

NO: R159

COUNCIL DATE: **June 27, 2016**

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **June 22, 2016**

FROM: **General Manager, Planning and Development
General Manager, Engineering**

FILE: **6440-01**

SUBJECT: **Guildford Town Centre and 104 Avenue Planning Program**

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning and Development Department and the Engineering Department recommend that Council:

1. Receive this report as information;
2. Authorize staff to initiate a planning process for Guildford Town Centre and the 104 Avenue corridor, including a public and stakeholder engagement process, as outlined in this report; and
3. Instruct staff to develop Terms of Reference for the land use planning process, including consultant assistance as needed for Council consideration and approval.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to seek Council authorization to develop plans for Guildford Town Centre and for those portions of the 104 Avenue corridor between City Centre and the Trans-Canada Highway that are without a detailed land use plan. It is proposed that a single planning process be undertaken which will result in the simultaneous preparation of three plans:

- A town centre plan for Guildford Town Centre;
- A Frequent Transit Development Area (FTDA) plan for the segment of 104 Avenue corridor between City Centre and Guildford Town Centre; and
- An infill area plan for the segment of 104 Avenue corridor east of Guildford Town Centre to the Trans-Canada Highway.

Planning for all three areas will include a program of public and stakeholder engagement.

BACKGROUND

In 2014 staff initiated the Town Centre Planning Program (“the Program”), the first phase of which was to review and update the Town Centre Plans for Newton Town Centre, Cloverdale Town Centre, and Fleetwood Town Centre. Work on these planning processes is well advanced.

The second phase of the Program was to include the development of a brand new plan for Guildford Town Centre which has long been without a detailed land use plan. With work on another major planning process (the City Centre Plan Update) nearing completion, staff will soon have the capacity to undertake a planning process for Guildford Town Centre and the 104 Avenue corridor.

Staff is also actively engaged in the planning and design of a Light Rail Transit (LRT) system comprised of two lines. This work is being led by TransLink. In accordance with the Mayors' Council Regional Transportation Investments Vision, the LRT line linking City Centre to Guildford Town Centre and to Newton Town Centre (referred to informally as the "L line") is planned to be in operation in advance of the Fraser Highway line. The L line is comprised of two components: the 104 Avenue corridor and the King George Boulevard corridor. It is important that up-to-date land use plans be in place along the LRT corridors to ensure coordination of land uses and densities with rapid transit infrastructure delivery.

DISCUSSION

A cornerstone of Surrey's vision for LRT investment has been its ability to shape development and growth, creating active, vibrant, livable neighbourhoods enabled through high quality, street level rapid transit. This planning process presents a unique and critical opportunity to fully integrate land use, densities, recreation, streetscapes, and urban design with the future LRT. Advance land use and associated transportation planning will enable Surrey to provide certainty to the development community, and inform real estate transactions regarding road allowance, infrastructure, and amenity needs to achieve city and community objectives.

This report proposes that the first phase planning be focused on a portion of the L line specifically along the 104 Avenue corridor, with a second phase of planning for the King George Boulevard corridor between City Centre and Newton Town Centre to be initiated within the next year. The intent is to direct early development activity in the King George Boulevard corridor, primarily to Surrey City Centre and the Newton Town Centre, along with the 104 Avenue corridor.

104 Avenue Corridor – Planning Areas

The 104 Avenue corridor is approximately three kilometers long and will have four "opening day" LRT stations spaced approximately 800 meters apart, from 140 Street at the boundary of City Centre to the proposed terminus station at 152 Street. The corridor is segmented into three sections as delineated in the map attached as Appendix "I" and described below.

104 Avenue Frequent Transit Development Area

The Official Community Plan (OCP) identifies the 104 Avenue corridor between City Centre (140 Street) and Guildford Town Centre (148 Street) as an FTDA. FTDA's are a concept introduced by the Metro Vancouver Regional Growth Strategy (RGS). They are located along TransLink's Frequent Transit Network and are intended to accommodate a mix of higher density residential, commercial, and community uses. The designation of an FTDA and the delineation of its boundaries within the RGS is accomplished through an approved Regional Context Statement (RCS), and requires the concurrence of TransLink.

The current boundaries of the approved 104 Avenue FTDA are shown on the map attached as Appendix "I"; however, the boundaries of the proposed Guildford Town Centre/104 Avenue corridor planning area cover a more extensive area, including all lands between 100 Avenue and 108 Avenue/Guildford Way from 140 Street to 154 Street, as well as an extension eastward to the Highway 1 on-ramps (Appendix "I"). This area incorporates all lands within 800m of the 104 Avenue LRT "L-Line." The outcomes of this planning process may warrant a revision of the existing boundaries of the FTDA through an amendment of the OCP and the RGS in consultation with TransLink.

Guildford Town Centre

The Guildford Town Centre area (distinct from the shopping centre of the same name) is a substantially developed urban area with existing commercial and residential uses. The commercial uses are dominated by the shopping centre, while the residential uses are mainly in the form of medium to high density multiple family developments. Small single family pockets exist, primarily to the west of the shopping centre. The town centre is mostly built out and development potential resides chiefly in the mixed use redevelopment of commercial properties including substantial areas of surface parking. While no secondary land use plan exists for the area, the extent of the Guildford Town Centre has long been defined: the area is bound by 148 Street, 100 Avenue, 154 Street and 108 Avenue/Ferguson Diversion/Guildford Drive.

The Guildford Town Centre shopping mall ("the mall") is a dominant land use in the area, and occupies a large and strategic parcel of land with significant potential for high-density redevelopment. The mall itself straddles the 104 Avenue corridor, and is the proposed terminus of the LRT line at this time. The larger section of the mall located south of 104 Avenue has been significantly renovated and expanded in recent years, and is unlikely to be redeveloped for some time. The portion of the mall located north of 104 Avenue appears to have significant redevelopment potential and has a capacity for high density mixed use under the current OCP.

The proposed land use plan for this area will include specific consultation with the mall owners to determine the appropriate land use mix and densities for these lands to meet the planning objectives of the study. These objectives include supporting the public investment in rapid transit, establishing a high standard of urban design, and enhancing the interface with community facilities such as the Guildford Recreation and Aquatics Centre.

East of Guildford Town Centre

While TransLink has established that the eastern terminus of the L line will be located at the mall (104 Avenue at 152 Street), it is proposed that an infill area plan be developed for the 104 Avenue corridor as far east as the Trans-Canada Highway off-ramp to 160 Street. Careful planning of the area east of the mall would develop the future road network, ensure transit-supportive land uses, and enable the possibility of a future extension of LRT east of Guildford Town Centre.

Scope of Work

It is proposed that the scope of work comprise the following components and address the issues described therein:

Land Use and Density

Each of the three segments of the 104 Avenue corridor occupies different levels in the hierarchy of urban form – town centre, FTDA, and infill area. For each of the segments, the planning process will establish land uses and densities that are of a scale and form appropriate to that level and to planned LRT (within 800 m of a station).

According to the OCP, Town Centres are intended to be the primary commercial and activity centre for each of Surrey's communities, and the location of higher density residential development. Indeed, Guildford Town Centre is second only to City Centre as a locus of commercial and multiple residential developments in Surrey. After City Centre and the Town Centres, FTDA's are intended to be a secondary focus of higher density development and constitute areas that are well served by transit. Finally, infill areas are locations that are suitable for a moderate degree of intensification.

The land use concept that is developed will assign densities that are sufficient to induce redevelopment and appropriate for adjacency to LRT without competing with City Centre as a location for concentrated higher density development. The land use concept should also provide for a mix of uses that are transit supportive, and result in a vibrant, livable neighbourhood.

Market Feasibility Assessment

Residents and businesses are increasingly being drawn to locations that have superior access to rapid transit service. LRT investment will increase development interest in the 104 Avenue corridor; however, such interest will not be without limit. A market feasibility study will determine appropriate densities and forms of development that are viable in the market and profitable for developers. The assessment will also test relevant policies to determine their effect on project feasibility. Such policies may include parking requirements, community amenity contributions/density bonus, and zoning regulations that govern the mix of residential and commercial floor space in mixed use zones, including the C-35 zone.

The market assessment will place a particular focus on the commercial real estate market in order to determine what the demand is for additional retail and office development in the corridor. It is expected that new commercial development in the 104 Avenue corridor will primarily be local serving; however, select sites adjacent to the mall (which serves a regional market) may be appropriate for complementary types of commercial activities, while sites with superior access to the Trans-Canada Highway may be appropriate for travel oriented businesses, including hospitality and entertainment uses. Although Guildford Town Centre is currently home to several Class A and Class B office buildings ranging up to six stories in height, OCP policies currently direct major new office development to City Centre.

Affordable Purpose Built Rental Housing

The 104 Avenue corridor, and particularly Guildford Town Centre, has a significant supply of affordable purpose built rental housing that is popular with new Canadians. This housing is in the form of older, low rise apartment buildings. It will be an objective of the plan to preserve and renew this housing stock, some of which is in poor condition. Work undertaken on an Affordable Housing Strategy for Surrey will inform policies related to preserving existing affordable rental housing and encouraging additional supply of rental housing in the 104 Avenue corridor.

Urban Design

The mall is the most prominent land use in the 104 Avenue corridor. A major redevelopment of the mall (completed in 2014) resulted in a more urban built environment, partly through the redevelopment of existing surface parking lots. Urban design guidelines developed through the planning process will respond to this major use in the town centre and ensure an appropriate interface with surrounding residential and commercial uses.

Opportunities will also be sought to improve the image of secondary commercial areas that are characterized by existing strip mall developments and surface parking. The urban design guidelines will include standards to improve the quality of the public realm throughout the plan area.

LRT has the potential to activate streets by generating pedestrian activity with adjacent land uses and facilitating passengers hopping on and off to stop at businesses. As such, particular attention will be paid to the interface with LRT stations and the LRT guideway to facilitate a seamless interface with the rest of the public realm, providing direct access from connecting pedestrian infrastructure. It is also desired that the corridor project a modern, progressive image.

Parks and Recreation Facilities

Parks are located throughout the 104 Avenue corridor. Through the planning process staff will determine whether there is sufficient capacity in existing parks to accommodate the anticipated population growth, or whether additional parkland will be required. The same process will be undertaken for recreation facilities in the corridor.

Transportation

The plan will include the development of a fine grained, connected road system to support the planned LRT and bus service, walking, cycling and traffic circulation. Particular attention will be given to the creation of new east-west routes on the 105 and 103 Avenue alignments, parallel to 104 Avenue. Our desire is to open at a minimum one or both routes prior to opening of the LRT. As well as supporting the implementation of LRT both during construction and longer term, they will help establish a finer grained road system to support future development. Although two travel lanes on 104 Avenue will be converted to LRT in the short term, the ultimate goal will be to re-establish four general purpose travel lanes on 104 Avenue through road dedications acquired at the time of re-development.

Access to LRT stations from the surrounding neighbourhood will be assessed to ensure we can achieve clear, comfortable and safe routes to each of the stations along the route. As part of the urban design work, particular attention will be given to the walking and cycling environments.

Stormwater

The Guildford Town Centre area and the 104 Avenue corridor is situated over a high point in North Surrey and drains in several directions. The northern portion of the plan area drains through Bon Accord Creek and East Bon Accord Creek. The southern portion of the plan area drains through Quibble Creek and King Creek. The eastern portion of the plan area drains through Guildford Brook and Serpentine Creek. Various Integrated Stormwater Management Plans (ISMPs) were developed for these watersheds, namely:

- Bon Accord North Slope (east) ISMP – Completed in 2015;
- Bridgeview North Slope ISMP – Completed in 2015; and
- Upper Serpentine ISMP – Completed in 2015.

All ISMPs recommend the implementation of low impact development facilities on lots, redevelopment sites, and along City roadways at time of reconstruction. Minor trunk upgrades are required and given the presence of productive salmon spawning grounds in each of the ISMP areas. Each ISMP recommends the installation of various water quality devices to maintain and improve water quality.

As an urbanized area with existing stormwater infrastructure, the planning process will assess the change in land use and its impact on the goals of each ISMP and determine necessary upgrades.

Sanitary Sewer

The Guildford Town Centre area and the 104 Avenue corridor are relatively well serviced. The eastern portion of the plan area drains east to the Tynehead Interceptor that eventually flows to Metro Vancouver's South Surrey Interceptor. The central portion of the plan area drains north to Metro Vancouver North Surrey Interceptor. The western portion of the plan area drains west to the City Central University Drive Trunk that eventually flows to Metro Vancouver North Surrey Interceptor. As an urbanized area with existing sanitary sewer infrastructure, the planning process will assess the capacity of the existing systems to service new development and determine necessary upgrades.

Water

The Guildford Town Centre area and the 104 Avenue corridor are relatively well serviced. As an urbanized area with water infrastructure, the planning process will assess the capacity of existing systems to service new development and determine necessary upgrades.

Environment

Portions of Hawthorne Park and Green Timbers Urban Forest Park lie within the 104 Avenue corridor plan area. Both of these parks are important components of Surrey's Green Infrastructure Network, having high ecosystem value and providing valuable habitat for wildlife, as well as providing active and passive recreational opportunities. Both are also designated *Conservation and Recreation* in the OCP. The land use and transportation concept will need to be sensitive to these significant natural environments; while allowing for development at LRT supportive densities and the completion of an integrated transportation network:

- This land-use area incorporates three drainages (Serpentine, Bon Accord, and Guildford Brook), all of which have sensitive fisheries issues including water quality/quantity concerns as well as significant known erosion sites.
- Hawthorne Park and Green Timbers are significant Hubs within the Green Infrastructure Network (GIN) of the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (BCS) and will need to be managed accordingly and interfaced with adjacent land-uses appropriately.
- The BCS identifies the 'Matrix' areas which are all lands outside the BCS GIN that also contribute to meeting the City's BCS objectives. Land-use planning should be sensitive to these objectives.

- BCS GIN Corridor #98 crosses 104 Avenue near 140B Street. Land-use planning and transportation infrastructure will need to be sensitive to this crossing.

District Energy

Surrey City Energy, the City's district energy (DE) utility, has made significant progress towards its objectives of developing an integrated DE system focused in City Centre.

At present, small scale energy plants and piping systems are being installed at strategic locations within the City Centre. As the utility grows over time, these small scale systems will inter-connect and form one large integrated system. At first, the individual systems will rely primarily on high efficiency natural gas boilers; however, once the integrated system reaches a larger size, efficiencies of scale will provide the opportunity to introduce various renewable energy supply alternatives, such as biomass; waste heat recovery; and solar thermal energy.

As the utility grows, there will be opportunities to expand its reach to other neighbourhoods. Given the proximity of the Guildford Town Centre area and the 104 Avenue corridor to the City Centre, the planning process will assess the suitability of expanding Surrey City Energy's service area to include Guildford Town Centre area and/or the 104 Avenue corridor.

Stakeholder Consultation

As part of the planning process staff will engage with stakeholder groups including the Surrey Board of Trade, Green Timbers Heritage Society, Whalley Community Advisory Association, and any other property owners associations that represent the 104 Avenue corridor area. Consultation will also occur with the owners of the mall to discuss plans for the redevelopment of the north mall site and to ensure an excellent and mutually-supportive interface between the mall and the public realm, including the LRT station.

Engagement activities will include the following events or activities, at minimum:

- Public open houses to receive input from the community at each phase of the process;
- Focused workshops and urban design sessions with key stakeholders and staff; and
- Meetings with the Development Advisory Committee and the Urban Development Institute.

Reports to Council will be submitted at major milestones. Council will also be advised in advance of each Public Open House associated with this planning process and will be invited to all other public meetings and workshops. Staff will liaise closely with TransLink staff to coordinate public engagement activities with those related specifically to the LRT project to ensure clarity and alignment between these linked but distinct processes.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The Guildford Town Centre and 104 Avenue Planning Program will contribute to achieving many of the objectives of the City's *Sustainability Charter 2.0*. In particular, the plan will address the following Desired Outcomes:

Built Environment & Neighbourhoods

- *Surrey is comprised of distinct, diverse and compact neighbourhoods and Town Centres, with an engaging public realm; and*
- *Surrey is well-connected within the city and to the rest of the region by fast and efficient public transit and active, all-ages and abilities transportation infrastructure.*

Economic Prosperity and Livelihoods

- *Efficient land use and well-managed transportation infrastructure is in place to attract businesses and support a thriving economy.*

Inclusion:

- *Appropriate and affordable housing is available to meet the needs of all households in Surrey.*

The planning program also directly addresses the following Strategic Directions in the *Sustainability Charter 2.0*:

Built Environment & Neighbourhoods:

- *Promote mixed-use development in and around Town Centres and along transit corridors;*
- *Continue to plan and develop a transportation and mobility network that supports safety, placemaking and integration of neighbourhoods; and*
- *Provide greater multi-family housing choice, and options for affordability and accessibility.*

Economic Prosperity and Livelihoods

- *Collaborate with senior levels of government and TrnsLink to reduce congestion along strategic goods and people movement corridors.*

Inclusion:

- *Increase and maintain the supply of affordable and appropriate rental housing across all Surrey communities.*

CONCLUSION

Guildford Town Centre and the 104 Avenue corridor are presently without a secondary land use plan. This corridor comprises one of the three corridors along which LRT will one day operate. As such, staff proposes that planning for this corridor be initiated and completed well in advance of LRT start of service. The scope of work for this planning process will include the development of a land use and density concept, the completion of a market feasibility assessment, the development of urban design guidelines, a review of parks and transportation infrastructure requirements (including the establishment of alternate road connections to 104 Avenue), and an assessment of the area's drainage and environmental systems.

The Planning and Development Department and the Engineering Department recommend that Council:

- *Authorize staff to initiate a planning process for Guildford Town Centre and the 104 Avenue corridor, including a public and stakeholder engagement process, as outlined in this report; and*

- Instruct staff to develop Terms of Reference for the land use planning process, including consultant assistance as needed for Council consideration and approval.

Original signed by
Jean Lamontagne
General Manager,
Planning and Development

Original signed by
Fraser Smith, P.Eng., MBA
General Manager,
Engineering

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Attachment

Appendix "I" – General Locations of Proposed 104 Avenue Corridor Planning Areas

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Appendix "I"

General Locations of Proposed 104 Avenue Corridor Planning Areas

