

NO: R059

COUNCIL DATE: March 6, 2017

---

## REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor and Council** DATE: **March 2, 2017**

FROM: **General Manager, Planning and Development** FILE: **6520-20 (Country Woods)**  
**6440-01**

SUBJECT: **Country Woods Subdivision: Request for OCP Amendment**

---

## RECOMMENDATION

The Planning and Development Department recommends that Council:

1. Receive this report as information;
2. Endorse the consultation process outlined in this report as the basis for determining the level of support in the Country Woods Subdivision (CWS), in Surrey and in Metro Vancouver, to amend the Official Community Plan (OCP) designations that apply to the lots in the Country Woods Subdivision neighbourhood (Appendix "I");
3. Resolve that the consultation program outlined in this report satisfies the requirements set out in the *Local Government Act* Section 475; and
4. Instruct the City Clerk to forward a copy of this report and the related Council resolution to representatives of the Country Woods Residents' Association (CWRA).

## INTENT

The purpose of this report is to:

- advise of an OCP amendment request that has been received by way of a petition from the CWRA; and
- seek approval for a City-led process to determine the level of neighbourhood and city support for the requested OCP amendment.

## BACKGROUND

On October 5, 2016, the Planning and Development Department received a petition from the CWRA indicating support from residents in the CWS for amending the neighbourhood's OCP General Land Use Designations from "Suburban" and "Suburban - Urban Reserve" to "Rural" in order to retain the existing neighbourhood rural character by preventing the further subdivision of properties within the CWS.

Appendix “I” shows the boundaries of the area subject to the OCP amendment proposal. Within this defined neighbourhood area, the owners of 65 lots of the area’s total 93 residential lots signed the petition, indicating that the owners of approximately 70% of the lots are in favour of the requested OCP amendment (Appendix “II”).

## DISCUSSION

The CWS is approximately 32.3 hectares (79.8 acres). The area, shown in Appendix “I” of this report, is bounded by 26 Avenue in the south; 174 Street, 28 Avenue, and Highway 15 in the east (excluding the lot located at 17586 28 Avenue); the northerly property lines of the lots north of 28B Avenue and 29 Avenue in the north; and 172 Street in the west. The area contains 98 lots, 93 of which are residential lots, all of which are zoned One Acre Residential – Gross Density (RA-G). The RA-G zone allows for lots that are less than one acre, if at least 15% of the original subdivided site is set aside as open space. Five lots that comprise this 15% open space are owned and managed by the CWRA.

As shown in Appendix “III,” the northern portion of the CWS – generally north of 28 Avenue – is designated “Suburban” in the OCP; and, either “Existing One Acre & Half Acre Lots” or “Existing Open Space” in the North Grandview Heights Neighbourhood Concept Plan. The southern portion of the CWS, generally south of 28 Avenue, is designated “Suburban – Urban Reserve” in the OCP and either “Suburban Residential (1 to 2 u.p.a.)” or “Parks/Open Space” in the Grandview Heights General Land Use Plan.

A number of second growth forest stands are located in the CWS, primarily within the open space lots, but also on residential lots throughout the neighbourhood. The stands are a mix of deciduous and coniferous trees and appear to be in good health. These trees provide important ecological value to the City and to wildlife using the area, and the larger lots in this subdivision provide sufficient space to preserve the forest canopy.

Throughout the CWS, there is a 5.7 hectares (14 acres) trail system situated on the five open space lots (Appendix “IV”). Together, the five lots make up approximately 17.5% of the total area in the CWS. These open space lots are owned by the CWRA and each has a Covenant on title (T54966) that restricts owners from building on or using the lands without the permission of the City, except for public recreational purposes during daylight hours. Motorized vehicles and bicycles are not permitted on the lands.

The CWRA is responsible for enforcing the above restrictions and manages the trail system. Although the trail system is accessible to the public, the City does not maintain any of these trails. To assist in tree maintenance on these trails (tree removal, replanting of trees, corrective pruning), the City has reduced permit requirements for the lot located at 2776 Country Woods Drive (which makes up the bulk of the trail system) such that trees here can be removed with a valid tree removal permit, with no cost for the tree removal permit and no securities charged for replacement trees. Residents can also plant more than the required number of replacement trees if desired.

All 98 lots in the CWS were created by subdivision in 1981. The 93 residential lots range from approximately 0.17 hectares (0.43 acre) to 0.75 hectares (1.8 acres), with a quarter of the lots approximately 2842 square feet (0.7 acre) in size. Shortly after subdivision, the majority of the houses were built, with 90 houses (97% of the lots) built from 1981 to 1989, with two houses built

in 1991 and one pre-existing house built in 1959. The five lots that form the open space and trail system are vacant and unserviced.

### **CWRA Proposal**

The CWRA proposes to amend the OCP General Land Use Designations in the area shown in Appendix “1” from “Suburban” and “Suburban – Urban Reserve” to “Rural” in order to retain the existing neighbourhood rural character by preventing the further subdivision of properties within the CWS.

The existing “Suburban” designation of the lots in the northern portion of the CWS, generally north of 28 Avenue, supports low-density residential uses; complementary institutional, agricultural, and small-scale commercial uses; and public facilities in keeping with a suburban neighbourhood character. The maximum density within the “Suburban” designation is 5 units per hectare (2 units per acre) and may be increased to 10 units per hectare (4 units per acre).

The existing “Suburban – Urban Reserve” designation of the lots in the southern portion of the CWS, generally south of 28 Avenue, supports the retention of Suburban land uses in areas where future urban development is expected, and is subject to Council initiation and approval of comprehensive Secondary Plans, such as Neighbourhood Concept Plans. Until a Secondary Plan is approved and until the OCP land use designation is amended to conform to that approved Secondary Plan, land uses within this designation will follow the same requirements as those listed under the “Suburban” designation.

In comparison, the “Rural” designation supports low-density residential uses and public facilities on large properties that are not serviced by sanitary sewers and are not expected to be serviced in the foreseeable future. The “Rural” designation has a minimum lot size of 0.8 hectare (2 acres), which is smaller than the 2 hectares (5 acres) minimum lot size of new lots in the “Suburban – Urban Reserve,” but which is larger than the existing residential lots in Country Woods and therefore sufficient to prevent further subdivision of the existing lots.

### **Proposed Neighbourhood Consultation Process**

Subject to Council approval, staff are proposing that a City-led public consultation process, as described in the following section of this report, be undertaken to determine the level of neighbourhood support for the OCP amendment that has been proposed by the CWRA. This process will accurately determine the level of support in the neighbourhood for the requested OCP amendment and related provisions. While acknowledging that the CWRA has submitted a package representing the results of a neighbourhood survey that shows that owners of approximately 66% of the lots in the neighbourhood support amending the neighbourhood’s OCP General Land Use Designations from “Suburban” and “Suburban – Urban Reserve” to “Rural”, it is important that the City undertake due diligence to ensure that the owners who support the OCP amendment clearly understand the implications and that the degree of support within the neighbourhood is verified.

The proposed neighbourhood consultation process includes the following components:

- The CWRA will hold an open house/meeting to gauge the level of support for the proposed OCP amendment. City staff will attend the meeting as a resource to answer any technical

questions about the proposed OCP amendment and respond to any questions about the OCP amendment process.

- Following the neighbourhood meeting, City staff will send a survey by registered mail to each lot owner whose property is proposed to be included in the OCP amendment. The mail out will contain detailed information on the provisions of the draft OCP amendment and a questionnaire to which each owner will be requested to respond. This survey will be used to determine the extent of support or opposition on the part of the owners of lots that will be directly involved in the OCP amendment.
- Staff will provide a report to Council for consideration that includes the results of the consultation process and the related survey and provides recommendations in relation to whether or not the rezoning process should be formally commenced.

The above-described process is similar to the process followed for an OCP amendment to a “Rural” designation in the Grandview Woods neighbourhood, slightly to the west of Country Woods, in 2015.

Section 475 of the *Local Government Act (LGA)* requires a local government to consider whether an OCP amendment requires “early and ongoing” consultation with the local community (Subsection 1) and with various agencies and organizations including the regional district, neighbouring municipalities, First Nations, Boards of Education, and provincial and federal government agencies (Subsection 2). Since the proposed OCP amendment establishes the status quo and does not change existing land uses, densities, land management, or any other development or environmental parameter, staff recommend that Council deem that the neighbourhood consultation program set out above to be sufficient to meet the requirements of LGA Section 475.

## **SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

The proposed OCP amendment consultation process addresses the following Sustainability Charter 2.0 Strategic Directions (SD):

### **Inclusion**

SD 15: Work at the neighbourhood level to empower local clubs, groups, individuals and agencies to contribute to a vibrant community.

SD 16: Enhance the opportunities available for residents to be meaningfully engaged in civic issues.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the above discussion, it is recommended that Council:

- Receive this report as information;
- Endorse the consultation process outlined in this report as the basis for determining the level of support in the Country Woods Subdivision, in Surrey and in Metro Vancouver, to amend the Official Community Plan designations that apply to the lots in the Country Woods Subdivision neighbourhood (Appendix “I”);

- Resolve that the consultation program outlined in this report satisfies the requirements set out in the *Local Government Act* Section 475; and
- Instruct the City Clerk to forward a copy of this report and the related Council resolution to representatives of the Country Woods Residents' Association.

*Original signed by*  
Jean Lamontagne  
General Manager,  
Planning and Development

DL/ss

**Attachments:**

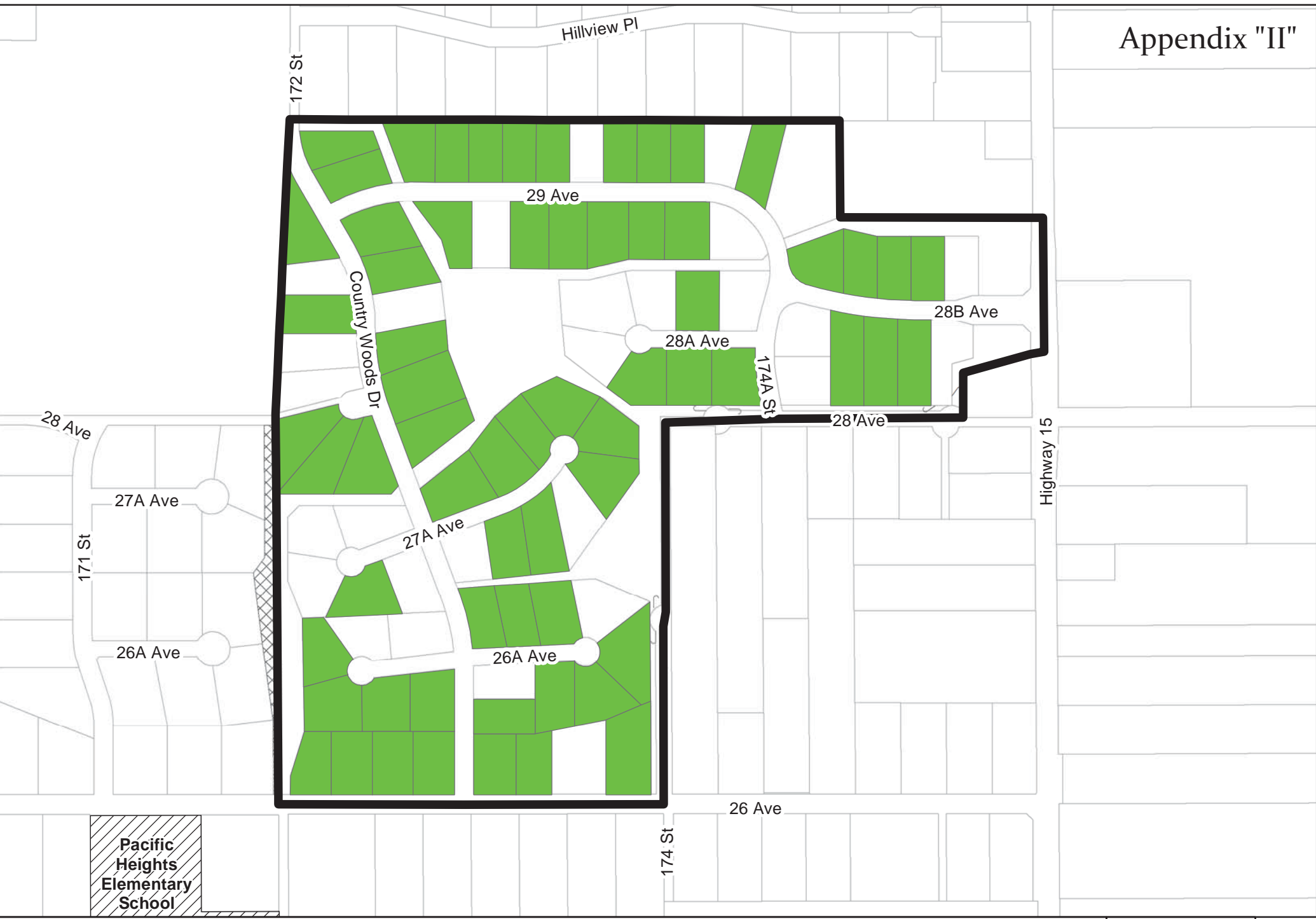
Appendix "I" - Map of Country Woods Subdivision Proposed OCP Amendment Area

Appendix "II" - Map of Neighbourhood Petition Responses

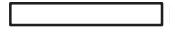
Appendix "III" - Country Woods Neighbourhood – Existing OCP and Secondary Plan Designations

Appendix "IV" - Aerial Photograph – Showing Open Space Lots

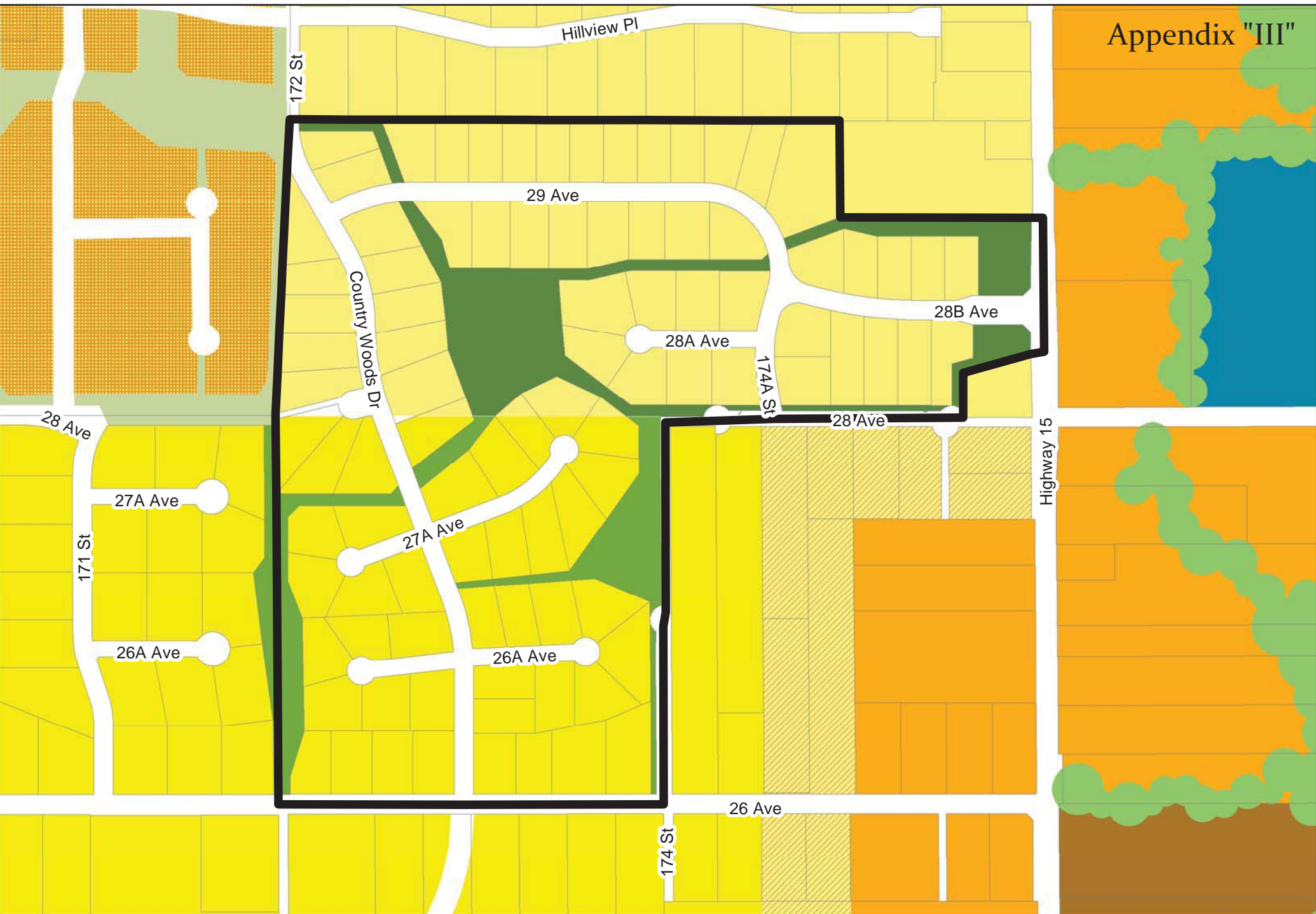




**COUNTRY WOODS SUBDIVISION - PETITION RESPONSES**

 Support	 Boundary	 Park	 School	 Lot Hooks	Scale 100  M	
--	--	--	--	---	---	---










**North Grandview Heights NCP Designations**

 Existing One Acre & Half Acre Lots	 Proposed One Acre Residential Gross Density (RA-G)
 Existing Open Space	 Proposed Open Space /Linear Open Space

**Grandview Heights GLUP Designations**

 Suburban Residential (1 to 2 u.p.a.)	 Transition Residential (2 to 4 u.p.a.)
 Parks / Open Space	 Urban Residential (4 to 15 u.p.a.)

 Multiple Residential (15 to 45 u.p.a.)
 Institutional
 Tree Clusters

Scale  
50  
 M









**COUNTRY WOODS SUBDIVISION - STUDY AREA**


 Boundary

 Park

 School

 Lots Owned by Country Woods Community Association

 Lot Hooks

Scale  
100  
 M

