



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: August 16, 2018
Contact: John Greer
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Meeting Date: September 19, 2018

TO: Standing Committee on City Finance and Services

FROM: Subdivision Approving Officer

SUBJECT: Proposed Amendment to Subdivision By-law 5208 – Reclassification of 728 to 888 West 48th Avenue and 6426 Fremlin Street

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council approve the application to reclassify the properties at 728 to 888 West 48th Avenue and 6426 Fremlin Street, from Category D to Category A of Schedule A, Table 1, of Subdivision By-law No. 5208

FURTHER THAT if Council approves the above Recommendation, the Director of Legal Services be instructed to prepare the necessary by-law to amend the Subdivision By-law implementing the required change.

REPORT SUMMARY

This report addresses an application to reclassify 16 RS-1 zoned properties at 728 to 888 West 48th Avenue and 6826 Fremlin Street (the subject properties), from Category D to Category A of Schedule A, for the purpose of gaining subdivision potential, in accordance with the minimum parcel size requirements of Schedule A, Table 1, of the Subdivision By-law.

COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

Council Policy regarding amendments to the subdivision categories in the RS-1, RS-3, RS-3A, RS-5 and RS-6 Zoning Districts is reflected in the Manager's Report as approved by Council on October 28, 1987. As well as establishing seven parcel size categories for subdivision in the RS Districts, the report provided for possible future changes in the categories in cases where property owners seek to classify their parcel category either up or down, to either facilitate or prevent subdivision.

CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager recommends approval of the foregoing.

REPORT

Background/Context

In 1988, Council enacted an amendment to the Subdivision By-law by introducing seven categories of minimum parcel width and area to govern the subdivision of parcels zoned RS-1. Subsequently, parcels zoned RS-3, RS-3A, RS-5 and RS-6 have been included as well. All lands in these zoning districts are classified on a block-by-block basis, as shown on 279 sectional maps which are on file with the City Clerk and which form part of Schedule A of the Subdivision By-law.

The minimum standard for each of the seven subdivision categories is shown in the table below.

<u>Subdivision Category</u>	<u>Minimum Width</u>	<u>Minimum Area</u>
A	30 ft.	3,000 sq. ft.
B	40 ft.	3,600 sq. ft.
C	50 ft.	5,000 sq. ft.
D	60 ft.	5,400 sq. ft.
E	75 ft.	6,750 sq. ft.
F	100 ft.	12,000 sq. ft.
G	150 ft.	18,000 sq. ft.

An application has been received requesting that City Council amend the Subdivision By-law to change the classification of the subject properties, from Category D to Category A.

As shown on Appendix A, all RS-1 zoned properties in this area north of 49th Avenue are classified as Category D. This category prescribes a minimum width of 60 ft. and a minimum area of 5,400 sq. ft. for each new parcel created by subdivision. Some areas on the south side of West 49th Avenue are in Category C, which prescribes a minimum width of 50 ft. and a minimum area of 5,000 sq. ft. At present, there are no areas in the immediate vicinity categorized as Category A. Under current Category D requirements, there is no potential to subdivide any properties in this area.

As part of the Cambie Corridor Phase 3 plan, approved by Council on May 1, 2018, the adjacent properties on the south side of the lane fronting on the north side of West 49th Avenue have been identified for townhouses (see Appendix A), which will allow 2.5 to 3 storey developments at an FSR of 1.20. Many of the properties on West 49th have already been acquired and assembled in anticipation of this land use change.

If this reclassification is approved, property owners on the south side of West 48th Avenue would gain the potential to subdivide their properties into smaller lots. Most lots are 62 ft. wide in this block and would qualify for subdivision into two 31 ft.

wide lots, each of which could potentially be developed with a one-family dwelling with secondary suite and a small laneway house.

Neighbourhood Notification

The owners of 60 properties in the immediate area were notified in writing of this application and asked to comment. A total of 26 responses were received (43% response rate) with the following result:

Support reclassification:	16 (61.5%)
Oppose reclassification:	10 (38.5%)
Total Responses:	26
Did not respond:	34

The owners of the subject properties are primarily motivated by the adjacent properties to their south being identified for higher density townhouse development in the *Cambie Corridor Plan*. As they will be sharing a lane with these new townhouse developments, they feel that the ability to subdivide will provide for smaller houses and laneway houses that will provide some transition to the larger lot sizes to the north of these properties, extending down to West 46th Avenue. A few other owners outside of the proposed reclassification area also supported the proposal.

Residents who opposed the reclassification were concerned with the large amount of change coming to the neighbourhood, as well as usual concerns regarding traffic and parking in the area. The owners of 2 properties on West 49th Avenue who opposed the application have since sold their properties to a developer as part of a lot assembly.

Reclassification Assessment Criteria

Since 1987, staff have based recommendations for reclassification applications on criteria identified in the original Council policy. The following provides an analysis of the current proposal in relation to that which was outlined in the original council policy.

- Whole blocks came forward together for reclassifications, and 60% of the block was in support.

61.5% of the property owners in the notification area that responded support the proposed reclassification.

- The subject parcels are considerably larger than other parcels on the block; have limited or no opportunity for subdivision even if consolidated with adjacent parcels; and the resulting parcels would be more, rather than less, consistent with parcels on the rest of the block.

There are no small lots close to 30 ft. in width in this area, but redevelopment of the adjacent properties along West 49th Avenue with townhouses will allow for a denser form of development than what is being proposed along West 48th.

- A precedent had been established by the approval of other reclassifications since 1988.

No applicable precedent has been established within the general area. An application similar in scale to reclassify 18 properties along East 52 Avenue (400 - 600 Block of East 52nd, 486 E 51st and 6707 St. George St.) from Category D to A was approved in 2015. It is possible that approval of this proposal could establish a precedent for the adjacent block on the north side of West 48th Avenue and portions of Fremlin Street, where most lots are over 60 ft. in width. The blocks along West 47th and West 46th and most of Tisdall Street in this area are primarily comprised of lots less than 60 ft. in width so would not be able to qualify for subdivision on individual lots under Category A standards.

- The parcel is in close proximity to higher density developments.

The subject property is adjacent to areas being identified for townhouses in the Cambie Corridor Plan, as approved by Council on May 1, 2018. It is also within walking distance of Oakridge Mall, and there are bus routes nearby on West 49th Avenue and Cambie Street.

Strategic Analysis

In addition to the criteria identified in the original council policy, the reclassification assessment criteria have expanded to take into consideration alignment with Council policies relating to sustainability, densification and heritage/character retention while continuing to consider the values and opinions of neighbours.

The entire area between West 46th and West 49th Avenues between Fremlin and Tisdall Streets was once City owned land. It was subdivided in 1961 by Plan 10991 into lots averaging over 60 ft. in width, and there has been no subdivision activity in this area since the 1961 subdivision was approved. As a result, there are no character or heritage homes in this area as all homes have been built since 1962 or later.

The reclassification would promote the ability to create new housing forms appropriate in context while contributing to the City's sustainability policies, especially as they pertain to densification. More specifically, the reclassification and subsequent subdivision could potentially double the current capacity of laneway houses and secondary suites. This could increase the stock of more affordable rental housing options in the area.

It should also be noted that the subject properties are located in an RS area and are therefore included in the scope of the Making Room Housing program. The program was endorsed by Council in June 2018 and focuses on providing more housing choice in neighbourhoods for families, downsizing seniors, and other households seeking housing options that are described as the "Missing Middle" - housing forms that fall between single-family homes and higher-density homes. One of the quick start actions is to introduce duplexes in most RS areas and, if approved by Council, would apply on the subject properties.

If Council approves this reclassification, it only provides the potential for subdivision in the future. Subsequent subdivision applications would need to be submitted and the Approving Officer will take into consideration any other related criteria in evaluating any future subdivision proposals, as minimum parcel width and area standards are not the sole criteria by which a subdivision is assessed. The existing pattern of subdivision in the vicinity, the characteristic orientation of parcels, the proposed development and use of

the parcels, and the effect of the anticipated development of the parcels on adjacent lands are also considerations. Engineering servicing requirements would be reviewed as part of individual subdivision applications in future.

Financial

Financial considerations are not within the purview of the Approving Officer when making decisions or recommendations on land use matters.

CONCLUSION

The properties in this block and blocks to the north were classified as Category D in the late 1980's when the subdivision categories were introduced. This classification reflected the existing pattern of predominately larger parcels. The majority of the owners on the south side of West 48th Avenue (728 – 888 and 6426 Fremlin Street) have made an application, seeking Council's approval to change the classification in order to provide some transition from the adjacent properties to the south being, which are identified for townhouses.

Based on the proximity to the higher density townhouse development proposed for adjacent properties on West 49th Avenue, and given that the majority of respondents have expressed their support, the Subdivision Approving Officer recommends approval of this application.

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