

NO: R244

COUNCIL DATE: December 3, 2018

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council** DATE: **November 29, 2018**

FROM: **General Manager, Engineering** FILE: **0910-30/219**
General Manager, Parks, Recreation & Culture

SUBJECT: **Closure of Road Allowance at the Northeast Corner of 156 Street and King George Boulevard, for Conversion to Parkland (Gratitude Gardens)**

RECOMMENDATION

The Engineering Department and the Parks, Recreation & Culture Department recommend that Council authorize the City Clerk to bring forward the necessary Bylaw to close and remove the dedication as highway of a 2,018 m² (21,730 ft.²) portion of 156 Street as generally illustrated in Appendix "I" attached to this report.

INTENT

The intent of this report is to seek Council's approval to close and remove a portion of 156 Street as road allowance for conversion to parkland.

BACKGROUND

On February 6, 2017 Council directed staff to undertake the necessary steps to convert the portion of road allowance discussed in this report to parkland as outlined in Corporate Report No. R021: 2017 attached as Appendix "II". The City originally acquired the parcel of land at 2248 King George Boulevard in order to facilitate the realignment of 156 Street at the King George Boulevard intersection. Subsequent to the 156 Street road alignment project being completed several South Surrey residents created a pocket garden on the remaining land. This pocket garden would later develop into a community Enhancement Partnership Grant for the Gratitude Garden Project.

Property Description

The portion of 156 Street road allowance proposed for closure is north of King George Boulevard and east of the 156 Street and has a total area of 2,018 m² (21,730 ft.²) (the "Road Closure Area").

Zoning, Plan Designations and Land Uses

The Road Closure Area is zoned Single Family Residential (RF) Zone and is designated Commercial in the King George Highway/Highway 99 Corridor Local Area Plan and "Urban" in the Official Community Plan.

DISCUSSION

Purpose of Road Closure

The City of Surrey is initiating the road closure for the creation of parkland known as Gratitude Gardens.

The proposed road closure has been circulated to all potentially involved City Departments for review and all are supportive of the proposal.

As required under Section 40 (4) of the *Community Charter*, all utility companies potentially affected by the proposed road closure have been consulted and none have expressed any objections.

All area calculations contained in this report are approximate and subject to final survey.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The proposed road closure for the creation of Gratitude Garden supports the objectives of the City's Sustainability Charter 2.0; more particularly, the following Desired Outcomes ("DO"):

- Neighbourhoods and Urban Design DO5: Trees, green spaces and natural areas are integrated into all neighbourhoods;
- Neighbourhoods and Urban Design DO8: The built environment enhances quality of life, happiness and well-being; and
- Natural Areas, Biodiversity and Urban Forest DO1: Parks, natural areas, urban forests and habitat corridors are interconnected throughout Surrey and the region, creating healthy places for people and wildlife.

CONCLUSION

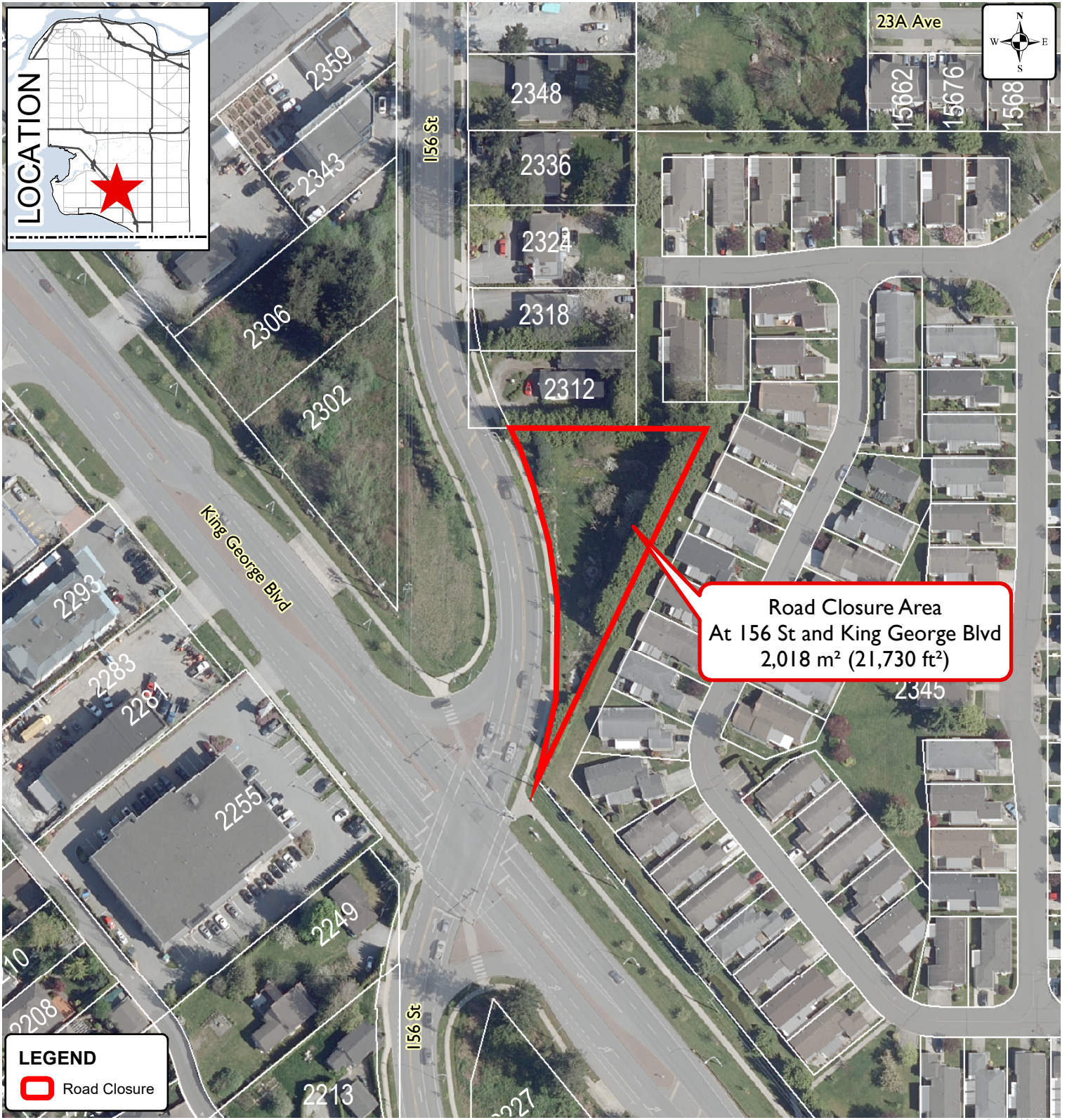
The Road Closure Area is surplus to the City's needs. The terms of the arrangement related to the internal transfer of the Road Closure Area from road to parkland are considered reasonable. It is recommended that Council authorize City staff to bring forward an appropriate Bylaw to close the Road Closure Area as generally described in this report.

Fraser Smith, P.Eng., MBA
General Manager,
Engineering

Laurie Cavan
General Manager,
Parks, Recreation & Culture

Appendix "I" - Aerial Photograph of 156 Street and King George Boulevard
Appendix "II" - Corporate Report No. R021; 2017

AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH OF SITE APPENDIX "I"



Produced by GIS Section: 26-Nov-2018, JJR

Date of Aerial Photograph: April 27, 2018

Scale: 1:1,500 0 10 M



ROAD CLOSURE At 156 Street And King George Boulevard

ENGINEERING
DEPARTMENT

The data provided is compiled from various sources and IS NOT warranted as to its accuracy or sufficiency by the City of Surrey. This information is provided for information and convenience purposes only. Lot sizes, Legal descriptions and encumbrances must be confirmed at the Land Title Office.

CORPORATE REPORT

NO: **R021**

COUNCIL DATE: **February 6, 2017**

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **January 16, 2017**

FROM: **General Manager, Engineering
General Manager, Parks, Recreation & Culture**

FILE: **1850-01**

SUBJECT: **Gratitude Garden at 156 Street and King George Boulevard**

RECOMMENDATION

The Engineering Department and the Parks, Recreation & Culture Department recommend that Council direct staff to undertake the necessary steps to convert the portion of road allowance (approximately 0.46 acres in size) located along the eastern side of 156 Street immediately north of King George Boulevard to "parkland".

BACKGROUND

In 2007, the City acquired a parcel of land at 2248 King George Boulevard (the "Property"), which was originally 1.00 acre in size as generally illustrated on the attached Appendix "I", in order to facilitate the realignment of 156 Street at the intersection of King George Boulevard. The realignment of 156 Street was an essential public safety project undertaken to enhance the geometry of the prior intersection. Upon finalizing the realignment of 156 Street, a 0.46 acre remnant area of dedicated road allowance remained (the "Remainder Land") along the eastern side of 156 Street immediately north of King George Boulevard.

Subsequent to the 156 Street road realignment project being completed, several South Surrey residents, including Mr. Arian Bilodeau, devoted considerable time and resources on a volunteer basis in establishing a "pocket garden" upon the Remainder Land, firstly as a memorial, and thereafter as a neighbourhood "community garden". On May 25, 2015, City Council approved a Community Enhancement Partnership Grant for the Gratitude Garden Project, pursuant to Regular Council Corporate Report No. R092;2015 attached to this report as Appendix "II". The community garden concept at this location has also been endorsed by the prior City Mayor, Dianne Watts, in November 2012, as noted in the letter attached to this report as Appendix "III".

DISCUSSION

In response to inquiries from several potential buyers as to the possible sale of the Remainder Land, and because the Remainder Land was not designated or identified for parkland purposes, Realty staff initiated its standard due-diligence process to assess whether the Remainder Land would be a candidate for a sale to the market at-large. Part of the due-diligence process included the investigation of potential land-use development concepts considering that the Remainder Land is designated commercial in the King George Highway/Highway 99 Corridor Local Area Plan. Communication by staff with Mr. Bilodeau resulted in Mr. Bilodeau expressing considerable concern about the possible future sale of the Remainder Land. Subsequent to this expression of concern by Mr. Bilodeau, appreciation of Mr. Bilodeau's longstanding beautification efforts at the Gratitude Garden have been further articulated by members of the public.

While the Remainder Land is not currently identified within the City's Park Program, nor currently titled as an existing legal lot, staff are recommending that the potential sale of the Remainder Land no longer be explored and that the status quo of the Remainder Land be maintained, while the following steps, as outlined below, are undertaken:

1. Staff to bring forward a Bylaw to close and remove the dedication as highway of the portion of road allowance located along the eastern side of 156 Street immediately north of King George Boulevard, subject to compliance with the advertising requirements of the *Community Charter* legislation;
2. That the new lot, once created, be designated for "parkland" purposes; and
3. That the new lot, once created, be converted from a transportation asset to a park asset.

Parks, Recreation & Culture Department Comments

Parks staff have reviewed the potential for the Remainder Land to be converted to parkland. The City's Mini Park and Plaza Policy outlines criteria to plan and design smaller parks, as pressure on existing parkland increases. The following points arise from that policy:

- At 0.46 acres in size, the Remainder Land is slightly under the minimum size of 0.7 acres, as identified in the Policy;
- The Remainder Land has good sightlines with a long frontage from 156 Street;
- The Remainder Land is in an area with moderate density that is experiencing infill development, further increasing the density; and
- The closest parks are Jessie Lee and Sunnyside Parks, which are 1,000 metres away from each other. The Remainder Land is sited approximately halfway between each park which helps fulfill having a park within walking distance (400 - 500 metres) for local residents.

It is beneficial when residents help identify and champion possible parkland. Advocacy and engagement are key indicators of a healthy community, and it is important for the City to support engaged neighbourhoods.

CONCLUSION

Based on the public support of the Gratitude Garden, staff recommend that Council direct staff to undertake the necessary steps to convert the portion of road allowance (approximately 0.46 acres in size) located along the eastern side of 156 Street immediately north of King George Boulevard to "parkland".



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NR/amg/cc

Note: Appendices Available Upon Request

Appendix "I" - Aerial Photograph of Site

Appendix "II" - Corporate Report No. R092;2015

Appendix "III" - Letter of support by prior City Mayor, Dianne Watts, dated November 8, 2012