

**TERMS OF REFERENCE
FOR
PREPARING THE
*SOUTH WESTMINSTER NEIGHBOURHOOD CONCEPT PLAN***

Introduction

The South Westminster area, which is situated in the north-westerly quadrant of the City and occupies an area of approximately 1,400 acres (see Appendix 2), has been designated Industrial in the Official Community Plan for many years. Despite the Industrial designation and the available services, the area is relatively undeveloped and under-utilized, being occupied predominantly by industrial uses which have minimal infrastructure investments but have a highly negative visual impact such as auto-wrecking and salvage yard operations.

The existing salvage uses in South Westminster occupy approximately 50% of the prime industrial lands along Scott Road. Presently, most of these lands used for salvage operations are for sale. Five major groups of holdings are listed, totalling nearly 150 acres (60 hectares) in area. All of these groups are presently owned by United Auto Lands; this situation could change in the near future.

South Westminster is one of the entrances to Surrey: from New Westminster via the Pattullo Bridge and SkyTrain; and from Delta via River Road and the South Fraser Perimeter Road in the future. The area is becoming more visible due to transportation improvements. SkyTrain travels above-grade through the area and the Scott Road SkyTrain Station and park and ride facility are located in South Westminster at 110 Avenue and 128 Street. Recent commercial developments such as Home Depot and Revy Home & Garden located near the Scott Road SkyTrain Station also bring more people into the area.

BC Parkway, a pedestrian / bicycle network, coincides with the SkyTrain alignment in South Westminster and is planned to terminate at Brownsville Bar, leaving the possibility for a pedestrian ferry shuttle to New Westminster in the future. The construction of BC Parkway between 128 Street in South Westminster and the Gateway SkyTrain Station at 108 Avenue in Surrey City Centre is nearing completion. The second phase will involve the construction of the link to Brownsville Bar.

Recent development approvals in South Westminster include a major film and recording studio at Scott Road and 108 Avenue and an ethnic community facility on City-owned land south of the Scott Road SkyTrain Station at 128 Street and 110 Avenue. The film studio, consisting of a film tank, is built and was operational until recently. Numerous other inquiries and proposals for non-industrial uses have been reviewed by the City including a spectator arena, a theme park (incorporating the relocated Pacific National Exhibition), churches, private schools and highway-oriented commercial uses. Mixed-

use developments along the waterfront have been discussed. Although such developments could bring an economic boost to the South Westminster area, a major concern is that it could be detrimental to a viable Surrey City Centre.

There is a strong desire to improve the image of South Westminster from that of a salvage industrial area to an area that offers many employment possibilities while providing for open space and recreation. The land use plan for the South Westminster area should be revisited. Redevelopment of the South Westminster area is consistent with Council's objective to attract additional industrial and commercial development to the City and support the City's Economic Development Strategy.

The existing land use plan should be replaced with a Neighbourhood Concept Plan (NCP). The NCP should include a land use plan which incorporates a parks plan, a servicing plan, amenity requirements and an implementation strategy which includes a financial plan. Like all NCPs, the South Westminster Neighbourhood Concept Plan should be prepared with significant consultation with the property owners. The NCP will form the basis for redevelopment of the area.

Opportunities and Constraints

The South Fraser Perimeter Road is potentially a limited access highway. It is aligned through the centre of South Westminster, generally parallel to the Fraser River. This highway will link the Trans-Canada Highway with Highway 17 / Highway 99 and act as an east-west connector for the Lower Mainland area south of the Fraser River between the four main river crossings.

The new road will improve service to and from the Surrey Fraser Docks. This multi-purpose terminal is one of the Lower Mainland's major port facilities and is situated in South Westminster along the Fraser River south of the Manson Canal.

The entire South Westminster area has a layer of soft peat soils up to 10 metres in depth. Therefore, conventional infrastructure design and construction will not work. The area is subject to subsidence (i.e. sinking) and infrastructure installation can only be undertaken after sufficient pre-loading has been completed.

The existing vacuum sewer system was installed to address public health concerns when the existing septic systems in the area failed. It is costly to operate and maintain and has no expansion capacity. A steep grade sewer system, which allows for settlement in the soft soils, is proposed as an alternative. Steep grade sewer systems have higher capital and maintenance costs when compared to conventional sewer systems.

The soft soils also present unique challenges for the water system. A higher standard for pipe joint restraint increases the cost of construction. Higher standards are also required to minimize the impact of a seismic event. Adequately sized feeder mains exist in the

area. However, the grid system will have to be improved as well as the security of the feeder mains to guard against failure during an earthquake.

From a drainage perspective, the study area is within the floodplain of the Fraser River. It is located at the downstream end of three main sub-watersheds, namely, the Old Yale, Pattullo and Manson sub-watersheds. Master Drainage Plans (MDPs) have been completed for the Old Yale and Pattullo watersheds. Capital works for these areas are planned for 1999. The MDP for the Manson sub-watershed is nearing completion.

The area is protected by a dyke system along the Fraser River with the 1:200 year flood elevation set at approximately 4.40 metres (including a 0.6 metre freeboard). BC Environment flood proofing regulations will need to be adhered to. Incremental filling to achieve flood protection standards will lead to increased flooding in some areas, therefore, a comprehensive fill and pre-load plan will need to take into account potential flooding impacts.

The three creek systems (Scott, Robson and Collieres Creeks) which eventually drain to the Manson Canal to an existing pump station near the Fraser River are salmon habitat. This has posed a limitation on maintenance activities needed to maintain capacity in the canal and the ability to upgrade the existing pump station. Therefore, there is a limitation on the capacity of the Manson Canal and pump station to protect the area from frequent flooding. The Collieres and Scott Creeks formally had their own outlets to the Fraser River, which have since been filled. The MDP is recommending that the former open channel outlet for Collieres Creek be reinstated to relieve the Manson Canal. In addition, riparian habitat enhancement along Scott and Collieres Creeks will likely be necessary to enable the Manson pump station to be upgraded through a long term maintenance agreement with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and BC Environment for the Manson Canal and other channels.

Brownsville Bar is a favourite Fraser River fishing spot located to the south of the Pattullo Bridge in South Westminster. Surrey's only Fraser River boat launch is also located at the Brownsville Bar. Waterfront properties at Manson Canal have the potential to become an equally popular recreation destination. Efforts should be made to establish a waterfront walkway between Brownsville Bar and Manson Canal. Other opportunities to establish recreation nodes and linkages to the north-east of Brownsville Bar should also be explored.

Study Area

The South Westminster area is bounded by King George Highway to the north, 96 Avenue to the south, the Fraser River to the west and the toe of the slope of the Whalley Hill to the east. South Westminster has an area of approximately 1,400 acres.

Objectives for the Plan

1. To assess the suitability of current industrial uses in the South Westminster area in the context of the changing character created by new developments, new ideas and market trends.
2. To investigate other potential land uses, to compliment industrial / business uses and their servicing requirements without compromising the viability of Surrey City Centre.
3. To redefine the role of the South Westminster area given its unique position of being a primary gateway into Surrey.
4. To prepare a Land Use Plan for South Westminster which will incorporate a parks plan that maximizes the City's waterfront assets for open space and recreation and to co-ordinate such a Waterfront Plan with other plans currently in progress, including the Whalley Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
5. To develop a servicing plan and financial strategy to achieve the land use plan.
6. To develop Urban Design Guidelines for the area particularly for the entrance areas and along the South Fraser Perimeter Road, Scott Road and King George Highway and along the SkyTrain alignment.
7. To formulate strategies to create a positive image and investment climate for South Westminster and in turn increase employment opportunities in this area including strategies for the possible phasing out of the existing salvage uses as a prerequisite to promoting and encouraging higher quality developments.

Methodology

1. Analyze the physical conditions of the area, including topography, road patterns, environmental issues, servicing and other components relevant to the study objectives.
2. Undertake a study to verify the financial feasibility of proceeding with any plans to alter the present land use pattern in the area, given known geotechnical and possible environmental problems in the area.
3. Review the existing industrial uses, in particular the salvage yards, and explore alternative land uses that would be more appropriate in view of the emerging character in the area and in the context of this area being strategically located as a gateway into Surrey.

4. Establish a public process which will include the formation of a Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) consisting of major and key land owners and tenants in South Westminster.
5. Investigate waterfront development opportunities and different land uses to maximize the City's waterfront assets within the context of Surrey City Centre development objectives. This would include a market feasibility study conducted by a consultant.
6. Undertake a heritage assessment to document any historical significance of the South Westminster area that should be incorporated into the urban design concept and guidelines.
7. Prepare a detailed land use plan, with appropriate public participation, to include implementation strategies and the phasing out of those existing land uses deemed inappropriate for the area. The preparation of the land use plan should take into consideration the development of the South Fraser Perimeter Road and other transportation needs as defined by the Engineering Department. The plan should also incorporate a parks plan, developed jointly with the Parks, Recreation & Culture Department.
8. Determine amenity requirements for the area which will assist in achieving the goal of developing an aesthetically pleasing and prestigious work environment.
9. Report to Council at key milestones.

Scope of Study

Based on positive results from the feasibility report, the study will involve preparation of a comprehensive land use plan, parks plan, urban design concepts and guidelines, servicing plans, a financial plan, an implementation strategy and other regulatory mechanisms necessary to provide guidance to achieving the stated objectives.

Timing

The planning process for developing a South Westminster Neighbourhood Concept Plan should begin immediately.

Based on undertaking the majority of this project in-house, the projected completion date is November, 1999. The following are the targeted milestones:

<i>Action Item (Some Steps May Occur in Parallel)</i>	<i>Action Required</i>	<i>Target Date for Completion</i>
1. Council endorsement of the Terms of Reference.	Submit necessary report to Council for approval.	February, 1999
2. Initiate planning study and seek general comments.	Prepare background materials/mapping.	February, 1999

<i>Action Item (Some Steps May Occur in Parallel)</i>	<i>Action Required</i>	<i>Target Date for Completion</i>
3. Conduct feasibility study.	Retain a consultant to determine the viability of changing land uses, given the high costs of servicing and environmental problems.	April, 1999
4. Determine opportunities and constraints.	Consult with City Departments. Consult with external agencies (MOTH, MELP, GVTA, Fraser Port). Market feasibility study on waterfront development opportunities. Establish a CAC for South Westminster.	May, 1999
5. Generate land use alternatives.	Prepare several options in consultation with City Departments. Present options to CAC. Present options to the general public.	June, 1999
6. Select preferred alternative.	Compile and review results of input from public and other input. Prepare preferred plan and conceptual servicing/funding strategy. Determine amenity requirements for the area. Present preferred plan to CAC.	August, 1999
7. Finalize preferred alternative.	Finalize servicing/funding strategy. Finalize amenity requirements and resultant costs. Present preferred plan to the general public.	Sept., 1999
8. Seek Council approval.	Submit South Westminster NCP to Council for approval.	October, 1999
9. Develop Urban Design Guidelines.	Prepare Design Guidelines for entrance areas and along major roads.	Nov., 1999
10. Seek Council approval.	Submit Design Guidelines to Council for approval.	Nov., 1999
	Amend OCP to include Design Guidelines.	Dec., 1999

Costs

The preparation of the South Westminster Neighbourhood Concept Plan will be lead by the Planning & Development Department. A consultant will be retained to conduct a preliminary feasibility study, which is estimated to cost \$10,000. Assuming that alternative uses of land are viable, the NCP project will proceed.

The Planning & Development Department will require the assistance of a consultant in the preparation of a market feasibility study on waterfront developments, which is estimated will cost \$5,000. The Engineering Department will retain a consultant to undertake a review of the servicing requirements and develop a financial strategy. The servicing study and financial plan are estimated to cost \$50,000.

Funds are available in the 1999 Capital Program to cover the above stated consultant costs.

Revised on February 9, 1999.

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