

City of Surrey
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT REPORT

File: 7910-0012-00

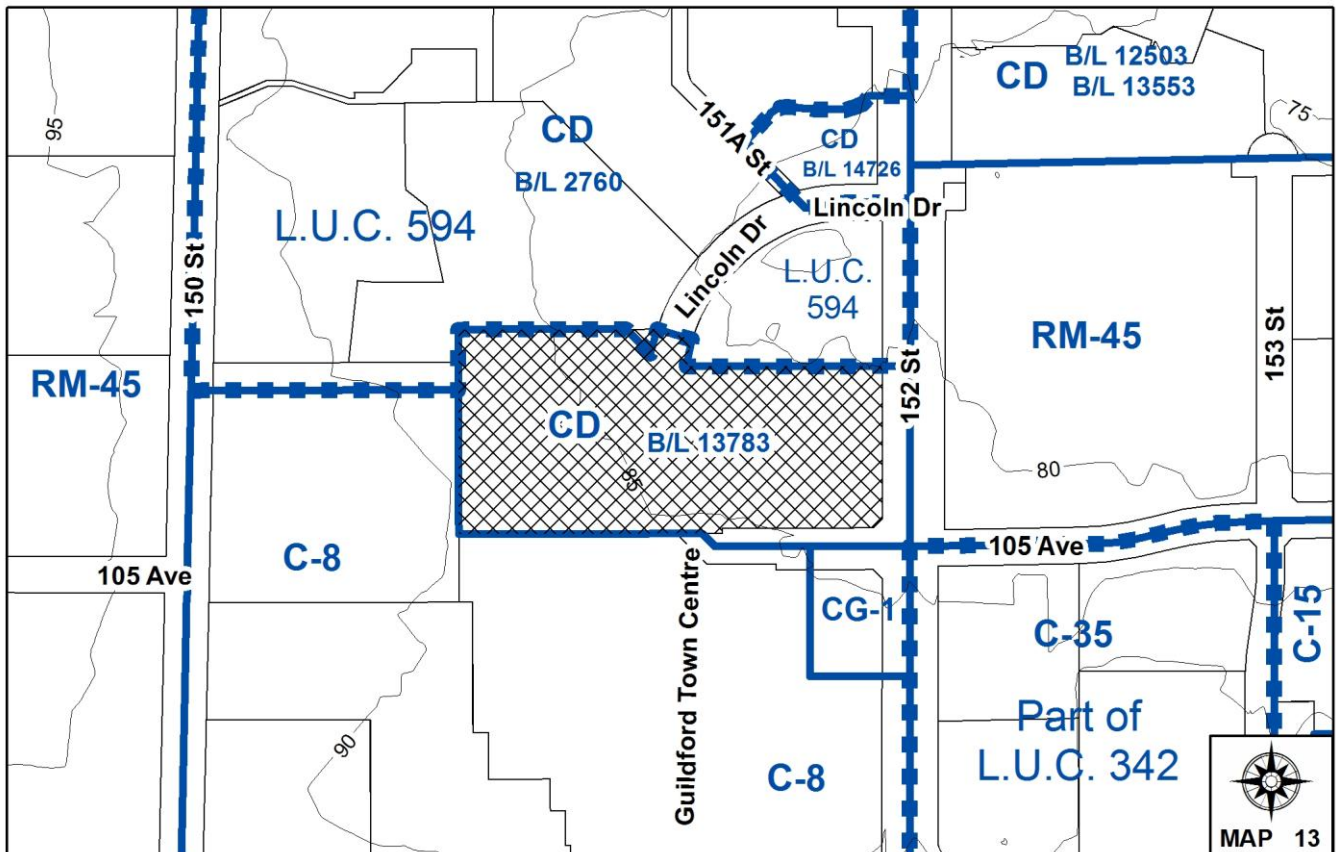
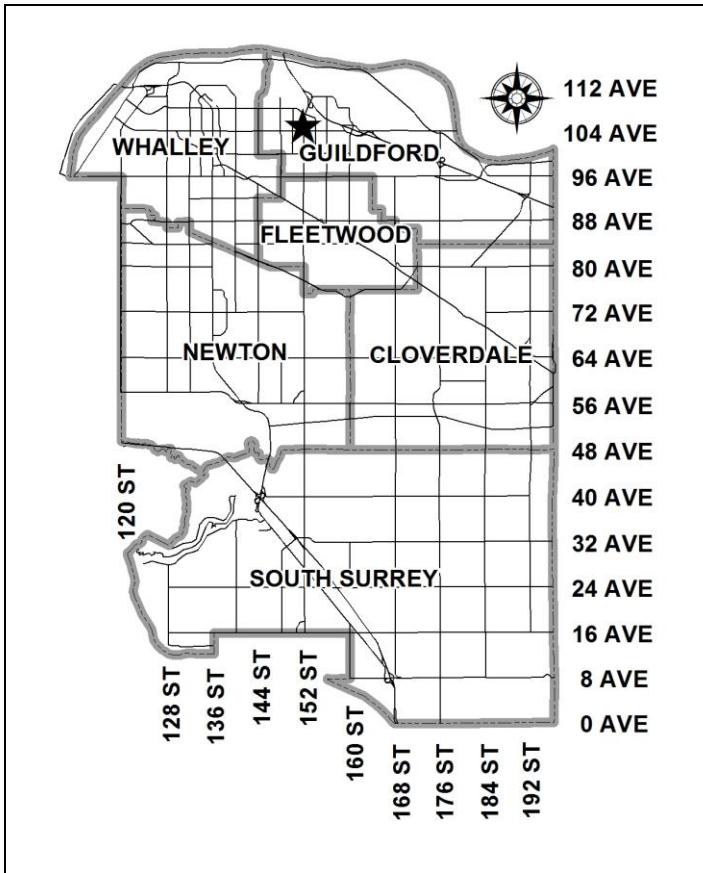
Planning Report Date: March 22, 2010

PROPOSAL:

- **Development Permit**
- **Development Variance Permit**

in order to allow a free-standing electronic message board sign at the Guildford Recreation Centre and Guildford Library site.

LOCATION: 15105 - 105 Avenue
OWNER: City of Surrey
ZONING: CD (By-law No. 13783)
OCP DESIGNATION: Town Centre



RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

- Approval to draft Development Permit.
- Approval for Development Variance Permit to proceed to Public Notification.

DEVIATION FROM PLANS, POLICIES OR REGULATIONS

- The proposed free-standing electronic message sign does not comply with the Sign By-law.

RATIONALE OF RECOMMENDATION

- The proposed free-standing electronic sign is part of a project that will see the installation of three digital signs in the City for a 36-month trial period.
- The proposed sign is of high quality and incorporates a unique design.
- The proposed sign will allow the City to generate additional revenue and also use the message board as a communication tool to relay community service information to the public.

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning & Development Department recommends that:

1. Council authorize staff to draft Development Permit No. 7910-0012-00 in accordance with the attached drawings (Appendix II).
2. Council approve Development Variance Permit No. 7910-0012-00, (Appendix II) varying the following Sign By-law regulations, to proceed to Public Notification:
 - (a) to allow an increase in the maximum height of a free-standing sign in the Guildford Special Sign Area from 2.4 metres (8 ft.) to 10.5 metres (34.2 ft.);
 - (b) to allow the sign permit for the proposed free-standing electronic message board sign to stay valid beyond the three (3) year time-frame from the Sign By-law adoption date of March 22, 1999 for an indefinite period of time;
 - (c) to allow the width of the proposed free-standing sign to exceed two-thirds of the height; and
 - (d) to allow third party advertising to exceed 70% of the allowable copy area on the proposed free-standing electronic message board sign.
3. Council instruct staff to resolve the following issues prior to approval:
 - (a) ensure that all engineering requirements and issues including restrictive covenants, and rights-of-way where necessary, are addressed to the satisfaction of the General Manager, Engineering; and
 - (b) issuance of Development Variance Permit No. 7910-0012-00.

REFERRALS

Engineering: The Engineering Department has no objection to the project.

SITE CHARACTERISTICS

Existing Land Use: Guildford Recreation Centre and Guildford Library.

Adjacent Area:

Direction	Existing Use	OCP Designation	Existing Zone
North (Across Lincoln Drive):	Multiple residential buildings.	Multiple Residential	LUC No. 594 (underlying CD By-law No. 2760)

Direction	Existing Use	OCP Designation	Existing Zone
East (Across 152 Street):	Multiple residential buildings.	Multiple Residential	RM-45
South (Across 105 Avenue):	Guildford Town Centre Mall and gas station.	Town Centre	C-8 and CG-1
West:	Vacant lot under in-process Development Application No. 7909-0216-00 to develop a parking lot to serve Guildford Town Centre Mall (Pre-Council).	Commercial	C-8

DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- The subject property, located at 15105 - 105 Avenue, is designated Town Centre in the Official Community Plan (OCP) and zoned Comprehensive Development (CD) By-law No. 13783. The Guildford Recreation Centre and Guildford Library currently occupy the site.
- The current application proposes a new free-standing electronic message board sign near the southeast corner of the subject site at 105 Avenue and 152 Street. There currently is no free-standing sign on the property.
- The current proposal is part of a pilot project by the City that will see the installation of a number of free-standing electronic message board signs throughout Surrey on City-owned sites.
- The pilot project will include two types of double-sided, free-standing, electronic message board signs distinguished by size (large-format and smaller-format). The large format free-standing signs will be approximately 19.5 metres (64 ft.) high and 17.0 metres (55 ft.) wide, while the smaller format signs will be approximately 10.5 metres (34.2 ft.) high and 7.45 metres (24.5 ft.) wide. The current application for the Guildford Recreation Centre site proposes a smaller-format, free-standing electronic message board sign.
- At present, there is one (1) other in-process development application which proposes a free-standing electronic message board sign:
 - Development Application No. 7910-0036-00 at the Surrey Sports and Leisure Complex.
- The main objectives of the pilot project are:
 - To realize a new revenue source for the City, a portion of which would be used to offset the lower revenue associated with the new high quality transit shelters;
 - To enhance the potential for the City and other public entities to share important information with the community extemporaneously by means of digital signage; and
 - To enhance economic development in the City and the region by expanding the opportunity for businesses to advertise goods and services through a new medium.

- The pilot project is proposed to run for up to 36 months to allow the City, the public, and other agencies to gauge the effectiveness and acceptability of the signs. If Council decides at any time before or at the end of the pilot project that the signs are not acceptable, all or specific free-standing signs will be removed.
- If the pilot project is successful, the agreement with the proponent, Pattison Outdoor Advertising Ltd, could call for a number of additional signs installed over a 20-year period. Each proposed free-standing sign will require a Development Permit, and if needed, a Development Variance Permit as well.
- The proposed free-standing electronic message board sign at the Guildford Recreation Centre site will require a Development Permit, as is the case with all new free-standing signs. Council will also need to consider the following variances as a result of the proposed free-standing sign:
 - The Sign By-law states that a free-standing sign in the Guildford Special Sign Area cannot exceed 2.4 metres (8 ft.) in height. The proposed free-standing electronic message board sign is proposed to be 10.5 metres (34.2 ft.) high;
 - Part 9 'Special Permit Signs' of the Sign By-law states that a sign permit for an electronic message board sign shall terminate at the end of three (3) years from the date of adoption of the Sign By-law (i.e., the provision expired three years from March 22, 1999);
 - The Sign By-law states that the width of a free-standing sign shall not exceed two-thirds of the height. The width of the proposed free-standing electronic message board sign will be almost three-quarters (3/4) of the height; and
 - Part 9 'Special Permit Signs' of the Sign By-law states that third party advertising on an electronic message board sign shall not exceed 70% of the allowable copy area. At given times, it is expected that third party advertising may occupy 100% of the allowable copy area.
- A variance is not required for the sign area of the proposed free-standing electronic message board sign. The proposed sign area is approximately 37.1 square metres (400 sq. ft.), while the maximum sign area permitted for a free-standing electronic message board sign is 43.0 square metres (460 sq. ft.) at this location.

PRE-NOTIFICATION

- Pre-notification letters were not required as part of the development application, however, the City Clerk will initiate the Public Notification as a result of the Development Variance Permit, should Council allow the application to proceed.

DESIGN PROPOSAL AND REVIEW

- The proposed free-standing electronic message board sign is 10.5 metres (34.2 ft.) high, 7.45 metres (24.5 ft.) wide and will be double-faced, with a total sign area of approximately 37.1 square metres (400 sq.ft.).

- The proposed sign is sited at the southeast corner of the subject property. The Parks, Recreation and Culture Department have confirmed that the proposed location will not interfere with or compromise any future expansion plans for the Guildford Recreation Centre.
- The proposed free-standing electronic message board sign is supported by a solid pole with aluminum cladding painted metallic, which will be installed on a concrete foundation. The existing grass lawn will be re-sodded after sign installation.
- The proposed free-standing sign will be capped with a curved aluminum roof and a perforated aluminum structure that will accommodate the City of Surrey logo.
- The two (2) electronic message boards on the proposed free-standing sign will be angled towards the street. The angled board creates better readability for passersby and the bold and distinctive design is unlike many standard electronic billboard signs.
- The proposed free-standing electronic message board sign is of high-quality with a unique design. The sign utilizes state-of-the-art LED digital technology, which is designed to provide clear, precise reproduction of still images and artwork.
- The digital advertising space on the proposed free-standing sign will present advertisements and information in one minute cycles consisting of nine separate advertising spaces. Each advertising space will present a static image that will remain on the sign for approximately six (6) seconds and then shift to the next static advertising message for another six (6) seconds, and so on and so forth.
- At least 10% of the advertising time will be dedicated to real-time City, RCMP, public service, emergency situations, and economic development messaging. The messaging on the proposed free-standing sign will not include streaming or live videos.
- The proposed free-standing electronic message board sign is similar to ones installed in Edmonton, where there are eight (8) free-standing signs located along arterial streets and highways designed and operated by the proponent, Pattison Outdoor Advertising, which is the same company designing and operating Surrey's proposed signs. The Proponent has agreed to post a \$500,000 letter of credit with the City to ensure performance of its obligations under the contract.
- A number of similar-sized free-standing electronic message board signs have been recently (December 2009) installed on First Nations land in Vancouver, West Vancouver, North Vancouver and Squamish. The smallest signs are approximately 9.1 metres (30 ft.) high, with the largest ones approximately 18.5 metres (61 ft.) high. The free-standing signs were not installed by Pattison Outdoor Advertising, however, the technology and size of the signs are similar to the ones proposed in Surrey.

BY-LAW VARIANCES AND JUSTIFICATION

(a) Requested Variance:

- To vary the Sign By-law to allow an increase in the maximum height of a free-standing sign in the Guildford Special Sign Area from 2.4 metres (8 ft.) to 10.5 metres (34.2 ft.).

Applicant's Reason:

- The proposed free-standing sign is well-designed and utilizes the same LED technology used in similar signs operating in other Canadian cities. The proposed size will allow for greater clarity and the ability to easily share advertisements and information with the public.

Staff Comments:

- The overall height of the proposed free-standing electronic message board sign is 10.5 metres (34.2 ft.) including the decorative element affixed above the electronic message board. However, the height of the sign from the ground to the top of the electronic message board is about 8.1 metres (26.5 ft.).
- The proposed free-standing electronic message board sign will not block sightlines or interfere with vehicle traffic along 152 Street or 105 Avenue. The pole of the proposed sign will be installed approximately 14.5 metres (47.5 ft.) from the property line, while the edge of the message board is approximately 4.4 metres (14.5 ft.) from the closest property line.
- The proposed free-standing electronic message board sign will provide an additional revenue source for the City, which can be used to improve infrastructure and facilities (i.e., transit shelters, street furniture, bike racks, etc.).

(b) Requested Variance:

- To vary the Sign By-law to allow the sign permit for the proposed free-standing electronic message board sign to stay valid beyond the 3-year time frame from the Sign By-law adoption date of March 22, 1999, for an indefinite period of time.

Applicant's Reason:

- The proposed free-standing sign is to be installed for an indefinite period of time.

Staff Comments:

- Part 9 of the Sign By-law states that electronic message board signs are considered experimental in nature and may be permitted on a trial basis at a limited number of major City-owned facilities. Consequently, Section 41 Sub-section 2(d) states that the sign permit for an electronic message board sign shall terminate at the end of three (3) years from the date of adoption of the Sign By-law, which was in 1999.
- Currently, the Planning Department is working on a number of amendments to the Sign By-law to provide clarity and to delete extraneous clauses. This clause is proposed for removal from the by-law.
- The proposed free-standing electronic message board sign is part of a pilot project by the City that may run for up to three (3) years. As such, the approval of the variance will allow the proposed free-standing electronic message board sign to remain on the subject site indefinitely if, after the trial period, Council determines that the proposed free-standing sign is reasonable.

(c) Requested Variance:

- To vary the Sign By-law to allow the width of the proposed free-standing electronic message board sign located in the Guildford Special Sign Area to exceed two-thirds of its height.

Applicant's Reason:

- The proposed free-standing electronic message board sign is the appropriate size given its design and intent.

Staff Comments:

- The width (7.45 metres / 24.5 ft.) of the proposed electronic message board sign is almost three-quarters of its height (10.5 metres / 34.2 ft.). However, this includes the decorative elements located at the crest of the proposed sign. If the height is compared with the width of the proposed message boards only, the proposed free-standing sign would comply with this clause in the Sign By-law.
- The proposed free-standing electronic message board sign will be installed on a concrete base and is of high quality and incorporates a bold and functional design. The proposed sign will allow the City to establish another communication tool to relay important information to its citizens.

(d) Requested Variance:

- To vary Part 9 'Special Permit Signs' of the Sign By-law to allow third party advertising on the proposed free-standing electronic message board sign to exceed 70% of the allowable copy area.

Applicant's Reason:

- Third party advertising is important to the feasibility of the proposed free-standing electronic message board sign.

Staff Comments:

- In addition to acting as a communication tool for the City to relay information to the public, the proposed free-standing electronic message board sign will offer third parties an opportunity to advertise their goods and services. At given times, it is expected that third party advertising may occupy 100% of the allowable copy area.
- The proposed free-standing electronic message board sign is a significant financial venture. Thus, the success and viability of the proposed sign is contingent on third party advertising.

INFORMATION ATTACHED TO THIS REPORT

The following information is attached to this Report:

- Appendix I. Lot Owners and Action Summary
- Appendix II. Development Variance Permit No. 7910-0012-00

Jean Lamontagne
General Manager
Planning and Development

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Information for City Clerk

Legal Description and Owners of all lots that form part of the application:

1. (a) Agent: Name: Oleg Verbenkov, Pacific Land Group
 Address: #101, 7485 – 130 Street
 Surrey, BC
 V3W 1H8
 Tel: 604-501-1624

2. Properties involved in the Application

- (a) Civic Address: 15105 – 105 Avenue
- (b) Civic Address: 15105 – 105 Avenue
 Owner: City of Surrey
 PID: 024-742-350
 Lot 1 Section 20 Block 5 North Range 1 West New Westminster District Plan
 LMP45471

3. Summary of Actions for City Clerk's Office

- (a) Proceed with Public Notification for Development Variance Permit No. 7910-0012-00.