

DATE OF MEETING July 5, 2021

AUTHORED BY CALEB HORN, PLANNER, CURRENT PLANNING

SUBJECT REZONING APPLICATION NO. RA469 – 2220, 2232, 2238, 2246, 2254 NORTHFIELD ROAD and 2230 BOXWOOD ROAD

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To present Council with an application to rezone the properties at 2220, 2232, 2238, 2246, 2254 Northfield Road, and 2230 Boxwood Road from Single Dwelling Residential (R1), Duplex Residential (R4), Medium Density Residential (R8), and Community Service One (CS1) to Mixed Use Corridor (COR2) with site-specific maximum gross floor area for a grocery store to allow for a mixed-use commercial and residential development.

Recommendation

That:

1. "Zoning Amendment Bylaw 2021 No. 4500.187" (To rezone the properties at 2220, 2232, 2238, 2246, 2254 Northfield Road, and 2230 Boxwood Road from Single Dwelling Residential [R1], Duplex Residential [R4], Medium Density Residential [R8], and Community Service One [CS1] to Mixed Use Corridor [COR2] with site-specific maximum gross floor area for a grocery store) pass first reading;
2. "Zoning Amendment Bylaw 2021 No. 4500.187" pass second reading; and
3. Council direct Staff to secure road dedication and the community amenity contribution should Council support the bylaw at third reading.

BACKGROUND

A rezoning application, RA469, was received from Island West Coast Developments Ltd. on behalf of NF Holdings Ltd., 1279779 BC Ltd., Jenwest Enterprises Inc., and the City of Nanaimo. The applicant proposes to amend "City of Nanaimo Zoning Bylaw 2011 No. 4500" (the "Zoning Bylaw") to rezone the subject properties to the Mixed Use Corridor (COR2) zone to allow for a mixed-use commercial and residential development. There is a concurrent boundary adjustment application to adjust the boundary of the City-owned property at 2230 Boxwood Road (SUB01413).

Subject Property and Site Context

<i>Location</i>	The subject properties are located on the north side of Northfield Road, west of Bowen Road and east of Boxwood Road.
<i>Total Area</i>	4.58ha
<i>Development Site Area</i>	2.22ha

<i>Current Zoning</i>	2220, 2238, 2246, and 2254 Northfield Road: • R1 – Single Dwelling Residential 2232 Northfield Road: • R4 – Duplex Residential 2230 Boxwood Road: • R8 – Medium Density Residential; and • CS1 – Community Service One
<i>Proposed Zoning</i>	COR2 – Mixed Use Corridor with site-specific maximum gross floor area for a grocery store
<i>Official Community Plan (OCP) Future Land Use Designation</i>	Corridor
<i>Neighbourhood Plan Land Use Designation</i>	n/a

The subject properties are part of the Mid-Town Gateway Project that involves the extension of Boxwood Road north of Northfield Road, and the Rosstown Connector and Boxwood Connector (see Attachment C). The project also includes remediation of the site as the area was previously impacted by historical coal mining activity. The future development site will be bound by Northfield Road to the south, Boxwood Road to the west, and the Boxwood Connector to the north.

Surrounding land uses include a mix of commercial, institutional, and residential uses. Beban Park is located across Bowen Road to the northeast, and a stormwater detention pond and public trail will be developed across the Boxwood Connector to the north. As part of the Mid-Town Gateway Project, the properties are envisioned as a significant development site at the junction of key corridors in the city. The site will be located at one of the primary entry points to Nanaimo, with access on Northfield Road from the Nanaimo Parkway.

DISCUSSION

Proposed Development

The applicant proposes to rezone the subject properties to the Mixed Use Corridor (COR2) zone to facilitate a mixed-use residential and commercial development. The COR2 zone allows for a range of office, retail, and residential uses with a maximum building height of 14m, or 18m where parking is provided underground. The base maximum permitted Floor Area Ratio (FAR) in the COR2 zone is 1.25. There is opportunity to gain additional density up to a maximum FAR of 2.00 in the COR2 zone where a development includes underground parking and where amenities are provided as outlined in Schedule D of the Zoning Bylaw.

In support of the rezoning application, the applicant has provided a conceptual site plan and perspective views to demonstrate how development could occur on the development site (see Attachments E and F). Detailed design review will occur through any subsequent Development Permit application. The conceptual development plans show a mix of uses in five buildings on the site. Both surface and underground parking areas are shown. Anticipated uses include:

- A standalone grocery store with a floor area of 3,716m²;
- Additional retail units at the ground level of multi-level buildings;

- 1,765m² of office floor area; and
- 188 residential dwelling units in a multi-level, multi-family building form.

The density contemplated by the conceptual plans is an FAR of 0.99, below the maximum permitted density in the COR2 zone.

A large portion of the City-owned property will be dedicated as road for the Boxwood Connector in the future and the remainder will be consolidated with the properties addressed along Northfield Road to create the development site. Road dedication for an expanded Northfield Road will be required as a condition of this rezoning application. Vehicular access point to the development site shown on the site plan are conceptual and will be reviewed further through detailed design review.

Site-Specific Gross Floor Area

The maximum gross floor area for a grocery store in the Corridor zones is 2,500m² as per the condition of use in Section 9.2.1 of the Zoning Bylaw. The applicant is proposing a grocery store with a floor area no greater than 3,716m², which will require a site-specific zoning amendment. The proposed grocery store is envisioned to serve a regional population beyond the immediate neighbourhood, and a gross floor area larger than 2,500m² is required in order to accommodate a large-format grocery store. The proposed site-specific zoning amendment will also require the overall site to develop with a residential component of equal size to any commercial component, ensuring that future development retains a mixed-use nature.

Policy Context

Official Community Plan

The Official Community Plan (OCP) identifies the subject property within the Corridor future land use designation, which is characterized by a mix of residential, commercial, professional, and service uses. Residential densities from 50 to 150 units per hectare (uph) in two- to six-storey building forms are generally supported by the OCP. The number of units in the conceptual plans for the residential component of the proposed development equal approximately 85uph, within the anticipated density range for Corridor developments. In addition, commercial services within mixed-use developments serving a regional population are supported in the Corridor designation.

The proposed rezoning with site-specific maximum gross floor area for a grocery store meets the intent of the OCP future land use designation.

Transportation Master Plan

The subject properties are located outside of a mobility hub, as identified by the Nanaimo Transportation Master Plan (NTMP). The NTMP's vision and strategies encourage inclusive transportation choices for people of all ages and abilities to walk, cycle, and use transit. The Mid-Town Gateway Project will provide improved active transportation facilities, including a connection for the Off-Bowen Bikeway on the west side of Boxwood Road. Additional trail connections will be available from the Boxwood Connector. A frequent transit network is identified along Bowen Road, approximately 60m east of the site.

The Boxwood Connector is identified in the NTMP as a short-term future major road network improvement project. The project will assist with alleviating existing traffic capacity issues at the intersection of Northfield and Bowen Roads by providing an alternative route for road users.

Community Consultation

The subject properties are within the area of the Wellington Community Association. The rezoning application was referred to the Wellington Community Association who had no comment. The applicant hosted a public information meeting on 2021-MAY-25 at the Christ Community Church, which is adjacent to the subject properties. Approximately 18 neighbours attended this meeting, and comments were made regarding density, traffic, and availability of parks.

Staff note the proposed density is within the range envisioned for the site in the OCP, and the overall Mid-Town Gateway Project will improve traffic conditions in the immediate area. Beban Park will be connected to the development site by a new intersection with crosswalk across Bowen Road.

Community Amenity Contribution

As outlined in Section 7.3 of the OCP, in exchange for value conferred on the lands through a rezoning, the applicant is encouraged to provide a Community Amenity Contribution (CAC). Typically, the value of CACs received from residential projects is at least \$1,000 per dwelling, and at least \$34/m² of gross floor area for commercial projects. In this case, the applicant is only proposing an increase in density through rezoning for the privately-owned properties currently fronting Northfield Road, and these properties comprise 49.8% of the future development site. With an anticipated total of 188 residential units and a commercial floor area of 7,572m², a contribution value of at least \$221,833 would be expected (49.8% of \$445,448).

For a Community Amenity Contribution, the applicant is proposing to construct a public plaza as part of the development of the site. The plaza is proposed to have an area of at least 527m² and is to include a textured surface, seating, landscaping, and public art. The conceptual site plan demonstrates that a plaza can be located on the site, and the exact location and design of the plaza will be reviewed through detailed design review. The estimated value of the public plaza, including soil remediation, is \$328,838. The value of the proposed CAC is greater than what would typically be expected, and Staff support the proposed CAC.

Conditions of Rezoning

Should Council support this application and pass third reading of “Zoning Amendment Bylaw 2021 No. 4500.187”, Staff recommend the following be secured as a condition prior to final adoption of the bylaw:

1. *Road Dedication* – Road dedication to be taken from the Northfield Road frontage to allow for a future modified Urban Arterial cross-section as identified as part of the Mid-Town Gateway Project, in addition to corner rounding at the intersection of Northfield Road and Boxwood Road.
2. *Community Amenity Contribution* – The development of a public plaza with an approximate area of at least 527m², to include a textured surface, seating, landscaping,

and public art, to be constructed by the property owner prior to site development and protected by statutory right-of-way.

SUMMARY POINTS

- The application is to rezone to subject properties from Single Dwelling Residential (R1), Duplex Residential (R4), Medium Density Residential (R8), and Community Service One (CS1) to Mixed Use Corridor (COR2) with site-specific maximum floor area for a grocery store to allow for a mixed-use commercial and residential development
- The subject properties are part of the Mid-Town Gateway Project that involves the extension of Boxwood Road north of Northfield Road, with connector roads to Bowen Road and Rosstown Road.
- The development of a public plaza is proposed as a Community Amenity Contribution.

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT A: Context Map
ATTACHMENT B: Location Plan
ATTACHMENT C: Mid-Town Gateway Project Plan
ATTACHMENT D: Site Context Plan
ATTACHMENT E: Conceptual Site and Building Plans
ATTACHMENT F: Conceptual Perspective Views
ATTACHMENT G: Aerial Photo
"Zoning Amendment Bylaw 2021 No. 4500.187" |

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