



# Corporate Report

NO: R279

COUNCIL DATE: November 15,

2004

## REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: Mayor & Council                      DATE: November 9,  
2004

FROM: General Manager,  
Planning and Development              FILE: 6520-20  
(Surrey City  
Centre)

SUBJECT: Proposed Text Amendment Affecting Single-Family  
Residential (RF) Zoned Lots in Surrey City Centre

## RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council:

1. Receive this report as information; and
2. Authorize the City Clerk to bring forward, for the required readings, text amendments to Surrey Zoning By-law, 1993, No. 12000, as documented in Appendix I of Appendix "A" attached to this report and to set a date for the related Public Hearing.

## INTENT

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with background information regarding proposed text amendments to Surrey Zoning By-law, 1993, No. 12000 (the "Zoning By law"). The amendments are intended to prevent the construction of new single-family residences on vacant and under-utilized single-family lots within the core of the Surrey City Centre, in locations that would prevent the implementation of Council's vision of the City Centre, as expressed in the Official Community Plan (the "OCP"). Council has previously considered a report on this matter. This report provides additional information to Council on the specific properties affected by this initiative.

## BACKGROUND

On March 22, 2004, Council considered Corporate Report No. R072 (copy attached as Appendix "A"), regarding text amendments to the Zoning By-law to limit the size of new single family homes in Surrey's City Centre to a maximum floor area of 93 square metres (1,000 square feet). This was recommended, following staff's assessment of a number of options to prevent the development of new single-family dwellings in City Centre and to encourage the assembly of land for higher density uses in keeping with Council's development objectives for the City Centre. New single-family dwellings in the area would have the effect of inhibiting the consolidation of lots for the purpose of high density redevelopment, which is consistent with the OCP.

After considering Corporate Report No. R072, Council adopted the recommendations of that report under resolution No RES. R04-728, as follows:

*"That Council:*

1. *Receive this report as information;*
2. *Approve text amendments to the Surrey Zoning By-law, 1993, No. 12000, as documented in Appendix I; and*
3. *Authorize the City Clerk to bring forward the necessary amendment by-law for the required readings and to set a date for the related Public Hearing".*

Although the proposed text amendment was approved, Council requested further information about the lots that would be affected by the amendments.

## DISCUSSION

There are 135 lots within the City Centre OCP designation that are zoned "Single Family Residential Zone (RF)". According to BC Assessment information, of these 135 lots:

- 26 are owned by the City, mostly for park purposes;
- 4 are owned by Translink and/or controlled for transit-related purposes; and

- At least 45 are owned and/or controlled by development/investment companies.

Fifty-three different owners own the remaining 60 lots individually. Of these 53 owners, only 28 occupy their home in the City Centre. Absentee owners own the remaining 32 lots (see map attached as Appendix "B" showing the location of the 28 owner-occupied lots).

The maps, attached as Appendix "C", illustrate the ownership status and images of the individual properties which are the subject of the recommended Zoning By-law text amendments.

In summary, although there are 135 lots zoned RF within the City Centre OCP designation, most are owned by the City, Translink or development companies. The construction of new single-family residences within Surrey's City Centre is inconsistent with the OCP and with Council's vision for a vibrant, successful economic commercial core.

The map, attached as Appendix "B", illustrates the location of the subject lots in relation to the impending Showcase initiative, the development of a Transit Oriented Village, in the immediate vicinity of the Central City SkyTrain station. City and Translink staff will jointly be reporting to Council on this initiative in late November, 2004.

**CONCLUSION**

The construction of new single-family residences in Surrey's City Centre is inconsistent with the OCP and with Council's vision for a vibrant, successful economic commercial core. The recommended Zoning By-law amendments, related to the Single Family Residential (RF) Zone in the City Centre, as described in the Corporate Report R072, attached as Appendix A, will act to deter the construction of single family residences in the City Centre. It is recommended that Council authorize the City Clerk to bring forward, for the required readings, text amendments to the Zoning By-law, as documented in Appendix I of Appendix "A" attached to this report and set a date for the related Public Hearing.

Murray Dinwoodie  
 General Manager  
 Planning and Development

JM/kms/saw  
Attachments:  
 Appendix "A" - Corporate Report No. R072  
 Appendix "B" - Map illustrating the location of owner-occupied lots in the City Centre OCP designation  
 Appendix "C" - Maps illustrating ownership status

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Appendix "A"

**Corporate  
 Report**

**NO: R072**

**COUNCIL DATE: March 22/04**

**REGULAR COUNCIL**

**TO: Mayor & Council**                      **DATE: March 11, 2004**  
**FROM: General Manager, Planning and Development**      **FILE: 6520-20 (Surrey City Centre)**

**SUBJECT: Proposed Zoning By-law Amendment – A**

# Text Amendment Affecting RF Single-Family Residential Zoned Lots in Surrey City Centre

## RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council:

1. Receive this report as information;
2. Approve text amendments to the Surrey Zoning By-law, 1993, No. 12000, as documented in Appendix I; and
3. Authorize the City Clerk to bring forward the necessary amendment by-law for the required readings and to set a date for the related Public Hearing.

## INTENT

The purpose of this report is to obtain Council approval for a text amendment to Surrey Zoning By-law, 1993, No. 12000 (the "Zoning By-law") to limit the size of new single family homes in Surrey's City Centre to a maximum floor area of 84 square metres [900 square feet] and to prohibit basements in new single family homes in City Centre. This interim zoning is focused on encouraging assembly of land for new development, which is consistent with the City's objectives for the City Centre.

## BACKGROUND

At its Regular meeting on September 29, 2003, City Council considered Corporate Report No. R206 (Appendix II) and, subsequently, in accordance with the recommendations of that report, authorized City staff to review the status of vacant and under-utilized single family zoned lots in the Surrey City Centre, with a view to ensuring such lots are appropriately zoned to achieve the development vision for the City Centre. In accordance with Section 929 of the *Local Government Act*, R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 323, any building permit applications for single dwelling units on single family lots in the City Centre may be withheld for up to 60 days to allow completion of this zoning review, subject to a separate resolution of Council for each such application. No building permit applications for single-family homes in the City Centre have been received since September 29, 2003.

Staff have reviewed the status of each of the 134 RF-zoned lots within the area designated City Centre in the Official Community Plan ("OCP"). Of note, is a full block of vacant single-family lots at 105A Avenue and 134A Street (east of City Parkway) which has recently been marketed for single-family homes. Staff have discussed the land use and procedural options with most of the owners of these lots and, to date, building permits have not been pursued. Immediately west of and adjacent to this block is a property for which the City has received a development application proposing three 18-storey high-rise residential buildings. This application is at the pre-Council stage. The subject block of single family lots is designated for similar high density mixed use (commercial/residential) development and, although it is currently zoned "single family residential", this low density use is not appropriate in the City Centre, especially adjacent to future high-rises.

It is, therefore, timely for the City to act to ensure that new development in the City Centre is consistent with the City's vision. Council is in the process of considering changes to the CHI zone (Corporate Report No. R003, January 12, 2004) to address CHI zoned sites in City Centre. Another important step toward achieving the vision for City Centre is to encourage the consolidation of small land holdings into larger parcels for the purpose of accommodating larger scale "downtown" types of development projects.

## DISCUSSION

There are 134 lots within the City Centre OCP designation that are zoned Single Family Residential (RF) Zone. Of these 134 lots:

- 24 are under application for redevelopment to higher density uses;
- 23 are owned by the City for civic-use (i.e. for parks and roads); and
- 87 RF-zoned lots are considered to have development potential (they are either vacant or have existing single family dwellings on them).

These lots are designated in the City Centre Plan for either high-density residential and/or commercial development, but have been zoned RF for many years. The map attached as Appendix III shows the location of all of the lots within the area designated "City Centre" that are zoned RF. It further identifies which of these lots are currently under application or owned by the City and those that may be impacted by the proposed change in the Zoning By-law, as described in the following section of this report.

## Policy Context

The "City Centre" designation in Surrey's OCP is intended to be the focus of mixed-use high-density downtown-type development. This designation allows for a wide range of retail, office, employment, entertainment, cultural and educational uses, services and facilities, government services and multiple residential housing, serving the needs of businesses and residents throughout the City and the region. Further, the OCP states that housing in the City Centre should be high density,

in the form of apartments, as part of mixed use developments or as principal uses surrounding the City Centre. While it is recognized that, historically, there are a number of existing single family homes in the City Centre, the creation of new single family housing is not appropriate. The vision is that eventually, these single-family lots will be developed for higher density "downtown related" uses. Currently the City Centre is experiencing significant development that is aligning itself with the "downtown" vision. In addition to the Centre City tower, there are at least 10 major development applications and/or projects in process in the City Centre, as well as existing and planned investment in infrastructure to support high-density residential and commercial developments.

In addition to specific policies in the OCP, there are also two secondary documents, which address land use (Surrey City Centre Plan, 1991) and urban design (Surrey City Centre Urban Design Concept, 1993) for the City Centre. These documents also stress high-density residential and commercial uses for the City Centre area. In connection with the Urban Transportation Showcase Program, the Whalley Enhancement Strategy and other initiatives in Surrey City Centre, staff have commenced a consolidation, review and update of all of the land use and design policies related to the City Centre. A Corporate Report on this project will be presented to Council in the next few weeks.

### Description of Options and Evaluation

In reviewing the 134 RF-zoned lots within the City Centre OCP designation, staff assessed several options to ensure that new development in the City Centre is consistent with the vision, as articulated in the OCP. These three options and the pros and cons of each are summarized in the following table:

Option 1: Ultimate Rezoning: Rezone (or up-zone) each lot separately to an ultimate zone more consistent with the City Centre designation and more consistent with the Surrey Centre Plan approved by Council in 1991	
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Zoning scheme more closely aligned with the OCP</li> <li>- May act as a catalyst for development</li> <li>- Easier/shorter process for development (sites are pre-zoned)</li> <li>- Zones conform to OCP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- May jeopardize City's ability to secure servicing and other contributions and dedication requirements through future rezonings</li> <li>- May promote land speculation in advance of the natural forces of the market and stand in the way of the early development of these lots (i.e., similar to what has happened along 104 Avenue where pre-zoned sites remain undeveloped)</li> </ul>
Option 2: Incremental Rezoning: Rezone (or up-zone) each lot separately to a zone that is permitted within the City Centre OCP designation but with a lower density than is ultimately envisioned	
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Single family homes could not be built</li> <li>- Zones would conform more closely to the OCP</li> <li>- Compromise approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Only incrementally better than the existing situation</li> <li>- May cause confusion among owners and within the market</li> <li>- May not encourage desired types of development in City Centre</li> </ul>
Option 3: Holding Provision: Enact a text amendment to address the size of future single family homes in the City Centre OCP designation by inserting a provision into the RF Zone to limit the size of homes in the City Centre designation to 84 square metres [900 square feet] and to prohibit basements	
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- May encourage lot consolidation and large scale redevelopment</li> <li>- Straight forward to enact and administer</li> <li>- Will act to limit the development of single family homes in City Centre</li> <li>- Will not impose massive rezoning on exiting owners or cause confusion in the market place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Will likely be perceived as restrictive</li> </ul>

Based on the above evaluation, Option 3 is considered the preferred course of action. It should achieve the desired outcome of encouraging the consolidation of RF lots in the City Centre, while being relatively straightforward to implement and administer.

### CONCLUSION

Based on the above evaluation, it is recommended that Council approve the text amendments to the Zoning By-law, as documented in Appendix I, that will act to limit the size of new homes on RF zoned lots on City Centre designated lands to no more than 84 square metres [900 square feet] and to prohibit basements in such new homes. It is further recommended that Council authorize the City Clerk to bring forward the necessary amendment by-law for the required readings and to set a date for the related Public Hearing.

*Original signed by*

Murray Dinwoodie  
General Manager  
Planning and Development

WW/kms/saw

#### Appendices:

Appendix I Proposed Text Amendment to the RF – Single Family Residential Zone

Appendix II Corporate Report No. R206

Appendix III Map – RF-Zoned Lots in the City Centre Designation

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Appendix I

Proposed Amendment to Part 16, Single Family Residential Zone (RF) of  
Surrey Zoning By-law, 1993, No. 12000

The following amendments are proposed to Part 16, Single Family Residential Zone (RF) of Surrey Zoning By-law, 1993, No. 12000, as amended:

1. In Section D. Density, Subsection 2 (b) iii. (a) delete the word "and";
2. In Section D. Density, Subsection 2 (b) iii. (a) insert the words:  

", except in the area designated as City Centre in the Surrey Official Community Plan By-law, 1996, No. 12900"

 after the words "or less";
3. In Section D. Density, Subsection 2 (b) iii. (b) insert the words:  

", except in the area designated as City Centre in the Surrey Official Community Plan By-law, 1996, No. 12900; and"

 after the figure and words "[6,000 sq.ft.]" and delete the period; and
4. Add a new Section D. Density, Subsection 2 (b) iii. (c) as follows:
  - (c) For *building* construction on a *lot* within the area designated as City Centre in the Surrey Official Community Plan By-law, 1996, No. 12900, the maximum allowable floor area shall be 84 square metres [900 sq. ft.] and a *basement* is not permitted on such *lot*.

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Appendix II



# Corporate Report

NO: R206

COUNCIL DATE: Sept 29/03

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## REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: Mayor & Council                      DATE: September 24, 2003

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

SUBJECT: **Single Family Lots in Surrey City Centre**

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## RECOMMENDATION

It is recommend that City Council authorize City staff to:

1. Review the status of vacant and under-utilized single family lots in the Surrey City Centre with a view to ensuring such lots are appropriately zoned to achieve the development vision for the City Centre; and
2. Prepare and bring forward the necessary amendment(s) to Surrey Zoning By-law, 1993, No. 12000 (the "Zoning By-law") to rezone properties within the City Centre from RF – Single Family Residential to a zone consistent with the long term development objectives for the City Centre.

## INTENT

The purpose of this report is to seek Council authorization to immediately conduct a zoning review of single-family lots within the City Centre area as defined in the Official Community Plan ("OCP") and to bring forward, for Council consideration, necessary Zoning By-law amendments to ensure that development in the City Centre area is consistent with the OCP and the development vision for City Centre.

## BACKGROUND

City staff has become aware of the potential for at least 14 vacant single-family lots in the City Centre area to be developed with single-family homes. Of particular note, is a full block of vacant lots located at 105A Avenue and 134A Street, just east of City Parkway (see attached map). These lots are zoned RF – Single Family Residential and designated "City Centre" in Surrey's OCP. The development of new single-family homes at this pivotal location in City Centre would be significantly inconsistent with the City's vision for development/redevelopment of this area. There is also the need to examine the existence of other under-utilized lots that may be inappropriately zoned "RF" in the City Centre.

## DISCUSSION

Section 3.3 of Surrey's OCP indicates that the City Centre designation is intended to focus the development of a mixed use and high density downtown. This designation allows for a wide range of retail and office uses, employment, entertainment, cultural and educational services and facilities, government services and multiple residential housing, serving the needs of business and residents throughout the City and the region. Further, Section C-3 of the OCP states that housing in the City Centre should be high density, in the form of apartments, as part of mixed use development or as principle uses in the area surrounding the City Centre. While it is recognized that historically, there are a number of existing single family homes in the City Centre, the creation of new single family housing is not appropriate. The intent is that eventually, these lots will be developed for higher density "downtown-related" uses.

In view of this potential conflict, City staff should undertake a review of the status of single-family lots in the City Centre area with a view to rezoning these lots where appropriate in support of the vision for City Centre. It is anticipated that this review will take approximately one month, after which any recommended by-law amendments will be brought forward to Council for consideration.

In the interim and in accordance with Section 929 of the *Local Government Act*, any building permit applications for single dwelling units on single family lots in the City Centre may be withheld for up to 60 days to allow completion of this zoning review, subject to a separate resolution of Council for each such application.

## CONCLUSION

The development of single-family homes in Surrey's City Centre is inconsistent with the OCP and with the City's vision for a vibrant successful economic commercial core. It is recommended that City staff conduct an immediate zoning review of single-family lots in the City Centre and bring forward appropriate by-law amendments to Council for consideration. During the term of the recommended study, staff will forward a separate report to Council on each building permit application that is received for the construction of a single family home on a lot in City Centre.

*Original signed by*

Murray Dinwoodie  
General Manager  
Planning and Development

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Attachment – Map

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Appendix III

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Appendix "B"



Appendix "C"





