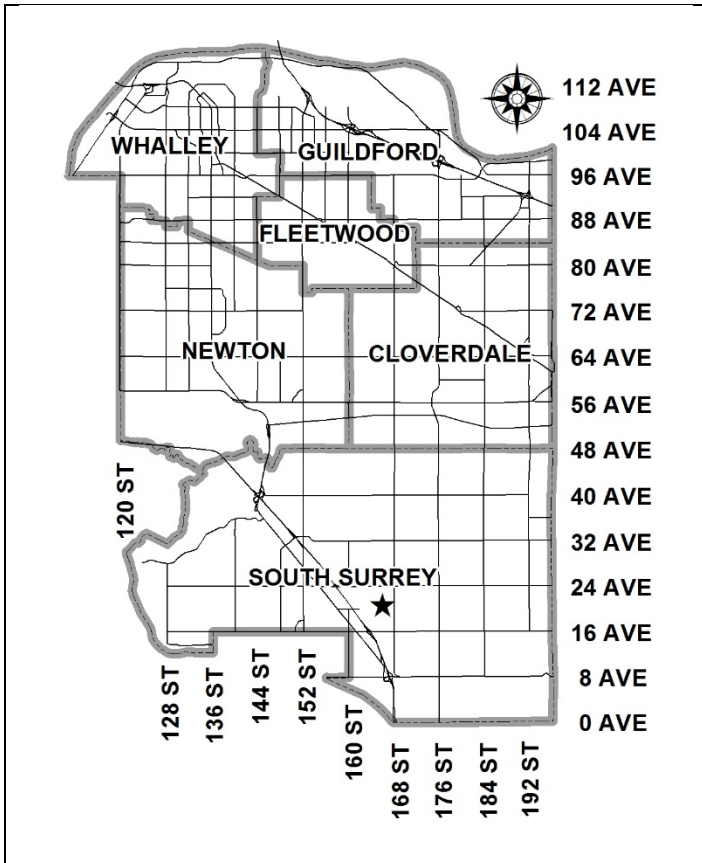


City of Surrey
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT REPORT

File: 7916-0575-00
 7917-0095-00

Planning Report Date: July 22, 2019



PROPOSAL:

- **NCP Amendment** from Cluster Residential 6-10 upa and Low Density Residential 6-10 upa to Multiple Residential 15-25 upa
- **Rezoning** from RA to RM-30
- **Development Permit**
- **Development Variance Permit**

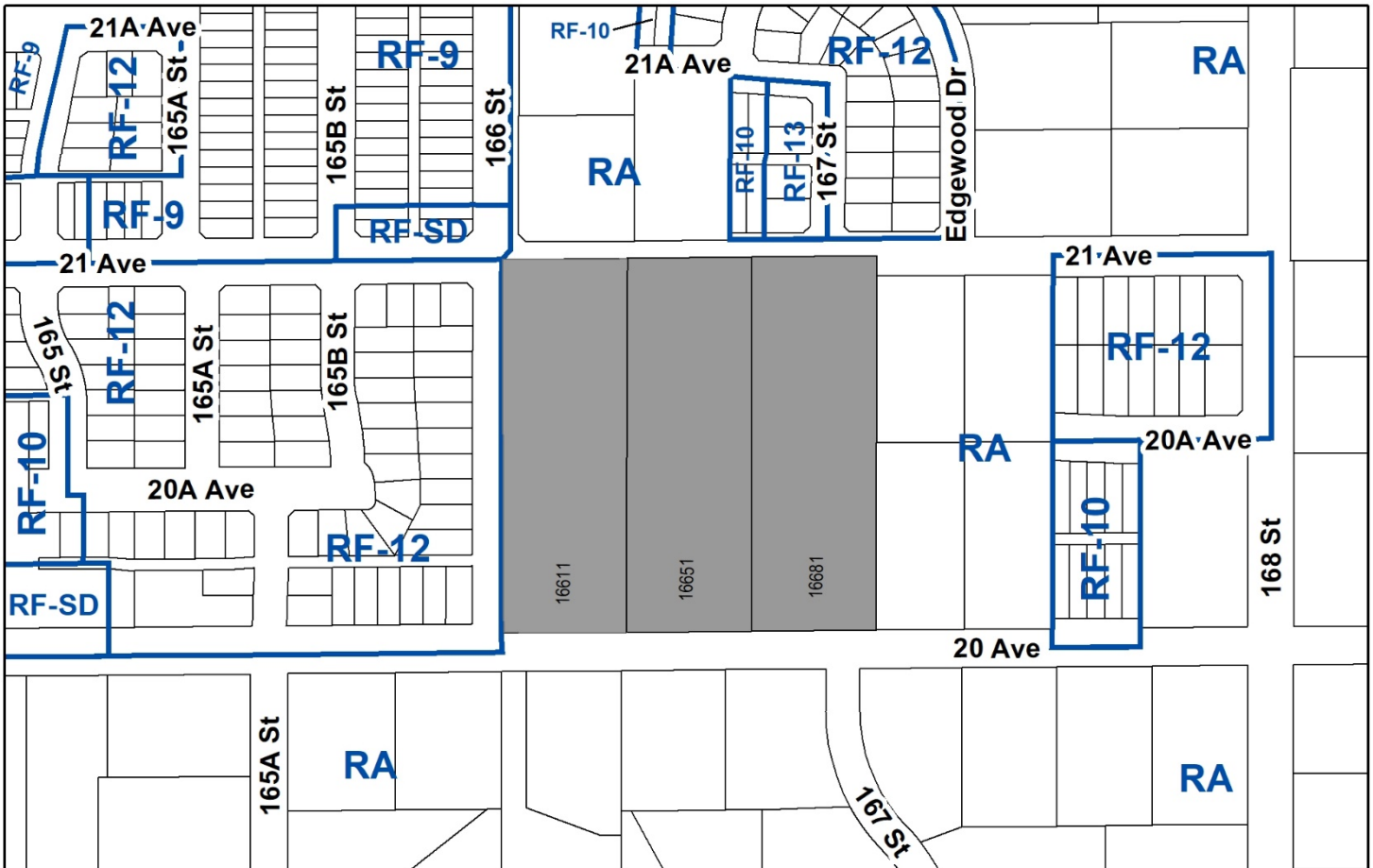
to permit the development of approximately 145 townhouse units.

LOCATION: 16611 - 20 Avenue (7916-0575-00)
 16651 - 20 Avenue (7917-0095-00)
 16681 - 20 Avenue (7917-0095-00)

ZONING: RA

OCF DESIGNATION: Urban

NCP DESIGNATION: Cluster Residential 6-10 upa and Low Density Residential 6-10 upa



RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

- The Planning & Development Department recommends that the proposed development be supported in concept and referred back to staff to work with the applicant on a more detailed site-planning review.

DEVIATION FROM PLANS, POLICIES OR REGULATIONS

- The proposed residential density of 21 upa (53 uph) is higher than the maximum density of 6-10 upa that is identified in the Sunnyside Heights Neighbourhood Concept Plan (NCP) for this site.

RATIONALE OF RECOMMENDATION

- The proposed density complies with the "Urban" designation in the Official Community Plan (OCP) and provides significant tree retention which meets the intention of the cluster designation in the Sunnyside Heights Neighbourhood Concept Plan (NCP).
- The proposed townhouse development will not significantly increase the projected number of students beyond what would have been accounted for under the existing NCP designation.
- The proposed development will provide a more affordable housing type than the low-density form required under the existing NCP designation.
- The two applicants under projects 7916-0575-00 and 7917-0095-00 have worked together to develop the site in a comprehensive manner. This approach is consistent with the land consolidation requirement of the NCP. It has allowed for significant tree protection and the provision of open space areas to ensure that the intent of the "cluster residential" designation in the NCP is achieved through both tree retention and re-planting.

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning & Development Department recommends that Development Application Nos. 7916-0575-00 and 7917-0095-00 be supported in concept and referred back to staff for more detailed site-planning review, including urban design, servicing, and community consultation among other considerations.

REFERRALS

- Engineering:** The Engineering Department has not completed a detailed review of the proposal yet. If the application proceeds to the detailed planning stage, Engineering comments will be provided to ensure necessary infrastructure is provided to service the site. The proposed location of the flex road is acceptable to Engineering.
- School District:** City staff have had detailed discussions with School District staff about school capacity in Sunnyside, which are outlined in the body of the report below.
- The applicant has proposed a phasing plan for the construction of the units. The first phase of units will be available for occupancy by September 2021 and the second phase will be available no earlier than April 2022.
- Parks, Recreation & Culture:** The Parks Department has not completed a detailed review of the proposal yet. If the application proceeds to the detailed planning stage, Parks comments will be provided.
- Surrey Fire Department:** The Fire Department has not completed a detailed review of the proposed layout because site planning has not been undertaken. If the application proceeds to the detailed planning stage, Fire will conduct a thorough review and provide comments.

SITE CHARACTERISTICS

- The discussion in this report relates to both Development Application Nos. 7916-0575-00 and 7917-0095-00. The two applications are comprised of three contiguous lots in total. The three lots together are identified as a consolidation area in the Sunnyside Heights Neighbourhood Concept Plan (NCP).
- The two applicants have been working together on a joint proposal. For the purposes of this Stage 1 land-use discussion, the two applications are considered one comprehensive development area and will be treated as one site in the discussion below.

Existing Land Use:

- The three subject properties are currently large-lot single family parcels zoned "One - Acre Residential Zone (RA)."

Adjacent Area:

Direction	Existing Use	NCP Designation (Sunnyside Heights)	Existing Zone
North (Across 21 Avenue):	Large single-family lots currently under application for small-lot single family (Applications No. 7917-0589-00 and 7917-0348-00) and recently-subdivided small lots.	Low-Density Residential 6-10 upa and Medium Density Residential 10-15 upa	RA, RF-10, RF-12, and RF-13
East:	Large single-family lots currently under application for small-lot single family (Application No. 15-0218-00).	Low-Density Residential 6-10 upa	RA
South (Across 20 Ave):	Large single-family lots, one of which is under application for small-lot single family (Application No. 7918-0357-00).	Cluster Residential 6-10 upa and Low-Density Residential 6-10 upa	RA
West (Across 166 Street):	Recently-subdivided small lots.	Medium-Density Residential 10-15 upa	RF-12

DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Context

- The properties comprising the two subject applications (7916-0575-00 and 7917-0095-00) are approximately 4 hectares (10 acres) in total. They span between 20 Avenue and 21 Avenue, west of 166 Street.
- The site consists of three properties that are currently used for large single-family homes with significant tree coverage on the lots.
- The properties are zoned "One-Acre Residential Zone" (RA) and are designated "Urban" in the Official Community Plan (OCP).
- The two western-most lots (Application No. 7916-0575-00 and half of Application No. 7917-0095-00) are designated "Cluster Residential 6-10 upa" in the Sunnyside Heights NCP. The eastern lot (half of Application no. 7917-0095-00) is designated "Low-Density Residential 6-10 upa" in the Sunnyside Heights NCP. All three lots together are identified as a consolidation area (see Appendix II for clarity).
- The cluster designation is intended to facilitate tree retention through development. In this case the NCP requires that 30-40% of the cluster-designated area be preserved for open space and tree preservation purposes. Outside of this open space, the rest of the site may support higher-density development, with a maximum permitted density of 6-10 upa averaged over the entire area.

Proposal

- Because all three lots are identified for consolidation the two applicants are working together to develop a joint proposal for development of the three lots.
- The applicants propose to retain 23% of the "cluster" designated properties for tree retention and open space. On the remaining developable portion of the site, 145 units are proposed. The overall proposed density, therefore, is 53 units per hectare (uph) (21 units per acre [upa]).
- The intent of this report is to seek Council's direction on the appropriateness of the land use, and therefore staff have not concluded a detailed review of the site plan. From an urban design perspective, some setbacks and unit orientations may not be supported as currently shown. It should therefore be noted that this total unit count and density may not be fully achievable once these design elements are considered in greater detail. These issues would be reviewed with the applicant should Council see merit in the proposal.

Land Use Considerations

- The factors below are relevant to the discussion about density on the subject properties:

School Capacity

- Insufficient school capacity has been a longstanding concern in the Sunnyside Heights neighbourhood. In 2017, through Corporate Report No. R129, Council put in place a six-month moratorium on any development applications proposing NCP amendments until a new school site could be established.
- A second elementary school site has now been acquired on the south side of 20 Avenue and the combined capacity of the two elementary schools in Sunnyside Heights, when they are completed, is expected to accommodate the projected student population of this NCP area under the land-use designations currently prescribed by the plan.
- Although the density proposed in these two applications is significantly higher than what is permitted in the NCP, the projected number of students is comparable. To consider the actual impact City staff have worked with School District staff on appropriate forecasting of the student population.
- Under the existing NCP designation (maximum density of 10 upa) the projected number of students is 38. At this density, single family is the typical housing form and for the purposes of enrollment projections the School District anticipates secondary suites in all single family homes. This effectively doubles the number of dwelling units and accounts for additional students in the enrollment estimates.
- Under the proposed townhouse density of approximately 53 units per hectare (21 upa) the projected number of students is 34. Townhouse units are calculated as one dwelling unit each because they do not typically contain secondary suites.
- Although the projected student populations of the two potential forms of development on this site are estimates only, at 38 versus 34 students the numbers do not differ significantly.
- The new elementary school on Edgewood Drive is scheduled to open in September 2021 with the future school south of 20 Avenue to open later, though the estimated date of the second school remains undetermined.
- School District staff advise that the students generated by these two applications will most easily be accommodated in the local schools if occupancy of the future units is phased to coincide with the availability of new school capacity.
- The applicants propose to phase the development in recognition of neighbourhood concerns about school capacity. Occupancy is proposed in two phases: phase one would be available for occupancy no earlier than September 2020 and phase 2 would be available in April 2022.

Affordability

- The applicant's proposal for a greater number of smaller and higher-density units will create a more affordable housing product than the single-family homes and larger townhomes that would be built under the existing designation.

- Housing affordability is a concern throughout the region. The developers suggest that the prices that larger homes would fetch make it uneconomical to develop this site under a 6-10 upa scenario.
- The smaller, more dense townhouse units are supportable from a planning perspective and are appropriate for the area. Many similarly dense townhouse developments have been approved in the Sunnyside Heights NCP area. The applicants' proposal is consistent with market trends, which have seen larger and more expensive homes decline in popularity in this area since the NCP was finalized in 2010.

Tree Preservation and Open Space

- The Sunnyside Heights NCP requires under the Cluster Residential designation that 30-40% of the site area be set aside for open space and tree preservation.
- The applicants submitted an arborist report that documented evidence of tree disease, which suggests that the NCP's expectation of significant tree retention on this site may need to be adjusted.
- City staff have worked extensively with the applicants and their arborist to develop a plan for retention of some forest stands with the recognition that certain species of trees within those stands are likely to decline over time. A forest stand management plan is proposed, administration of which would be the responsibility of the future strata.
- Through the retention of these tree stands, approximately 23% of the "cluster" designated area is proposed to be preserved for open space and tree management. This 23% includes the lands set aside specifically for tree retention and outdoor amenity space. There will be additional open space within setbacks and in rear yards that has not been included in this calculation.
- Staff are satisfied that the applicant has met the intention of the NCP with the tree protection areas as they are shown on the site plan in Appendix I.

Precedent

- There are a number of active applications in the Sunnyside Heights NCP area that propose plan amendments to increase density. Staff have also fielded inquiries from other owners in the area suggesting that additional density increases may be proposed in the future.
- If the plan amendment proposed under the two subject applications is supported, then other applicants and developers will likely seek support for their proposals as well.
- If all of the amendments that are currently proposed through formal development applications were to be approved, the result would be an estimated additional 155 units in this NCP area. This calculation takes into account the estimated residential units that will be lost through the acquisition of a second school site in the plan area. The land that has been acquired for the second school would otherwise have been developed for residential use.

- The estimated 155 units above includes only those already proposed through formal development applications in the Sunnyside Heights area. It does not include pre-application inquiries.
- With the recognition that a shift in development patterns from lower density single family homes to higher density townhomes does not necessarily result in a significant increase in the student population, the School District has indicated that some additional NCP amendments could be accommodated. The School District emphasizes that staggering the timing of occupancy of new developments can be an effective way to accommodate increases in school enrollment.

PRE-NOTIFICATION

Pre-notification for the subject applications has not yet been undertaken. Pre-notification letters and possibly a public information meeting will be undertaken if Council supports in concept the proposed land use.

PROJECT EVALUATION

- The applicants' proposal for a townhouse development with an overall density of 53 units per hectare (uph) (21 units per acre [upa]) and 23% open space for tree retention complies with the "cluster residential" component of the NCP designation even though the proposed density is higher than the NCP permits.
- Given that there are tree diseases on the site that were not identified at the time the NCP was approved, the 23% open space allows for retention of the most viable stands of trees with a management plan to be implemented by the future strata to address the future health of the tree stand.
- The proposed higher density development will allow for the provision of more affordable homes in this community compared to the larger, lower density, and more expensive homes that would be constructed under the existing maximum density of 6-10 upa.
- The smaller, more affordable homes are reflective of current market demands as they are observed in this part of the City.
- The proposed development accommodates the flex road in an acceptable location as required in the NCP while still maximizing tree retention and open space.
- The applicants propose to phase the development so that new residents will not occupy the units until after the new school on 20 Avenue is in operation.

CONCLUSION

- For the above reasons, staff are supportive of the proposed development concept in principle.
- Should Council support the proposal in principle staff will work with the applicant to resolve remaining outstanding design considerations (including unit orientation, driveway access,

setbacks, and amenity areas, among other items) and bring forward the subject application for Council's consideration at a subsequent Regular Council -Land Use meeting, at which time rezoning by-laws for the amended proposal will be introduced.

INFORMATION ATTACHED TO THIS REPORT

The following information is attached to this Report:

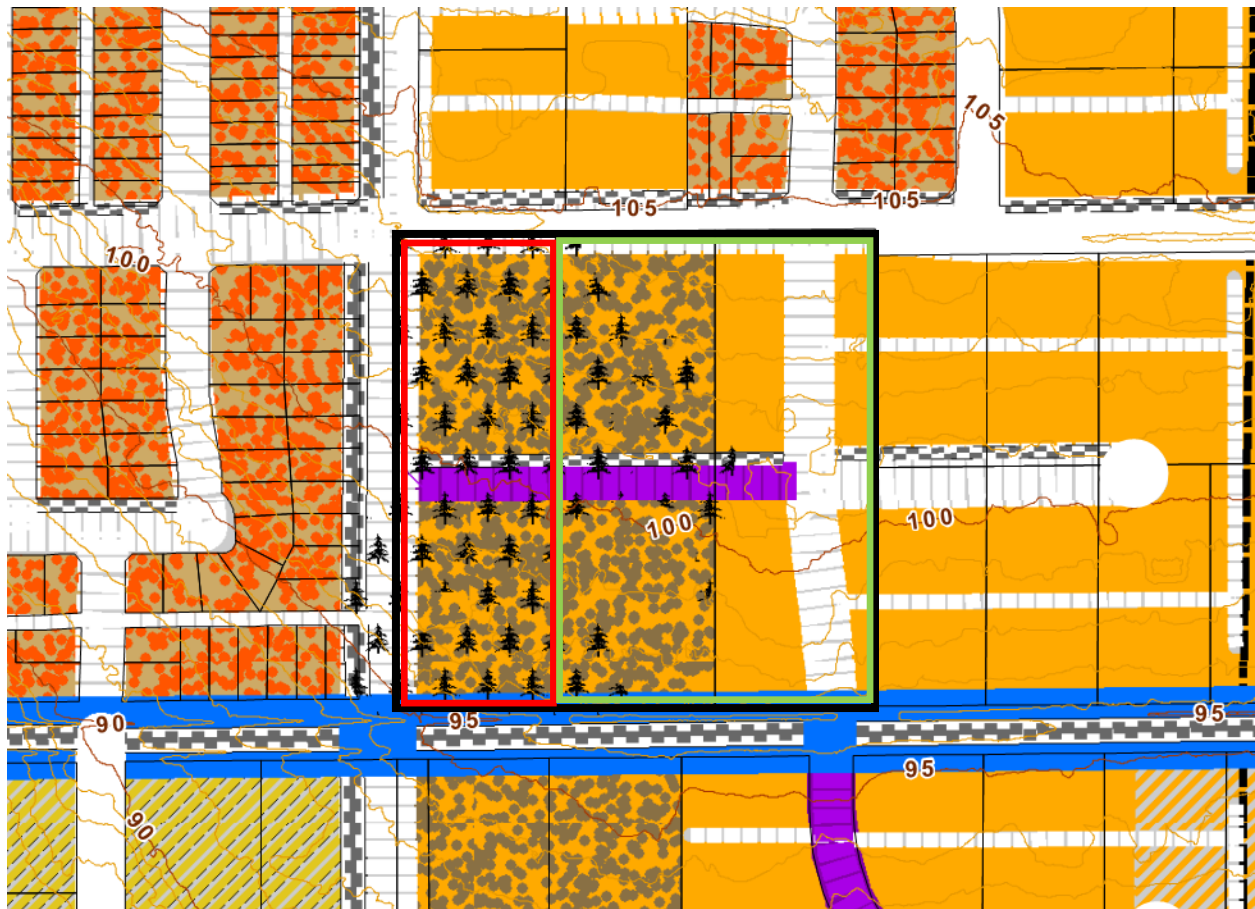
- Appendix I. Site Plan
- Appendix II. Context Plan Showing Existing NCP Designations

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



Jean Lamontagne
General Manager
Planning and Development

MJ/cm

Excerpt from Sunnyside Heights Neighbourhood Concept Plan



Legend

-  Consolidation area identified in NCP
-  Boundary of Application No. 7916-0575-00
-  Boundary of Application No. 7917-0095-00
-  "Cluster Residential 6-10 upa" Designation
-  "Low Density Residential 6-10 upa" Designation