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The Corporation of **THE CITY OF NORTH VANCOUVER**
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

INFORMATION REPORT

To: Mayor Linda Buchanan and Members of Council

From: Karen Montgomerie, Planner 2

Subject: DUPLEX SPECIAL STUDY IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE

Date: May 11, 2021

File No: 13-6520-20-0056

ATTACHMENTS

1. Duplex Special Study Area Existing Land Use Map (Citydocs [#2051505](#))
2. Duplex Special Study Recommended Option Land Use Map (Citydocs [#2051508](#))
3. Staff Report: Duplex Special Study Results and Direction, dated February 28, 2018 (Citydocs [#2051510](#))

PURPOSE

The results of the Duplex Special Study were received by Council at its regular meeting on March 5, 2018. At that time, staff were directed to return with draft bylaws and a process for implementation of the recommended option. This report provides an overview of the study to-date and outlines the next steps required to implement the Duplex Special Study recommended option.

BACKGROUND

In 2015, during the final stages of the 2014 OCP update, a number of residents between East 15th and East 19th Streets approached Council and requested a change from Residential Level 1 (0.5 FSR) to Residential Level 2 (0.5 FSR) in the Official Community Plan (OCP). This was to allow for duplex development, consistent with the proposal for the eastern half of the 300 blocks between 13th and 15th Streets to the south. This request came late in the process, and in response a Special Study Area designation was applied to this area in the OCP; Special Study Areas are areas that have been identified for a possible Schedule A land use change at a later date. The blocks on the eastern half of the 300 blocks from 13th to 15th Streets were designated Residential Level 2 (0.5 FSR) in the OCP, however they were not rezoned at the time which means currently individual re-zonings are required to build duplexes on these properties.

Duplex Special Study Process

In spring of 2017, staff were directed by Council to initiate the Duplex Special Study and explore housing options for the 300 blocks of East 13th to 19th Streets in consultation with area residents. The following resolution was passed:

THAT, as set out in Option 1 of the report, staff be directed to proceed with the OCP Duplex Special Study to consider expanding the Residential Level 2 designation to apply to the 300 blocks East 15th through East 19th Streets, and to explore zoning the land and the east half of 300 blocks East 13th through 15th Streets to allow for duplex development.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

There are a total of 146 properties in the Duplex Special Study area, with the following land use designations (Attachment 1, Existing Land Use Map):

- 115 lots at Residential Level 1 (0.5 FSR)
- 24 lots at Residential Level 2 (0.5 FSR)
- 7 lots at Residential Level 3 (0.75 FSR)

Staff conducted community engagement and analysis of options through various techniques. A Preference Survey was mailed to owners and occupants of the 151 properties in the area to assess the level of interest in considering land use change and to invite input on initial options. The survey was also made available more broadly online. A total of 138 responses were received, 88 (64%) from residents within the study boundary, and there was majority support for change in the area.

Input from the Preference Survey assisted staff in their analysis and development of a series of land use change options. These options were presented at an Open House, with a paper and online feedback form used to gather results. The greatest support was for the option that would provide for more ground oriented housing including duplex and rowhouse forms with the potential for accessory secondary suites on nearly all lots.

Recommended Option

The results of further staff analysis and the two rounds of public engagement led to a recommended option (Attachment 2, Recommended Option Land Use Map) being presented to Council as follows:

- Duplex development on 76 lots (Residential Level 2, 0.5 FSR);
- Small lot duplex (no suites) on 12 lots (Residential Level 2, 0.5 FSR);
- Rowhouse or townhouse development on 51 lots (Residential Level 3, 0.75 FSR);
- Garden apartment development on seven lots (Residential Level 4A, 1.0 FSR).

From an urban form perspective, the structure of development in the City follows a pattern of transitional densities, with higher densities along the north/south spine of Lonsdale Avenue stepping down in density along the blocks to the east and west. The 300 blocks east of Lonsdale Avenue function as a transition between highest density to the west and lower density to the east. The study area is bisected along East 15th Street by a significant arm of the Frequent Transit Network, providing 15 minute connectivity from the west, through the Lonsdale Regional Centre and into Lynn Valley Town Centre.

The recommended option provides for a wide range of ground orientated housing in the study area, including the potential for accessory secondary suites on nearly all lots. For the 88 lots proposed to change from Residential Level 1 to duplex development (Residential Level 2), there would be no increase in density, as Residential Level 1 also has a density of 0.5 FSR. For the 58 lots proposed to change to Residential Levels 3 and 4 in the southern part of the study area, there would be a marginal increase in density of between 0.25 – 0.5 FSR which would create a more gradual transition to the medium density areas to the west.

By transitioning from traditional single family forms, more ground orientated rental suites and smaller, less expensive ownership options can be made available in the community. With the introduction of varied development options, the potential number of units within the study area increases to 648 (as compared to the current OCP potential of 477 units) and an estimated population of 1,749 should every lot redevelop to its full potential. The forms of development proposed do not involve large consolidations, and it is anticipated that redevelopment in this area would occur at a small scale incrementally over time.

The introduction of rowhouse, townhouse and garden apartment development forms of development would also support the transit network and encourage active transportation. A review of underground infrastructure capacity revealed no concerns regarding water, sewer and drainage to accommodate future growth. Any longer term infrastructure upgrades would come through regular upgrades set out in the City's capital plan, as is the case in other lower density areas of the City.

At the time of developing the recommended option, staff also met with representatives of the North Vancouver School District regarding the potential increase in population and the potential need for additional school spaces. The School District advised that should Council proceed with the proposed changes, they would request additional funding from the Province to add additional capacity.

Based on the staff recommended option (Attachment 3, Duplex Special Study: Results and Direction) at its regular meeting on March 5, 2018, Council passed the following resolution:

PURSUANT to the report of the Planner 2, dated February 28, 2018, entitled “Duplex Special Study: Results and Direction”:

THAT the results of the Duplex Special Study be received and community members thanks for their input;

CARRIED

AND THAT the study be concluded and staff be directed to return with draft bylaws and process for implementation.

CARRIED

PROCESS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Change from Residential Level 1 to Residential Level 2

For the properties (88 lots) on the northern blocks that are currently zoned One Unit Residential (RS-1) with a current OCP land use designation of Residential Level 1, the process for implementing the recommended option requires an OCP amendment to change the land use designation to Residential Level 2 and a corresponding change in zoning to Two Unit Residential (RT-1). This would allow for duplex development potential without a requirement for individual rezoning applications for properties within the area. These changes require consideration by Council and referral to a Public Hearing, and can be implemented without further analysis.

Changes to Residential Level 3 and Residential Level 4A

The recommended option proposes a change to OCP land use designations for the remaining properties to Residential Level 3 (51 lots) and Residential Level 4A (7 lots). The process for implementing this is more complex, as the rowhouse and garden apartment forms do not currently exist in the Zoning Bylaw. This means that if an OCP amendment was taken forward for these plots, individual rezoning applications would still be required to take forward this form of development. Further analysis is required to develop the required guidance and/or corresponding changes to zoning that would allow for rowhouse, garden apartment or other small lot options in the southern part of the study area.

The increase in density proposed in the southern portion of the study area also presents an opportunity to explore how the development of new affordable home ownership options could be supported on these properties through the OCP amendment and rezoning process. The City’s *Density Bonus and Community Benefits Policy*, in conjunction with the OCP, requires community benefit cash contributions based on the lift gained for certain forms of development, including Residential Levels 3 and 4 (the policy does not apply to lower density OCP designations). The further analysis will consider the interaction of the density bonus policy and the potential for supporting affordable home ownership options.

NEXT STEPS

Due to the period of time that has passed since the results of the Duplex Special Study were received by Council, prior to returning to Council with draft bylaws for implementation of the recommended option in the northern part of the study area, staff will notify residents in the study area about the indicative timeline and proposed two-stage process for implementing the recommended option. Residents will also be invited to attend a virtual open house where staff will present on the study and the public can ask questions and provide comments.

Following this period of reengagement, staff will prepare a report to Council with the OCP Amendment Bylaw to introduce new land use density designations and a corresponding change in zoning to Two Unit Residential (RT-1) for the 88 plots in the northern part of the study area. These bylaws would be referred to a public hearing at the same time should Council resolve to progress the proposed changes. With this change, these properties would have the potential for duplex development without a requirement for an individual rezoning application. The controls for any new development would be handled through the building permit process. The process for implementing this change is expected to take approximately four to six months. Outreach and information would be made available on the project page of the City's website and on other communication tools.

For the portions of the study area proposed for Residential Levels 3 and 4A, staff will undertake further analysis of this area following adoption of the bylaws for the northern area. Given the number of current priorities, the timeframe for the implementation of the recommended option for the southern properties will be the subject of a future report.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:



Karen Montgomerie
Planner 2