

Staff Report to Council

Planning and Development

FILE: 3360-20-2022-03

REPORT DATE: February 15, 2023

MEETING DATE:

February 28, 2023

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Samantha Maki, Acting Director of Planning

SUBJECT: Metro Vancouver Non-market Housing and Childcare Project at 19085
119B Avenue

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REVIEW/APPROVAL:



RECOMMENDATION(S):

THAT Council:

- A. Grant third reading and adopt Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 2927, 2022, which if adopted would permit the rezoning of the property at 19085 119 Ave to facilitate development of Metro Vancouver's non-market housing and childcare project; AND
 - B. Adopt Development Cost Charges Reduction Bylaw No. 2928, 2022; OR
 - C. Other.
-

PURPOSE

Following a public hearing, Council to consider granting third reading and adoption of the bylaw to rezone the property at 19085 119 Ave (PID 027-242-269) to facilitate development of Metro Vancouver's non-market housing and childcare project.

☐ Information Report

☒ Decision Report

☐ Direction Report

DISCUSSION

Background:

In partnership with the City, Metro Vancouver Housing (MVH) is proposing a non-market rental housing and child daycare project on City-owned land at 19085 119B Ave.

First and second readings to the Zoning Amendment Bylaw were granted on October 4, 2022, along with first, second and third readings to the corresponding Development Cost Charges Reduction Bylaw. A public hearing was held on February 7, 2023.

Relevant Policy, Bylaw or Legislation:

Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2864, 2020

In the City's Official Community Plan, the property is designated as Civic Centre. This designation is intended "to permit civic, public recreational, and cultural uses; may also include residential, office uses, and childcare."

This project supports numerous policies in the OCP that facilitate and encourage: rental and non-market housing; high density housing in the Town Centre and close to transit; age-friendly, adaptable and accessible housing; including childcare in civic projects; and sustainable building design.

Zoning Bylaw No. 2505, 2011

A new Comprehensive Development zone, CD-P, is proposed for this project to change the zoning of the site to a new high-density, mixed-use zone.

Housing Needs Assessment

According to the City's Housing Needs Assessment, there is an overall need for 582 affordable rental units by 2026. Of these, 110 should be accessible units, 337 units for seniors, and 85 units for families.

This proposed development offers 115 new, non-market rental tenure apartments, including 16 accessible units. It will help to meet the demand for units suitable for seniors, families, and people with disabilities.

Other

Higher density on this site is compliant with the City's Strategic Plan and Housing Action Plan policies, including: increasing housing affordability, particularly for young families and seniors; increasing housing diversity; providing density close to transit; building a compact, complete community; and, providing density that increases the viability of the central business area.

This project also provides additional childcare spaces, which responds to the findings and recommendations of the City's Child Care Needs Assessment. This includes incorporating childcare spaces into new housing projects and encouraging childcare facilities to be located near areas close to schools, multi-family residential housing and recreation programming.

Analysis:

A public hearing for the application was held on February 7, 2023 (see Attachment A). One written submission in the form of a petition was received and there were seven speakers, including the applicant.

All the signatories to the petition reside in the Wesbrooke building, adjacent to the proposed development site. Petitions are challenging to evaluate, because it is unclear what information was provided to people signing the petition. Other than the applicant, all the speakers reside in Pitt Meadows.

The written petition opposes the proposed development. Verbal submissions included both support for and opposition to the proposed development. Of the speakers, two spoke in favour of the project; three spoke in favour of this type of housing and the childcare component, but had concerns specific to the location and/or construction activities; and, two opposed the project. The main themes arising from the written and verbal submissions are as follows:

- Parking Concerns

From the outset of the project, impacts to parking in the Civic Centre area has been a concern and is the subject of ongoing discussions. Parking impacts of infill development is a complex issue that many municipalities face, especially in their urban centres. City staff continue to explore ideas to mitigate the impacts and Council recently endorsed a number of suggested improvements to parking and access in the Civic Centre area.

It was noted that the City parking lot next to the Wesbrooke building, also home to the Seniors Society, will be impacted. While it is expected to continue to be used by Wesbrooke visitors, service providers, and the Seniors Society, it is important to note that this parking lot is also part of the general Civic Centre parking and subject to the needs of a range of user groups.

Specific to this development, reduced levels of parking are an important consideration for a non-market and rental housing development, particularly one that is located within easy walking distance of services, amenities and transit. Parking is a high cost in developing multi-family housing and requiring additional parking spaces, such as a second level of underground parking, would make this project financially unfeasible. Discussion around parking in the Civic Centre will continue, and measures identified to improve the parking situation will be implemented and monitored as practicable.

- Standards of maintenance for the building post-construction

Metro Vancouver Housing (MVH) has decades of experience building and operating non-market rental homes to suit a variety of incomes, ages, abilities and family sizes. MVH operates 49 sites providing homes for more than 9,400 people across the greater Vancouver region, and they have a proven track record of maintaining their buildings to a high standard. As the City will retain ownership of the land, staff will work with MVH to ensure a standard of care is maintained for the building and the property.

- Need for non-market housing

As was recognized by several speakers, there is a critical need for rental and non-market housing in the community, and accessible units. There are no secured rental buildings in the City, nor any non-market housing other than a few co-operative developments. The residential portion of this development will provide housing opportunities for people of all ages, including seniors and families, and for people needing accessible housing.

The project also represents a significant investment in the City by senior levels of government to address a growing need in the community for secure, non-market rental homes. The support of these partners enables the City to provide secure and accessible housing for vulnerable community members.

- Construction impacts

Concerns of impacts to the Civic Centre and surrounding residents during construction of this development, included: parking for construction workers; loading and unloading of construction materials; digging for the underground parking and foundation; temporary loss of some parking stalls in the paved parking lot; and storage of construction materials and vehicles. Unfortunately, construction is disruptive in the short term, but is unavoidable in order to realize development. MVH is committed to mitigating these impacts to the best of their ability within the financial constraints of the project. A construction management plan and a construction parking plan will be developed in consultation with the City to help mitigate issues in advance. MVH has decades of experience building and managing multi-family buildings, including during construction, and working collaboratively with neighbours to reduce impacts/disruption overall.

- Public consultation

There were some comments at the public hearing about a lack of public consultation, specifically with residents of the Wesbrooke. The following is a summary list of the engagement that has occurred for this project to date:

- Site selected by Council during a Public Meeting on Feb. 25, 2020.
- Initial rezoning application presented during a Public Meeting on June 21, 2022.
- Public open house held July 27, 2022. Advertised in two editions of local newspaper, promoted in social media, and notices mailed to all residential addresses within 122 m of the site. Approximately 50 people attended.
- Additional information available and feedback opportunities via project information page on City's website, and on Metro Vancouver's website.
- MVH met with Executive Director and President of Seniors Society on July 28, 2022 and January 16, 2023.
- MVH met with owner/operator of the Wesbrooke on July 28, 2022. Invitation also extended for January 16, 2023 or any other day/time that works.
- Project plans forwarded to School District 42 on August 9, 2022.
- Development Sign posted on site August 24, 2022.

- Application presented for 1st and 2nd reading during a Public Meeting on October 4, 2022.
 - Public hearing held on February 7, 2023. Advertised in two editions of local newspaper and on City website, and notices mailed to all residential addresses within 122 m of the site.
- Need for additional childcare spaces

The immediate need for additional childcare spaces was noted, and this project will add 83 new spaces to the 67 currently offered by Discovery Playhouse Children’s Society for a total of 150 spaces for infant to school age children. The additional spaces will help address the needs of many families on the waiting lists for affordable childcare spaces in Pitt Meadows. This project also aligns with goals in the City’s Child Care Needs Assessment for incorporating childcare spaces into new housing projects and encouraging childcare facilities to be located near areas close to schools, multi-family residential housing and recreation programming

- Height

While a six storey building is taller than other buildings in the City, the two Solaris towers nearby are each ten storeys. This proposed building will be shorter than these and will provide a visual bridge from those tallest buildings in Pitt Meadows down to nearby four-storey and lower buildings. The site is next to the four storey Wesbrooke senior's housing.



Figure 1: Proposed streetscape view on 119B Ave looking north

The City’s Official Community Plan supports buildings taller than four storeys in the Town Centre where community benefits are provided, in this case non-market housing and child care. The proposed building has been carefully planned to balance the number of residential units that can be offered to provide suitable non-market housing for as many people as possible; with achieving a feasible per-unit costs of constructing and operating non-market housing.

Next Steps

Design details are being revised based on past feedback, and the applicant will seek input from City’s Advisory Design Panel (ADP) in March. ADP comments and ideas will be considered and an updated design and any further details about the project (parking challenges, continued discussions with adjacent properties, etc.) will be brought back to Council prior to finalizing a lease agreement for the site and building permit issuance. Design elements are not part of the

rezoning application. Instead, a rezoning application is assessed in relation to the proposed land use and building envelope (e.g., density, setbacks, height, lot coverage, and parking).

A lease agreement with the applicant is required for this project, to lease the City-owned land to Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation. This lease agreement will also include provisions for a portion of the outdoor childcare play area to be located on the adjacent parcel, securing the transportation demand management measures, standards of maintenance, and ensuring rents in the residential units will remain at a below-market level.

COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

- ☒ Principled Governance ☐ Balanced Economic Prosperity ☐ Corporate Excellence
☒ Community Spirit & Wellbeing ☐ Transportation & Infrastructure Initiatives
☐ Not Applicable

Regional Relationships. Proactively connect, collaborate and build strong relationships with our regional partners.

Affordability. Promote accessible and affordable transportation, daycare and housing opportunities to help families and businesses thrive.

Housing Diversity. Encourage diversity in housing types to foster an inclusive, affordable, multi-generational community.

WORKPLAN IMPLICATIONS

- ☒ Already accounted for in department workplan / no adjustments required
☐ Emergent issue / will require deferral of other priority(ies)
☐ Other
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FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- ☐ None ☐ Budget Previously Approved ☐ Referral to Business Planning
☒ Other

Waiving of Development Cost Charges and application fees. The City will lease the site to MVH for a nominal fee. In collaboration with MVH and Discovery, the City received a grant of \$1,991,883 from the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development's Child Care BC New Spaces Fund for the 83 new child care spaces. The majority of the grant was allocated to MVH to support the design and construction of the child care facility. The balance was allocated to Discovery for materials and furnishings.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- ☒ Inform ☒ Consult ☐ Involve ☐ Collaborate ☐ Empower

Comment(s):

A public hearing was held on February 7, 2023.

KATZIE FIRST NATION CONSIDERATIONS

Referral ☒ Yes ☐ No

MVH has consulted with Katzie regarding this project and an archaeological overview assessment was completed

SIGN-OFFS

Written by:

Allison Dominelli,
Senior Development Services Technician

Reviewed by:

Colin O'Byrne,
Manager of Planning

ATTACHMENT(S):

- A. Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 2927, 2022
- B. Development Cost Charges Reduction Bylaw No. 2928, 2022