

**To:** Chief Administrative Officer **Date:** March 21, 2022  
**From:** Gerald Schlesiger, Project Manager  
**Subject:** **Waterfront Revised Preferred Land Use Plan**

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### **Recommendation**

That Council endorse the revised Preferred Land Use Plan (PLUP) as the model for the preparation of the Waterfront Master Plan and the bylaw to integrate the Master Plan into the Official Community Plan.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to:

- a) Inform Council of the outcomes and revisions resulting from further consultations and analysis of the December 20<sup>th</sup> 2021 PLUP; and
- b) Seek Council's endorsement on the revised PLUP as the model for Phase 3 Public Engagement and the preparation of the bylaw to amend the Official Community Plan accordingly.

### **Background**

The Mission Waterfront Revitalization Initiative commenced in earnest in March 2021. The land use planning process is anticipated to be completed by May 2022. The legislative process to adopt a bylaw that brings the new Waterfront Master Plan into the OCP is expected to be completed in early July.

The Waterfront Master Plan will be a living document that will be revisited at regular intervals as the economic, environmental, demographics, community aspirations, and opportunities change. The genesis of this living document originates from the background research, technical engineering analysis, economic research, assessing the physical and environmental setting, applying planning principles, and respecting the legislative parameters. The leadership and direction originate from the strategic priorities set by Council, and the outcomes balance the opinions, thoughts, and ideas received from stakeholders throughout the planning process.

Following several months of gathering information, assessing the variables, formulating options, generating ideas, hearing opinions, and receiving direction, three concept land use plans were prepared for Community, First Nation, Stakeholder, Advisory Committee, and Landowner consultations. Following these consultations, the objective was to move from three concept plans to one. This would serve as the foundation for more focussed discussion, more rigorous analysis, and further fact checking and assessment.

Council was presented with a Preferred Land Use Plan on December 20, 2021. Council recognized the efficiency of focussing the discussion and yet realized that more consultation

was needed to improve the depiction of a viable and vivid land use plan. This report informs Council of the revisions made to the PLUP with the intention of initiating the third series of public engagement and preparing for the legislative process to adopt a Master Plan.

## **Discussion and Analysis**

The revised PLUP depicts the revisions in response to further public dialogue and analysis. It is characterized by the following:

### **Land Use Designation Map**

The land use designation map (Attachment A) differs from the December 20<sup>th</sup> map by:

1. The London / Glasgow Avenue “S” curve connector is supplanted by maintaining the existing road grid pattern.  
An economic and engineering analysis between the “S” and “grid” options identified that the “grid” pattern provided better certainty and less disruption for Landowners, with only a marginal downside to the improved travel times and traffic flows provided by the “S” curve. The main disruption to traffic flows in the Waterfront remains at the CPR level crossing on London Ave. The grid option is also less intrusive to building design compared to an “S” curved street option. The “S” curve configuration reduces the City’s obligations associated with land acquisitions to implement a new road pattern.
2. The Employment /Mixed Use land designation adjacent to the existing West Coast Express Station was altered to a Hub / Mixed Use land designation.  
The focus of Hub activities at the north end of Mershon Street reflects the objective to support the City’s historic Downtown area. It provides social and public activities within close proximity to Downtown. The linkage is further reinforced by the proposed overpass connecting Welton with Mershon Street.
3. The proposed park in the Bridge East precinct has moved westward.  
Relocation of the park westward offers the potential to capitalize on rail/river access in support of the employment lands. The inland port and spur lines are visual representations broadening the attractiveness and opportunities to entice specialized employers. The graphic depiction accentuates one of the competitive advantages the City has to offer. However, the features are reflective of permissible land use and are dependent on the Developer ascertaining its feasibility and satisfying the regulatory requirements for the development of these features.
4. The Bridge West / East precinct land use designations are changed to Innovation Employment & High FSR (Floor Space Ratio) Light Industrial.  
The change clarifies that the minimum FSR for these two precincts is 1.0 reflecting a blending of the density distribution over the larger area. The

lands adjacent to the Raceway retain an employment focus while alternate opportunities avail themselves as one moves eastward.

### **River Foreshore**

The revised PLUP maintains its distinction from other waterfront communities by preserving a publicly accessible and environmentally friendly natural water's edge along most of the river front. The PLUP recognizes the Fraser's historic role as the highway and food source for the Sto:lo people. This is accomplished by avoiding the excessive use of sheet pile wall flood protection, retaining a natural shoreline that supports aquatic life, and providing people with the opportunity to touch the water. Historically the Waterfront lands provided local people with a unique relationship with the river and the plan seeks to reinstate that relationship.

### **Density**

The land use plan is predicated upon permitting a Floor Space Ratio (FSR) of 2.5 on the lands east of the CPR spur line. This allows for up to 6-storey wood frame buildings. However, the opportunity to double the density to FSR 5.0 is embedded in the plan, but it is not explicit. The short-term economic analysis suggests that there may be a market reluctance to accommodate an FSR of 5.0 (or high-rise construction) until the waterfront's revitalization is solidly on track. As the waterfront grows, market capacity and absorption rates are expected to improve, thereby favouring higher densities as the area matures.

### **Flood Protection**

#### Dockside

Flood Protection of the waterfront lands is based on a super-dike concept. All lands south of Highway #11 will be filled to achieve the Flood Construction Level. Highway #11 itself will serve as the backbone of the dike. The raising of the lands above its existing elevation will serve to effectively make one level of parking underground. However, at maximum density, another level of parking will be required. The design guidelines (below) identify the courtyard concept as a means to offset the undesired aesthetics of above grade parking.

#### Station lands

Lands north of Highway #11 will be in a flood exemption zone once the foreshore diking is in place. Excessive stormwater flows affecting this area will be satisfied by improvements to the Pump Station on Dike Road near the Highway 11 cloverleaf.

#### Bridge West / East

A large segment of the employment / industrial lands either side of the Mission Abbotsford Bridge have recently been raised addressing part of the flood protection measures for these lands. Diking improvements will be required to fully satisfy flood protection measures.

#### Raceway

The raceway retains its existing flood protection status as no major changes are anticipated. The lands are not secured by a dike. Should any development occur, the provisions for development are captured in the Floodplain Management Bylaw.

## **Highways**

The PLUP is in keeping with the general initiative to extend Highway 11 eastward to reconnect with Highway 7 near Stave Lake Street. The plan retains the east and west Special Highway Planning Area designations as conversations with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure continue. The Highway will be at grade, rather than on an elevated structure as it transits through the waterfront. It rises only to clear the CPR tracks. The Highway serves as the inland backbone to the super-dike.

## **Open Space & Amenities**

The land use plan retains a significant amount of open space composed of undevelopable areas, environmentally sensitive areas, and active parkland. It includes those lands that are needed for flood protection. The top of the dike will serve as a pedestrian greenway and be a key amenity for the city and the region.

In keeping with Council's priorities to feature diverse outdoor spaces for recreational events, public art, and features displaying environmental technologies and sustainability, the land use plan encourages Developers to incorporate or contribute to these types of amenities in their developments. While the waterfront lends itself to celebrating natural features, the Hub at the north end of Mershon Street lends itself to celebrating cultural diversity and social interactions.

## **Design Guidelines**

The Master Plan will incorporate high level design guidelines to guide the form and character of development. It will be incumbent on the future neighbourhood plan to detail the form and character. The rationale for deferring detailed form and character guidelines at this time is the recognition that the build out of the Waterfront will be in phases. While the Dockside area has appeal, given its proximity to the water, implementing the flood protection requirements are challenged by the fragmentation of land ownership. It will take time for the Dockside neighbourhood to coalesce. Building materials, consumer preferences, perceptions on what constitutes quality, aesthetically pleasing criteria will change over time. Therefore, establishing prescriptive, detailed design guidelines addressing aesthetic values today may become stale dated before development occurs.

However, higher-order, principle-based design guidelines will be incorporated into the plan. The Plan will provide Developers with criteria on how things are to be done. For example, a key design challenge is concealing parking facilities. Given the high-water table, underground parking may be cost prohibitive. Even with the area raised to the appropriate flood construction level, one level of above ground parking is still anticipated. To alleviate creating expansive parking lots, a courtyard design concept may be employed. The building frames and encloses an inner courtyard. The street face on all four sides contain storefronts or residential uses with the parking provided in a central courtyard. The parking facilities will not be obvious to the pedestrian passing by on the street. The higher levels of the building will either overlook the central courtyard or the street.

## **Master Plan**

The PLUP is the core element around which the Master Plan's policies, costs, phasing, implementation options, and financial implications will be assessed. The map provides a high level of guidance on land uses with the knowledge that adjustments may be needed as time progresses. The Master Plan itself reaches beyond the context of the PLUP map.

The forthcoming Master Plan to be introduced for bylaw consideration in a few weeks will identify policies and guiding principles to supplement the intentions of the PLUP. The map provides the core elements, but the execution of the revitalization initiative will be broadened by City bylaws, policies and guidelines that compose the Master Plan. The execution of the plan is also influenced by the role of the City, the partnerships that form, the interactions and responsibilities between different levels of government, and the interplay between motivated landowners and the business community. The Waterfront Master Plan that will be tabled as part of the amending OCP bylaw will expand beyond the confines of the land use designation map and identify key topical issues that need to be addressed to unify the plan's implementation regardless from which sector the efforts originate from.

### **Going Forward**

With the acceptance of the revised PLUP, the focus shifts to its implementation. This involves assessing the application of City policies, regulations, development practices and procedures. The objective is to ensure that the City's bylaws and policies align with the vision and to make the necessary adjustments where misalignments or absences have been identified.

### **Schedule**

Phase 3 Public Engagement is set to begin on March 22. First Nations, Landowners, Stakeholders and the Advisory Committee will be given the opportunity to comment on the PLUP.

Following Phase 3 Public Engagement, the bylaw to amend the Official Community Plan and integrate the Waterfront Master Plan will be brought forward for First Reading. The Council Report on bylaw introduction will also summarize the Phase 3 Public Engagement findings. A separate session with Council is to be scheduled to discuss the economic analysis.

In keeping with policy LAN.47, the draft bylaw will be formally circulated to outside agencies, First Nations, and neighbouring cities. Staff will report back to Council on the outcome of this process. A Public Hearing is anticipated for June 20<sup>th</sup> and will provide all parties with final input to the Waterfront Master Plan. Adoption of the Waterfront Master Plan is anticipated July 4<sup>th</sup>.

### **Council Goals/Objectives**

The Preferred Land Use Plan strives to meet Council's Five (5) Strategic Directions and Priorities for Mission's Waterfront addressing Social & Community, Culture & Arts, Environment & Health, Employment; and Economic objectives.

### **Financial Implications**

Staff will present Council with the financial implications of the PLUP following the plan's endorsement in a separate Council meeting in keeping with the provisions of Section 90 of the Community Charter.

## **Communications**

The revised PLUP is to be released for Phase 3 Public Engagement upon endorsement by Council. The engagement period will run through to April 5<sup>th</sup>. The primary objective of Phase 3 Public Engagement is to identify any critical components they deem missing from the plan.

The Phase 3 Public Engagement includes:

- Inclusion on the engage/waterfront project page.
- Social Media.
- A concept webpage that includes a brief survey.
- A public Open House session for March 30<sup>th</sup> at the Mission Parks, Recreation and Culture Centre.
- Placement of Highway Reader Board signs advertising the Open House.
- Posters displayed on various community boards and at the Mission Public Library.
- New Waterfront display added to the kiosk at Jack Poole Harbourside Park.
- Invitations to Landowners, First Nations, Stakeholders, and the Advisory Committee to discuss the revised Land Use Plan.
- Media release added to our City website.

## **Summary and Conclusion**

The revised Preferred Land Use Plan has been crafted under Council's leadership and commitment to depict a viable and vivid land use plan. It is the creation of community engagement and the analysis of possibilities through a lens focused on attainable outcomes. It has been vetted in relationship to Council's strategic priorities, the City's OCP policies, and truth tested against engineering and economic parameters. It is the result of a distinct year long multi-disciplinary planning process. The ideas and vision contained in the plan avoid fanciful speculation. It is financially feasible and balanced with employment, commercial, and residential land uses to create a unique vibrant waterfront community Council's endorsement of the revised Preferred Land Use Plan will initiate the last leg of bringing forward the Mission's Waterfront Revitalization Master Plan.

**Report Prepared by:** Gerald Schlesiger, Project Manager

**Reviewed by:** Stacey Crawford, Director of Economic Development

**Approved for Inclusion:** Mike Younie, Chief Administrative Officer

## **Attachment**

Attachment A: Revised Preferred Land Use Plan