



CITY OF VANCOUVER

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Date: April 14, 2008
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Meeting Date: April 29, 2008

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: General Manager of Engineering Services

SUBJECT: Great Northern Way Campus - New Structure Plan of Roads, Parcels and Open Space

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council approve the new structure plan of roads, open space and parcel configuration, as shown in Appendix A.
- B. THAT if Council approves A that Council authorize the Director of Legal Services to enter into a new or amended Services and Open Space Agreement, to the satisfaction of the Director of Legal Services and the General Manager of Engineering Services, with the Owners of the Lands, that continues to secure all of the obligations for delivery of infrastructure and open space as per the Council approved conditions for the 1999 enactment of CD-1 402 and that reflects the new phases of development resulting from the application of the No Net Loss guiding principle to the new structure plan.
- C. THAT if Council approves A and B that Council authorize the Director of Legal Services to enter into a Section 219 Covenant for "No Development" with the subdivision and against the SW parcel of the new structure plan until such time that the SW parcel has been rezoned to be IC-3 and the new or amended Services and Open Space Agreement is registered.

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager of Engineering Services recommends approval of A and B above.

COUNCIL POLICY

In 1999 Council enacted CD-1 (402) for 555 Great Northern Way

In June 2002 Council approved the Public Realm Plan for 555 Great Northern Way

PURPOSE

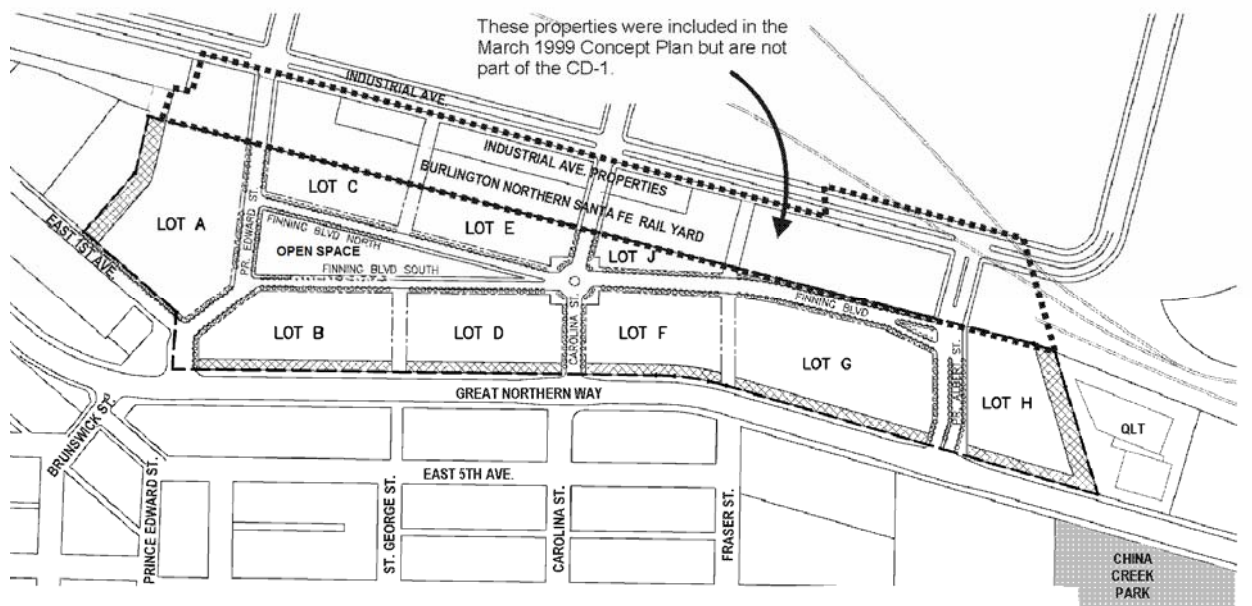
The purpose of this report is to present to Council, for approval, the new structure plan of roads, parcels and open space for the Great Northern Way Campus Lands. Council approved the original structure plan as part of the 1999 rezoning CD-1 guidelines for the area and therefore staff are seeking Council approval for the changes. The revised structure plan will serve as a guide to the final form of subdivision of the lands. The report also seeks Council authority for the Director of Legal Services to enter into a new or revised Services and Open Space Agreement that will better reflect anticipated phases for development and secure the appropriate on and off site infrastructure and amenity improvements while respecting the guiding principle for "No Net Loss" (explained below) to any party, be it the City or land owners.

BACKGROUND

In 1999 Council approved the CD-1 zoning for the Great Northern Way Technology Park being those lands bounded by Great Northern Way to the south, Prince Edward Street to the west, a midway point between the new Foley Street and Glen Drive to the east and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) rail yard to the north. These lands have since subdivided and the western portion gifted by Finning International Inc. to the education consortium of UBC, SFU, Emily Carr and BCIT and as such the lands are now known as the Great Northern Way Campus.

As part of the 1999 CD-1 guidelines there was a structure plan approved showing the layout of roads, parcels and a central open space, as shown below in Figure 1.

Figure 1: The structure plan from the 1999 CD-1 Guidelines



This structure plan was intended to help guide the future subdivision and development of the lands. The location of the open space and the western most road were governed primarily by a desire to create a corridor for the future westward extension of the Millennium Line ALRT and a location for the station entrance of an underground station in the eastern portion of the open space.

In the years since 1999, TransLink has confirmed their preferred routing for the potential western Millennium Line extension and Engineering has developed a much improved alternate alignment for the western most road. These changes alter the shape of the western parcels and the open space, hence the need for a new structure plan.

Recently, Great Northern Way Campus initiated a design charrette process to explore their future vision for the site. City staff have been invited to attend and observe. Any changes that may result from this charrette process would be handled through a separate City process, e.g. a CD-1 text amendment or major project rezoning process, depending on the scope of proposed changes.

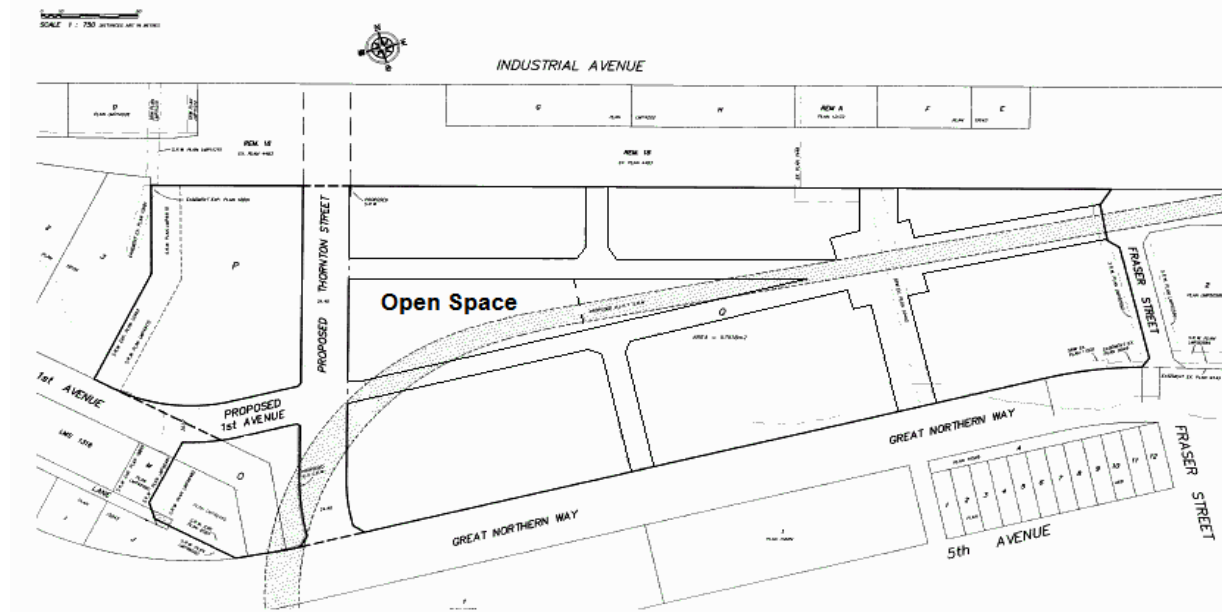
DISCUSSION

The changes being recommended by the new structure plan, as seen on the next page in Figure 2, are created by the re-orientation of the western most road, currently referred to as Thornton Street, to allow for:

- a more logical and safe street network through the future neighbourhood by eliminating non-right angle intersections;

- an opportunity to construct a wide off-street north-south greenway (to be a portion of the Central Valley Greenway) as per the Council approved Public Realm Plan of 2002: and,
- improvement to the previously envisioned intersection condition at Great Northern Way by further separating the Brunswick Street pedestrian controlled intersection (shown in Figure 1) with the to-be-signalized intersection with the new Thornton Street alignment. In the long term if the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Rail Yard is decommissioned, this alignment of Thornton will better protect the residential neighbourhood to the south of Great Northern Way from shortcutting between Terminal and Broadway via Thornton and Brunswick Streets because of the increased offset in the intersections.

Figure 2. The Recommended New Structure Plan Showing the Re-Alignment of Thornton



To help identify the changes we include Figure 3 below which shows the new structure plan overlaid on the old plan.

Figure 3. The New Structure Plan Overlaid on the Old Plan.

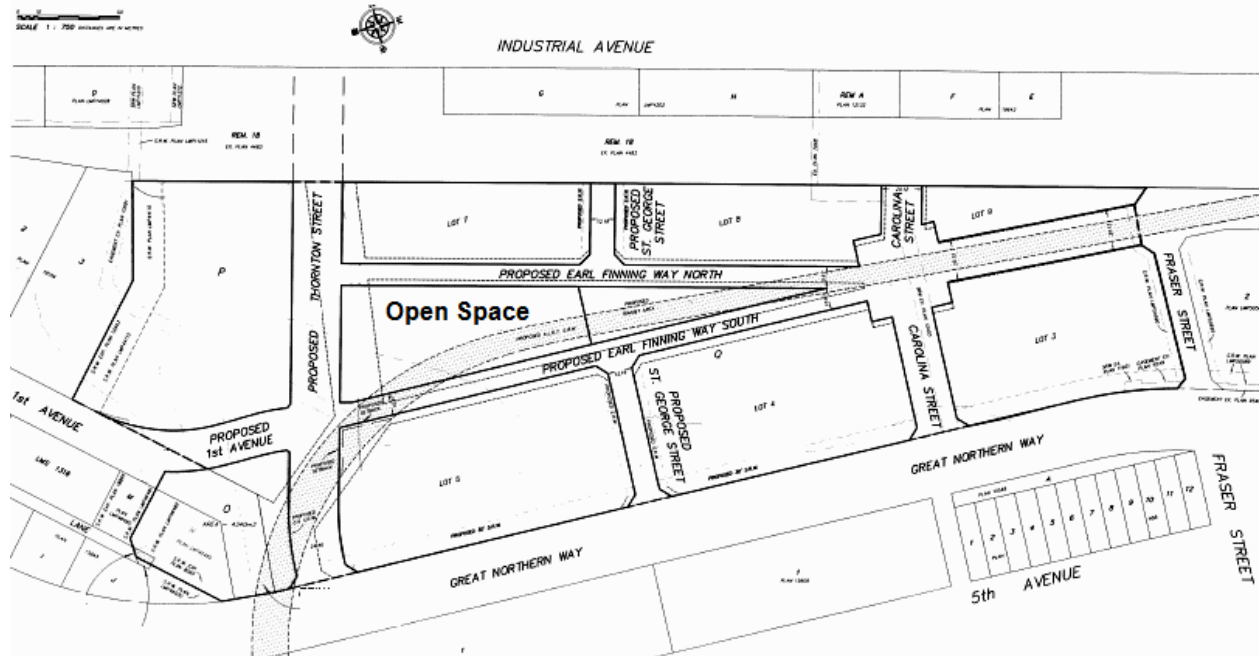


Figure 3 identifies the adjustments to the shape of the western parcels and the open space with the new Thornton Street alignment. The bold is the new plan and the fainter line is the old plan.

Changes in Open Space

In 1999 Council required as a condition of rezoning that the open space consist of a minimum of 4937m². Even after excluding the area for the future station entrance and the appropriate amount of area for congregation and transitioning from the station to the open space, this minimum area of 4937m² is exceeded in the new structure plan. Further, staff feel that the new orientation of the open space, particularly the width along its western edge, allows for enhanced flexibility for future design and programming of this amenity area.

Changes to the Western Parcels and the “No Net Loss” Guiding Principle

The western parcels undergo the most dramatic changes in shape with the changes to the structure plan. The 1999 CD-1 zoning establishes land uses, densities and building heights for various areas of the Great Northern Way Campus Lands. The parcel with the most versatile allowable land uses and the greatest height, the NW corner lot, becomes substantially smaller in size which creates a net loss in developable land that is not picked up by the other parcels that have increased in lot size. The discussions that have taken place over the past several years between City staff and the property owners, the education consortium represented by UBC Properties Trust and Finning International Inc., have focussed on innovative ways to offset the loss in developable value without creating loss for any of the other parties. This is the principle of “No Net Loss” that has guided our discussions and investigations of options. The recommended structure plan, with the associated changes to the Services Agreement to alter the phasing of the on and off-site works, represents a solution that honours the “No Net Loss” guiding principle and is supported by all parties.

Planning staff will be bringing forward, in a separate report to Council, zoning amendments corresponding to the changes proposed in this report. The zoning amendments will abide by the No Net Loss principle and will not seek to change the intent of the CD-1 By-law or its guidelines.

Service Agreement Changes

The existing Services and Open Space Agreement phases the delivery of off-site improvements and envisions the development of the land from east to west. Therefore the development of the parcel in the NW corner carries with it the obligation for substantial off-site improvements if developed before the earlier phased parcels to the east. With the reduced developability of this site, and the intent of the owner to develop it prior to the other parcels to the east, staff recommend it be removed from the specific development phase with which it is currently associated and placed in its own phase such that the appropriate amount of off site improvements (e.g. those that are required for this site to function and which properly mitigates the impacts of this site on the surrounding neighbourhood) be attributed as obligation of its development. Through these changes to the Services and Open Space Agreement the parcel in the SW corner, which is currently not included in agreement, will now be included as another new phase which will pick up some of the obligations shed by the NW site as it has grown in size and developability. The remaining obligations shed by the NW site will be re-assigned to phases in the interior of the Great Northern Way Campus Lands site in such a way that amenity and infrastructure are introduced as required to serve the site and enhance the neighbourhood while providing flexibility for the land owners to develop in their preferred sequence.

All of the 1999 Council approved rezoning conditions will be retained and improvements will be provided by the owners of the properties at no cost to the City.

Next Steps

A subdivision application has been applied for and staff will bring forward in a separate report today, see report 7361, the required steps for Council to enable the changes to the road network and parcel configurations.

Planning would follow up with a report seeking referral to Public Hearing a number of consequential changes to the Zoning and Development By-law related to the new road network and parcel configurations. The zoning amendments would include:

- rezoning the northeast part of new Lot O from CD-1 to IC-3;
- amending CD-1 402 to decrease the permitted floor area in line with the increased permitted floor area of the new Lot O;
- amending various plans within the CD-1 By-law and its guidelines to reflect the new parcel configuration; and
- amending the IC-3 Schedule to allow the Director of Planning discretion to permit yards in irregular shaped lots.

Timing

The owner of the SW parcel has a potential purchaser and to assist in a timely sale of the property staff recommend that as an interim measure a Section 219 Covenant for "No Development", be registered with the subdivision and against the SW parcel. The agreement will remain until such time as the rezoning for the new SW corner site is enacted and the amended or replaced Services and Open Space Agreement, as per recommendation B, is registered and includes the SW parcel.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with Recommendations A or B as the original rezoning conditions will persist at no cost to the City.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommend approval of Recommendations A , B and C as they will allow for an improved road network for all users groups, maintain the provision for a neighbourhood open space and allow for a new development parcellization and phasing plan that is supported by staff and the property owners.

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APPENDIX A - New Structure Plan

