



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: June 18, 2013
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Meeting Date: June 26, 2013

TO: Standing Committee on Planning, Transportation and Environment
FROM: General Manager of Planning and Development Services
SUBJECT: Langara Gardens Policy Planning Program

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council endorse a planning program, outlined in Appendix A, to develop a Policy Statement to guide the redevelopment of Langara Gardens.
- B. THAT the staff resources outlined in Appendix B and the estimated cost-recovery budget of \$710,000 outlined in Appendix C be approved to complete the Policy Statement; and

FURTHER THAT, consistent with the City's cost-recovery practice, Council accept a financial contribution of \$710,000 from the project proponent, the Peterson Group, to be paid in four instalments, to fully cover the program costs.

REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's endorsement of a program to create a Policy Statement to guide the redevelopment of Langara Gardens, a 20.8-acre site on Cambie Street at 57th Avenue. The Policy Statement will establish principles and objectives relating to a range of topics, including: land use, density, height, public benefits, transportation, built form and character, sustainability and development phasing. The Policy Statement will be presented for Council's consideration at the end of the process and, once adopted, used to inform any future rezoning of the site.

COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

CD-1 (47) (1968)
Oakridge Langara Policy Statement (1995)
Pearson Hospital/Dogwood Lodge Policy Planning Program (2009)

Green Buildings Policy for Rezoning (2010)
 Cambie Corridor Plan (2011)
 Greenest City 2020 Action Plan (2011)
 Vancouver's Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2012-2021 (2012)
 Transportation 2040 Plan (2012)
 Sustainable Large Developments Rezoning Policy (2013)

REPORT

Background/Context

Site Background and Zoning

Langara Gardens is an 8.4 hectare (20.8 acre) site located west of Cambie Street between 54th and 57th Avenues. The property was rezoned to CD-1 (47) in 1968 to address the need for rental accommodation in Vancouver. The initial rezoning permitted a density of 0.687 FSR in the form of three 18-storey towers and approximately 270 apartment and townhouse units in 19 low-rise buildings. All residential units on the site are rentals. The rezoning also permitted commercial space along west 57th Avenue, as well as underground and surface parking for the site. At time of rezoning, the original parcel was subdivided and in accordance with the Subdivision Control Bylaw, 10% of the land was dedicated to the City as park space. Cambie Park, the 2.3 acre park at West 54th Avenue and Cambie Street was then constructed.



In 1987 an amendment to the CD-1 Bylaw was approved which increased the density to 0.782 FSR and permitted the construction of a fourth 18-storey rental tower with additional commercial space along West 57th Avenue. The zoning amendments restricted height in the two sub-areas to 180 feet to reflect the existing towers and 30 feet to reflect the existing low-rise apartment and townhouse buildings.

Several additional requests to amend the zoning were submitted in 1990 and 1993, each proposing to construct additional rental apartment towers along west 57th Avenue. Each proposal failed in the face of significant public opposition to the tower forms and the lack of a local community plan. Council directed staff to commence a planning study for the site. Shortly thereafter, however, the study was put aside in favour of the emerging Oakridge Langara Policy Statement (OLPS), which was approved in 1995.

Since the adoption of the OLPS in 1995, Cambie Street has been developed as a major transit arterial, and the area is in the process of redevelopment in conjunction with the policies set out in the Cambie Corridor Plan. As a large site, the Cambie Corridor Plan directs Langara Gardens to be considered for additional height and density as a way of providing needed public benefits for the growing population in the area.

Current Uses

There are currently 605 market-rental residential units at Langara Gardens. 335 of these units are in the four 18-storey high-rise towers. The balance of the units are 236 two-storey garden apartments and 34 townhouses. There is 2,050 m² (22,000 square feet) of retail in the podium of the towers creating a small-scale shopping area on 57th Avenue near Cambie Street. The site is owned by the Peterson Group.

Pearson-Dogwood Lands

Langara Gardens is directly north of the 25-acre Pearson-Dogwood lands owned by Vancouver Coastal Health and currently undergoing a policy planning program leading to a future rezoning of that site as a more-intensive mixed-use residential and health services community. The Langara Gardens planning process will relate closely to the planning currently underway on the Pearson-Dogwood site, recognizing that the two are not likely to proceed exactly in tandem as the Pearson-Dogwood program has been underway since January 2013 and has quite explicit timelines relating to Vancouver Coastal Health's schedule for the redevelopment. There are, however, significant opportunities for design synergies between the two sites and strategic consideration will be given to integration, movement and scale relationships between the two sites, as well as the delivery of public benefits.

Council Policy

Oakridge Langara Policy Statement (1995): The Oakridge Langara Policy Statement (OLPS) provides policy to evaluate rezoning applications. Langara Gardens is identified as a potential large-scale redevelopment site that could accommodate housing (with an emphasis on rental housing) and mixed-use development, enhancing the existing neighbourhood node at 57th and Cambie.

The OLPS describes a rezoning policy for Langara Gardens with the following conditions:

- Limit height to 30-40 feet with a 20% increase available, provided no significant negative impact can be demonstrated on the surrounding development.
- Limit development to a mix of stacked townhomes and low-rise apartment buildings.
- Limit density to a range of 0.9-1.0 FSR.
- Large site rezonings (over 5 acres) that will significantly increase park demand should supply additional park space to meet those demands.
- Consider accepting secured moderate rental housing (as defined by Social Infrastructure staff) as fulfilment of social housing requirements
- Consider Langara Gardens as a potential site for a community facility.
- Provide street linkages and pathways through the site.

Green Buildings Policy for Rezonings (July 2010): Requires that all buildings demonstrate high green performance. Currently, a minimum of LEED® Gold certification (with specific points in energy performance, water efficiency and stormwater) is mandatory for all new buildings where there is a rezoning. All new buildings at Langara Gardens will be required to meet or exceed this standard.

Cambie Corridor Plan (2011)

As a large site, the Cambie Corridor Plan directs Langara Gardens to be considered for additional height and density as a way of providing needed public benefits for the growing population in the area. All large site rezonings, such as Langara Gardens, should achieve 20% of the dwelling units as affordable housing. The extent to which affordable housing units are targeted to core-need or low-income individuals and families will depend on the availability of funding.

Greenest City 2020 Action Plan (July 2011): The plan outlines actions required to achieve a healthy, prosperous and resilient city - with the ultimate goal of becoming the world's greenest city by 2020. It identifies strategies to promote green economic development, eliminate dependence on fossil fuels, promote green transportation options, utilize green building design and ensure everyone has access to nature, clean water and local food. The plan calls for compact, complete communities which promote walking and cycling, and are well-served by services, amenities and green space. Furthermore, the plan promotes the development of neighbourhood-scaled renewable energy systems, green construction and carbon-neutral buildings.

By design, Langara Gardens will be required to embody many of the goals in the Greenest City Action Plan: Climate Leadership, Green Buildings, Green Transportation, Zero Waste, Access to Nature, Lighter Footprint, Clean Air and Local Food.

Vancouver's Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2012-2021 (July 2011): This strategy is a framework for addressing homelessness and increasing the variety of affordable housing options across the entire housing continuum to improve choice and affordability for all residents within the city. The three strategic directions are:

- Increase the supply of affordable housing.
- Encourage a housing mix across all neighbourhoods.
- Provide strong leadership and support partners to enhance housing stability.

With the direction to achieve affordability in market housing and the provision of new housing to the market, Langara Gardens will be required to provide a range of housing opportunities including core need (low-income) housing, market rental housing and owner-occupied market condos and townhouses.

Transportation 2040 Plan (2012): Transportation 2040 is a long-term strategic vision for the city that will help guide transportation and land use decisions for the years ahead. The plan sets long-term mode share and safety targets and includes both high-level policies and specific actions to support a socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable future. A number of goals are relevant to Langara Gardens, including the following:

- Support compact community development, helping to preserve natural habitat and agricultural land throughout the region.
- Making the majority of trips on foot, bike and transit.
- Support vibrant public spaces that encourage a culture of walking, cycling and social interaction.

Sustainable Large Development Rezoning Policy (May 2013): When generally applied to large site developments, this policy requires plans or studies on the following as part of the rezoning process:

- Sustainable Site Design
- Access to Nature
- Sustainable Food Systems
- Green Mobility
- Rainwater Management
- Zero Waste Planning
- Affordable Housing
- Low Carbon Energy Supply

Strategic Analysis

The 1995 Oakridge Langara Policy Statement defines limits on height and density on the Langara Gardens site. If redevelopment adheres to these limits, the site is not likely to meet the urban potential the City has been striving for in locations well-served by transit and accessible to urban amenities and employment. It is important to recognize that the Policy Statement was approved prior to the decision that the Canada Line would run along Cambie Street and its subsequent construction.

It is recommended that Council endorse a program that looks at options reflecting the approved Sustainable Large Development Rezoning Policy, the Greenest City 2020 Action Plan, Transportation 2040 and the Housing and Homelessness Strategy to maximize its potential to meet City and community needs around sustainability, affordable housing, transit-oriented development and public benefits.

City staff believe that restricting development to the height and density limits of current policy would result in a less-than-optimum use of the site, and could unnecessarily limit:

- the site's potential to create a higher-density, highly-sustainable, socially inclusive and liveable environment;
- the capacity of the redevelopment to provide amenities to serve the new development and the surrounding neighbourhood;
- the creation of new social housing and additional rental housing; and
- the potential to generate ridership and funding for a new Canada Line Station on 57th Avenue.

Policy Process: A policy planning process offers the opportunity to explore various possible development forms for the site. The vehicle for this exploration will be a comprehensive public process. Residents of Langara Gardens as well as the broader community will be encouraged to participate.

The process lead to a Policy Statement which establishes principles and objectives relating to a range of topics, including: land use, density, height, public benefits, transportation, built form and character, sustainability and development phasing. The Policy Statement will be presented for Council's consideration at the end of the process and, once adopted, used to inform any future rezoning of the site.

As part of the process, The Peterson Group's design team will be expected to prepare a range of conceptual redevelopment options with advice from City technical staff. The options would be based on and evaluated against guiding principles relevant to the site and its potential in the context of existing urban patterns. An initial list of site planning considerations is contained in Appendix D.

The options will be discussed and evaluated through community consultation and technical analysis undertaken as part of the process. It is anticipated that the Policy Statement will include one or more development concepts for illustrative purposes and to inform more detailed planning and design work at the rezoning stage.

The City and the proponent's team will undertake a review of the neighbourhood context for the redevelopment of Langara Gardens and consultants will be retained to assess traffic patterns and impacts, tree preservation, retail impacts (if necessary), and other issues as may be identified through the community consultation. Close dialogue will be maintained between the staff team involved with Langara Gardens and the team undertaking the Pearson-Dogwood planning work to ensure the programs are coordinated. Additionally there will be integration with the work underway on the Marpole Community Plan (recognizing that Langara Gardens falls just outside of the Plan boundary) and with the implementation of the Cambie Corridor Plan.

Rental Housing and Social Housing: The 605 rental units on site are protected under the City's Rental Housing Stock Official Development Plan, adopted by Council in April 2007. The intent of these regulations is to prevent the loss of established rental housing as a result of redevelopment. These regulations require that all rental units be protected, or replaced on a 1-for-1 basis through the redevelopment with a similar unit mix. As rental replacement is required under the existing zoning, financial pro forma analysis will need to reflect this requirement as outlined in the Cambie Corridor Plan. Further, the proponent is required to provide a relocation plan for any displaced tenants and offer first right to relocate back into the project.

The policy to provide 20% of all units as social housing is established in the Oakridge Langara Policy Statement, Cambie Corridor Plan and the Sustainable Large Development Rezoning Policy, and will apply to the Langara Gardens site. Of these units, 50% must be for families with small children as required by the Oakridge Langara Policy Statement and the Cambie Corridor plan.

57th Avenue Canada Line Station: Although the Canada Line tracks have been prepared for a future station at 57th Avenue, construction of the station is currently unfunded. Means to fund the station, including leveraging opportunities, will be explored through the Pearson-Dogwood and Langara Gardens policy planning programs. Recognizing that higher density levels are predicated on the existence of a rapid transit station, lower interim density limits or a cap on units may be applied to both sites until the station is operational.

Schedule: The key steps in the policy planning process for the site are outlined in Appendix A. The process leading to consideration of the Policy Statement by Council is expected to take approximately one year. A contingency has been built into the budget to allow for unforeseen delays up to an additional two months.

The subsequent stage would be the rezoning process, which provides additional opportunities for community consultation and review (including a Public Hearing) and will likely take approximately 18 months to complete through to enactment. This would be followed by the Development Permit stage.

Program Staffing and Resources: To provide the public and proponent with the service needed to achieve appropriate and timely policy conclusions requires a dedicated program team including urban design resources and a range of departmental technical representatives (see Appendix B). The Major Projects group in Community Planning will be assigned the lead role in coordinating this work and the team will report to the Major Projects Steering Committee for direction.

Implications/Related Issues/Risk (if applicable)

Financial

The program budget is estimated to be \$710,000 as outlined in Appendix C, which includes staffing, external consultancies, Policy Statement development, public open houses, report to Council, and contingency. The Peterson Group will contribute the necessary funds in four instalments to cover the program costs, with the first instalment to be paid upon approval of the program by Council. Please refer to Appendix C for the payment schedule.

The Peterson Group recognizes that the \$710,000 contribution may increase if actual program costs exceed the budget. It also understands that this contribution covers the costs of assessing the structure of the site but brings no obligation or expectation of City staff or Council support for any particular outcome.

Human Resources/Labour Relations

The salaries of Major Projects and Technical Team staff members engaged in this program will be funded through the cost-recovered planning funds from the proponent according to the allocations identified in Appendix B. The majority of staff are in existing positions and their respective departments' operating budgets will receive allocations from the cost-recovered budget. Any new positions that are created through this program will be funded through the cost-recovered funds, or from a combination of cost-recovered funds if the staff position supports two or more concurrent programs (e.g., Langara Gardens and Pearson-Dogwood).

Environmental

The creation of a Policy Statement for Langara Gardens will facilitate the redevelopment of the site to a vibrant mixed-income community located adjacent to a future rapid transit station. It has the potential to achieve significant environmental benefits through intensification of land use on a site on the Canada Line in the Cambie Corridor as well as application of green principles in site planning and design.

CONCLUSION

This report seeks Council's endorsement of a planning program to create a Langara Gardens Policy Statement to establish new site-specific policy relating to land use, density, height, public benefits, transportation, built form and character, sustainability and development phasing. The redevelopment of the site following a future rezoning would help achieve City objectives around sustainability, transportation and affordable housing. Staff recommend that the program be carried out as a cost-recovered major projects process, with the program costs covered by a financial contribution from the project proponents.

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Langara Gardens Policy Planning Program

<i>Scoping Phase</i>	
April-May 2013	Program Scoping and Background
June 2013	Program Report to Council

<i>Policy Statement Planning Phase</i>	
September 2013	Public open house #1: introduce planning program - objectives, scope, timelines
Dec 2013 - February 2014	Public open house #2: present draft Guiding Principles, site plans and initial concepts
April - June 2014	Public open house #3: present refined Guiding Principles, site plan and redevelopment concept, plus draft policies
July - August 2014	Finalize Draft Policy Statement
September 2014	Policy Statement to Council

Staff Resources (Months)

	Scoping Phase	Planning Phase	<i>Total Allocation</i>
Senior Planner	1	4	5
Planner II	0	12	12
Planning Assistant	1	8	8.5
Senior Urban Designer	0	4	4
Project Engineer	0	4	4
Transportation Eng.	0	1	1
Social Planner	0	3	3
Park Planner	0	3	3
Housing Planner	0	3	3

Program Budget (Rounded to Nearest \$1,000)

	Scoping Phase	Planning Phase	<i>Total Budget</i>
Salaries and Benefits	\$16,000	\$405,000	\$422,000
Contingency (20% on Planning Phase)	\$0	\$94,000	\$94,000
Process Costs: Open Houses	\$0	\$14,000	\$14,000
Consultancies	\$0	\$50,000	\$50,000
Management and Allocated Costs	\$4,000	\$97,000	\$100,000
Overheads (Office Space, Supplies, Equipment)	\$2,000	\$28,000	\$30,000
Total by Phase	\$22,000	\$688,000	\$710,000

Schedule of Instalments

Timing	Amount
Upon Council Approval of Program	\$194,000
Three months after Program Commencement	\$172,000
Six months after Program Commencement	\$172,000
Nine months after Program Commencement	\$172,000

Langara Gardens - Urban Design Considerations

Cambie Corridor Hierarchy. Create an intensity of development appropriate to this transit-oriented location, acknowledging that this station area is lower in the hierarchy of station areas along the Cambie Corridor than Oakridge municipal town centre and the Marine Landing area.

57th Ave Station. Organize the site design around a new Canada Line station at the corner of 57th and Cambie, recognizing that developing strategies to fund the station are an integral part of the process moving forward.

Integration and Permeability. Integrate and connect with the surrounding community and the adjacent Pearson site through increased permeability and clearly public and inviting pedestrian access into the site.

Relationship with Pearson Site. Coordinate with, and build upon, opportunities created by the evolving redevelopment plans for the Pearson site. Reflect the higher order of consideration for wheelchair users and accessibility anticipated for this site.

Pedestrian & Cyclist Connections. Consider the site as part of a larger cycling and walkway system connecting to Oakridge Centre, the Pearson site, Langara Golf Course perimeter trail, and the Canada Line pedestrian and cyclist bridge over the Fraser River.

Vehicular Access. Orient vehicular access to minimize impacts on the adjoining neighbourhood, public greenways and bikeways.

Ecological Systems. Develop ecological systems on the site to augment and reinforce the Green/Blue Corridor introduced in the Cambie Corridor Plan by connecting parks with green streets and public open spaces, and managing stormwater on site.

Transitions. Create transitions that respect the scale of the surrounding community, noting the opportunities for this area to redevelop in conjunction with the Cambie Corridor Plan.

Building Variety. Incorporate a range of building types, forms, heights and tenure that is visually interesting, supports housing choice, creates scale transitions, and provides opportunity for rooftop amenity and greening at various levels.

Existing Assets. Seamlessly integrate significant existing assets including residential towers and mature trees, and preserve natural features wherever possible. Use features as organizing elements for new buildings, open spaces, roads and public ways.

Solar Access. Consider shadow impacts on public spaces including the adjacent playing fields, Cambie Park, and the Langara golf course and perimeter walking route.