



# Corporate Report

NO: R105

COUNCIL DATE: MAY 2, 2005

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## REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: Mayor & Council DATE: April 27, 2005  
FROM: General Manager, Planning and Development FILE: 0340-01  
SUBJECT: Proposed Revisions to the Development Proposal Signs Policy and the Panhandle Lots Policy

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## RECOMMENDATION

The Planning and Development Department recommends that Council:

1. Approve amendments, as documented in Appendix I, to City Policy O-8 "Development Proposal Signs" to require the installation of such a sign at least two weeks in advance of the meeting at which Council will consider the related development application and to delete the requirement for a development proposal sign where an application for a Development Permit relates to fascia signage only; and
2. Approve the amendments, as documented in Appendix II, to City Policy O-15 "Panhandle Lots" to clarify the intention of this policy.

## INTENT

The purpose of this report is to obtain Council approval for revisions to Council's policies related to Development Proposal Signs (Policy No. O-8) and Panhandle Lots (Policy No. O-15), respectively.

## DISCUSSION

### Development Proposal Sign Policy Amendment

At the Regular Council meeting on July 12, 1999, Council passed a resolution (Res. R99-1850) to amend Council's policy on Development Proposal Signs to include provisions specifying when such signs are to be erected and removed from a project site (Appendix I). The amended policy specifies that development proposal signs are

required to be erected on the site within six weeks, or three weeks in the case of liquor applications, of specific types of development applications being made. In addition, the policy states that Planning Reports shall not proceed to Council until the development proposal sign is in place on the development site. In the case of a subdivision application, the Preliminary Layout Approval ("PLA") letter shall not be issued until the development proposal sign has been installed on the site that is the subject of the application. Applicants are required to submit a photograph or photographs demonstrating that the development sign has been appropriately installed on the site and showing clearly the text and key plan map on the sign.

Development proposal signs are required to be posted on sites that are subject to land development applications involving Subdivisions, Rezoning, OCP and NCP Amendments, Land Use Contract Amendments or Discharges, Temporary Use Permits, Development Permits and Liquor Permit Applications. While the existing Development Proposal Sign Policy O-8 (Appendix I) specifies that a development sign must be installed on the site that is the subject of the application, it does not specify the minimum duration of time the sign must be in place before an application can proceed to Council or before a PLA can be issued, in the case of a subdivision-only application. Such a provision in the policy is considered important because development proposal signs are viewed as being a critical component of the public notification process in respect of development applications. There have been instances where a project has proceeded to Council, or a PLA has been issued, within a day or a few days of a development proposal sign being installed. Such a circumstance clearly is contrary to the intention of the City in relation to ensuring that the public are properly informed regarding development applications.

For subdivision-only applications, development proposal signs are the only method used to notify the public of the proposed subdivision. In the case of rezoning and/or OCP amendment applications, development proposal signs are one of four regular means used to notify the public of the proposed development. The other methods are pre-notification letters, public hearing notification letters and public hearing advertisements in the local newspapers. The issuing of pre-notification letters takes place at the time of receipt of a complete development application near the outset of the review process, while public hearing letters and newspaper advertisements related to the public hearing occur when an application has been considered by Council and a by-law has been introduced and received first and second readings.

Planning and Development Department staff mails letters to the owners of properties located within a 100-metre (330 foot) radius of the site that is the subject of the development application, with the exception of Agricultural and Suburban area applications where, as a minimum, pre-notification letters are sent to the owners of lots within a three-lot distance. Pre-notification letters are sent to the owners of properties. The property owner may or may not choose to notify tenants. Therefore, development proposal signs are instrumental in ensuring that the general public is notified about a proposed development on a specific site.

As such, if Council approves a change to the policy to require applicants to install a development proposal sign a minimum of two weeks in advance of the meeting at which Council will first consider the related development application or the PLA letter being issued, it will give the public reasonable time to become aware of a proposed development and contact the developer and/or City staff to become informed about the proposed development and to raise concerns or indicate support. It is beneficial for the City to receive feedback from the public, prior to the Planning Report being considered by Council, so that concerns can be addressed prior to Council consideration or, as a minimum, be identified for Council in the report.

With Council's approval of the proposed policy amendment, the applicant will continue to be required to submit a photograph to the Planning and Development Department to demonstrate that the development proposal sign has been installed. The date that the Planning and Development Department receives the photograph will trigger the beginning of the two-week minimum installation timeframe.

### **Exempt Development Permit Applications for Fascia Signage from the Requirement to Install a Development Proposal Sign**

Current City policy requires that a development proposal sign be installed on the site that is subject to a Development Permit ("DP") application, including DP applications related only to changes to on-site signs on commercial and industrial sites. Planning and Development staff has found that the City does not receive inquiries or concerns from the public about DP applications for the installation of fascia signage. On this basis, it is recommended that the Development Proposal Sign policy be amended to remove the requirement for a development proposal sign to be installed for such applications.

In a situation where the proposed fascia sign does not comply with Surrey Sign By-law, 1999, No. 13656, then the applicant would also be required to apply for a Development Variance Permit ("DVP") to vary the requirements of the Sign By-law. As part of a DVP application, the owners of the lands adjacent to the subject site are notified of the proposed variance to the Sign By-law, as part of the public notification process conducted by the City Clerk.

### **Panhandle Lots Policy**

Recently, it has come to the attention of staff that Panhandle Policy No. O-15 contains a typographical error that results in some confusion related to the intent of the policy. The policy currently reads as follows:

- "2. In rare instances, where panhandle lots are created in urban residential subdivisions, the buildable area of the lot should be substantially in excess of the required minimum so as to alleviate discount the area taken up by the panhandle and to impact on adjacent lots". [emphasis added]

To clarify the policy it is recommended that this section be reworded to read:

- "2. In rare instances, where panhandle lots are created in urban residential subdivisions, the buildable area of the lot should be substantially larger than the required minimum so as to alleviate the negative impact on the adjacent lots".

## CONCLUSION

On this basis, it is recommended that Council approve amendments, as documented in Appendix I, to City Policy O-8 "Development Proposal Signs" to require the installation of such a sign at least two weeks in advance of the meeting at which Council will consider the related development application and to delete the requirement for a development proposal sign where an application for a Development Permit relates to fascia signage only. It is further recommended that Council approve amendments, as documented in Appendix II, to City Policy O-15 "Panhandle Lots" to clarify the intention of that policy.

Murray Dinwoodie  
General Manager,  
Planning and Development

AP/kms/saw

Attachments:

- Appendix I Existing Development Proposal Sign Policy No. 0-8 with Proposed Amendments Highlighted
- Appendix II Existing Panhandle Lot Policy No. 0-15 with Proposed Amendment Highlighted



# CITY POLICY

NO. O-8

**REFERENCE:**

REGULAR COUNCIL MINUTES  
9 JANUARY 1978  
PAGE 34

**APPROVED BY: CITY COUNCIL****DATE:** 29 SEPT 2003 (RES.R03-2364)

**HISTORY:** 12 JUL 1999 (RES.R99-1850)  
10 MAR 1997 (RES.R97-631)  
5 SEPT 1995 (RES.95-2234)  
6 MAY 1991; 9 JAN 1978

**TITLE: DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL SIGNS**Policy on Development Proposal Signs

1. Applicants submitting development proposals involving one or more of the following shall be required to erect and maintain a development proposal sign or signs on the development site:
  - (a) Rezoning
  - (b) Land Use Contract Amendment or Discharge
  - (c) Temporary Use Permits
  - (d) Development Permit (excluding Development Permit applications related exclusively to fascia signage)
  - (e) Subdivisions
  - (f) Liquor Applications
  
2. Notwithstanding Clause 1, Council initiated rezonings involving 10 or more lots are not required to erect a Development Proposal Sign. Authority is delegated to the General Manager, Planning & Development to ascertain if Development Proposal Signs are to be erected in conjunction with Council initiated rezonings.
  
3. If a Development Permit has expired and a new Development Permit exactly the same as the previous Development Permit is being applied for, notwithstanding Clause 1, a Development Proposal sign is not required. If, however, the new Development Proposal deviates in anyway from the previous plans, a new Development Proposal Sign shall be required.

4. Development Proposal Signs shall be erected on the site within six weeks, or three weeks in the case of Liquor Applications, of a development application being made, in accordance with the specifications prescribed by the general format as attached in Appendix I and the Planning & Development Department.
  5. If the lot or lots subject to the development proposal has frontage on more than one opened road allowance, a Development Proposal Sign may at the discretion of the Planning & Development Department be required on each frontage.
  6. Development Proposal Sign(s) must be installed on the development site a minimum of two weeks prior to the date on which Council considers the Planning Report on the related application. In the case of a subdivision application, the preliminary layout approval letter shall not be issued until the development proposal sign has been displayed on-site for a minimum of two weeks. Applicants are required to submit a photograph or photographs showing the sign appropriately displayed on site and showing clearly the text and key plan map on the sign. The two week period for displaying the development proposal sign on the site will commence on the date that the Planning and Development Department receives the photograph.
- Amended July 12, 1999 (Res.R99-1850)
7. All key plans shall clearly indicate the development site, shall contain a north arrow and shall show and label all roads adjoining the development site.
  8. The applicant shall maintain the sign in good order until the sign is required to be removed as set out in Clause 9.
  9. For applications involving a by-law, the Development Proposal Sign shall be removed by the applicant within 30 days after the final adoption of the by-law. For applications involving a Development Permit only, or a subdivision, the Development Proposal sign shall be removed within 30 days after the issuance of the Development Permit or within 30 days of the Approving Officer signing the subdivision plans. Development Proposal Signs shall be removed within 30 days after the applicant withdraws the application or Council denies or files the application, or in the case of subdivision, within 30 days of when the Approving Officer issues a denial letter. For Liquor Applications, the Development Proposal Sign shall be removed within 30 days of Council adopting a resolution to be forwarded to the Provincial Liquor Control and Licensing Branch.
  10. Smaller development proposal signs for secondary suite rezoning applications on individual properties are allowed, as shown in Appendix II.

Added March 10, 1997 (Res. R97-631)



# CITY POLICY

No. O-15

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**REFERENCE:**

REGULAR COUNCIL MINUTES  
6 MAY 1991  
PAGE 9

**APPROVED BY:****DATE:****HISTORY:****CITY COUNCIL**

6 MAY 1991

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**TITLE: PANHANDLE LOTS**

1. The Approving Officer should consider panhandle lots only in the following circumstances:
  - a. The proposed lot is in a suburban or agricultural zone.
  - b. The physical constraints of the site are such that a panhandle lot is the best solution to providing both physical access and legal frontage.
  - c. The physical configuration of the site is such that to refuse a panhandle lot would impose an unreasonable reduction in lot yield.
  - d. Exceptional circumstances prevail which warrant such consideration.
2. In rare instances, where panhandle lots are created in urban residential subdivisions, the buildable area of the lot should be substantially larger than the required minimum so as to alleviate the negative impact on the adjacent lots.