

City of Surrey
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT REPORT

File: 7910-0036-00

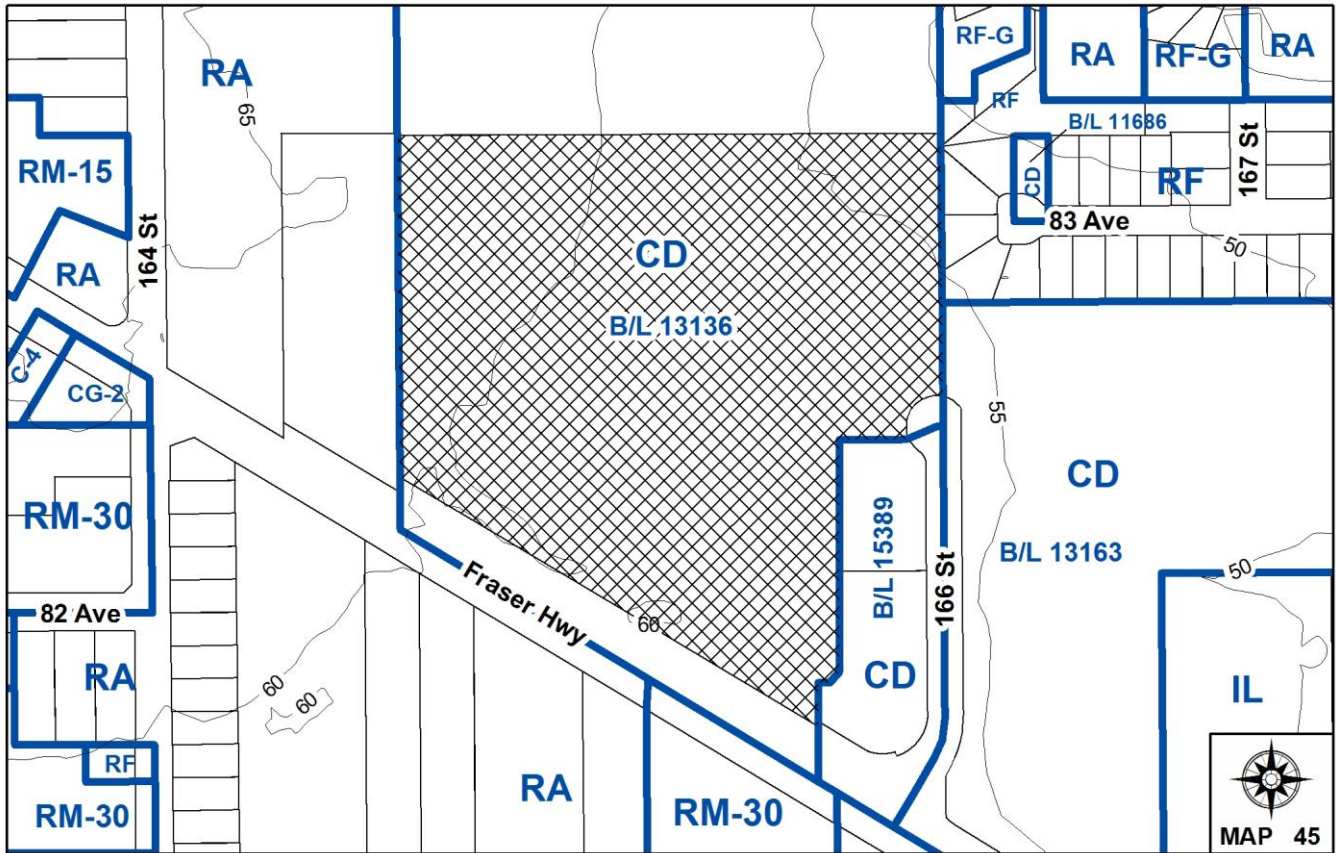
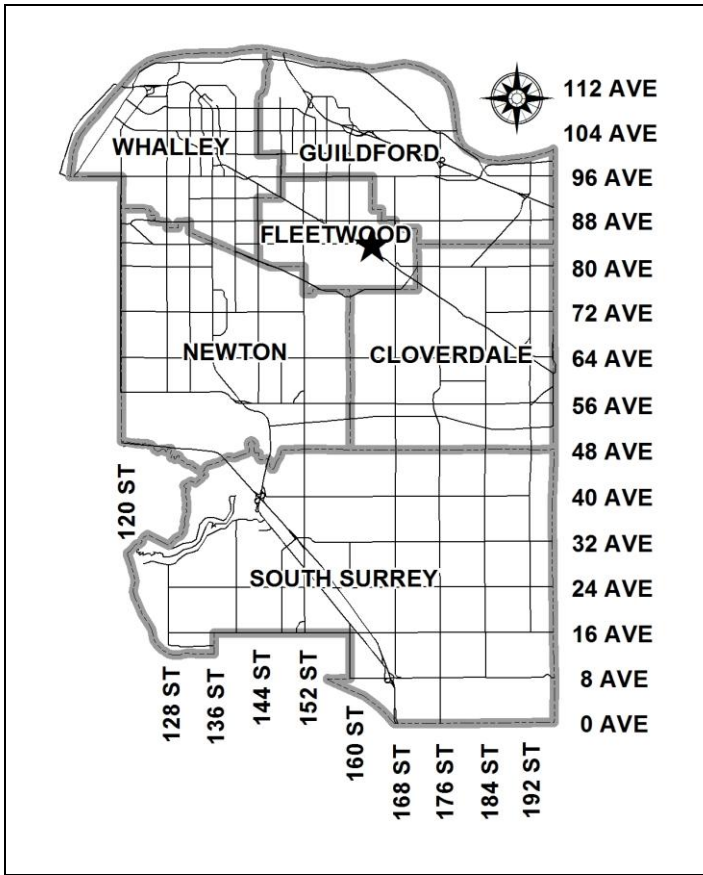
Planning Report Date: March 22, 2010

PROPOSAL:

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

in order to allow the installation of a free-standing electronic message board sign at the Surrey Sports & Leisure Centre.

LOCATION: 16555 Fraser Highway
OWNER: City of Surrey
ZONING: CD (By-law No. 13136)
OCP DESIGNATION: Urban



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 board sign does not comply with the Sign By-law.

RATIONALE OF RECOMMENDATION

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

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning & Development Department recommends that:

1. Council authorize staff to draft Development Permit No. 7910-0036-00 in accordance with the attached drawings (Appendix II).
2. Council approve Development Variance Permit No. 7910-0036-00, (Appendix II) varying the following, to proceed to Public Notification:
 - (a) to allow an increase in the maximum height of a free-standing sign from 7.6 metres (25 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 by deleting the three (3) year time-frame from the Sign By-law adoption date of March 22, 1999;
 - (c) to allow third party advertising to exceed 70% of the allowable copy area on the proposed free-standing electronic message board sign; and
 - (d) to reduce the minimum setback from a lot line from 2.0 metres (6.6 ft.) to 0 metre.
3. Council instruct staff to resolve the following issue 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.

REFERRALS

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

SITE CHARACTERISTICS

Existing Land Use: Surrey Sports and Leisure Complex.

Adjacent Area:

Direction	Existing Use	NCP Designation	Existing Zone
North:	Bonnie Schrenk Park	Parks and Linear Corridor	CD (By-law No. 13136)
East:	Restaurant and pub. Single family lots. Retail commercial building.	Commercial and Urban	CD (By-law No. 15389), RF and CD (By-law No. 13163)

Direction	Existing Use	NCP Designation	Existing Zone
South (Across Fraser Highway):	Vacant lands and townhouses.	Medium Density Townhouses	RA and RM-30
West:	Fleetwood Athletic Park	Parks and Linear Corridor	RA

DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- The subject property, located at 16555 Fraser Highway, is designated Urban in the Official Community Plan (OCP) and zoned Comprehensive Development (CD) By-law No. 13136. The Surrey Sports and Leisure Complex currently occupies the site.
- The current application proposes a new free-standing electronic message board sign along the south portion of the site along Fraser Highway. There currently is one (1) free-standing sign on the property.
- The current proposal is part of a pilot project by the City that will see the installation of free-standing electronic message board signs throughout Surrey on City-owned sites. At present, there is one other in-process development application which proposes a free-standing electronic message board sign:
 - Development Application No. 7910-0012-00 at the Guildford Recreation Centre;
- 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;
 - 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 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 at this location cannot exceed 7.6 metres (25 ft) in height. The proposed free-standing electronic message board sign will be 10.5 metres (34.2 ft) high;
- Part 9 'Special Permit Signs' of the Sign By-law 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 (i.e., the provision expired three years from March 22, 1999);
- 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; and
- The Sign By-law states that a free-standing sign must be located a minimum 2.0 metres (6.6 ft.) from any lot line. The proposed free-standing electronic message board sign extends slightly beyond the property line.
- 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.).

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 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-sod 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 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 the proposed free-standing electronic message board sign from 7.6 metres (25 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 only about 8.1 metres (26.5 ft.).

- 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.
- 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 timeframe from the Sign By-law adoption date of March 22, 1999.

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 one of the ones 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 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.

(d) Requested Variance:

- To vary the Sign By-law to reduce the setback from the property line of the proposed free-standing electronic message board sign from 2.0 metres (6.6 ft.) to 0.0 metre (0.0 ft.).

Applicant's Reason:

- The proposed free-standing electronic message board sign will be installed in the appropriate location where it will not interfere with existing telephone poles, trees and landscaping.

Staff Comments:

- The electronic message board on the proposed free-standing sign will extend slightly beyond the property line. However, the pole of the proposed free-standing electronic message board sign will be installed approximately 8.5 metres (28 ft) from the property line, and thus, the proposed sign will not block sightlines or interfere with vehicle or pedestrian traffic along Fraser Highway.
- There is an existing free-standing sign located on the subject property along Fraser Highway, which is located approximately 90 metres (295 ft.) east of the location of the proposed free-standing sign. The existing sign is located entirely off the subject property on the grassy area within the right-of-way.

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. 7910-0036-00

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: 16555 Fraser Highway

 - (b) Civic Address: 16555 Fraser Highway
 Owner: City of Surrey
 PID: 024-161-845
 Lot 1 Section 25 Township 2 New Westminster District Plan LMP38186 Except:
 Firstly; Part Subdivided by Plan BCP13454 Secondly; Part Dedicated on Plan
 BCP3004

3. Summary of Actions for City Clerk's Office
 - (a) Proceed with Public Notification for Development Variance Permit No. 7910-0036-00.