



Corporate Report

NO: R254

COUNCIL DATE: September 27,

2004

REGULAR

TO: Mayor & Council DATE: **September
21, 2004**

FROM: General Manager, Planning and Development FILE: 6520-20 (South Newton)

SUBJECT: **Proposed Amendment to the South Newton Neighbourhood Concept Plan to Provide Increased Opportunity for Small-Lot Residential Development**

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council:

1. Receive this report as information; and
2. Authorize staff to proceed with public consultation related to an amendment to the South Newton Neighbourhood Concept Plan (the "NCP") as described in this report that would have the effect of increasing the potential for single-family small lot housing development in this NCP area.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is:

1. To inform Council about the implementation of the South Newton NCP and the significant market demand for small lot housing in this area;
2. To advise Council about a proposed amendment to the NCP to increase the amount of land available for single family small lot residential development and on the implications of this amendment; and
3. To obtain Council authorization to proceed with a public consultation process regarding the proposed NCP amendment.

BACKGROUND

The South Newton NCP was approved by Council on June 14, 1999 and is illustrated on the map attached as Appendix I. The plan area is generally bounded by King George Highway to the west, 152 Street to the east, Highway No. 10 to the south and 64 Avenue to the north.

The South Newton NCP covers approximately 405 hectares (1,000 acres) of land and includes the following land uses:

- 31 ha (8%) - Single Family Suburban density (2 upa/5 uph)
- 78 ha (20%) - Single Family RF density (6 upa/14.5 uph)
- 50 ha (12%) - Single Family small lot density (10 upa/24 uph)
- 79 ha (20%) - Town housing RM-15 density (15 upa/37 uph)
- 7 ha (2%) - Apartment density (25-45 upa/60-111 uph)
- 133 ha (33%) - Commercial, industrial, schools, parks and open space use
- 27 ha (7%) - Buffers, ponds, etc.

At build-out, the current land use plan would result in a population of approximately 18,000 residents. In the past five years, approximately 25% of the NCP's residential capacity has been developed, mainly in areas designated for single-family small lot and row-housing types of development.

The Planning and Development Department has received 10 applications proposing to amend the NCP land use plan from the Single Family Residential RF designation (6 units per acre or 14.5 units per hectare) to the Single Family Small-Lot designation that would allow for rezoning and subdivision under the RF-12 and RF-9 Zones (10 to 14 units per acre or 24 to 36 units per hectare, respectively). The location of each of these applications is illustrated on Appendix II. This number of applications to amend the NCP is an indication that the NCP land use plan may not be consistent with current demands in the housing market.

DISCUSSION

Status of Development within the South Newton NCP

In the current strong housing market, the South Newton area is developing rapidly. Approximately 40% of the land in the NCP, designated for Single Family Small-Lot development, has been developed and another 15% of this land is under application. Less than 5% of the NCP's Single Family RF-designated lands have been developed, to date. Developers have applied to amend about 30% of the land designated for Single Family RF development to the Single Family small lot designation.

Since the City introduced small lot zones into the Zoning By-law in 1999, small lot residential development has become a common form of residential development in the City and is receiving strong market acceptance in South Newton. Small-lots developed under the RF-9 and RF-12 Zones, having frontages of 9 metres (30 feet) and 12 metres (40 feet), respectively, are becoming the standard form of single family housing in many parts of Surrey.

The South Newton NCP was completed in the late 1990s, just as small lot residential development was beginning to emerge, but prior to the City establishing the RF-9 and RF-12 zones. The NCP planning process did not fully anticipate the potential market demand for and popularity of small lot housing. The current NCP land use plan may be unnecessarily constraining from the perspective of small lot development.

NCP Amendment Policy Issues

There are currently 10 NCP amendment applications to convert the Single Family RF areas of the NCP land use plan to small lot (RF-12, RF-9) development. These applications are shown on the map attached as Appendix II and include approximately 24 hectares or 30% of the existing Single Family RF designated area within the NCP land use plan.

The Official Community Plan (the "OCP") contains policies to guide the procedures for NCP amendments. These procedures require the proponent to prepare a comprehensive impact analysis and rationale for any plan amendment that seeks to change land use or densities. The analysis should consider the impact of the proposed amendment on the engineering services, schools, parks and other amenities and facilities. A public consultation process is also required.

However, when there are many amendment applications within a particular NCP area, it becomes difficult for each separate analysis to fully account for the cumulative impact of all of the amendments. It is also probably reasonable to assume that the prevailing market demand for small lot housing development will spark plan amendment applications related to more of the existing Single Family RF designated area in the South Newton NCP. Since the existing RF area of the land use plan includes about 78 hectares (193 acres) the potential increase in dwelling units and population and the impact on the plan would be significant.

It is, therefore, important to consider a more comprehensive review of the South Newton NCP, relative to the overall impacts of increasing the dwelling unit and population capacity of the land use plan and options for plan amendment that could most effectively facilitate small lot development potential within the existing land use plan.

Increasing Small-Lot Development in the South Newton NCP

City staff has undertaken a review of the South Newton NCP land use plan to assess the feasibility of and options for increasing the area of land available for small lot residential development. The review included consideration of:

- Potential increases in dwelling units and population;
- Effects on the NCP servicing plan (water, sanitary sewer, drainage, roads);
- Impact on parks and public amenities, school sites and facilities and neighbourhood character; and
- Procedural options for amending the NCP land use plan to allow for additional small lot development.

Based on the review, it has been concluded that it would be feasible to increase the small lot residential capacity of the South Newton NCP by re-allocating more of the NCP land for small lot housing development. In support of such a change to the land use plan, amendments will be required to the engineering servicing plans, parks allocation requirements and school capacities. The additional costs to the City associated with these plan adjustments are recoverable through a combination of the additional Development Cost Charge ("DCC") revenues and amenity fees that will be generated through the increased density and potentially through "community benefit" contributions from developers. Community benefit contributions may include the dedication of strategic areas of land required for park or right-of-way purposes.

Potential Increase in Housing and Population

The existing South Newton NCP has a residential capacity of 6,100 dwelling units and 18,000 residents. The 78 hectares currently allocated for Single Family development (at 6 upa/14 uph) has an estimated capacity at build-out of 1,100 dwelling units and 3,600 residents.

If the Single Family RF areas of the NCP were amended to allow small lot development, the following range of densities could be expected based on low, medium and high density scenarios. Each option includes a combination of RF, RF-12 and RF-9 zones at densities ranging from 20 to 30 units per hectare. Table 1 below shows the potential dwelling unit and population increases for each of three scenarios.

Table 1 - Potential Housing and Population within the NCP - RF Area

Housing Type	Land Area	Total Dwellings Units	Build Out Population	Population Increase
Existing NCP Plan Average Density 14 uph	78 ha	1,100	3,600	0
Low Density Scenario Average Density 20 uph	78 ha	1,560	5,150	1,550
Medium Density Scenario Average Density 24 uph	78 ha	1,870	6,200	2,600
High Density Scenario Average Density	78 ha	2,350	7,750	4,150

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Engineering Services

A detailed review of the engineering servicing impacts resulting from increases in the number of dwelling units and related population concludes that:

- increasing the small lot allocation/housing capacity of the NCP is feasible, but will require revisions to the current NCP servicing plan to provide additional capacities in some locations; and
- the additional DCC revenue resulting from the increased housing densities would be sufficient to cover the costs of the needed servicing upgrades.

Parks and Facilities

Between 3 and 5 hectares of additional parkland would need to be acquired to accommodate the increased residential population in the NCP area. Park sites can be added to the NCP plan and acquisition may be accomplished through the development application process (with some of the additional park land potentially being dedicated by the developer as a "community benefit" consideration). The additional park land DCC revenues generated by the increased densities resulting from the small lot developments, would amount to between \$4 million and \$6.5 million, which would be used for park acquisition and development. Staff continues to explore strategies for locating and acquiring these additional park sites and will include this matter in the next report to Council.

Recent improvements to the Newton Wave Pool and Community Centre, in combination with the new YMCA recreation centre, will satisfy the recreational facility requirements the area.

School Capacity

The increased density of dwelling units, resulting from the plan amendments, will increase the number of school children as follows:

- by up to 322 under the low density small lot scenario;
- by up to 540 under the medium density small lot scenario; and
- by up to 875 students under the high density small lot scenario.

Assuming a medium/high growth estimate, the number of elementary students would be estimated to increase by between 292 and 473 students, while secondary school students would increase by between 245 and 400 students. The School District advises that the current allocation of existing and planned elementary schools throughout the NCP area, could absorb the projected increase in the number of elementary school children. Sullivan Heights Secondary School may require expansion to accommodate the additional secondary school student population.

Neighbourhood Character

The proposed small lot housing would be accommodated under the specifications of the RF-12 Zone (12 metre/40 foot lot width/frontage) and the RF-9 Zone (9 metre/ 30 foot lot width/frontage). The current South Newton NCP contains comprehensive Residential Design Guidelines, which would apply to all future small lot developments. There are many small lot neighbourhoods already built in South Newton and future small lot subdivisions would generally follow these established precedents. The new small lot developments will be subject to guidelines, which address design, siting, interfaces with surrounding land uses and implementation of adequate park space and public pathways and circulation.

NCP Amendment

Staff are of the view that consideration should be given to allowing, within the existing Single Family Residential designated areas, flexibility to accommodate small lot subdivisions without the requirement for an NCP amendment, but subject to location and development guidelines. The Single Family RF-designated areas are illustrated on Appendix I.

To implement such flexibility, the Single Family Residential description in Section 6.2.2 of the NCP document would need to be revised. The areas of the South Newton land use map identified as Single Family Residential would retain the current base density of 6 upa/14 uph (RF Zoning). However, within these areas, development applications with densities up to a maximum of 14.5 upa/36 uph (RF-9 Zone) would be considered. Such applications would not require an NCP amendment, but would be reviewed and evaluated according to the existing South Newton NCP Design Guidelines and development guidelines, as set out below.

Development Guidelines for Increased Density in the Single Family Land Use Designation

A. Location Guidelines

- Location of small lot developments should consider the planning context and existing character of the existing developments. The principle of establishing a density gradient should generally be followed (i.e., moving from lower densities to higher densities in stages);
- Properties abutting existing or proposed Suburban half-acre or lower density development will be limited to a maximum density of 6 units per acre (RF); and
- Small lot developments at the density of RF12 and RF9 should be complementary to other forms of housing to achieve diversity in the neighbourhood. The RF9 form of development should not be adjacent to the RF and lower density developments.

B. Interfacing Guidelines

- Developments located adjacent to streams or other environmentally sensitive areas must include an appropriate interface, as required by current plans and regulations;
- Small lot developments located adjacent to a major road (arterial or major collector) must provide rear lane access. Rear lane access for small lot developments is encouraged at all locations in support of pedestrian-friendly streets;
- Residential developments abutting existing or planned industrial or commercial land uses must include a minimum of a 10 metre buffer at the interface with these other land uses and provide a compatible siting interface; and
- Small lot developments must be compatible with the established road configuration in the NCP.

C. Approval Process

- Each development should achieve general acceptance by surrounding residents/property owners, as demonstrated by responses to the development pre notification process or opinion surveys collected through public information meetings; and
- Small lot developments may be required to provide a tangible community benefit that may include the dedication of additional land for park, buffers, walkways, detention ponds or utility rights-of-way that may be required due to the increased development density.

Recommended Course of Action

It is recommended that Council authorize staff to proceed with public consultation, related to the above described amendments to the South Newton NCP that, if approved, will have the effect of increasing the potential for single-family small lot housing development in this NCP area in those areas of the NCP currently designated Single Family Residential. If Council authorizes this course of action, Planning and Development staff will arrange and advertise an

open house, at which information about the proposed amendment to the NCP will be displayed, at which City staff will be available to answer questions and at which a survey questionnaire will be available for interested members of the public to provide feedback to the City about the proposed amendments. Invitations to the open house would be sent to the owners of all properties located within the South Newton NCP boundary and each of the South Newton NCP amendment applicants. An advertisement, regarding the open house would also be placed in the local newspapers inviting the public to the open house.

Subsequent to the open house, staff will prepare a further report to Council documenting the results of the open house and making appropriate recommendations with respect to the NCP amendments. It is expected that the public open house could take place during October 2004, with a further report being forwarded to Council for consideration in November 2004.

Status of Existing NCP Land Use Amendment Applications

All current NCP amendment applications proposing small lot development within the Single Family Residential designated areas in the South Newton NCP would be held in abeyance pending the completion of the above-referenced public consultation and further report to Council. The cost for engineering studies will be shared by the in-stream applications that caused the review of the NCP.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above discussion, it is recommended that Council authorize staff to proceed with public consultation, related to amendments to the South Newton NCP that would have the effect of increasing the potential for single-family small lot housing development in the Single Family Residential areas in this NCP.

Murray Dinwoodie
General Manager
Planning and Development

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Attachments

Appendix I South Newton NCP Land Use Plan

Appendix II NCP Amendment Applications for Small Lot Development within the Single Family Designation

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Appendix I

South Newton NCP Land Use Plan



Appendix II

**NCP Amendment Applications for Small Lot Development
Within the Single Family Designation**

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