



**To:** Richmond City Council

**Date:** April 12, 2024

**From:** Cecilia Achiam  
Acting Chair, Development Permit Panel

**File:** DP 21-945828

**Re:** **Development Permit Panel Meeting Held on September 27, 2023**

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**Staff Recommendation**

That the recommendation of the Panel to authorize the issuance of Development Permit (DP 21-945828) for the properties at 900 and 1000 Ferguson Road, be endorsed and the Permit so issued.

Cecilia Achiam  
Acting Chair, Development Permit Panel  
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## Panel Report

The Development Permit Panel considered the following item at its meeting held on September 27, 2023.

DP 21-945828 – GREATER VANCOUVER SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE DISTRICT –  
900 AND 1000 FERGUSON ROAD  
(September 27, 2023)

The Panel considered a Development Permit (DP) application to facilitate upgrades through construction of secondary and tertiary treatment structures and related components for the Iona Island Waste Water Treatment Plant on a site designated Environmentally Sensitive Area.

The applicant, Nelson Szeto, of Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District, the applicant's landscape architect, Sarah Primeau, of space2place landscape architects, and the applicant's architect, Matthew Woodruff, of Local Practice Architecture + Design Ltd., provided a brief visual presentation highlighting:

- The proposed upgrade of the existing facility would accommodate future population growth of serviced areas and meet provincial and federal regulatory requirements.
- The project is currently at the preliminary design stage and the facility is projected to be commissioned by 2035.
- The proposed project site and design would minimize the ecological impact of the project.
- Existing habitats around the project would be enhanced.
- There are five proposed ESA compensation areas for the project around the island representing a total area of 26.2 hectares, which is in excess of the required ESA compensation area of 23.08 hectares (including previous ESA development permit commitments).
- The applicant has committed to a monitoring program to ensure the long-term success of the project's proposed ESA compensation scheme and a construction environmental management plan to protect existing habitats during construction.
- A comprehensive sustainability plan for the whole Iona Island and sustainability strategies for individual building components have been developed.

Staff noted that (i) the proposed ESA compensation scheme would achieve a net gain and ecological area and ecological function, (ii) the existing Power and Administration Building on the site are identified in the City's Heritage Registry and was investigated for retention or repurposing; however, is not viable candidates for retention or repurposing due to the impacts of site raising, BCBC seismic standards and an inability to relocate due to their cast-in-place concrete construction - all noted in the letter attached to the staff report, (iii) a legal agreement will be secured as a consideration of this DP indicating the structure shall not be demolished until there is a comprehensive heritage commemoration, salvage and implementation plan

prepared by a qualified heritage professional and submitted to and reviewed by City staff and the Richmond Heritage Commission, and (iv) noted that the proposed barge facility that is currently under consideration by Metro Vancouver on Iona Island is not part of the subject application as there is no certainty on the location.

In reply to queries from the Panel, the applicant noted that (i) the potential exemption of the project from the BC Environmental Assessment Act is yet to be determined, (ii) the proposed project has the capacity to service the projected growth in the number of people serviced without further impacting the ESA, (iii) the potential expansion of ESA through habitat banking has not been considered in the scope of the application, (iv) adaptation strategies are included in the flood adaptation plan for the island, and (v) there will be a monitoring strategy for the ESA compensation areas based on annual 5-year monitoring plans, coupled with multi-season site visits as well as a more detailed monitoring program established by the QEP towards the end of the landscape completion period.

The Panel expressed support for the project, noting that (i) the proposed upgrade of the existing wastewater treatment plant is appreciated, (ii) the project is well designed, and (iii) the evolution of the project in the future would be positive based on the current plan.

The Panel recommends the Permit be issued.