

To: Regional and Corporate Services Committee

Date: 2018-05-08

From: Johannes Bendle, Planner I

File No: 6935-15-Abbotsford

Subject: City of Abbotsford Referral for the Official Community Plan Addition of UDistrict Neighbourhood Plan

INTENT

This report is intended to advise the Fraser Valley Regional District Board of information pertaining to the City of Abbotsford's draft UDistrict Neighbourhood Plan. Staff is not looking for a recommendation and has forwarded this information should members want more clarification to discuss the item further.

STRATEGIC AREA(S) OF FOCUS

Support Environmental Stewardship

Foster a Strong & Diverse Economy

Support Healthy & Sustainable Community

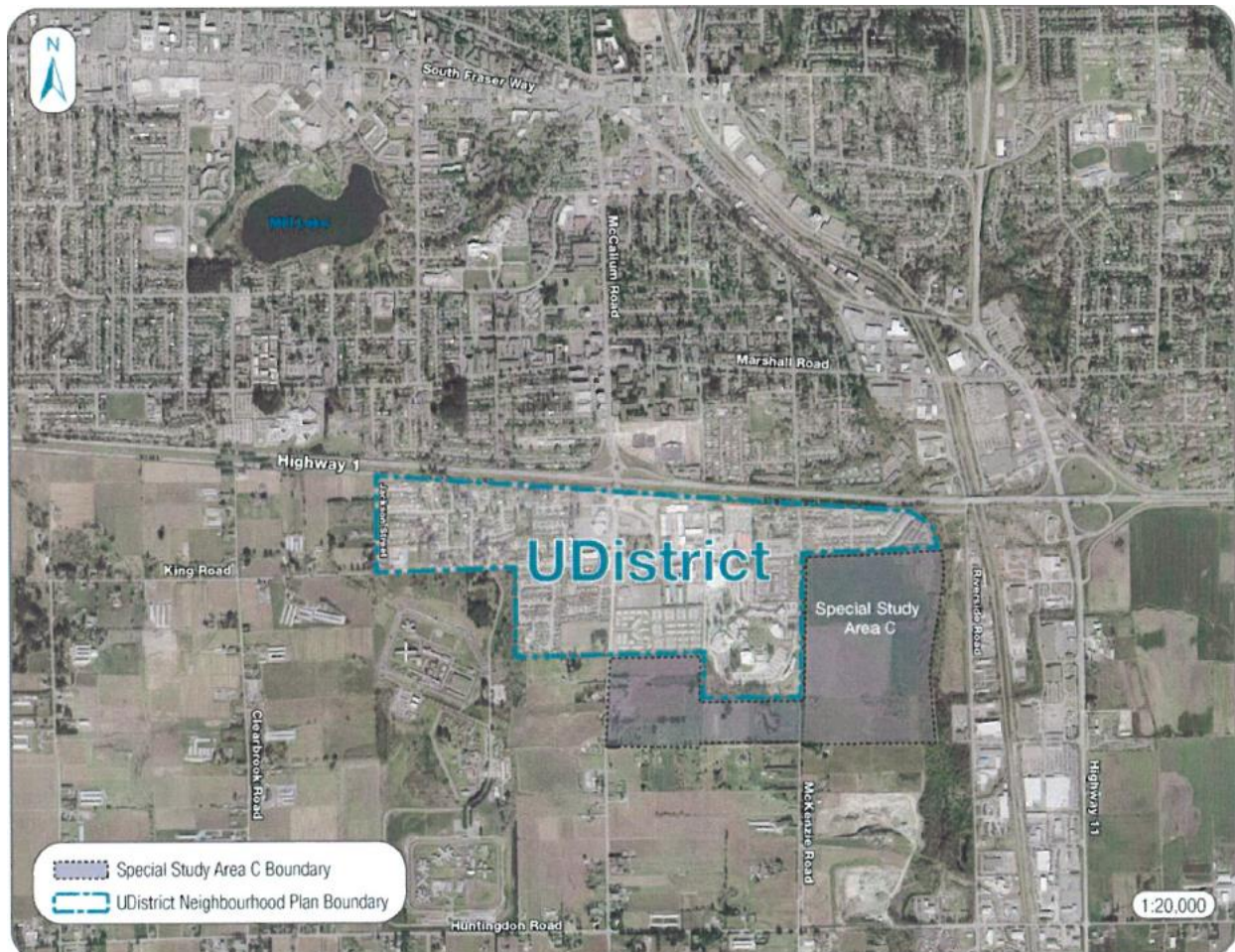
BACKGROUND

The FVRD has received a referral from the City of Abbotsford regarding an amendment to the City's Official Community Plan (OCP). The City of Abbotsford is amending its OCP to incorporate the UDistrict Neighbourhood Plan. Abbotsford's City Council has given amendment bylaw No. 2812-2018 first and second reading and a public hearing is scheduled for May 28, 2018. Once adopted, the UDistrict Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the City's OCP.

While an OCP provides broad guidance for development and growth, neighbourhood plans are created to guide development for specific areas of the city. Both the OCP and neighbourhood plan guide decision-making, with the OCP providing general, high-level guidance for the whole city, and neighbourhood plans providing guidance at a finer, local scale. While the OCP sets out the overarching vision for how the City of Abbotsford should develop, neighbourhood plans speak to how neighbourhoods will help achieve that city-wide vision, while considering the specific needs and desires of the neighbourhood.

The UDistrict is located within the City of Abbotsford on the south side of the Trans-Canada Highway' immediately adjacent to the McCallum Park and Ride facility, a key regional transit connection for the Fraser Valley Express (FVX). The UDistrict Neighbourhood Plan area is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 – UDistrict Neighbourhood



Source: UDistrict Neighbourhood Plan

DISCUSSION

Regional Growth Strategy

The FVRD has reviewed the City of Abbotsford's UDistrict Neighbourhood Plan from a regional perspective and finds it to be consistent with the FVRD's 2004 Regional Growth Strategy (RGS), *Choices for our Future*. The UDistrict Neighbourhood Plan specifically supports the RGS's growth management goal to "develop a network of sustainable communities". The FVRD is currently reviewing and updating the RGS and the UDistrict Neighbourhood Plan aligns with the draft *Fraser Valley Future* RGS.

Neighbourhood Profile

The UDistrict is one of four mixed use urban centres identified in the City of Abbotsford's new OCP adopted in 2016. The neighbourhood is home to the Abbotsford Centre, the City's major arena, and the University of the Fraser Valley's Abbotsford campus. The UDistrict neighbourhood is 126 hectares in size. Overall the neighbourhood has very diverse population with an average age of 38.7 and a median household total income of \$69,696. The Neighbourhood Plan projects the population to grow from 3,775 to 9,700 people while the number of housing units is expected to increase from 1,400 to 4,600 units. As well, the UFV student and staff population is expected to increase from 6,120 to 8,090 people.

Neighbourhood Vision and Policies

The UDistrict Neighbourhood Plan vision is for a "vibrant and district urban community that supports a walkable, transit-oriented lifestyle, focused around an innovative university village." The Neighbourhood Plan envisions the primary focal point of the UDistrict will be the "University Village" centred at the intersection of University Way and King Road. Land use policies in the Neighbourhood Plan support a large range of land uses and the integration of the university campus into the neighbourhood. The Neighbourhood Plan allows for higher density mixed use development in the urban centre around the "University Village" and provides for a range of housing types, unit sizes and tenures. Residential units will range from four to six storey apartment buildings in the centre and scale down towards the periphery to two to three storey townhouses providing a transition to single family dwellings. Policies in the neighbourhood plan support institutional and commercial uses, provide for amenity space, parks and trails, and encourage social and cultural development. In addition to employment created by new commercial businesses, the Neighbourhood plan envisions an opportunity for business growth and development in the tech sector.

To enhance development, the Neighbourhood Plan provides form and character Development Permit guidelines for the "University Village" area. The guidelines are intended to encourage the construction of a dynamic, livable and attractive neighbourhood. The guidelines set out in the Neighbourhood Plan emphasize site planning, site context, building design, landscaping and lighting.

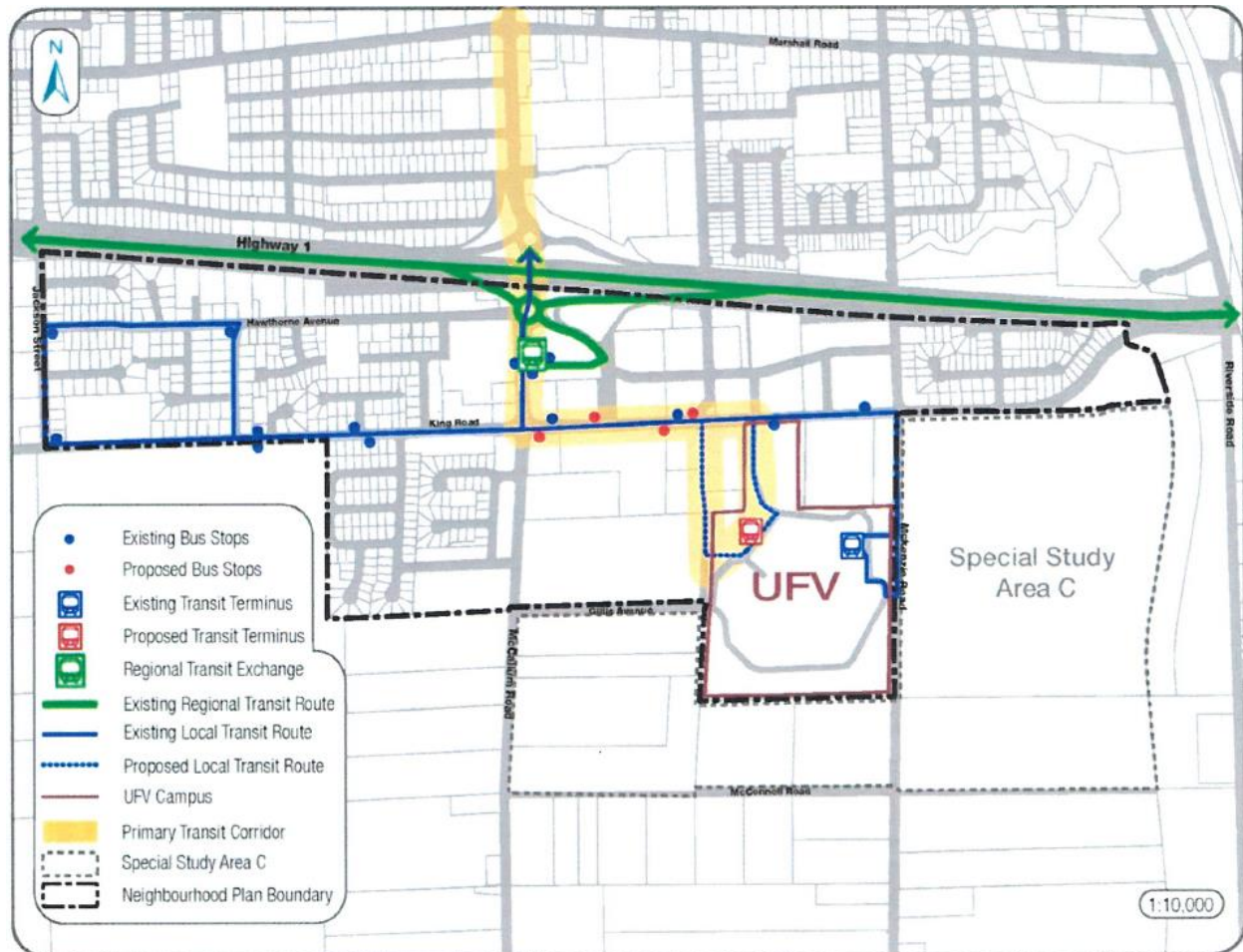
The Neighbourhood Plan establishes a foundation for the redevelopment of the neighbourhood providing an opportunity for a mode shift where walking, cycling and transit become the preferred transportation choices. All streets within the primary redevelopment area will have sidewalks and cycling lanes on both sides on the street. The UDistrict is also designed to be transit supportive in terms of its densities, mixed uses and pedestrian friendly urban design. To further enhance transit services the current transit terminus will be relocated on University Way in front of the university. Local transit services are also able to tie into regional transit services, connecting UDistrict to other communities in the Fraser Valley Regional District and Metro Vancouver.

Regional Transit

The FVRD has a particular interest in the transit component of the UDistrict Neighbourhood Plan as the Fraser Valley Express (FVX) bus serves the neighbourhood. The FVX stop at the McCallum Park and

Ride facility is a key regional transit connection and with the UDistrict forming part of Abbotsford's primary transit corridor there are opportunities for further service integration between the FVRD's regional transit service and the City of Abbotsford's local transit services. Figure 2 shows existing and proposed transit service within the UDistrict. The FVX's stop at the McCallum Park and Ride is located adjacent to the primary transit corridor; therefore, providing the opportunity for transit users to seamlessly connect with local or regional transit services.

Figure 2 – Transit Service



Source: UDistrict Neighbourhood Plan

COST

There are no costs associated with this report.

CONCLUSION

The City of Abbotsford is amending its OCP to incorporate the UDistrict Neighbourhood Plan. The FVRD affirms the Neighbourhood Plan's consistency with the FVRD's RGS. As well, the FVRD affirms its support of transit services and willingness to work with the City of Abbotsford and BC Transit to enhance transit services in the region.

COMMENTS BY:

Alison Stewart, Manager of Strategic Planning

Reviewed and Supported

Barclay Pitkethly, Director of Regional Programs

Reviewed and supported

Mike Veenbaas, Director of Financial Services

Not available for comment

Paul Gipps, Chief Administrative Officer

Reviewed and supported