

THE CORPORATION OF THE
CITY OF WHITE ROCK
CORPORATE REPORT



DATE: April 29, 2024

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Anne Berry, Director, Planning and Development Services

SUBJECT: Initial Review of 1513 Johnston Road (OCP00012/ZON00060/MJP00039)

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council receive for information the corporate report dated April 29, 2024, from the Director of Planning and Development Services, titled " Initial Review of 1513 Johnston Road (OCP00012/ZON00060/MJP00039);" and

1. Direct staff to process the OCP and zoning bylaw amendment application at 1513 Johnston Road concurrently with the North Bluff Corridor Study.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On September 28, 2020, Council gave final reading to a bylaw, which amended the City of White Rock's Planning Procedures Bylaw, 2017, No. 2234, to enable an initial review of the zoning bylaw amendment ("rezoning") and official community plan amendments ("OCP amendment") applications. Upon receipt of an initial review report, Council can deny the application or direct staff to continue processing the file (without committing to the proposal's ultimate approval). An initial review is to provide Council with the opportunity to comment early on the project and to help avoid significant cost and time expended by staff and an applicant preparing a zoning bylaw amendment application for the first reading that may not have support.

If Council deems that the application meets the intent of the OCP, city bylaws and policies, Council may provide comments and direct the application to the next stage in the application process. If Council deems that the application does not meet the intent of the OCP, city bylaws and policies, Council may identify their concerns and send the application back to staff or not support the application. If rejected, an applicant would be refunded a portion of their application fees and may consider making a subsequent application responsive to Council's concerns or continuing the current land use on the property. Alternatively, they may choose to develop within their current zoning provisions.

On July 12, 2021, Council adopted Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw No. 2387, this bylaw updated the OCP. This update made several changes to the OCP, including limiting the scale (height and density) of development in the Town Centre, Town Centre Transition, and Waterfront Village land use designations, as well as introducing new definitions for affordable rental housing as they relate to density bonus incentives for projects that include affordable rental housing.

The proposed zoning bylaw amendment application in its current form does not comply with those updates; therefore, an OCP amendment would be required if the zoning bylaw amendment was to advance.

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

Previous Application

A Major Development Permit application was received in 2021 for the subject property to facilitate a 23-storey mixed use development containing approximately 185 residential dwelling units, 905 m² (9,750 sq.ft.) of commercial space and 590m² (6,350 sq.ft.) of community space. On May 10, 2021 Council adopted Zoning Amending Bylaw No. 2376 which amended the CR-1 (Town Centre Area Commercial/Residential) zone. With this amendment to the CR-1 zone, the proposed height and density (among other items) with the Major Development Permit application did not conform to the zoning of the property. The Applicant withdrew the application and was refunded the application fees in accordance with Planning Procedures Bylaw.

Current Application

The current development proposal consists of the following applications:

- OCP amendment;
- Zoning bylaw amendment; and
- Major Development Permit.

The proposed development consists of a 31-story mixed-use building as follows:

- Levels 8 through 31 consisting of 188 strata market residential dwellings units;
- Levels 3 through 7 consisting of 56 rent to buy residential dwellings units;
- Level 1-2 2,787 m² (30,000 sq.ft.) of civic space for a density bonus, as well as, 2 commercial spaces approximately 464 m² (5,000 sq. ft.) in area. With respect to the civic space offered as a density bonus by the applicant, staff will continue to communicate with the Applicant to fully understand the density bonus being proposed if Council advances the application to the next stage in the process.
- 5 levels of under surface parking (see figure 1 below).

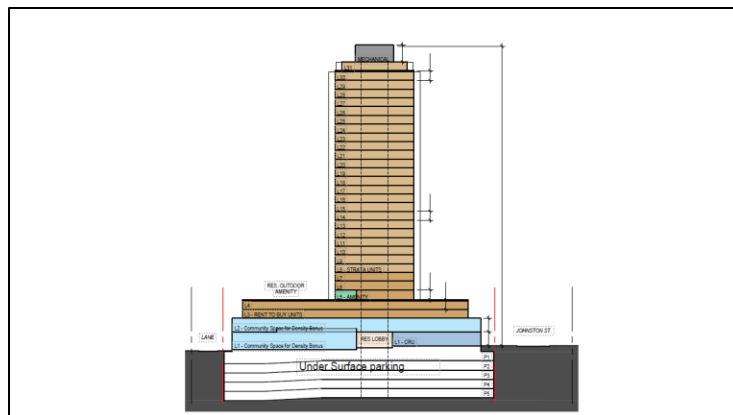


Figure 1 – Proposed Building

Current Use of Subject Property

Currently built on the subject property is a one-story structure containing a mixture of commercial businesses. The northern portion of the property contains surface parking as seen in figure 2 below.



Figure 2: Ortho Map highlighting subject property.

OCP Land Use Designation

The OCP land use designation for the subject property is *Town Centre*. The *Town Centre* is the centre for cultural, civic, economic, and public life in the City. It is characterized by a diverse mix of uses, and it is focus for the majority of future growth within the current OCP.

The following objectives and policies of the Town Centre designation apply to the proposed development.

Objective 8.1 - To enable a concentrated mix of multi-unit residential and commercial uses to strengthen the heart of the city, reinforcing it as a neighbourhood, city-wide, and regional destination, and to provide sensitive transitions between the Town Centre and adjacent areas.

The proposed development contains a mixture of residential and commercial uses.

Policy 8.11 - Uses and Building Types – Allow mixed-use (commercial/residential/ civic), multi-unit residential, and civic uses in a range of low-rise to high-rise buildings, with any new high-rises not to exceed 12 storeys.

The proposed development contains a mixture of market and market rent to own residential dwellings units; two proposed commercial retail units; and as a density bonus a civic space. The proposed building exceeds the height limit of 12 storeys as the proposed building is 31 storeys plus a mechanical space on the roof. Figure 3 below provides a perspective of the interaction of the proposed building with the surrounding area.

Figure 3



Policy 8.1.2-Density and Height – Concentrate the highest densities and heights in the area bounded by North Bluff Road, Johnston Road, Russell Avenue, and George Street. Maximum allowable densities (FAR) are outlined in Figure 9 and maximum heights (in storeys) are illustrated in Figure 10. Any portion of a building within 15 metres of Johnston Road is not to exceed four storeys in height.



Figure 9 Maximum FAR in the Town Centre, Town Centre Transition, and Lower Town Centre Areas
 (* indicates density may be increased with inclusion of an affordable housing component)

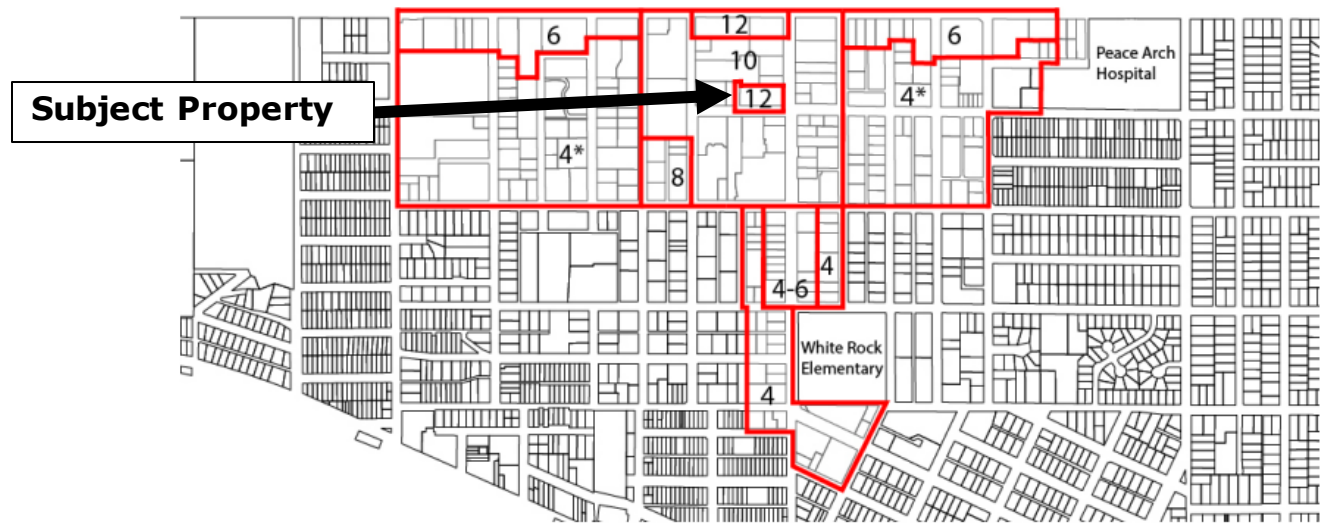


Figure 10 Maximum Building Heights in the Town Centre, Town Centre Transition, and Lower Town Centre Areas
 (*indicates where 6 storeys permitted with inclusion of affordable housing component)

The subject property is located within the highest densities and heights area as it abuts Johnston Road and Russell Avenue. The proposed building FAR, Height and Storeys limitation to Johnston are detailed below:

	PERMITTED	PROPOSED	DIFFERENCE
FAR	4.0 FAR	6.46 FAR	2.46 over
HEIGHT	12 Storeys	31 Storeys	19 Storeys over
LIMITED TO 4 STOREY WITHIN 15m of JOHNSTON ROAD	4 Storeys	4 Storeys	conforms

The maximum FAR and building height exceed what is supported within the *Town Centre* designation. The required setback of 15m from Johnston Road for storey over 4 has been fulfilled.

Policy 8.1.3-Retail Streets – Strengthen existing retail streets by requiring continuous street-fronting commercial uses on Johnston Road. Street-fronting commercial uses are encouraged on North Bluff Road and on Thrift and Russell Avenues adjacent to Johnston Road, and will be considered on George Street. Small scale commercial uses may be appropriate in other areas of the Town Centre.

The proposal contains commercial units on the first floor which fronts onto Johnson Road.

Policy 8.1.4 Urban Design – Enhance the built and public realms through policies identified in Section 9 and guidelines in the Town Centre Development Permit Area in Part D.

The form and character of the proposed development is subject to the *Town Centre Development Permit Guidelines* that requires a major development permit (MJP00039) application that will be subject to a future Council report.

North Bluff Corridor Study

One of Council's Strategic Priorities is to assess the long-term land use and density in Uptown (town centre) along North Bluff Road, from Oxford Street to Finlay Street, in consultation with Surrey's approved Semiahmoo Town Centre Plan (see linked Appendix C). On June 12, 2023, Council directed staff to develop a scope of work and cost estimate for the Land Use Plan for the North Bluff Corridor Study. Staff anticipate bringing this scoping report forward for Council's approval in the summer of 2024.

It is anticipated that the scoping report will further refine the corridor study area, and as such the subject site may fall within the perimeter of the present corridor study area based on Council's strategic priority. Due to the scale of density and height requested for this project being inconsistent in nature with established land use designations in the *Town Centre*, staff recommend that this application be processed concurrently with review of the North Bluff corridor study.

Alternatively, Council could choose to defer consideration of the application as the results of the corridor study will inform staff of the recommended height and density limits for the Town Centre area and ensure the proposal aligns with these study findings before bringing the application forward for Bylaw readings to Council.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The *Planning Procedures Bylaw* states the following under *Schedule A Refundable Amounts*:

Application fees for OCP and Zoning bylaw amendment application that Council denies would be subject to a refund minus 10% of the original fees. This refund is intended to cover administrative costs.

COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

If supported by Council, the 1513 Johnston Road North Bluff Road OCP and Zoning bylaw amendment would proceed to the next step in the application process, after a complete application package is received, which is a Public Information Meeting (PIM) as outlined within the *Planning Procedures Bylaw Schedule G*.

Once the PIM is completed and circulation of the application for interdepartmental and external comments, bylaws would be presented to Council for 1st and 2nd readings. These applications would also be subject to a Public Hearing, enabling additional community engagement, Notice of the PIM and Public Hearings would be circulated to owners and occupants of properties within 100m of the subject property.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL INVOLVEMENT/IMPLICATIONS

The early review of OCP and zoning bylaw amendment applications bring such applications before Council prior to referral to internal city departments, and several external agencies (e.g. School District, RCMP, Surrey etc.). Interdepartmental referral will be conducted if Council directs the application to proceed.

With respect to the civic space offered as a density bonus by the applicant, staff will continue to communicate with the applicant to fully understand the density bonus being proposed if Council advances the application to the next stage in the process.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



OBJECTIVE	ACTION	PRIORITY
1. Enable appropriate market housing builds to address inventory shortages and build tax revenue.	Assess long-term land use and density in Uptown (town centre) along North Bluff Road, from Oxford Street to Finlay Street, in consultation with Surrey's approved Semiahmoo Plan.	Top Priority
	Encourage missing "middlehousing" (e.g., duplexes, triplexes, small townhouses, coach houses) through infill development in established neighbourhoods to provide more housing options for families.	High Priority
2. Increase at and below market rental housing inventory.	Deliver a plan, identifying location, funding, and partners, to build an affordable housing project.	Top Priority
	Develop an affordable housing strategy to support the creation of appropriate affordable housing options through future development.	Top Priority

The proposed development includes market and rental housing which is an objective within the *Strategic Priority of Housing and Land*. While it supports this objective it is not in conformance with the OCP with respect to FAR and height.

The North Bluff Corridor study has not been presented to Council as staff resources have been redirected to fulfill the requirements of the new Provincial housing legislation that came into existence in early 2024 and needs to be completed before the end of June 2024. Staff anticipates bringing a scoping report to Council in the near future.

ALTERNATIVES

The following options are available for Council's consideration:

1. Council may direct staff to obtain additional project-specific information prior to deciding whether to advance or deny the applications;
2. Council may defer consideration of the applications until the North Bluff Corridor study is complete;
3. Council may deny the applications; or
4. Council may direct the application to proceed to the next stage in the process and give additional direction on any additional focus or scrutiny during the review process.

CONCLUSION

The zoning bylaw amendment application to increase the height and FAR in the CR-1 (Town Centre Area Commercial/Residential) zone does not conform to policies of the OCP, considering this an OCP amendment would be required. This OCP amendment would be seeking to increase the height and FAR supported within the *Town Centre* designation. It is therefore recommended that staff be directed to process the OCP and zoning bylaw amendment application at 1513 Johnston Road concurrently with the North Bluff Corridor Study.

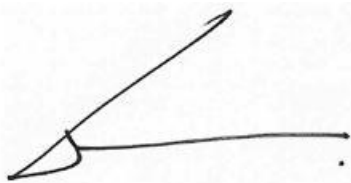
Respectfully submitted,



Anne Berry, MCIP, RPP
Director, Planning and Development Services

Comments from the Chief Administrative Officer

I concur with the recommendation of this corporate report.



Guillermo Ferrero
Chief Administrative Officer

- Appendix A: Subject and Ortho Maps
- Appendix B: Architectural Drawings
- Appendix C: [Land Use Plan for Semiahmoo Town Centre.](#)

Appendix "A"

