



Corporate Report

NO: R100

COUNCIL DATE: May 12, 2003

REGULAR

TO: **Mayor &
Council** DATE: **May 9, 2003**

FROM: **City Manager** FILE: **6520 -20/W**

SUBJECT: **Whalley Enhancement Strategy**

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council:

1. Receive this report for information.
2. Approve a budget of \$5,000,000 for one-time capital improvements for Whalley Enhancement Strategy.
3. Approve-in-principle, a reduction of up to 50% of the DCC's in City Centre related to higher density, multi-family residential development, for a period of two years.
4. Approve the development of new leisure programs, services and facility upgrades for Whalley aimed at strengthening families and building community pride.

INTENT

The intent of this report is to gain Council approval for a group of capital improvements, community development initiatives and incentives for development in Whalley that will enhance this area of the City by improving its image, stimulating private sector development, and by building a greater sense of pride within the community for those who live, work and visit there. This intent is consistent with Mayor and Council's ongoing Whalley cleanup efforts, and with the Official Community Plan's Policy Area 3, *City Image and Character*.

BACKGROUND

Based on the Official Community Plan's Policy Area 3, *City Image and Character*, Surrey is striving to establish itself as a very attractive location to live, work, locate a business in and visit, within the region and also nationally and internationally. This vision is to be realized not only in the rapidly growing areas of the City where development has given the City a fresh, vibrant and liveable image, but also in the well established and older areas of the City.

In one such older area of the City, Whalley, traits of concern have been identified within this community as it transforms over time, including: a high unemployment rate; visible drug use on the streets; higher than average prostitution; a number of rundown properties; and a perception of high levels of crime. Mayor and Council are addressing many of these obvious problems in Whalley through a series of clean-up initiatives, increased police presence, and greater by-law enforcement activities.

However, in addition to the special needs of Whalley, Council has also recognized its great potential, and has designated a central area within Whalley as the new City Centre. Significant major projects such as the pre-servicing of Bridgeview, the Gateway development, the Central City tower and the development of two new riverfront parks have played an important role in helping to redefine the image and character of Whalley. These projects need to be built upon to achieve Council's vision. Several key mechanisms for transforming Whalley include altering the physical, cultural and lifestyle attributes of this portion of the City, engaging the community in programs and services that re-build the community's pride in the area, and stimulating private sector development.

It is anticipated that improvements from the proposals outlined below in this report will assist in achieving the following outcomes:

- **The City Centre will become a much more vibrant, people-friendly place;**
- **Surrey's north gateway into the City from the Patullo Bridge, through Bridgeview and up the hill to City Centre, will be revitalized;**
- **The waterfront along the Fraser River foreshore will become more accessible to the public for Active City activities such as walking;**
- **New leisure facilities and programs will create safer environments in which families and individuals can thrive, community capacity can be built, and greater community pride can be achieved;**
- **Unwanted and illegitimate activities will be decreased.**

DISCUSSION

The enhancement of Whalley will have three main components: 1) Capital Improvements; 2) Additional incentive for private sector development and 3) New and enhanced leisure programs that focus on wellness, youth and family-oriented activities.

1. Capital Improvements 2003 – 2005

The proposed capital works will occur in three key areas:

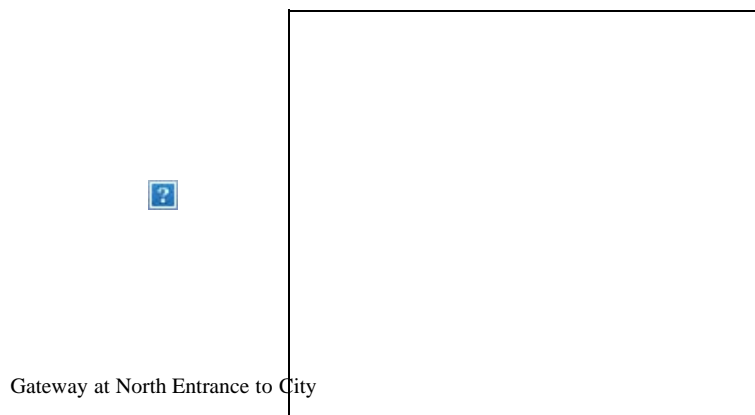
- A. **Gateway to Surrey**, which is the approach from Patullo Bridge to City Centre;
- B. **City Centre Axis**, which would have two Civic anchors (Tom Binnie North and Holland Park South) drawing from Central City's synergy; and
- C. **Waterfront improvements.**
- D. **Showcase Program** for transit-oriented development at Surrey Central Station.

The proposed capital improvements will be kept at a "manageable scale". These improvements will be

done to a relatively high standard, and will be maintained at an appropriate level in order to increase pride in the Community. Appendix 1. contains a more detailed list of the capital improvements that are proposed under the Whalley Enhancement Strategy.

A. Gateway to Surrey

Presently, the North Gateway to Surrey is not attractive for those entering the City. It is intended that the northern gateway to Surrey from the Patullo Bridge to City Centre be improved with banners along King George Highway, art on the pedestrian overpass located at 126 Street, and land acquisition at different intersections which will allow for key landscape improvements. This will greatly assist in changing the appearance of our City.



Improvements are also proposed for main roads, including King George Highway, and East & West Whalley Ring Roads. Proposed actions would include land acquisition, landscape improvements, directional signage and the completion of the missing links. Hanging flower baskets and banners will be placed on light standards in the City Centre, bringing art and natural beauty to this area.

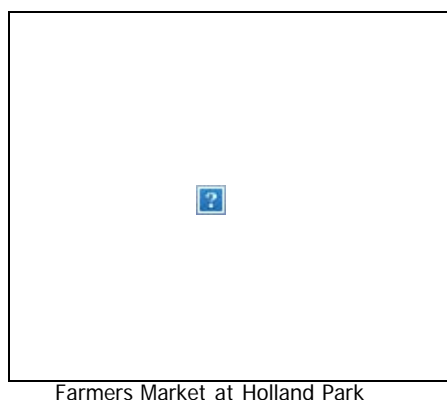
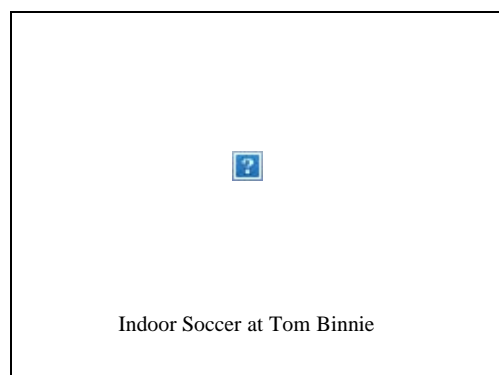
A map contained in Appendix 2. shows the proposed roads and intersections that would be targeted for improvement.

B. The City Centre Axis

The new Central City tower in City Centre is a very positive addition that will bring greater positive use of the City Centre. “Missing links” of the **Surrey Parkway** will be completed to connect the community anchors of Tom Binnie Recreation Centre (north) and Holland Park (south). Along with the completion of the Surrey Parkway, completion of the East and West Whalley Ring Road connections will be undertaken over the next two years, thus displacing some negative use of the undeveloped land, meeting transportation needs, and improving the appearance of the area. **Staff are also actively investigating the potential for development of a large, civic plaza in the area between the North Surrey Recreation Centre and the Central City tower.**

At the north end, Tom Binnie Recreation Centre is well used by the Community and could act as the catalyst for more positive use in that area. The BC Lions Football building is used by the BC Lions club and does not generate much “positive” traffic in this neighbourhood. An indoor soccer training facility is proposed for this site, to be used by Surrey groups, the BC Lions and also soccer groups from outside of Surrey. Such facilities are in high demand, and will bring a great deal of positive activity to the neighbourhood, especially in the important evening hours.

Additional land acquisition is proposed adjacent to Holland Park, facilitating the creation of “windows” along Old Yale Road to the north and King George Highway to the east. These acquisitions, coupled with the development of Holland Park into a “special events” park would allow for hosting community and special events such as the return of the farmers market to City Centre, in a prime visible location with easy access and parking.



C. Waterfront Access and Improvements

The City will more actively pursue key acquisitions along the Fraser River waterfront between Brownsville Bar and Tannery Park. This may involve outright acquisition, land exchanges, negotiated rights of public access or, if necessary, expropriation. Once the land has been acquired, pedestrian and cycling pathways will quickly be established along the river front between these two important parks.

D. Showcase Program – Development of a Transit-Oriented Development at Surrey

Central Station

The City, in conjunction with the GVRD has applied to Transport Canada under the “Urban Transportation Showcase Program” for funding to provide and enhance infrastructure (e.g. roads, sidewalks, lighting, landscaping, cycle paths, etc.) that will increase the use of public transportation in the City Centre area. Council has endorsed an application for funding to create a Transit-Oriented Development (Transit Village) at the Surrey Central Station area. This project, if approved, will include planning for and construction of capital improvements in the vicinity of the Surrey Central Station to enhance the physical environment to increase walking, cycling and transit use in the vicinity of the station. Some specific projects that are included in the application are the upgrading of City Parkway, widening of 103A Avenue west of King George Highway, and completion of West Whalley Ring Road. The program would also examine and implement other measures to encourage development and redevelopment of properties within an 800 m radius of the skytrain station. At this time, the total of \$6 million is being requested toward this program of projects, with up to \$2 million being funded by the City and the remainder being funded by senior levels of government through the Showcase Program. Although the final evaluation of applications has not been completed, staff is confident that the City's proposal has a very strong potential to be successful. The Minister of Transport will be announcing the successful applications by August 2003.

Upon approval of the Whalley Enhancement Strategy, a detailed report will be submitted to Council respecting the specifics of the above capital works outlined conceptually in this report.

2. Incentives for Development

While the City's investment in Whalley will make this area of the City more vibrant and liveable and therefore more attractive to private sector investment and development, an additional incentive to development will be offered in terms of reducing Development Cost Charges (DCC's) for City Centre. It is proposed that the City Centre DCC's be reduced 50% for densities of over 45 units per acre and 25 % for densities of under 45 units per acre. This will be accomplished by eliminating the Park Land Acquisition DCC on the basis that significant acquisitions have occurred in City Centre recently. Further, the Roads DCC will be reduced by 25%. This reduction in City Centre DCCs would require a calculation and amendment to the DCC by-law, which also requires Provincial approval. A reduction in the City Centre Road DCC will result in a relatively small reduction in funding towards overall road/transportation needs. At this time, we anticipate that this shortfall would be made up through the use of cost shared programs such as the Transport Canada Showcase Program and the Infrastructure Program. It is anticipated that this reduction in DCC's will encourage the development of high-density multi-family residential properties, and with a corresponding growth in development related to the service industries that will build around the higher density City Centre.

Collectively, these reductions will promote the development of affordable housing in City Centre. **This is intended to be a two-year pilot program** to spur a response from the development industry. A future

detailed report will be submitted for Council approval and then be forwarded on to the Province for approval.

3. Leisure and Community Development Initiatives

New and enhanced leisure and community development initiatives by the City will encourage people to become involved in wellness, family-oriented activities and in their community. There will be a focus on children, youth and families, with an increase in the opportunity for these groups to participate in positive activities that will increase community capacity and resilience. The outcomes of this will be as follows:

- Increased amount of Whalley residents working together toward the common good of the community, with a greater sense of belonging.
- Healthier, happier residents participating in positive activities.
- Increased links with the City of Surrey, through enhanced participation in existing community based programs such as Block Watch, Adopt-A-Street, Block Parties, Community Advisory Boards, Parent Advisory Committees, Business Associations, etc.
- Greater capacity to sustain community special events and community partnerships with businesses.
- An improved image of Whalley from both within and without the community.

An outline of the proposed Leisure and Community Development Initiatives is included in Appendix 3.

Upon approval of the Whalley Enhancement Strategy, a detailed report will be submitted to Council respecting the specifics of the leisure programs and services that will be undertaken under the Whalley Enhancement Strategy.

4. Financing the Whalley Enhancement Strategy

The total cost of all of the initiatives outlined in this strategy will be approximately \$8M to \$10M. Some of the projects identified in this report are included in specific capital programs that have already been approved such as Parkland Acquisition and Roads Capital. However, over and above, the programs already approved, an additional \$5M is required to fund the remaining initiatives in the Whalley Enhancement Strategy.

Several years ago, Council set aside Capital funds for constructing a building to house a joint Fire & Police Dispatch as well as to construct "towers" for the Fire Radio Communication System. Staff is currently exploring alternative solutions, therefore \$4M of this funding is no longer required. There is also an

additional \$1M of sundry capital funding available from other projects completed under budget. It is recommended that this total funding of \$5M be re-allocated to the Whalley Enhancement Strategy.

Some of the initiatives identified in this strategy will require ongoing operating funds which will be identified in future budgets. As well, the City will explore the possibility of involving other community service groups with a goal of reducing these costs over time.

5. Implementation of the Whalley Enhancement Strategy

If Council approval is given for the Whalley Enhancement Strategy, staff will immediately begin preparations for the capital works projects and leisure programs, with the intention of having the first improvements beginning in the summer of 2003. Major capital works will take place over the summers of 2003 and 2004, with some other ongoing projects beginning in the fall of 2003.

6. Summary

While the Whalley/City Centre has already benefited from Mayor and Council's Whalley enforcement initiatives, the City's pre-servicing of Bridgeview, the development of the Central City Tower and other private sector developments in City Centre, there is a need to build on these initiatives and the OCP Policy 3 – ***City Image and Character***, to significantly enhance Whalley into a great place to live, work and visit. To this end, it is recommended that Council give approval to a group of capital improvements, community development initiatives and incentives for development in Whalley that will enhance this area of the City by improving its image, stimulating private sector development, and by building a greater sense of pride within the community for residents and visitors alike.

Umendra Mital, P.Eng

City Manager

APPENDIX 1

Preliminary List of Capital Projects

A. Gateway to Surrey

- Install banners on poles from the south end of the Patullo Bridge to 100 Avenue.
- Improve intersection at King George Highway and 128 Street.
- Improve intersection at King George Highway and 108 Avenue.
- Improve intersection at King George Highway and 102 Avenue.
- Improve intersection at King George Highway and East and West Whalley Ring Road.
- Improve street landscaping on King George Highway, a portion of Scott Road, East and West Whalley Ring Roads.

B. City Centre Axis

Road Capital Improvements:

- Completion of East and West Whalley Ring Roads
- Completion of the Surrey Parkway between 108 Avenue and Holland
- Park Land Acquisition near Tom Binnie Recreation Centre
- Banners and flower baskets on City Centre poles

Parks, Recreation and Culture Capital Improvements:

- Parkland Acquisition near Holland Park
- Indoor soccer at Tom Binnie Recreation Centre
- Renovation to the lobby as well as reconfiguration and expansion of weight and cardio room at North Surrey Recreation Centre (in reflection of the Central City public plaza)
- Development of Holland Park
- Improvements to playground area at Tom Binnie Recreation Centre
- Addition of a slide and windows to the North Surrey Recreation Centre Pool
- Improvements to parking lots (CPTED design and lighting) at different community facilities
- Addition of different amenities which are in high demand within parks in Whalley and other areas of Surrey (OCP policy area 3).
- Development of a Large Civic Plaza

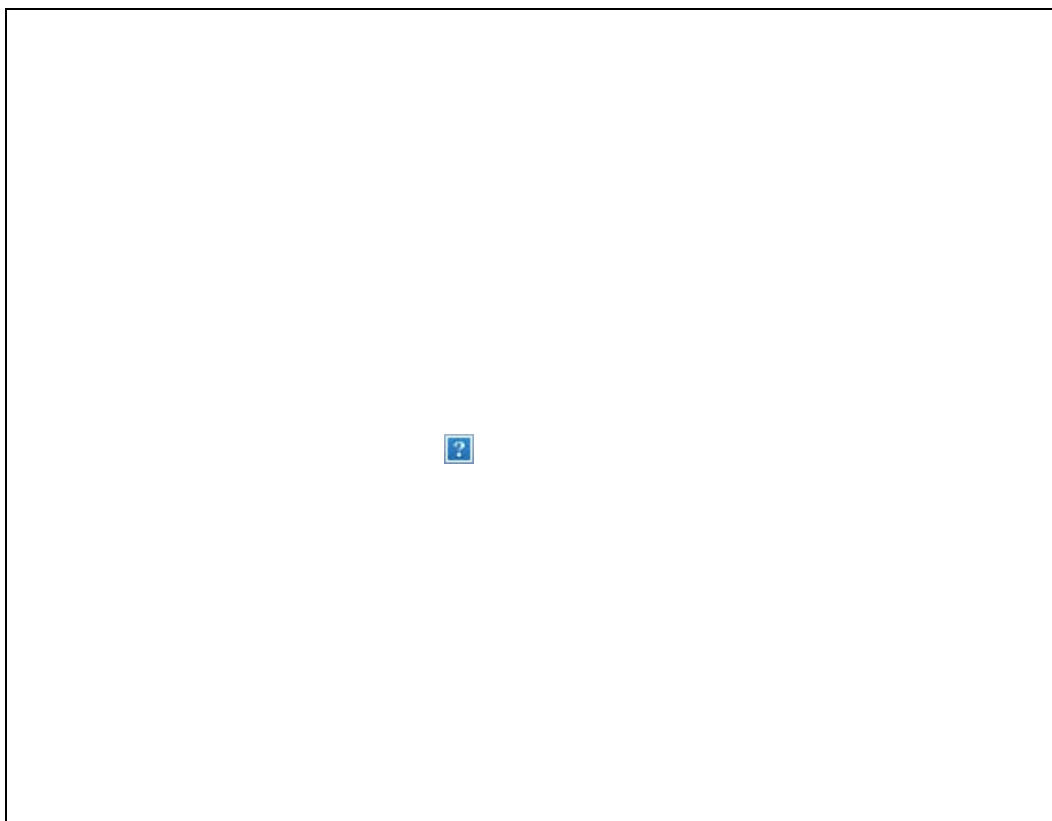
C. Waterfront

- Land Acquisition along the Fraser River waterfront
- Development of acquired properties on the Fraser River waterfront

D. Development of a Transit-Oriented development at Surrey Central Station

- Transit Village related improvements

Appendix 2 – Map of Roads & Intersections



Appendix 3

Leisure and Community Development Programs Initiatives

The program proposals include community-based events that will provide opportunities for residents to come together around positive activities and provide vibrant visual activity in Whalley. A *Community Art Series* will feature outdoor exhibitions of local artists and musicians temporarily displaying their work, creating an *Art Walk* concept. The events will be held outdoor in highly visible locations in the community, i.e., North Surrey Recreation Centre Front Plaza and along 135 Street, and in Kwantlen Park. This program will be developed with key community stakeholders.

Creating Neighbourhood Spirit is a smaller-scale program focusing on building community pride at a neighbourhood level through Block Parties, free outdoor music performances titled “Concert in the Park”, and community BBQ’s with games and activities. All community-based programs will be facilitated by staff working closely with community members.

A number of family/all ages special events are proposed at Whalley recreation facilities. Events will be developed around major themes such as Fall Harvest, Easter Egg Hunt, Earth day and World Peace Day. The events will feature music, crafts, games, low cost food and cultural activities. Small-scale special events are very popular and often attract up to 500 community members; they provide an excellent opportunities for families to enjoy entertainment in their local community.

While the City will launch and establish the above three initiatives, it is proposed they will then be run by various community groups. In addition to the above, it is also proposed that the City deliver a variety of recreational programs

throughout the community. Such programs are proposed to target specific age groups and particularly high-risk populations. Cost and transportation are two key barriers to participation; therefore, low cost activities delivered in various community locations are key to the success of the programs. Additional preschool programs (children aged 0 to six) will be introduced at Tom Binnie and North Surrey Rec Centre. Child development during ages 0 - 6 are critical for the long-term positive outcomes of a child. The programs will offer high quality instructors leading age-appropriate activities in a clean and supportive environment.

Introduction of additional after-school programs schools will increase the access to recreational programs during this high risk time period for children. Surrey Parks, Recreation and Culture currently deliver programs in 13 of the 16 elementary schools in Whalley. More resources will enable the programs to be offered at all the schools. After school programs feature sport instruction, games, crafts, and leadership skills. Parks and Recreation staff will work closely with school staff and local parent advisory groups to develop programs that meet the community need.