



POLICY REPORT DEVELOPMENT AND BUILDING

Report Date: February 17, 2009
Contact: Michael Naylor
Contact No.: 604.871.6269
RTS No.: 07869
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20
Meeting Date: March 3, 2009

TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: Director of Planning
SUBJECT: CD-1 Text Amendment: 4176 Alexandra Street (York House School)

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the application by York House School to amend the land use section of CD-1 #288 (By-law No. 7045) for 4176 Alexandra Street (PID: 007-993-811; Block 670, Lot 526, Group 1, NWD) to increase the limit on enrolment in grades 8 to 12 from 265 students to 325 students be referred to a public hearing, together with:

- i) draft CD-1 By-law amendments, generally as presented in Appendix A; and
- ii) the recommendation of the Director of Planning to approve;

FURTHER THAT the Director of Legal Services be instructed to prepare the necessary amending by-law generally in accordance with Appendix A for consideration at the public hearing.

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager of Community Services RECOMMENDS approval of the foregoing.

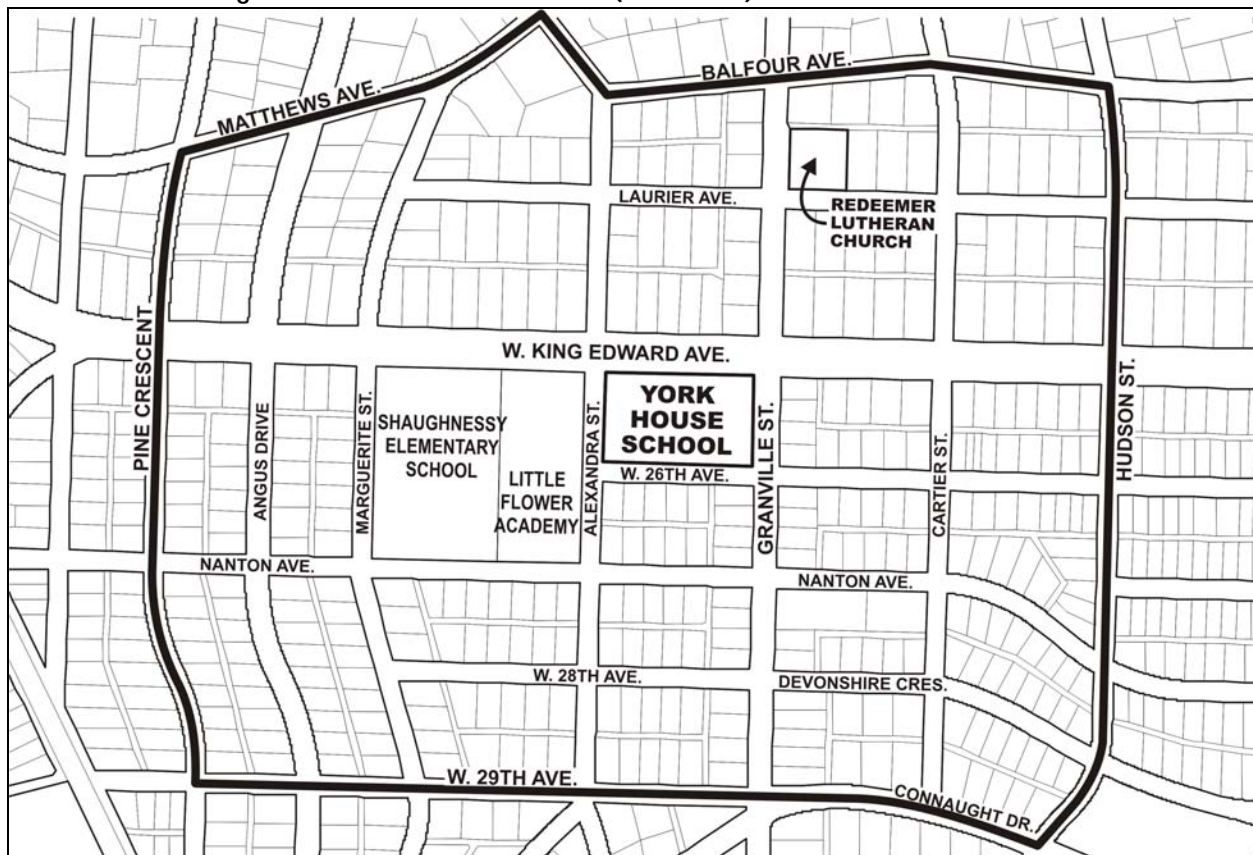
COUNCIL POLICY

- CD-1 #288 (By-law No. 7045) for 4176 Alexandra Street was initially approved November 3, 1992 and subsequently amended on November 1, 2005.

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE

This report analyzes an application by York House School ("the School") to revise the CD-1 By-law for 4176 Alexandra Street to permit an increase in the enrolment limit for grades 8 to 12. Staff have reviewed the application, the public input and the transportation impacts and recommend that an increase in the limit be approved from 265 students to 325 students. The School is not requesting a change to the overall limit of 600 students which will remain in the by-law.

Figure 1 - York House School (CD-1 site) and notification area



DISCUSSION

Background

York House School is a private school for girls that has been present at its current location at King Edward Avenue and Granville Street since 1939. In 1985, the School's Board of Governors committed the school to a maximum size of 600 students offering elementary and secondary programs. In 1992, the site was rezoned from RS-1 to CD-1 to allow the School to expand the development on their site beyond the maximum density permitted in RS-1. At the time, staff recommended that an overall enrolment limit of 600 students be included in the CD-1 By-law as a condition of approving school use. After hearing from local residents at the hearing who were concerned about parking and activity levels associated with the senior students, Council added a further limit of 265 students for grades 8 to 12. After approval of the CD-1 zoning, the school implemented part of its 1992 expansion plans.

In 2005, amendments to the CD-1 By-law were approved for a revised redevelopment plan. The first phase of the new plan was completed in 2008 and includes a building expansion under an existing sports field adjacent to King Edward Avenue. Future phases approved as part of the 2005 rezoning include the replacement of a classroom building on Alexandra Street and construction of a second underground parkade adjacent 26th Avenue. The 2005 amendments did not include any changes to the by-law's enrolment provisions. The limit

remains at 600 students for total enrolment, of which a maximum of 265 students can be in grades 8 to 12.

In 2008 the School purchased an existing preschool at 3274 East Boulevard to establish an "Early Childhood Learning Centre" for York House School. The kindergarten program, comprising 36 students, has now been moved from the main campus at 4176 Alexandra Street to this satellite location. The Early Childhood Learning Centre is not part of the CD-1 site and exists at 3274 East Boulevard under a previous approval for school use under RS-1 zoning.

Proposal

With 36 kindergarten students now moved to another location, the School wishes to adjust the enrolment in the grades that remain at 4176 Alexandra Street, while adhering to the overall enrolment limit of 600 students. Specifically, the School seeks to redistribute the 36 places from the kindergarten and 19 places from grades 1 to 7 to grades 8 to 12, bringing the enrolment in the senior school to 320 students. This will enable the School to offer a broader, more diversified curriculum for their secondary program.

The initial request of the School was to eliminate the enrolment limit imposed on grades 8 to 12. While the School would target a maximum of 320 students in grades 8 to 12, they note difficulties in ensuring that the maximum is not exceeded due to uncertainties around the admissions process at the start of each school year. Prospective senior students often apply for admission to several schools, so it is challenging to control the outcome while multiple offers and acceptances are occurring. A more reasonable objective might be "320 students, plus or minus 5 students".

Public Input

The School hosted an open house for surrounding neighbours on October 15, 2008 which was attended by City staff. The proposal to apply for the by-law amendment was presented at that meeting and attendees were given the opportunity to comment. Feedback at the open house was generally understanding and supportive of the School's proposed enrolment changes. Several attendees commented that the traffic and parking around the School was much improved compared to the situation prior to the 2005 rezoning.

The School submitted its application on December 17, 2008. A notification letter was sent to 361 property owners surrounding the School and two rezoning signs were placed on the site. The School's application submission was made available on the City website.

Ten residents responded by letter or email and two telephoned. Of the 12 respondents, one supported the School's application and 11 were opposed to elimination of the senior enrolment cap. Of those opposed, many were willing to accept a small increase in the senior enrolment as long as it continued to be limited. Concerns expressed included parking impacts due to students driving to school and parking on neighbourhood streets, and a perception that a greater proportion of senior students would mean a higher level of activity around the School, particularly during evenings.

Transportation and Parking

Staff have reviewed mode-split surveys submitted by the School and a submission from Bunt & Associates, the applicant's transportation consultant (see Appendix B). The following observations are made about the changes related to the enrolment shift.

- Overall, there would be 3 fewer drop-off/pick-up vehicle trips as a result of the enrolment changes, however the nature of the activity shifts. About 25 to 35 high-impact kindergarten drop-off/pick-ups no longer occur at 4176 Alexandra Street (high-impact because the School requires that kindergarten students be escorted in and out of the building) are replaced by a slightly lesser number of curb-side drop-off/pick-ups of older students (utilizing passenger lay-bys along the School's frontages).
- Due to BC's graduated licensing program, only a small number of grade 12 students are typically able to drive themselves. Two additional grade 12 students are expected to drive and park. As part of the Transportation Management Plan required with 2005 rezoning, the School makes provisions for students who do drive to school. Those who drive must register their licence plate numbers with the School, display a decal on their dash, and park at a nearby church. If they disregard the rules and park on a local street, residents can report the licence number to the School and disciplinary action is taken.
- The School has adhered to its Transportation Management Plan by implementing numerous programs and controls on pick-up/drop-off, parking, bussing, walking and biking. Positive results are shown in the mode-split data derived from surveys of staff and students conducted three times per year.

With regard to increased activity outside of school hours, due to a larger senior school, York House is required to maintain and annually update a Facilities Use Plan which plans for the parking and traffic activities associated with evening and weekend events using the gymnasium and auditorium. This plan would be updated by the School to reflect any changes in the number of events or number of participants. With the proposed change in enrolment, the School does not envision any substantial change in the use of facilities.

Also since the 2005 rezoning, the School has maintained a Neighbour Relations Committee which meets regularly and consists of representatives from School staff, senior students and neighbours. The Committee meetings have provided a forum to address traffic and parking concerns raised by neighbours.

Staff Recommendation

After receiving input from local residents and after staff review of the traffic and parking impacts associated with the proposed change, staff recommend that the proposed shift of enrolment from the elementary to the secondary levels be supported. However, rather than removing the limit on grades 8 to 12, staff recommend that the limit be increased from 265 to 325 students. Retaining a limit addresses a concern of some neighbours that the School will convert entirely to a secondary school. The School concurs with this recommendation, noting that they intend to remain as both an elementary and secondary school at this location and that, while they would aim for an enrolment of 320 students in the senior school, a limit of 325 students gives them flexibility in their admissions process.

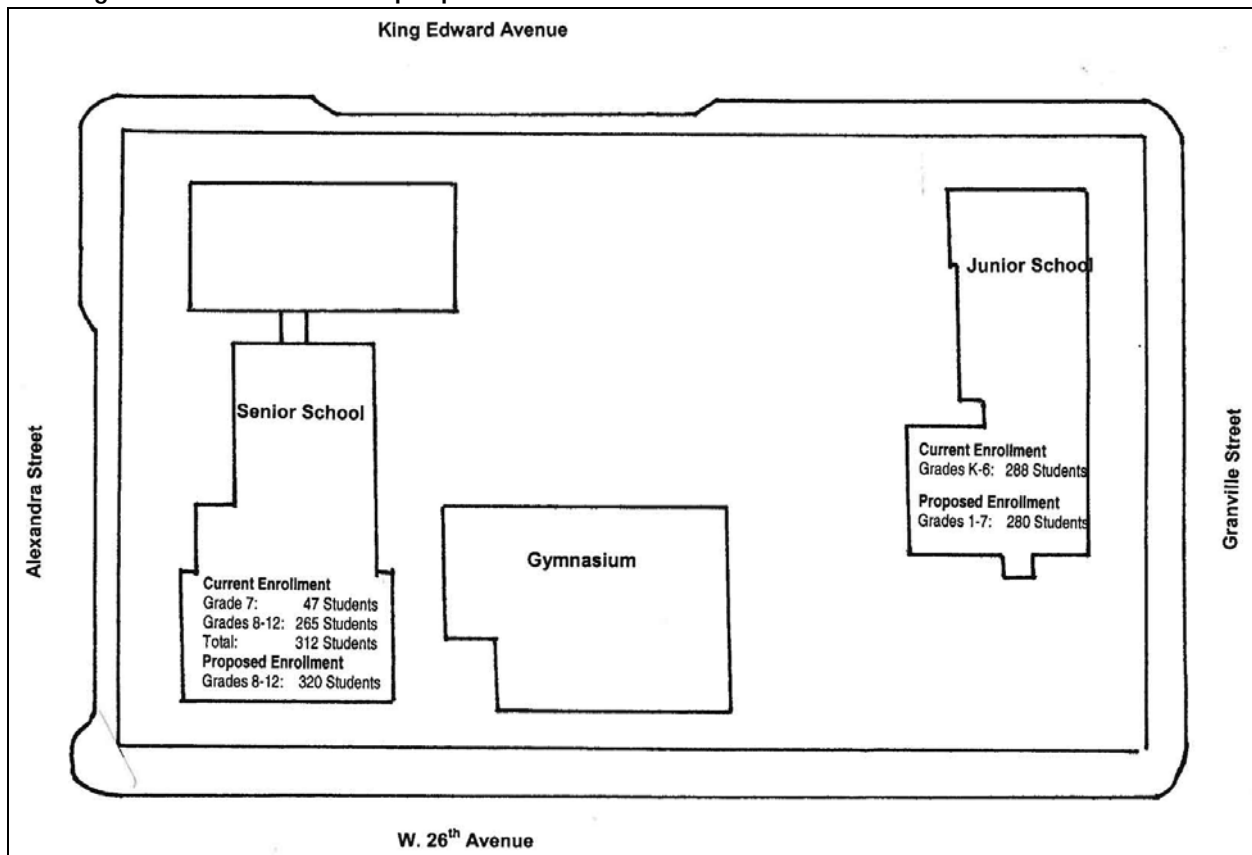
Table 1 – Summary of CD-1 By-law limits and enrolment

York House School	enrolment with Kindergarten on-site	current CD-1 By-law limits	proposed enrolment	recommended CD-1 By-law limits
Kindergarten	36		36*	
Junior (grades 1 to 7)	299		280	
Senior (grades 1 to 8)	265	max. 265	320	max. 325
all students at 4176 Alexandra	600	max. 600	600	max. 600

* Kindergarten now located off-site at the Early Childhood Learning Centre (3274 East Boulevard)

With the enrolment change, there would be no physical changes to the site’s approved form of development. The grade 7 classes would relocate from the Senior School into floor space freed up in the Junior School by the kindergarten’s move to the Early Childhood Learning Centre. At that point, there would be extra classroom space available in the Senior School to accommodate the additional grade 8 to 12 students who would be admitted in September 2009. (See Figure 2, below.)

Figure 2 – Current and proposed enrolment distribution at 4176 Alexandra Street



Public Benefit

Because there is no increase in floor area associated with this amendment, no Community Amenity Contribution (CAC) is anticipated. (In 2005, as a condition of the previous zoning approval which did entail an expansion of floor space, the School offered and paid a CAC of \$65,122.)

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

CONCLUSION

Staff have reviewed the application by York House School to revise the CD-1 By-law for 4176 Alexandra Street to permit an increase in the enrolment limit for grades 8 to 12 and have concluded that an increase in the limit from 265 students to 325 students is supportable. The Director of Planning recommends that the application be referred to a public hearing, together with the draft by-law amendment contained in Appendix A, and be approved.

* * * * *

4176 Alexandra Street (York House School)
DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO CD-1 #288 (BY-LAW NO. 7045)

Note: A by-law will be prepared in accordance with the provisions listed below, subject to change and refinement prior to posting.

- Amend Section 2 (a) as follows:
 - (a) School - Elementary or Secondary, provided that enrolment does not exceed 600 pupils, of which no more than ~~265~~ 325 shall be in grades 8 to 12.
- Correct the site address in the by-law by substituting all references to "1500 West King Edward Avenue" with "4176 Alexandra Street".

TRANSPORTATION CONSULTANT'S LETTER



February 18, 2009

Project No. 4457-05

York House School
4176 Alexandra Street
Vancouver, BC V6J 2V6

Attn: Ms. Gail Ruddy, Head of School

**RE: YORK HOUSE SCHOOL – VANCOUVER, BC
BYLAW AMENDMENT – TRAFFIC/PARKING REVIEW**

Dear Ms. Ruddy,

We have prepared this letter to summarize our traffic/parking review associated with the proposed Bylaw Amendment for York House School, in Vancouver, BC.

Background

York House School is proposing to amend their CD-1 Bylaw to make changes to the enrollment cap. The current enrollment cap is a total of 600 students, with an upper limit of 265 secondary students in grades 8 to 12. The proposed changes would increase the secondary school cap to 325 students, with the overall enrollment of 600 staying the same.

The purpose of our traffic/parking review is to comment on anticipated changes related to traffic and parking at the school, based on the proposed enrollment changes. The current TDM (Transportation Demand Management) measures will also be examined.

Proposed Changes

The City staff recommended change to the enrolment cap could result in an increase of up to 60 girls in the secondary school (Grades 8-12). With the overall enrolment cap of 600 girls remaining in place, there would be a commensurate decrease in the elementary school of up to 60 girls. In addition to this, the Kindergarten class, currently about 35 students, would be relocated to the Early Childhood Learning Centre, a new pre-school facility started by the school and located on East Boulevard.

York House School – Vancouver, BC
Bylaw Amendment – Traffic/Parking Review
February 18, 2009



Impacts to Traffic & Parking

The school conducts travel mode surveys three times per year, usually in October, February and May. The results of the last questionnaire survey, which was conducted in October 2008, are summarized in *Table 1*.

Table 1 – Travel Modes (as per October 2008 questionnaire survey)

Mode	Elementary Students			Secondary Students		
	AM	PM	Average	AM	PM	Average
Driven Single Student	47%	46%	46%	54%	43%	48%
Carpool *	34%	39%	37%	22%	23%	23%
Transit/Shuttle	6%	2%	4%	16%	25%	20%
Walk/Bike	13%	13%	13%	8%	9%	9%
Drive & Park	--	--	--	0%	0%	0%

Notes: * Carpooling includes children being driven by their parents and those being driven by another student's parents, ie- about 1/2 of the carpooling trips generate a vehicle trip, assuming a 2-student occupancy.

Vehicle Trips – Pick-Up/Drop-Off

Roughly 83% of elementary students arrive by car, and taking carpooling into consideration assuming a 2-student occupancy, about 65% of those generating a vehicle trip. Roughly 71% of secondary students arrive by car, and taking carpooling into consideration also assuming a 2-student occupancy, about 60% actually generate a vehicle trip. *Table 2* summarizes the existing and future anticipated vehicle trips associated with pick-up/drop-off at the school.

Table 2 – Vehicle Trip Projections

Students	Observed Trip Rates *	Existing (Current Bylaw)		Future (Amended Bylaw)		Difference # Vehicles
		# Students	# Vehicles	# Students	# Vehicles	
Elementary	0.65	335	218	275	179	-39
Secondary	0.60	265	159	325	195	+36
	--	600	377	600	374	-3

Notes: * Trip rates expressed in # vehicle trips/student

*York House School – Vancouver, BC
Bylaw Amendment – Traffic/Parking Review
February 18, 2009*



As shown, the Bylaw changes are expected to cause very few changes with respect to the number of vehicles associated with pick-up/drop-off at the school, and if anything a slight reduction in vehicle trips to the school would be expected. The most notable change may be in the number of vehicles that park on-street during pick-up/drop-off. The school currently requires that all Kindergarten students are walked into the school by a parent/guardian, suggesting that 25-35 vehicles currently park in the neighbourhood, mostly on Granville Street. With the relocation of the Kindergarten class to the Early Childhood Learning Centre, there should be a shift to more parents using the pick-up/drop-off lay-bys, meaning more shorter duration stops in designated areas right next to the school.

Student Driving/Parking

There are currently approximately 53 grade 12 students, and based on the schools past travel mode surveys, approximately 3% of secondary students drive to school on any given day. The travel mode survey conducted last fall found that no students were driving to school on a regular basis, which is likely a factor of many students not having had their license at that time, and by February/May 2009 this number would be expected to increase (as was observed in previous travel mode surveys). **Table 3** summarizes the results of past travel mode surveys, looking at only student driving. The observed average of 3% of secondary students driving on any given day represents about 8 Grade 12 students, or 15% of all Grade 12 students (assuming 53 in total).

Table 3 – Student Drivers

Date of Survey	% of Secondary Students Driving
February 2006	1%
May 2006	4%
October2006	2%
February 2007	7%
May 2007	7%
October2007	1%
February 2008	3%
May 2008	2%
October2008	0%
<i>Average</i>	3%

Note: Represents the percent of students that drive out of all secondary students in Grades 8-12 (265).

*York House School – Vancouver, BC
Bylaw Amendment – Traffic/Parking Review
February 18, 2009*



The school has implemented some relatively strict policies vis-à-vis student driving. All student drivers are required to register with the school, place a school decal in their vehicle window and are instructed to park at the Redeemer Lutheran Church parking lot, where the school has an off-site parking arrangement. Students are alternatively allowed to park on-street in any place where they have received written permission from a neighbour, and must inform the school of this location. All parents of students who have just turned 16 are sent a letter from the Head of School to inform them of these student driving/parking policies. Compliance with these rules has been relatively well observed, with any students not registering typically being reported by a displeased neighbour, and the school promptly speaking with the involved student and relocating the vehicle.

The proposed increase in the number of secondary students is a total of 60, or about 12 per grade. Assuming 15% of grade 12 students would drive to school on any given day (as per the travel mode survey), and assuming 12 new grade 12 students, this would represent about 2 new student drivers following the enrollment increase. Even if more students were to drive, it is expected that any would in fact park in the off-site parking at the Redeemer Lutheran Church with little to no impact to neighbours and on-street parking.

Transit

York House School is well situated for travel by Transit. The travel mode survey in October suggests that up to 15-25% of secondary students are currently using Transit on any given day.

The school's record of transit pass sales suggests that currently 100 out of 265 secondary students have purchased a transit pass through the school, roughly 38%. This is composed of about 50% of the Grades 11 & 12 students, and 20-45% of the grades 8-10 students.

Upper grades students (Grades 7-12) are typically the most involved in Transit use at any school. With the proposed increase in secondary student enrollment and a decrease in elementary student enrollment, it would be anticipated that more students would be taking Transit and further supports the findings that traffic to the school could be decreased with the proposed enrollment changes.

*York House School – Vancouver, BC
Bylaw Amendment – Traffic/Parking Review
February 18, 2009*



TDM Plan & School Driven Initiatives

As part of the School's Bylaw Amendment application in 2004, York House School implemented a TDM Plan, started the NRC (Neighbourhood Relations Committee) and created a Good Neighbour Pledge. The roles and implications of each are briefly summarized below.

The NRC

The Neighbourhood Relations Committee is composed of three representatives from the neighbourhood, three representatives from the school, and a student representative. The committee was collectively responsible for creating the Good Neighbour Pledge document, and meets on a regular basis to discuss school/neighbourhood issues and determine resolutions, and to review the TDM plan.

The Good Neighbour Pledge

The purpose of this document is to "provide a framework for York House School to work with its neighbours to pursue common goals and to resolve differences in the best interests of the school and the neighbourhood. The specific objectives are to: minimize impacts on the neighbourhood, provide open and effective communication, and to respect the objectives of the neighbours, YHS and the City of Vancouver."

The Pledge was developed by the NRC and is updated annually. The main areas of focus are: Neighbour Communications, the Annual Review and Traffic and Parking.

The most beneficial aspect of this document is the well used line of communication that has been established between the school and neighbourhood. As well, a record of all communication is kept in the Neighbour Relations Log, which documents the date of complaint, type of complaint, the action taken by the school and the outcome, and overall serves as a useful tool to monitor/assess the effectiveness of the TDM plan and Pledge.

Table 4 summarizes the Neighbour Relations Log recordings from April 2006 to February 2009. As shown, the nature of complaints has generally shifted away from student and parent parking issues. More importantly though, this log shows that the school is communicating with its neighbours on a regular basis and resolving any reported issues immediately. It shows that the school is committed to the Good Neighbour Pledge and dedicated to maintaining a good relationship with its neighbours.

*York House School – Vancouver, BC
Bylaw Amendment – Traffic/Parking Review
February 18, 2009*



Table 4 – Summary of the Neighbour Relations Log

Type of Complaint	Number of Complaints Received		
	April 2006 – January 2007	March 2007 – April 2008	Sept 2008 – February 2009
Parent Parking	3	3	1
Student Parking	1	2	--
Student Walking	1	2	--
Construction Vehicles Related	3	4	--
Misc Neighbourhood Issue	1	1	--
Landscaping/Lighting	--	1	7
King Ed/Alexandra Crosswalk	--		2
Misc/Unknown Vehicle Parking	1	4	2
Total	10	17	12
Total Parking Related	5	9	3

The last aspect covered in the Pledge, is an annual review of the travel modes, which involves three questionnaire surveys being given to students each school year (October, February, May). In conjunction with this, the TDM plan is also reviewed to ensure it is still effective and changes are made as necessary.

The TDM Plan

The school has implemented a Transportation Demand Management Plan, which serves the purpose to monitor and control all aspects of traffic, mode of travel, pick-up/drop-off and parking associated with the school. The following summarizes a number of the initiatives the school has implemented as a result of the TDM plan.

Through the TDM Plan, the school has developed a pick-up/drop-off plan, that details the pick-up/drop-off locations parents are allowed to use (3 lay-bys along school frontages), and the desired traffic flow directions. In conjunction with this, Provident Security personnel are at the school during peak periods to monitor and assist with traffic flow, as are parent volunteers, and teacher volunteers for crossing-guards. This plan is communicated to parents regularly and generally seems to be adhered to.

*York House School – Vancouver, BC
Bylaw Amendment – Traffic/Parking Review
February 18, 2009*



Through the TDM Plan, the school has implemented the following initiatives to promote alternate mode of travel:

- Free Transit passes for staff,
- Subsidized (50%) transit passes for students,
- A carpooling address matching service,
- 'Walking Wednesdays',
- A 'Carpooling Day',
- Earth Day celebrations and the 'Name a Tree' Challenge based on a tally of points for each class for travel by alternate mode,
- The school offers a shuttle bus service for students with two pick-up/drop-off locations.

Through the recently completed new development on-site, the school has increased the on-site parking supply. To supplement this parking supply and ensure that as much as possible, if not all school parking is off-street, the school also rents parking at the Redeemer Lutheran Church. As a further control, all staff are assigned parking spots, and all students are required to register with the school and to park at the Church.

Also as part of the new development, the on-site bicycle parking has been increased. The school now has 16 Class A racks, and 33 Class B racks.

Through the TDM Plan, the school has developed a detailed parking plan and signage for all major school events, and parents and senior students volunteer to assist with vehicle direction and parking on those days.

Summary

Through the NRC, the Neighbour Pledge and the TDM Plan, the school has made numerous positive changes to the pick-up/drop-off and parking operations in the neighbourhood. The school is completely dedicated to these documents, and the changes around the school are evident around the school, and in the Neighbour Relations Log.

At this point in time, we could not recommend any further changes to TDM plan or initiatives, and believe the school is doing all they can. A continued effort, as per the existing, will serve to in time further decrease traffic volumes and parking associated with the school. Continued enforcement of the pick-up/drop-off/parking plans currently in place, and continued communication of these plans to students and parents will serve to effectively manage the traffic and parking that do take place.

*York House School – Vancouver, BC
Bylaw Amendment – Traffic/Parking Review
February 18, 2009*



Conclusions

The proposed Bylaw Amendment is anticipated to result in an increase of 60 secondary students, and a decrease of 60 elementary school students at York House School.

The proposed enrollment change is expected to generate a minimal change to traffic volumes at the school, if anything a slight decrease in traffic volumes would be expected.

The on-street parent parking component of pick-up/drop-off activity is anticipated to be greatly reduced with the relocation of the Kindergarten class to the Early Childhood Learning Centre; a reduction of 25-35 parked vehicles on-street.

The increase in senior students driving to school could be expected to increase by about 2 vehicles, however, this is not anticipated to noticeably impact the neighbourhood, as all students are required to park at the Redeemer Lutheran Church, and there is a relatively high degree of compliance with this.

York House School has established a Neighbour Relations Committee (NRC), through which a very effective and efficient level of communication is made possible between the school and its neighbours. Through the NRC, a Good Neighbour Pledge has been developed, a very comprehensive document that far exceeds what any other school in Vancouver has implemented. Lastly, the school has implemented a comprehensive TDM Plan and travel mode initiatives, meeting the requirements of City of Vancouver for any school, and no further TDM measures are recommended at this time.

* * * * *

Should you have any questions, or wish to further discuss our findings, please do not hesitate to contact me or Peter Joyce.

Yours truly,
Bunt & Associates

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sarah Allen".

Sarah Allen, P.Eng.
Transportation Engineer