are:

1. To preserve and enhance the semi-rural residential and seaside village character of the community;
2. To allow for housing choices with special attention to the initiative of “aging in place”;
3. To retain the natural and semi-rural setting of the environment while providing for different types of recreational opportunities;
4. To meet the recreational needs of both the local residents and the community at large; and
5. To provide various transportation modes, including walking, cycling, public transit and automobile, with priority given to pedestrian traffic.

### Planning Policies

The proposed Land Use Plan has four main policy areas:

1. Crescent Beach Character Policies which aim at maintaining and enhancing the unique character and reinforcing the identity of the area. These policies include adopting the seaside village theme as the principal character of Crescent Beach, ensuring the built environment contributes to the area's character, and encouraging the design of new homes and renovation of existing homes to maintain the existing seaside residential character.
2. Sustainability and Environmental Policies which aim at maintaining a harmony between the natural and built environment by protecting the environmentally sensitive areas and fostering an environmentally sustainable community. These policies include managing growth to ensure that the planned development capacity can be adequately serviced while conserving, protecting and enhancing the environment and environmentally sensitive areas, and encouraging the co-existence of local residential interests and the interests of the larger community in Crescent Beach as a recreational destination point.
3. Pedestrian, Vehicle Circulation and Parking Policies which promote a walkable village with easy access to the beach, natural areas and other recreational points for the residents and visitors. Some of these policies are:
  - integrating all pedestrian paths, trails, walkways, sidewalks, crosswalks and bicycle paths to form a continuous local pedestrian/bicycle network incorporating various points of interest and landmarks;
  - encouraging access to Crescent Beach using non-vehicular modes by connecting the local pedestrian/bicycle network to surrounding neighbourhoods and to major linear corridors in the Semiahmoo Peninsula;

- providing and locating visitor parking so as not to disrupt the single family residential lifestyle in the area; and
- promoting pedestrian safety and reinforcing the priority of the pedestrian network in Beecher Street, Sullivan Street and McBride Avenue by introducing traffic calming measures.

4. Land Use Policies which aim at maintaining and enhancing the community as a small scale and liveable village with land use designations that reflect the actual uses (for example, the residential subdivisions including the Wickson lands which are privately owned, the beach, the marina and existing institutional facilities) and the proposed uses (for example, the Arpeg Farm site which has urban residential development potential) (Appendix V).

#### 4.1 *Commercial Uses*

Policies related to commercial uses include locating commercial development in the Beecher Street village core to provide neighbourhood level retail, office and personal services for Crescent Beach residents and visitors, while encouraging local convenience commercial uses to locate on Sullivan Street near McBride Avenue; widening housing choices by allowing residential uses to mix with commercial uses in the Beecher Street village core, in the form of integrated home/business units, artist studios or other similar arrangements; and allowing for fine arts enterprises and innovative business ventures that take advantage of the area's seaside village character, including bed and breakfast accommodations, non-powered water related activities and bicycle rentals.

#### 4.2 *Park, Open Space, Institutional and Recreation Uses*

The Open Space and Recreation Policies recognize and facilitate the variety of water-related activities that take place in the vicinity of the beach, including swimming, sailing and boating, while emphasizing safe co-existence among all users and environmental sensitivity. The Land Use Designation Map (Appendix V) differentiates three types of open space available in the area, including:

- Formal parks such as Heron Park and Sullivan Point;
- The beach; and
- Conservation areas consisting of the environmentally sensitive areas of Blackie Spit, the inter-tidal mudflats, the community gardens and Dunsmuir Farm, and the northern corner of the Arpeg Farm site with a heritage barn and forming an integral part of the surrounding environmentally sensitive areas.

It is considered appropriate to establish and formalize landmarks and points of attraction which contribute to the vitality of the village and enrich the experience of visitors, and to consider the long term feasibility of converting the railway right-of-way into a major linear open space corridor, incorporating public parking, if and when the railway ceases to operate.

#### 4.3 *Residential Uses*

The main residential policies include maintaining the dominance of single family residential land use in the area; widening housing choices, including seniors housing, and promoting the concept of “aging in place”; and encouraging home-based businesses and artist studios.

### Community Structure and Land Use Designation

A comprehensive Land Use Plan for Crescent Beach has been developed on the basis of a community structure

comprising the following elements:

- A principal commercial area along Beecher Street forming the Village's Main Street;
- A local commercial node on Sullivan Street near McBride Avenue;
- Single family residential areas north and south of the Beecher Street Commercial Area, including the lower reaches of the Crescent Heights bluff;
- Pockets of institutional uses including child care centres, a church, and civic facilities such as Beecher Place on Beecher Street, and Camp Alexandra on Sullivan Street;
- Parks and open spaces including Heron Park, Sullivan Point, the grassy open space and pedestrian walkway along the beach, and lands used for public and private utilities (GVRD pump station site and Burlington Northern Railway right-of-way);
- Beach and waterfront park along the western shoreline;
- The Crescent Beach Marina at the mouth of Nicomekl River; and
- Conservation areas including Blackie Spit, Dunsmuir Farm, the Arpeg barn site, the community gardens and the environmentally sensitive lands and waters in the inter-tidal area of Mud Bay.

A land use designation map is provided in Appendix V. The distribution of land in various land use designations is as follows:

<b>Crescent Beach Land Use</b>	<b>Approximate Land Area</b>			
	<b>Plan Designations</b>	<b>(Hectares)</b>	<b>(Acres)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Village Commercial	1.4	3.4	1.5	
Local Commercial	0.1	0.3	0.1	
Urban Residential	24.7	61.2	27.2	
Institutional	1.3	3.2	1.4	
Park/Open Space	9.0	22.2	9.9	
Beach	3.6	8.8	4.0	
Marina	4.4	10.9	4.9	
Conservation	35.0	86.4	38.5	
Roads/Lanes	11.3	28.0	12.5	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>90.8</b>	<b>224.4</b>	<b>100</b>	

It is projected that the population of the area will grow from the existing estimate of 835 to 1,166 at build-out,

assuming an increase of average household size from 2.5 to 3.0 for single family dwellings, new residential units in combination with commercial uses, and development of the Arpeg Farm site for residential uses and coach houses for extended families.

### Neighbourhood Character and Urban Design Guidelines

As part of the Study, design guidelines have been formulated in the following areas:

1. Residential Character Guidelines which identify the dominant building design elements (such as roofs, windows, finishing materials, front entrances and porches) and streetscape treatment (including road standards, landscaping, front yard treatment and fencing) that define the overall character of the residential neighbourhoods.
2. Design Guidelines for Commercial Areas which are intended to reinforce and enhance the character of Beecher Street as a Village Main Street, and Sullivan Street as a local commercial node. Specific guidelines for building frontage character, parking areas, and canopies/awnings have been established. Specific guidelines for signs have also been developed to respond to the seaside village theme, the human scale and pedestrian-oriented character of the Commercial Areas.
3. Design Guidelines for Streetscape and Seaside Walkway which will be used to co-ordinate the overall streetscape, landscaping, fencing and street edge treatment for the major streets and the seaside walkway. In particular, a Beecher Street Beautification Scheme (Appendix II) has been developed by the Planning & Development Department with the participation of the Crescent Beach Property Owners Association, Engineering Department and Parks, Recreation & Culture Department. Funding sources to implement the Scheme will need to be identified and pursued.

### Community Development Concept

A Community Development Concept, attached as Appendix VI, has been developed to visualize and co-ordinate the implementation of various planning policies, land use proposals and urban design guidelines put forward in the Study.

### Plan Implementation and Follow-up Matters

To implement the proposed land use plan, a series of actions have been identified. The main implementation measures are summarized below:

1. Preparing amendments to the Official Community Plan:
  - (a) To designate the City-owned portion of the Wickson lands to Conservation in order to give statutory recognition and protection to the site;
  - (b) To designate the privately owned portion of the Wickson lands to Urban in order to reflect the single family residential use allowed on the lots;
  - (c) To redesignate the northern corner of the Arpeg Farm property from Urban to Conservation in order to give protection to the site and the barn which form an integral part of the surrounding environmentally sensitive areas; and

(d) To incorporate the Crescent Beach Commercial Area Design Guidelines as supplemental Development Permit Area Guidelines to control the quality of the built environment in the Crescent Beach area.

2. Making amendments to the Sign By-law to ensure that the type and height of signs allowed in the Crescent Beach Commercial Areas conform to the proposed design guidelines for signs.
3. Amending the Subdivision and Development By-law to allow the City's engineering standards to be changed to reflect the existing semi-rural road standards for the Crescent Beach area.
4. Identifying funding sources and seeking funding approval to implement the proposed street beautification schemes.
5. Co-ordinating future public works and improvement projects as described in the Community Development Concept, including the introduction of traffic calming measures and designation of on-street parking areas.
6. Pursuing public art in private, community or public works projects as appropriate for the area.
7. Compiling the main findings of this Study, including the main policies, Land Use Designation Map, Residential Neighbourhood Character and Commercial Area Guidelines, in a document which may be purchased by the public, residents and designers to help raise awareness about the local area character and design objectives.
8. As requested for follow-up by the residents, it is recommended that Council authorize staff to review the following issues and Zoning By-law provisions as they relate to Crescent Beach:
  - Residential building height and massing;
  - Integrated home/business units in the Beecher Street Commercial Area;
  - Coach houses as accessory uses to single family dwellings.

## CONCLUSION

The proposed Land Use Plan for Crescent Beach, incorporating planning policies and urban design guidelines, has been developed with extensive consultation with the public. It is recommended that Council approve the Plan and authorize staff to proceed with actions to implement the Plan.

Murray D. Dinwoodie  
General Manager  
Planning & Development Department

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## Appendices

- I Crescent Beach Land Use Plan
- II Beecher Street Beautification Scheme
- III Boundaries and OCP Designations of Study Area
- IV Zoning of Study Area
- V Proposed Land Use Designation Map
- VI Proposed Community Development Concept

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