



REPORT TO COUNCIL

TO: Richmond City Council
FROM: Cllr. McNulty, Chair
Planning Committee
DATE: August 26, 2004
FILE: 08-4105-00 xr 6360-00
RE: INTERIM STRATEGY FOR MANAGING TOWNHOUSE AND SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL REZONING APPLICATIONS DURING THE REVIEW OF THE LANE ESTABLISHMENT AND ARTERIAL ROAD REDEVELOPMENT POLICIES

The Planning Committee, at its meeting held on Tuesday, August 24th, 2004, considered the attached report, and recommends as follows:

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION –

That the following “Interim Strategy for Managing Townhouse and Single-Family Residential Rezoning Applications During the Review of the Lane Establishment and Arterial Road Redevelopment Policies”, (which is attached as Schedule 1 and forms a part of these minutes), take immediate effect:

Except in the following cases, rezoning applications for development along arterial roads that are subject to the Lane Establishment and Arterial Road Redevelopment Policies will be deferred until the review of these policies is complete and approved by Council:

- *Townhouses (requiring a land assembly of at least 30 m frontage) where shared access for adjacent sites is provided;*
- *Single-family residential proposals, where a municipal lane already exists and is operational; or*
- *Single-family residential proposals in compliance with an existing Lot Size Policy that do not require a rear lane.*

Cllr. McNulty, Chair
Planning Committee

Attach.

VARIANCE

That the Interim Strategy (Attachment 4 to the report dated August 5, 2004, from the Director of Development), titled “Interim Strategy for Managing Townhouse and Single-Family Residential Rezoning Applications During the Review of the Lane Establishment and Arterial Road Redevelopment Policies”, be endorsed until the review of the Lane Establishment and Arterial Road Redevelopment Policies is complete and approved by Council.

Staff Report

Origin

The purpose of this report is to recommend an Interim Strategy for managing townhouse and single-family residential rezoning applications along arterial roads until a review of the Lane Establishment and Arterial Road Redevelopment Policies is completed in the next four (4) months.

Findings Of Fact

Four (4) separate referral motions to staff were made during the past few months in relation to four different projects (single family small lots, townhouses, coach houses) in various locations. **(Attachment 3)** These referrals were the subject of specific concerns raised by Council, Planning Committee, and the public regarding the Lane Establishment and Arterial Road Redevelopment Policies **(Attachments 1 and 2)**. The issues can be summarized as follows:

- Establishment of a rear lane is problematic where:
 - A rear lane does not presently exist;
 - There are undersized (shallow/narrow), undevelopable, or newly developed lots around the site which would impede lane development;
 - No developments which include establishment of a rear lane have previously been approved in the area (first in the block);
 - There is uncertainty about the future lane pattern in a block; and
 - Various land uses exist in the area (small lots; townhouses), creating difficulty in integrating future rear lanes and internal shared driveways.
- Aesthetics, Streetscape, and Quality:
 - Narrow dwellings, separated by temporary shared driveways, are out of character with larger dwellings in established neighbourhoods;
 - Temporary shared driveways result in substantial paving of the site, limiting open space, and creating a “bowling alley” effect; and
 - The quality and marketability of the small lots has been questioned.
- Adjacency Issues:
 - Removal of mature vegetation and trees from the rear of the property is required for the rear lane, impacting adjacent properties; and
 - Lanes are perceived to create problems, such as security, traffic, parking, garbage, crime, privacy, vandalism, and impact on property values and quality of life.

Single Family Lots vs. Townhouses

Most of the concerns associated with arterial road redevelopment involve the introduction of a rear access lane, which is a current requirement for single-family development. Townhouse

developments, on the other hand, provide a viable development alternative to address many of the concerns noted above, including alternative access, and should be encouraged, in certain circumstances, over single-family developments for the following reasons:

- Can achieve alternative access by coordinated, internal shared driveways in the middle of the townhouse site, internalizing traffic, and reducing intrusion on adjacent lots;
- Require relatively large land assemblies, thus avoiding piecemeal development; and
- Are subject to design controls (Development Permit), and can achieve a high-quality design and landscaping standard to address adjacency and potential for tree retention.

Options

A staff review of the Lane Establishment and Arterial Road Redevelopment Policies is under way. In the interim, Council direction is required to address existing (in-stream) and new rezoning applications. Several Options for an Interim Strategy have been identified:

Option 1: Status Quo

Under this option, rezoning applications along arterial roads would continue to be processed in the normal fashion, both with and without the Fast Track Option. This approach is not recommended due to the significant concerns that have been expressed to date, and continuing uncertainty for both staff and developers as to how these policies can be applied.

Option 2: Townhouses, or Single-Family Lots located on Existing Lanes or which Complete and Existing Development Pattern Only (Recommended)

This option would address the uncertainty relating to arterial road redevelopment by allowing staff to process only the following applications:

1. Straightforward rezoning applications for townhouses and single-family residential proposals (i.e. where an operational lane already exists; where an existing Lot Size Policy is in place that does not require a lane);
2. Single-Family residential proposals:
 - where it can be demonstrated that townhouses cannot be achieved; or
 - where development proposals for similar rezoning applications have already been approved in the immediate area, and the proposal will substantially complete an existing development pattern.

The proposed Interim Strategy is attached as **Attachment 4**.

While this option will enable straightforward townhouse and single-family rezoning applications to be processed, some applications will require more detailed examination to assess future lane development issues. In many cases, additional processing time may be needed, therefore the Fast Track option for processing may not be available.

Option 3: Moratorium

Under this option, all rezoning applications located on arterial roads that are subject to the Lane Establishment and Arterial Road Redevelopment Policies would be deferred pending completion of the broader policy review, which will be completed in four (4) months. This option will result in delays for in-stream applications; however, it would provide clear direction and avoid ambiguity for staff and the development community.

Analysis

During the next four (4) months, City staff will undertake a review of the Lane Establishment and Arterial Road Redevelopment Policies. Among other things, the scope of this review will include the following:

- Review examples of recent developments to assess aesthetics, design, interface, lane operation, shared access issues, sustainability, etc.;
- Consider public concerns regarding lanes (traffic; noise; crime; vandalism; security; privacy; garbage; parking; property values; connectivity; etc.);
- Examine where lanes are not needed;
- Review how many Single-Family Lot Size Policies exist that are contrary to the Lane Establishment and Arterial Road Redevelopment Policies; and
- Address the potential or impediments to integrate single-family, two-family and multiple-family residential rezoning applications in the same block.

Input from the development community will be sought through discussions with the Urban Development Institute, Greater Vancouver Home Builders Association, and the Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver.

Although the review may raise concerns about processing delays for in-stream applications, as well as general uncertainty about redevelopment, a broader review is deemed necessary to clarify the form that arterial road redevelopment should take, and how to address valid concerns respecting lane establishment. Because of the time sensitivity and implications of this matter to development, staff will report back to the Planning Committee by early December, 2004.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

This report recommends that Council endorse an Interim Strategy, as per Option 2 identified in this report, for managing townhouse and single-family residential rezoning applications on arterial roads until the review of the Lane Establishment and Arterial Road Redevelopment Policies is completed. A review of these policies, which is under way, will be completed in the next four (4) months.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Raul Allueva', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Raul Allueva
Director of Development
(4138)



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Adopted by Council: Aug.27/01

POLICY 5038

File Ref: 6360-00

LANE ESTABLISHMENT

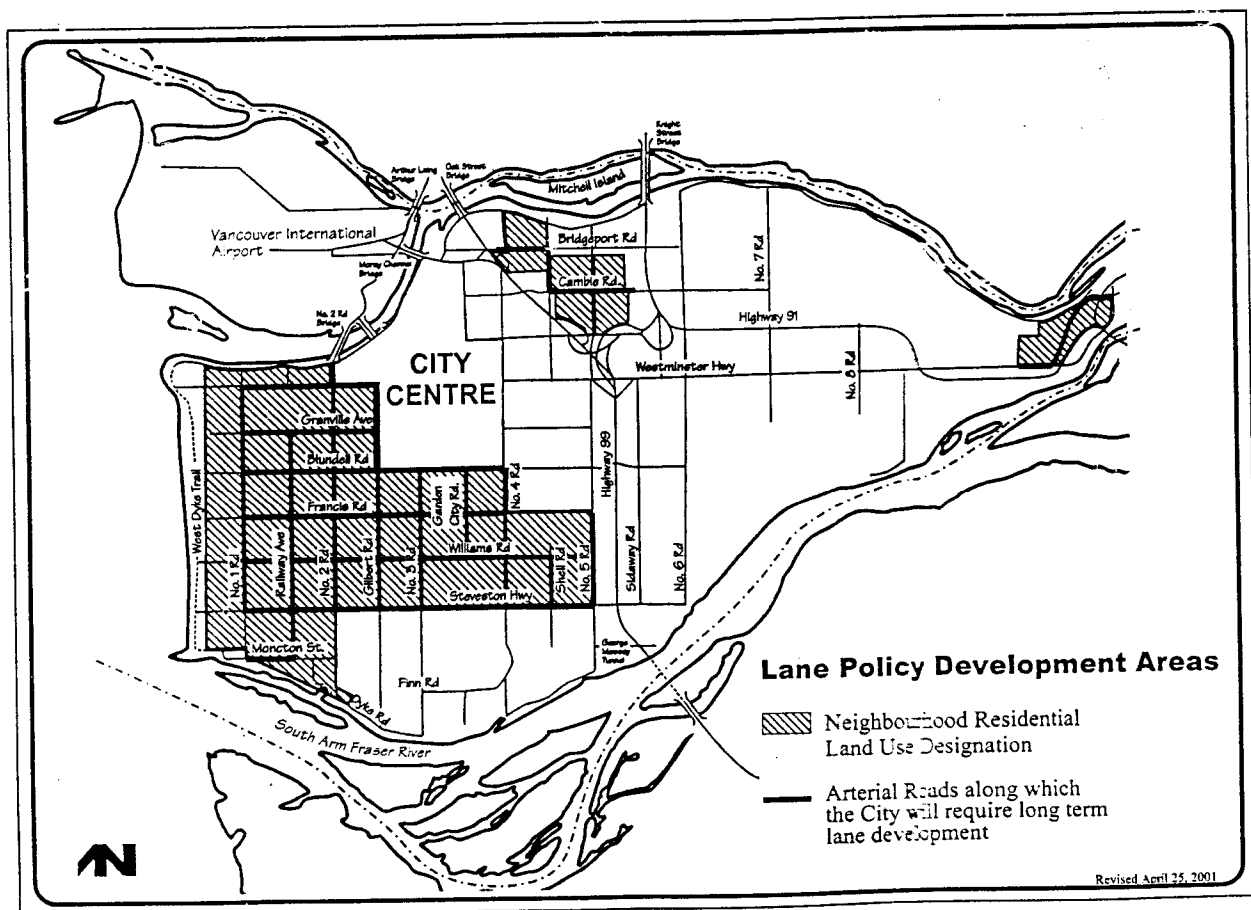
POLICY 5038:

It is Council policy that:

1. Where the City approves Rezoning, Development Permit and/or Subdivision applications for properties which:
 - a) are outside the City Centre;
 - b) are designated by the Official Community Plan as "Neighbourhood Residential";
 - c) front a major arterial road, or local arterial road that is part of the Bike Network or Francis Road between No.1 and No.4 Roads; and
 - d) are illustrated generally on the attached map, "Lane Establishment Policy Development Areas";the City requires the applicant to:
 - e) provide land (eg, dedicate) at the rear and/or side of the properties for a lane and/or mid-block lane access; and
 - f) pay for construction, to City standards, of such lane and/or mid-block lane access.
2. A lane required under Section 1 must not exit directly onto a major arterial road, unless:
 - a) a mid-block vehicular access is approved by the City and constructed to current standards; or
 - b) land is dedicated and funding provided for the future construction of a lane and in the interim a temporary, single-width, shared access driveway is provided for use by vehicles accessing only those parcels located directly adjacent to the driveway on the understanding that any garage(s) is to be located at the rear of such property, to ensure that the access to the arterial road can be closed when the lane is operational.
3. In order to implement the provisions of Section 1, restrictive covenants may be required as part of a rezoning application in order to:
 - a) increase rear-yard setbacks;
 - b) ensure that where fill is added to raise the property, vehicular access to the lane is maintained;
 - c) ensure that garages, if any, are located at the rear of the property in question; and/or
 - d) ensure that when the lane is operational, access to the arterial road is closed.
4. Exceptions to the policy, which would be determined with each application, include where:
 - a) there is a lane already built to City standards;
 - b) the property is less than 30m in depth;
 - c) there is, or the City approves, an alternate access, such as a frontage road, shared access, or internal road;
 - d) Council authorizes an exemption through the rezoning or development permit process; or
 - e) the Subdivision Approving Officer authorizes an exemption through the subdivision process.



5. The main principles used by staff to determine the suitability of an alternate access referred to in clause c) of section 4 are that:
- (i) there are to be no additional accesses created to residential lots along arterial roads;
 - (ii) the proposed access will not impede the intended function of the arterial road; and
 - (iii) the type of access is consistent with the existing and/or anticipated form of development.
6. Notwithstanding the provisions of this policy, the City will continue to examine development applications in terms of meeting OCP objectives, Lot Size Policies, the Residential Lot Vehicular Access Regulation Bylaw and other requirements, standards and factors.





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Adopted by Council: June 25, 2001

POLICY 7017

File: 8060-20-7240

ARTERIAL ROAD REDEVELOPMENT**POLICY 7017:**

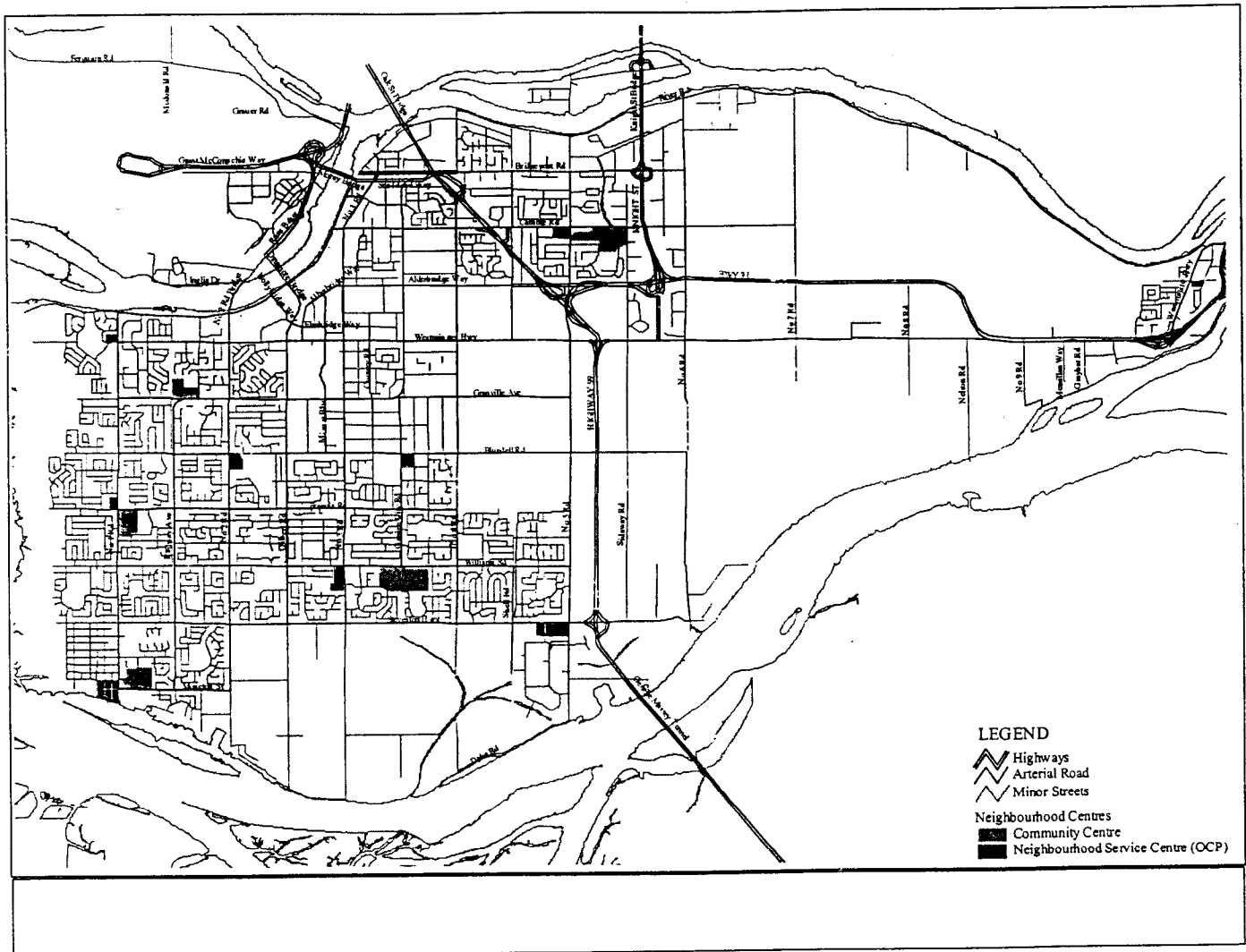
It is Council policy that:

Along arterial roads (as shown on Attachment 1), outside the City Centre, in areas designated "Neighbourhood Residential" in the Official Community Plan, redevelopment will be managed and prioritized as follows:

1. "Near" Neighbourhood Service Centres as defined in the Official Community Plan and City-run community centres (as shown on Attachment 1), townhouses and low-rise apartments, rather than smaller scale forms of development (eg, duplexes or small single family lots) are to be encouraged.
2. For the purposes of Section 1, "near" is defined to be generally within ½ block or 400m of the Neighbourhood Service Centres' main intersection; however, the following factors will affect the actual location of proposed townhouses and low-rise apartments:
 - location of intersecting streets and amenities;
 - form of development across the street;
 - local subdivision pattern;
 - form of development, uses and orientation of the centre;
 - ages of development; and
 - community objectives for redevelopment.
3. In areas not within the scope of Section 1, the following housing forms will be considered along arterial roads:
 - large lot single family, small lot single family and duplex developments,
 - townhouses (not low-rise apartments), may be supported where significant community benefit can be derived which would include for example, improvements such as:
 - lane access;
 - trail connections;
 - green space;
 - improvements to existing transportation problem areas;
 - saving of heritage resources;
 - beautification improvements that exceed minimum City requirements; or
 - non-market housing.



Attachment 1



Attachment 3

Summary of Council or Planning Committee Referrals to Staff

Application	Council or Planning Committee Referral Motion
<u>RZ 04-268666- 9631 No. 4 Road</u>	<p><i>“That Zoning Amendment Bylaw 7728 be referred to staff for a report on the appropriate committees on (i) the lane requirement, and (ii) the feasibility of accommodating a townhouse development on the subject property.”</i></p> <p><i>(June 21, 2004 Public Hearing)</i></p>
<u>RZ 04-255365- 5988 Riverdale Drive:</u>	<p><i>“That the proposal be referred to staff to conduct a public consultation with area residents, including those on both sides of Westminster Highway, to ascertain neighbourhood views on the proposal and Lot Size Policy options.” and</i></p> <p><i>“That staff review the City’s Arterial Road Redevelopment Policy with regard to the establishment of new lanes in areas where there are no existing laneways.”</i></p> <p><i>(July 19, 2004 Public Hearing)</i></p>
<u>RZ 03-232158- 11511, 11551, 11571 and 11591 Steveston Highway:</u>	<p><i>“That the use of internal lanes in multiple family dwellings as an alternative to regular lane access, be referred to staff to investigate a potential use in the subject property as well as its suitability in other areas.”</i></p> <p><i>(July 20, 2004 Planning Committee)</i></p>
<u>RZ 04-270312- 5420 Granville Avenue:</u>	<p><i>“That staff report on Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 7761 on the appropriateness of ‘R9’ zoning on major arterial roads for those properties which do not have current lane access.”</i></p> <p><i>(July 26, 2004 Council)</i></p>

Attachment 4**Interim Strategy for Managing Townhouse and Single-Family Residential Rezoning Applications During the Review of the Lane Establishment and Arterial Road Redevelopment Policies****OBJECTIVES:**

- To address Council, Planning Committee, and public concerns regarding the Lane Establishment and Arterial Road Redevelopment Policies; and
- To assist staff and Council to manage townhouse and single-family residential Rezoning applications along arterial roads in the interim until a review of the Lane Establishment and Arterial Road Redevelopment Policies is completed.

INTERIM STRATEGY:

Except in the following cases, rezoning applications for development along arterial roads that are subject to the Lane Establishment and Arterial Road Redevelopment Policies will be deferred until the review of these policies is complete and approved by Council:

- Townhouses (requiring a land assembly of at least 30 m frontage);
- Single-family residential proposals, where a municipal lane already exists and is operational;
- Single-family residential proposals in compliance with an existing Lot Size Policy that do not require a rear lane; or
- Single-family residential proposals where all of the following conditions are met:
 - it can be demonstrated that a townhouse development cannot be achieved or is not recommended due to technical reasons (failure to achieve a required land assembly is not considered valid justification); and
 - similar rezonings have already been approved in the immediate area; and
 - the proposal substantially completes an existing development pattern; and
 - the quality and age of development suggests that redevelopment may be anticipated in the surrounding area in a reasonable time frame, thus ensuring lane development in the near future.