

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 1556 George Street (OCP00013/ZON00062/MJP00040)

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 1556 George Street (OCP00013/ZON00062/MJP00040);" and

1. Direct staff to process the OCP and rezoning amendment application at 1556 George Street 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") 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 rezoning 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

The current development proposal consists of the following applications at 1556 George Street:

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

The proposed development is to create a site specific Comprehensive Zone (CD) to facilitate a mixed use building 26-storey in height containing 167 residential units (see figure 1 below) consisting of the following elements:

- Level 1

Use	Area
Commercial Space	483.56 m ² (5,205 sq.ft.)
Commercial Parking	586.68 m ² (6,315 sq.ft.)
Circulation and Services	186.74m ² (2,010 sq.ft.)
Mechanical Shafts	38.46 m ² (414 sq.ft.)
Common Space for Residential component of the building	228.91 m ² (2,464 sq.ft.)
Total Floor Area	1,524.45 m ² (16,409 sq. ft.)

- Levels 2 – 4 Rental Residential

Level	Unit Count	Bedroom composition
2	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2- one bedroom units. • 1- one bedroom plus den unit. • 1-two bedroom unit.
3	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3- one bedroom units. • 3- one bedroom plus a den units. • 4- two bedroom unit. • 2- two bedroom plus a den units.
4	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3- one bedroom units. • 3- one bedroom plus a den units. • 4- two bedroom unit. • 2- two bedroom plus a den units.

- Level 5 Mixed Rental and Market Residential

Level	Unit Count	Bedroom composition
5 - Rental	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2- one bedroom units. • 2- one bedroom plus den unit. • 1-two bedrooms unit.
5 - Market	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1- one bedroom units. • 1- one bedroom plus a den units. • 3- two bedrooms unit. • 2- two bedrooms plus a den units.

- Level 6 Market Residential and Amenity Space

Level 6	Unit Count	Bedroom composition
Market Residential Units	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1- one bedroom units. • 1- one bedroom plus den unit. • 2-two bedroom units. • 2- two bedroom plus a den units.
Amenity Space	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 159.23m² (1,714 sq. ft.) amenity space

- Level 7 Market Residential and Amenity Space

Level 7	Unit Count	Bedroom composition
Market Residential Units	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1- one bedroom units. • 1- one bedroom plus den unit. • 2-two bedrooms unit. • 2- two bedrooms plus a den units.
Amenity Space	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 76m² (819 sq. ft.) amenity space

- Levels 8 – 23 Market Residential

Level 8-23	Unit Count	Bedroom composition
Total 16 floors of Market Residential	7 units per floor Total units= 112 Units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16- one bedroom units. • 16- one bedroom plus a den units. • 32- two bedrooms unit. • 48- two bedrooms plus a den units.

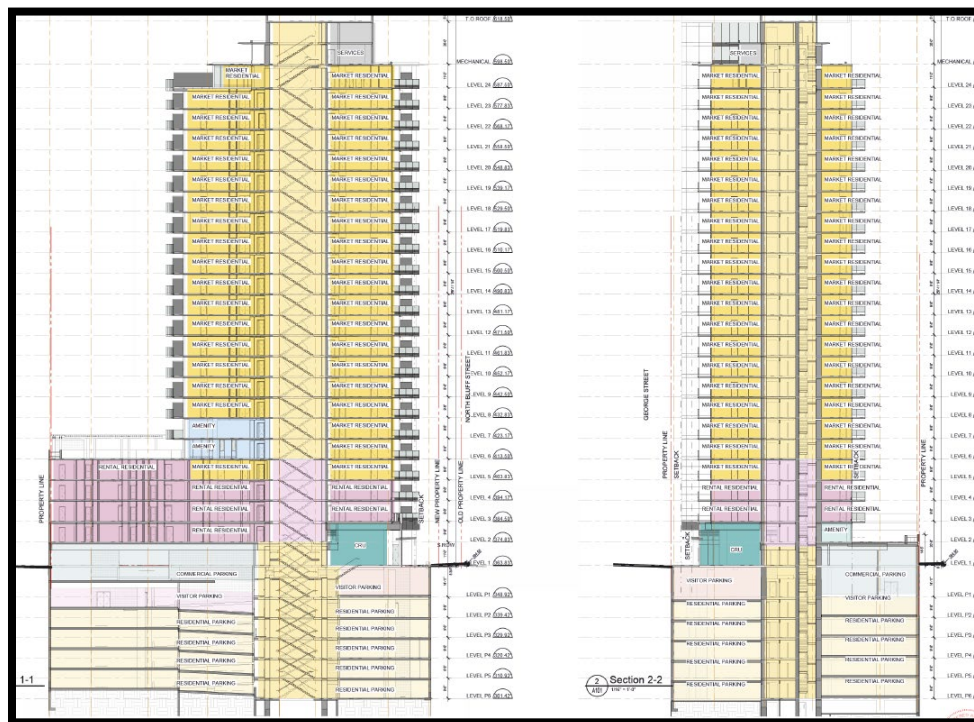
- Level 24 Market Residential

Level 24	Unit Count	Bedroom composition
Market Residential Units	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1- two bedrooms plus a den units. • 2 - three bedrooms plus a den.

- Levels P1-P6 - Parking

Level	Vehicle Parking Stalls
P1 – Visitor Parking	50 stalls
P2-P6 Residential Parking	250 stalls

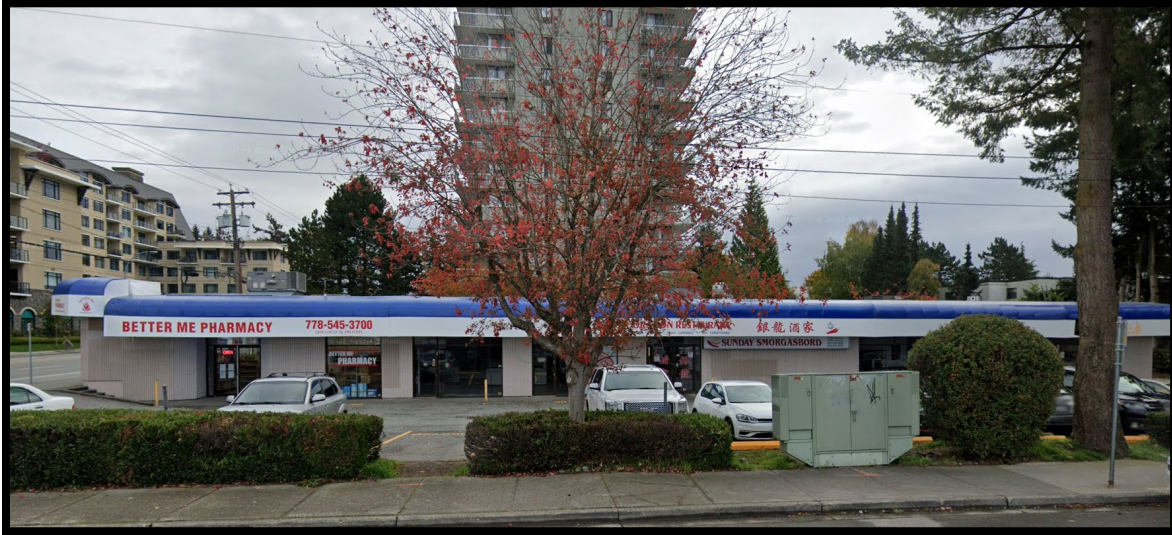
Figure 1 – Proposed Buildings



CURRENT USE OF THE SUBJECT PROPERTY

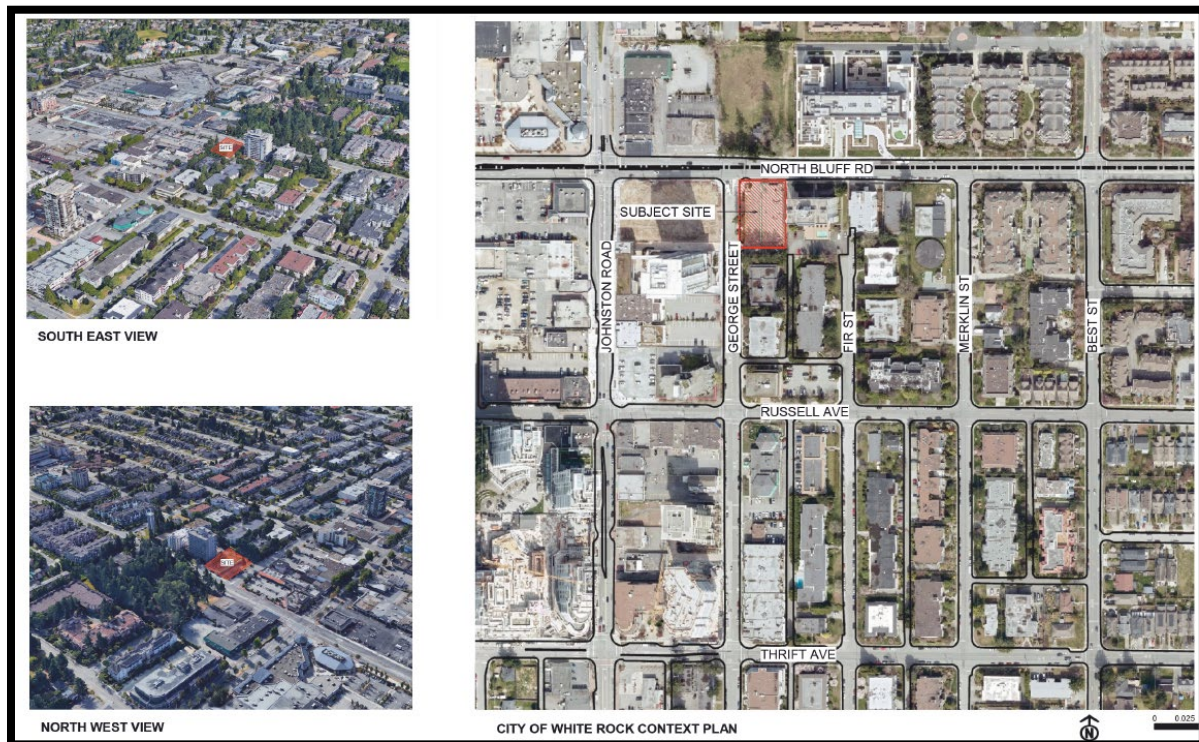
The subject properties contain an older single-storey commercial building with surface parking that faces George Street (see Figure 2 below).

Figure 2 West street view from George Street



The subject properties are located on the southeast corner of North Bluff Road and George Street (see Figure 3 below).

Figure 3



OCP Land Use Designation

The OCP Land Use Designation for the subject properties is *Town Centre Transition*. The *Town Centre Transition* area is residential in character, with densities and heights that support the Town Centre and provide transitions to neighbouring low to mid rise residential areas.

The following objectives and policies of the *Town Centre Transition* land use designation apply to the proposed development:

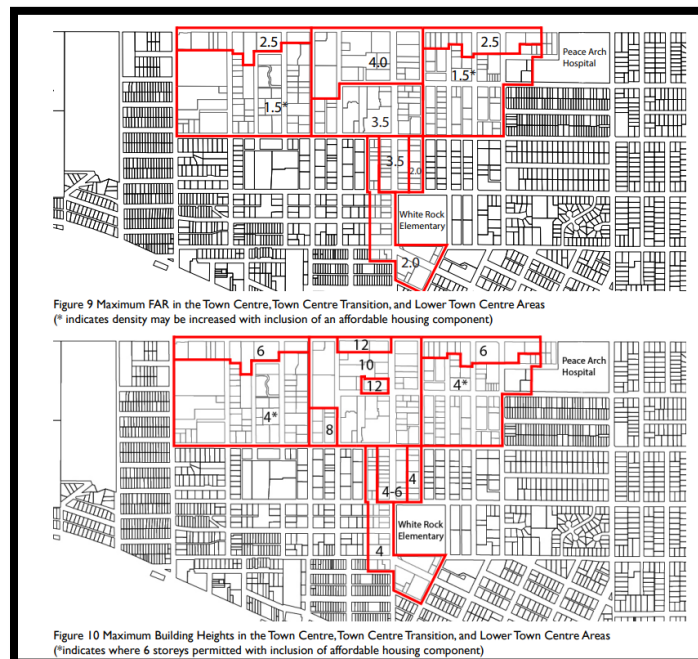
Objective 8.2 - To enable a concentration of multi-unit residential uses to provide easy access to and to strengthen the commercial uses in the Town Centre and the transit corridor on North Bluff Road, and to provide a transition to surrounding low- to mid-rise residential areas.

The proposed development contains multi-family development that will have easy access to commercial uses in the Town Centre and transit as the subject properties abut North Bluff Road which is a transit route. To the west of the subject properties is the *Town Centre* land use designation and a 26 storey mixed-use building. To the east of the subject properties is a 12 storey residential building.

Policy 8.2.1 - Uses and Building Types – Allow multi-unit residential uses, with mixed-use (commercial/residential) on George Street and adjacent to the hospital. Existing institutional and utility uses are also supported and may be mixed in new buildings with multi-unit residential uses. Building types range from low-rise to mid-rise.

The proposed development abuts George Street and contains mixed-use (commercial/residential). The building is a high-rise which is not supported.

Policy 8.2.2 - Density and Height – Concentrate the highest heights and densities adjacent to the Town Centre along North Bluff Road. Maximum allowable densities (FAR) are outlined in Figure 9 and policy 8.2.3, and maximum heights (in storeys) are illustrated in Figure 10.



The chart below details the proposed FAR and Height, as well as what is permitted in the *Town Centre Transition* land use designation.

	PERMITTED	PROPOSED	DIFFERENCE
FAR	2.5 FAR	7.66 FAR	5.16 over
HEIGHT	6 Storeys	26 Storeys	20 Storeys over

The maximum FAR and building height exceed what is supported within the *Town Centre Transition* land use designation.

*Policy 8.2.3 - Affordable Housing Density / Height Bonus – Allow properties in the areas identified with the * on Figure 9 and 10 to rezone up to six storeys and 2.5 FAR (2.8 FAR if providing replacement rental units) where the development includes the one of the affordable housing components identified in policy 11.2.4.*

The subject properties are not identified on Figure 9 and 10 that are referenced in this policy.

Policy 8.2.4 - Urban Design – Enhance the built and public realms through guidelines included in the Multi-Family Development Permit Area in Part D. Focus on the establishment of a greenway between the Town Centre and Centennial Park, as per Sections 13 and 15.

The form and character of the proposed development is subject to the Multi-Family Development Permit Guidelines that requires a major development permit (MJP00040) application that will be subject to a future Council Report.

Policy 11.2.4 Affordable Housing Bonus – Allow rezonings in the Town Centre Transition area to permit buildings up to six storeys and 2.5 FAR where the development provides:

- a. For strata housing development, at least 20% of the units as Affordable Rental Housing;*
- b. For secured market rental development without a requirement to replace existing rental units, at least 10% of the units as Affordable Rental Housing;*
- c. For a development replacing existing rental units and providing compensation to tenants in accordance with the City’s Tenant Relocation Policy, at least 5% of the units as Affordable Rental Housing. Projects with applications submitted prior to 2021 may be approved with at least 5% of the units secured at average rents for a period of 10 years, instead of 20% below average for the life of the building. Developments in this category may have a density up to 2.8 FAR.*

For projects owned or operated by regional or provincial housing agencies, or non-profit housing co-operatives, Council may approve rezonings up to six storeys and 2.5 FAR according to the merits and affordability in the proposal.



The current application is proposing to allocate 30% of the total units to affordable rental units. The details of this element of the application have not been provided by that applicant. The

proposed 30% affordable rental units exceeds *Policy 11.2.4* threshold of 20% to utilize the Affordable Housing Bonus provision to allow rezonings in the Town Centre Transition area to permit building up to 6 storeys and 2.5 FAR. The proposal is for a 26 storey building and FAR of 7.66 which exceeds the permitted height and FAR of the *Town Centre Transition* land use designation.

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 Transition*, 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 Transition* 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 1556 George Street 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.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

 Housing & Land Use We advocate for diversity in housing and practice balance land-use planning.		
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 Use*. 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 for the site specific CD (Comprehensive Development) 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 1556 George Street concurrently with the North Bluff Corridor Study.

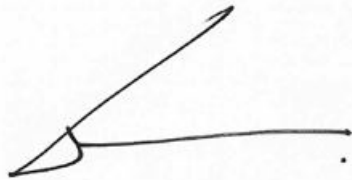
Respectfully submitted,



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

Comments from the Chief Administrative Officer

I concur with the recommendations 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"

