



POLICY REPORT  
DEVELOPMENT AND BUILDING

Report Date: June 19, 2012  
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Meeting Date: June 27, 2012

TO: Standing Committee on Planning, Transportation and Environment

FROM: Assistant Director of Community Planning, in consultation with the Managing Director of Social Development, the General Manager of Engineering Services and the General Manager of the Park Board.

SUBJECT: Little Mountain Policy Statement

**RECOMMENDATION**

- A. THAT Council adopt the Little Mountain Policy Statement, attached as Appendix A, to guide the future rezoning and development of the Little Mountain site.

AND THAT Council direct staff to report back on a community amenity financial strategy as part of the rezoning.

- B. THAT Council direct staff to explore new housing forms beyond those considered in the Riley Park South Cambie Vision (in addition to those contemplated in the Vision) when developing a rezoning policy for the residential area immediately adjacent to the Little Mountain site and bounded by E. 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, the lane west of Quebec Street, the lane south of E. 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Main Street.

FURTHER THAT Council direct staff to explore the potential for establishing an area-specific fixed-rate per-square-foot Community Amenity Contribution for this adjacent area.

**REPORT SUMMARY**

This report seeks Council's approval of the Little Mountain Policy Statement, which will guide the rezoning and redevelopment of the Little Mountain site. Little Mountain represents one of the first large-scale brownfield redevelopments in Vancouver's lower-density residential neighbourhoods, and uniquely one that is not on former industrial land.

The Policy Statement contains a set of policies to guide consideration of an anticipated rezoning application for the Little Mountain site. The Policy Statement considers the future mix of uses, density and height, building forms and character, public spaces, circulation and movement, and parks and community facilities to serve the new and existing community. This report summarizes the planning process and outlines the key policies, and also contains commentary from the Little Mountain Community Advisory Group and Holborn Properties, the project proponent.

The report also seeks Council direction to explore some new housing forms that were not supported in the 2005 RPSC Community Vision and to explore a flat-rate CAC for the area immediately adjacent to the Little Mountain site (the “northeast quadrant”). These directions will inform staff’s work on developing a rezoning policy for this area, which is a direction from the RPSC Vision.

### ***COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS***

- Riley Park South Cambie Community Vision, November 2005
- Green Buildings Policy for Rezoning, June 2008
- Sustainable Large Development Rezoning Policy, June 2008
- Little Mountain Policy Planning Program, November 2009
- Greenest City Action Plan, July 2011
- Housing and Homelessness Strategy, July 2011

### ***CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS***

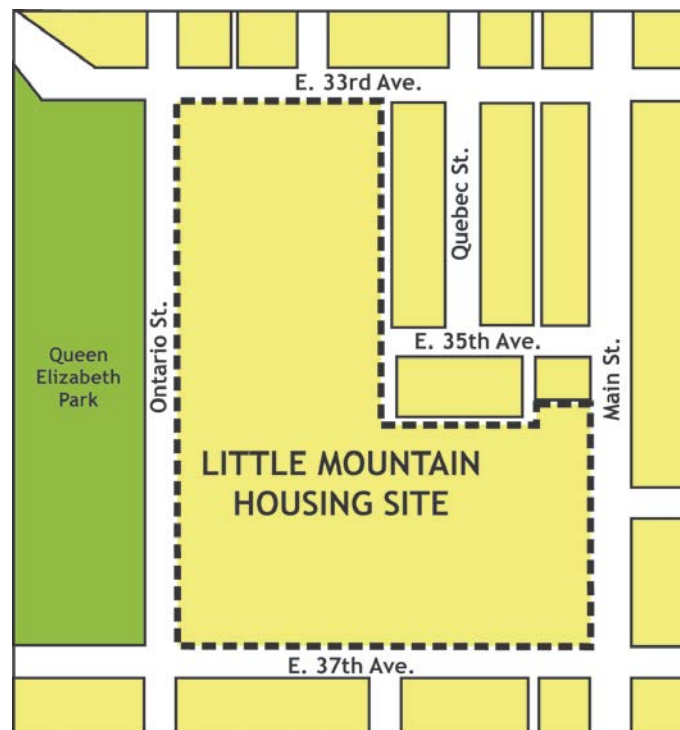
The City Manager and the General Manager of Community Services recommend approval of the foregoing.

### ***REPORT***

#### ***Background/Context***

##### **Site Description**

Little Mountain is located east of Queen Elizabeth Park between 33<sup>rd</sup> and 37<sup>th</sup> Avenues, and Ontario and Main Streets. The site is 6.2 hectares (15.2 acres) in size and is currently zoned for multi-family residential use (RM-3A), which allows a density of up to 1.45 FSR and buildings heights of up to four storeys.



Built in 1954 by the Federal government, Little Mountain was the first large-scale modern social housing project in Vancouver. It contained 224 social housing units which were mostly intended for families and were a mix of three-storey walk-up apartments and rowhouses.

#### **Memorandum of Understanding (2007) and Letter of Understanding (2009)**

In early 2007, the Federal Government transferred ownership of Little Mountain to the Province under BC Housing, and in July of that year a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between BC Housing and the City regarding the future of the site (see Appendix B). It confirmed that the 224 social housing units would be replaced by BC Housing on-site using the proceeds from the land sale, that existing tenants would have first opportunity to move back when the redevelopment was complete, and that the City would lead a collaborative Major Projects planning process to develop new policy for the site. It also stated that the City would reinvest all of the Development Cost Levies generated by the redevelopment into public amenities to serve the site and to address any service gaps in the immediate neighbourhood.

In September 2009, BC Housing and the City signed a Letter of Understanding which stated that BC Housing was willing to relocate all remaining residents into a single building on site, that social housing would be a priority in the first phase of redevelopment, and that the City would issue permits for the removal of hazardous material and the clearance of structures (see Appendix C).

## Council Policy

**Riley Park South Cambie Community Vision (November 2005):** In November 2005, Council approved the Riley Park/South Cambie Vision (RPSC Vision) which contained several directions for the redevelopment of the Little Mountain site:

- That the number and mix of social housing units be maintained in any redevelopment of the site
- That a mix of uses be considered, including retail and commercial uses along Main Street and limited institutional uses such as a seniors centre or childcare, subject to analysis of traffic, parking and other impacts.
- That development over four storeys not be considered when additional planning occurs for the site.
- That an area adjacent to the site in the block bounded by 37th, Main, 33rd and Ontario be considered for possible zoning changes when planning for Little Mountain takes place.

**Green Buildings Policy for Rezoning (June 2008):** Requires that all buildings demonstrate high green performance. Currently, a minimum of LEED® Gold certification (with specific points in energy performance, water efficiency and stormwater) is mandatory for all new buildings where there is a rezoning. All new buildings at Little Mountain will meet or exceed this standard.

**Little Mountain Policy Planning Program (November 2009):** In November 2009, Council approved a budget, timeline and deliverables for the Little Mountain policy planning program. In addition, Council recommended that staff work toward a target of 20% of all units as social housing, and that a minimum of 25% of all units be family housing, and that staff establish a Community Advisory Group to help guide the planning program.

**Ecocity Policies for Rezoning of Sustainable Large Sites (December 2010):** This policy makes specific reference to Little Mountain as a site where the Community Vision identifies limits on building heights. It states that the four-storey limit noted in the Vision will be used as the base case when an actual site planning/rezoning process occurs, but that additional options with increased densities and heights can be created and assessed in the course of the planning work, subject to considerable public consultation.

When generally applied to large site developments, this policy requires plans or studies on the following as part of the rezoning process:

- District Energy Screening and Feasibility
- Sustainable Site Design
- Green Mobility and Clean Vehicles
- Rainwater Management
- Solid Waste Diversion
- Sustainable Housing Affordability and Housing Mix

Staff are currently refining these sustainability requirements in a broader range of subject areas as the *Sustainable Large Development Rezoning Policy*, to be brought forward for Council consideration in the summer of 2012.

The Little Mountain development will meet or exceed the requirements of this policy as it exists at the time of rezoning.

**Greenest City Action Plan (July 2011):** The plan outlines action required to achieve a healthy, prosperous and resilient city - with the ultimate goal of becoming the world's greenest city by 2020. It identifies strategies to promote green economic development, eliminate dependence on fossil fuels, promote green transportation options, utilize green building design and ensure everyone has access to nature, clean water and local food. The plan calls for compact, complete communities which promote walking and cycling, and are well-served by services, amenities and green space. Furthermore, the plan promotes the development of neighbourhood-scaled renewable energy systems, green construction and carbon-neutral buildings.

By design, Little Mountain will embody many of the goals in the Greenest City Action Plan: Climate Leadership, Green Buildings, Green Transportation, Zero Waste, Access to Nature, Lighter Footprint, Clean Air and Local Food.

**Housing and Homelessness Strategy (July 2011):** This strategy is a framework for addressing homelessness and increasing the variety of affordable housing options across the entire housing continuum to improve choice and affordability for all residents within the city. The three strategic directions are:

1. Increase the supply of affordable housing
2. Encourage a housing mix across all neighbourhoods that enhance quality of life
3. Provide strong leadership and support partners to enhance housing stability.

With 234 social housing units, direction to achieve affordability in market housing and the provision of new housing to the market, Little Mountain will provide a range of housing opportunities from core need (low-income) housing to owner-occupied market housing.

### Planning Process Summary

City staff has led a collaborative planning process with the Riley Park South Cambie community, former Little Mountain tenants, and the project's proponents, Holborn Properties (selected in 2008 by BC Housing as their development partner for the site).

The planning process included four sets of public open houses at key milestones, including:

- **December 2009:** introduction to process, background, objectives, issues and priorities
- **June 2010:** site plan concepts, community amenity evaluation and draft Guiding Principles.
- **July 2011:** refined site plan, range of density explorations, preliminary economic analysis and refined Guiding Principles.
- **January 2012:** redevelopment concept, urban design analysis, financial analysis and refined Guiding Principles.

Another key element of the planning process was the creation of a community advisory group, which was requested by Council at the outset of the process. City staff and the proponent have worked very closely with the Little Mountain Community Advisory

Group in all stages of the creation of the Policy Statement. This volunteer body of local residents and former Little Mountain tenants met 22 times since early 2010 for presentations, hands-on workshops and charrettes. Staff would like to recognize the Advisory Group's invaluable contribution to the planning of Little Mountain. A statement from the Advisory Group is included in this report in the Little Mountain Community Advisory Group Comments section and as Appendix D.

In addition to the public open houses and advisory group sessions, information has been provided and input gathered from on-line material, as well as meetings with specific stakeholder groups such as: former Little Mountain tenants, the Riley Park South Cambie Vision Implementation Group, Main Street business owners, youth and the arts community. For a summary of the events held during the planning process, see Appendix E.

The City's Urban Design Panel evaluated the project at two key stages. In July 2010, the Panel provided feedback on four site plan options and in May 2012, it considered staff's draft urban design policies. Both of these sessions were non-voting workshops. A summary of the Panel's comments from these sessions is included in Appendix F.

### **Little Mountain Policy Statement: Summary of Key Principles**

This section provides an overview key principles established in the Policy Statement. The background and rationale relating to some key policies are addressed in the Strategic Analysis section of the Report.

#### **Vision for Little Mountain**

- To create a highly-sustainable community that celebrates the site's history and is well-integrated with the existing Riley Park South Cambie neighbourhood.
- To build a primarily residential development, with a broad mix of housing types and tenures to meet the needs of a variety of households.
- To provide new community facilities - a neighbourhood house and childcare - to help meet existing and new needs in the area. These amenities and a cluster of local commercial uses near Main Street will help draw people into the site.
- To integrate into the surrounding neighbourhood with an appropriate scale and form of development, clear and welcoming connections and attractive public spaces.
- To recognize the legacy of the former Little Mountain public housing project not only through the replacement of the social housing, but also through mature tree preservation, public art and a site plan which echoes historical patterns.
- To meet or exceed the requirements in the City's Green Rezoning Policies to ensure the project meets the highest levels of sustainability.

#### **Complete Community**

Little Mountain will contain a substantial component of social housing, local-serving commercial uses, a vibrant community plaza, and identified community facilities.

***Social Housing (additional discussion in Strategic Analysis)***

- The development is to provide, at a minimum, 234 units of social housing (1-for-1 replacement of the original housing, plus an additional 10 units for urban Aboriginals).
- All 234 units of social housing are to be delivered in the first phase of development.
- Former Little Mountain residents will get first access to the replacement social housing. Offered units will be of a comparable rent and configuration to the previous housing.

***Integrated Mix of Housing***

- Social housing buildings are to be integrated throughout the development
- At least 25% of the units at Little Mountain - with a target of 35% - are to be for families as per the City's High-density Housing for Families with Children Guidelines.
- Additional ways to achieve affordability in market housing will be provided through 'flex suites' or 'breakaway suites', as well as through units with modest finishes.

***Retail and Commercial Uses***

- Some Local-serving commercial uses (e.g., café, small grocery store, small pharmacy, medical offices) should be provided to serve Little Mountain and the surrounding community.

***Community Hub and Plaza***

- A new plaza designed around existing trees and surrounded by community facilities and retail uses will be a central social focus of Little Mountain.

***Community Amenities (additional discussion in Strategic Analysis and Financial Implications)***

- A new Little Mountain Neighbourhood House and a new 69-space childcare facility built to City specifications are to be provided at Little Mountain. Funds will also be allocated to park and transportation improvements in the immediate area.

**Built Form, Density and Height**

The form and scale of development at Little Mountain is intended to be respectful of its context while also delivering on key objectives around sustainability, social housing and community amenities.

***Density & Height (additional discussion in Strategic Analysis)***

- Little Mountain will have a density of 2.3 to 2.5 gross FSR (approximately 1,500,000 to 1,670,000 square feet, gross).
- The maximum height will be 12 storeys (or 120 feet), achievable in a limited number of specific locations. The majority of buildings will be in the 4-10 storey range.
- Respectful transitions to surrounding neighbourhoods will be created by stepping down buildings to 3 and 4 storeys on sensitive site edges.

### Views

- Views to Mount Baker and regional views from the summit of Queen Elizabeth Park (Little Mountain) are to be protected, in part through a view corridor from the summit across the site towards to Mount Baker.

### Solar Access

- Solar access (sunlight) on key public spaces and parks should guide the form, height and placement of buildings.

### Public Spaces, Open Spaces and Memory

Well-designed, clear and welcoming public open spaces are key to integrating Little Mountain into the Riley Park community and creating a liveable new development. The original development was green and park-like, with mature trees and distinctive mid-century modern off-grid site planning. The new Little Mountain is to reflect and celebrate this history.

### Public Space Focus

- Little Mountain will have a highly-public open space system organized around significant east-west and north-south connections.
- Primary public spaces are the 'green wedge' at 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue adjacent to the park, the north-south central spine, and the community plaza/hub at 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue near Main Street.

### Sustainable Public Spaces

- Open spaces will build a complete and sustainable community by meeting the needs of all ages and abilities, and by supporting Greenest City objectives around rainwater management, sustainable food systems, green mobility and access to nature.

### Memory *(additional discussion in Strategic Analysis)*

- To recognize the history of the original Little Mountain housing development, Little Mountain will reflect historical patterning, connections, community and places through site planning, public realm elements and public art.
- Significant mature trees are to be retained wherever possible and buildings, open spaces and public ways will be organized around them.

### Circulation and Transportation

An emphasis on green mobility guides the transportation strategy for Little Mountain. Sustainable modes of transportation will be emphasized and facilitated while traffic impacts are minimized.

### Transportation Strategy *(additional discussion in Strategic Analysis)*

- The primary connections across the site are a new central street connecting 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue and James Street, and an east-west connection from 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue to Queen Elizabeth Park, both delivered through the development with the central street and portions of the 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue connection dedicated to the City. The central street and will provide safe, comfortable and attractive spaces for pedestrians and cyclists.



- The site design will prioritize pedestrians, cyclists and transit users.
- Vehicle access to and from the site will be limited to arterials (Main Street and 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue) and traffic impacts on the 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Ontario Street Greenways will be minimized or eliminated.

### **Green Mobility**

- A Green Mobility Plan identifying explicit design and program strategies to encourage walking, cycling and transit use and to minimize vehicle usage will be required at the time of rezoning.

### **Sustainability**

The Little Mountain development will meet or exceed the City's policies around sustainability and will contribute to meeting the Greenest City 2020 targets.

### **Green Buildings**

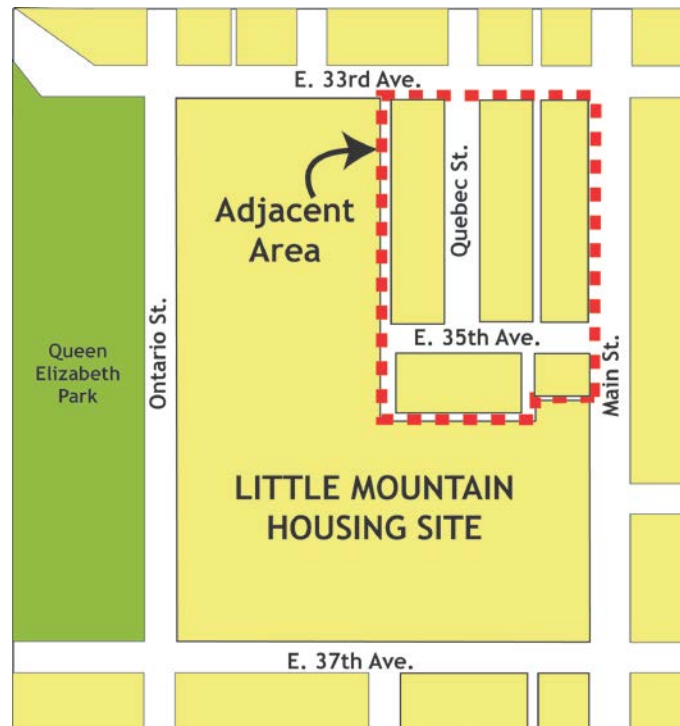
- All new buildings at Little Mountain will meet or exceed the green building standards identified in the Green Building Policy for Rezoning at the time of rezoning (currently LEED® Gold certified with specific points in energy performance, water efficiency and stormwater).

### **Sustainable Large Development Planning**

- Little Mountain will meet or exceed the requirements identified in the Sustainable Large Development Rezoning Policy at the time of rezoning.

### **Adjacent Area Rezoning Policy**

Adjacent to the Little Mountain site towards Main Street and 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue is an area of primarily single-family houses, with some low-rise apartments (subject to the Rate of Change Bylaw), one commercial building and three duplexes. The Riley Park South Cambie RPSC Vision (2005) recommends the exploration of new zoning for this Adjacent Area when the planning of Little Mountain takes place. This was confirmed in the 2009 Council Report on the Little Mountain program. To support development of a rezoning policy for the Adjacent Area (which is a separate document from the Little Mountain Policy Statement to be considered by Council this fall), staff are seeking Council direction on two issues - housing forms not considered in the RPSC Vision and an area-specific flat-rate CAC - to support the exploration of new zoning (*see additional discussion in Strategic Analysis*).



### *Strategic Analysis*

The following sections provide background, analysis and recommendations relating to key components of the Little Mountain Policy Statement.

### **Social Housing**

The Province is proposing to build 234 units of social housing at Little Mountain (there are 10 additional units for urban Aboriginals beyond the original 224). In the 2007 MOU, the Province committed to reinvesting the net proceeds of the Little Mountain land sale (after the replacement of the social housing) in supportive housing projects elsewhere in the city and province. As a result, at the time of the MOU the City decided not to apply the 20% social housing requirement to Little Mountain that has been applied to other major projects. In 2009, City Council directed staff to look for opportunities to achieve 20% social housing on the site.

After substantial effort to identify means of achieving additional social housing (as per Council's direction in 2009), while at the same time achieving a density range which was appropriate for the site, this policy statement confirms that Little Mountain will provide 234 units which amounts to 14% to 16% of the total units. In addition to this, the 2007 MOU committed that the Province would use proceeds of the land sale to enable supportive housing developments for those who are homeless or at greatest risk of homelessness in Vancouver and across the province. With Council approval of the policy statement, confirming 234 as the minimum commitment, staff will continue to work with the developer and the Housing staff during the rezoning to identify any other possibilities to achieve the 20% target.

Leading up to the demolition of the original buildings at Little Mountain in 2009, almost all of the residents living on site were relocated by BC Housing around the region (one occupied building remains). Recognizing that many of the relocated former Little Mountain residents have a strong desire to move back to the neighbourhood as soon as possible, all of the 234 social housing units are to be built in the first phase of development. This will enable the former residents to re-establish themselves at Little Mountain while also freeing up capacity in the social housing units which they are currently occupying.

Approximate Housing Mix					
Density	Market Housing*		Social Housing		Total Units**
	Units	%	Units	%	
2.3 FSR	1,250	84%	234	16%	1,475
2.5 FSR	1,400	86%	234	14%	1,625

\*assumes approximately 1,000 sq. ft. per unit, gross

\*\*rounded to nearest 25

## Community Amenities

A community amenity evaluation was undertaken as part of the planning program. It concluded that while the area around Little Mountain is generally well-served with community facilities - the City-operated Hillcrest Centre (community centre, fitness centre, preschool, library, swimming pool and ice rink) and four recreation facilities operated by non-profit partners: curling at the Hillcrest Centre, gymnastics and indoor lawn bowling at the Millennium Sports Facility and badminton/squash at the Racquets Club - there was a pressing need for a larger neighbourhood house for social programs and community gathering and for additional childcare facilities. In 2009, Council recommended that a new Little Mountain Neighbourhood House be included in the redevelopment of the Little Mountain site (currently located at Main Street & 24th Avenue). These new facilities will become civic assets and will likely be co-located, possibly with a component of social housing integrated in a single building. The new Little Mountain Neighbourhood House will be expanded from 1,400 square feet to 12,000 square feet and will be built to current standards. While programmed for more social uses than recreational uses, it will provide additional services to the community, particularly with regard to seniors' and children's programming. The co-located childcare facility will help meet the demand for childcare services in the community.

Public consultation confirmed the need for these new facilities. During the process, some concern was expressed that community facilities, such as the new Hillcrest Centre, are at capacity.

In the course of their recent renewal, the following facilities were expanded and/or upgraded in the area:

- Swimming pool: doubled in size (Percy Norman to Hillcrest)
- Ice rink: increased to full-sized (200 by 85 feet)
- Fitness centre: expanded
- Gymnasium: expanded from low-ceiling single gym to high-ceiling double gym
- Library: increased from 1,340 square feet to 7,400 square feet
- Curling club: increased from five to eight sheets
- Lawn bowling club: added lanes

- 20-space preschool: upgraded to current standards

A new gymnastics facility was built as part of the Millennium Sports Centre, operated by Phoenix Gymnastics, a not-for-profit society.

## Density and Height

Little Mountain is a large redevelopment site that is centrally-located in the city, in an area of high amenity and on a major arterial (Main Street). However, Little Mountain is not in the Downtown Core, on a rapid transit corridor or in a Neighbourhood Centre, and its immediate context is primarily single-family housing. Long-standing City policy and good practice in sustainable urban planning indicate that redevelopment opportunities on sites such as these should be optimized, while also ensuring that the development fits well into the existing neighbourhood.

Density and height emerged as some of the most sensitive issues during the public consultation process. When considering Holborn's proposed development concept (which was 2.8 FSR gross) in January 2012, the majority of feedback indicated that the density was too great and that there were too many buildings over 10 storeys. Those concerned about density cited incompatibility with neighbourhood character, increased traffic, sensitive adjacencies to Queen Elizabeth Park and the capacity of existing community facilities as key issues.

The recommended density range of 2.3 to 2.5 gross FSR over the site reflects rigorous urban design and financial analyses. 2.3 FSR represents the point at which the project becomes economically viable while contributing financially to the contemplated public amenities over the development horizon. At densities beyond 2.5 FSR, the project is unlikely to meet principles around shadowing, liveability, and respectful transitions to surrounding areas. Extensive design studies, community workshops and urban design analysis have led staff to conclude that 2.5 is an appropriate maximum density for the site. To put this density range in perspective, Arbutus Walk at W. 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Arbutus Street is 1.9 FSR gross. The Olympic Village is 2.6 FSR gross. The density range for Little Mountain is assertive but achievable with an exceptional quality of design.

## Memory

The social history and distinctive character of the Little Mountain housing project is acknowledged and celebrated in the new site plan. The memory of Little Mountain will carry forward in the angled road and building orientation, the preservation of mature trees, in public art and other ways. The importance of such actions was clearly articulated in the public consultation.

All but one of the original buildings were demolished in 2009. One rowhouse remains and is currently occupied by four households. The potential of preserving the last rowhouse was raised by some members of the public, Little Mountain tenants and the Little Mountain Community Advisory Group. In response, staff undertook a comprehensive analysis which considered its heritage value, physical condition, suitability for retention as housing or re-purposing as a community facility, and the impact that preservation would have on the overall site layout. While suitable for housing, the re-purposing of the rowhouse as a neighbourhood house or childcare was not recommended, largely due to size constraints, operational

challenges and layout. In addition, the location of the rowhouse conflicts with the location of a key public space in the site plan: the community plaza/hub.

Analysis of the public feedback gathered in the course of the planning process found only a limited amount of support for preservation of the rowhouse. This feedback did speak to the importance of recognizing the social history of Little Mountain, and this memory will be celebrated in meaningful ways in the redevelopment.

## **Transportation**

The Little Mountain site is uniquely situated adjacent to two Greenways on 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Ontario Street, and has only two other potential vehicular access points, on Main Street and 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. When site plan options were being considered during the public engagement, significant concern was expressed about vehicle impacts on the Greenways. There was, however, also some concern expressed about the impact on surrounding neighbourhoods and streets if only two vehicle access points were used.

It is recommended that vehicle access be limited to the arterials (Main Street and 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue) to protect the Greenways and to minimize traffic impacts on Queen Elizabeth Park. An initial traffic study concluded that all existing and new intersections around Little Mountain would continue to function well after the project is complete. Should a higher-density rezoning policy be adopted for the adjacent area (northeast quadrant), the possibility of a third vehicle access along 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue could be considered.

## **Adjacent Area**

To help develop a rezoning policy for the Adjacent Area, staff is seeking Council direction on two key issues:

- Direction to consider housing types which were not supported in the RPSC Vision
- Direction to explore an area-specific fixed-rate Community Amenity Contribution in the Adjacent Area.

### **Adjacent Area New Housing Types**

To meet demand for new housing, the RPSC Vision considered a variety of future building types for the area. The Vision contains the following directions on possible housing types:

- Approved: infill housing, duplexes, cottages and small houses
- Not approved (uncertain): fourplexes, rowhouses
- Not supported: four-, six- and twelve storey apartments

In a preliminary urban design analysis for the adjacent area, a broad range of options was considered including some housing forms not supported in the RPSC Vision. This range included duplexes with laneway houses, rowhouses, and 4-to-6 storey apartments. This broader range was intended to provide a more diverse and varied building form, along with an appropriate transition in scale from the Little Mountain site to the surrounding areas.

A financial analysis looking at redevelopment economics in the Adjacent Area concluded that, generally, redevelopment to the lower-density RPSC Vision-supported housing types was not financially viable due to the high value of existing single family homes.

Based on these analyses, a range of five building form options have been developed that meet the urban design goals for the area and which are economically viable (see Appendix G). The options include a variety of building forms including courtyard townhouses, 4-6 storey apartments and a combination of both.

Council direction to explore housing options not supported in the RPSC Vision would enable staff to bring forward options that integrate with the Little Mountain development and with the surrounding community, are viable for redevelopment and help meet City goals around sustainability, complete communities and housing affordability.

### **Adjacent Area Public Benefits Approach**

Recently, City of Vancouver Financing Growth staff has been considering refinements to the Community Amenity Contribution process in order to offer more clarity and predictability in the redevelopment process.

The Adjacent Area's relatively consistent scale of existing development and the nature of the housing types being considered suggest that it is a suitable area for consideration of an area-specific flat-rate CAC. Staff are seeking Council direction to further explore development of a flat-rate CAC. Recommendations will be brought forward for Council consideration with the draft rezoning policy for the Adjacent Area.

### ***Financial Implications***

The planning process included a financial assessment of the proposed Little Mountain development using a pro-forma analysis undertaken by Coriolis Consulting as a consultant to the City. This was intended to provide a high level assessment of the financial viability of the project and to inform the public amenity strategy. Updated in May 2012, the analysis determined that at the proposed density range of 2.3 to 2.5 FSR, the project would be economically viable and yield combined DCLs and CACs of approximately \$24 million (at 2.3 FSR) to \$33 million (at 2.5 FSR), subject to refinement upon rezoning. The CAC estimate is based on the City's current target of achieving a contribution of 75% of the land lift from rezoning.

<b>Anticipated DCL and CAC Revenue (\$2012)</b>			
<b>Density</b>	<b>DCLs</b>	<b>CAC (Assuming 75% of Land Lift)</b>	<b>Total</b>
2.3 FSR	\$14.6 million	\$9.5 million	\$24.1 million
2.5 FSR	\$15.9 million	\$16.9 million	\$32.8 million

The approach to the above financial analysis reflects the City's standing practice that assumes the developer provides land for social housing development while the capital funds to construct the social housing come from BC Housing. The City is not expected to provide bonus density, DCLs or CACs to fund the construction and/or operation of the 234 units of social housing. Staff recommend that this approach be affirmed as part of the policy statement to be implemented through the rezoning stage.

In addition to the anticipated DCLs and CAC, approximately \$3 million has been earmarked in the Capital Plan for the development of the neighbourhood house (a combination of a

Provincial grant, City funds and anticipated proceeds from the sale of the current site at 3981 Main Street).

Besides the replacement of the 234 units of social housing on site, the table below summarizes the contemplated public benefits valued at approximately \$21-\$24.5 million (2012 dollars) over the development horizon:

<b>Value (\$2012) of Contemplated Public Benefit Package</b>	
<b>Onsite</b>	
Little Mountain Neighbourhood House	\$8.5m*
69-space Childcare	\$9m-\$10m*
<b>Surrounding Area</b>	
Transportation Improvements	\$1.5m to \$3m
Park Improvements	\$2m to \$3m
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$21-\$24.5m</b>

*\*includes financial contributions towards sustainment of the facilities for up to 20 years and the childcare programs*

Potential transportation improvements include new or improved sidewalks around the site, traffic calming measures and improvements to the Ontario and 37<sup>th</sup> Greenways, including possible separated bike paths. These are generally confirmed in the rezoning process.

Potential park improvements include upgrading a portion of Queen Elizabeth Park adjacent to Little Mountain to create a new neighbourhood park and enhancement of the trail network in Queen Elizabeth Park to improve non-vehicular access to the park and to transit. These would be subject to additional public consultation.

Pursuant to the 2007 MOU between the City and BC Housing (Appendix B), the City has agreed to invest the DCL revenue generated from the Little Mountain project in delivering the contemplated public amenities on or near the site over the development horizon.

Staff will develop a comprehensive financial strategy that outlines the funding and phasing of the contemplated public amenities over the development horizon and present to Council for adoption as part of the rezoning, as identified in Recommendation A.

## **Little Mountain Community Advisory Group's Comments**

### **Staff Introduction**

The Little Mountain Community Advisory Group played a central role in the creation of the Policy Statement. Formed as a result of a direction from City Council, the Advisory Group represents a large cross-section of the community who have an interest in, or would be affected by, the redevelopment of Little Mountain. The Group met 22 times for meetings, presentations and workshops during the planning process.

### **Community Advisory Group Statement**

*"Based on well over 2 years of research and deliberation, the Little Mountain Community Advisory Group (CAG) has developed a document outlining our collective feedback on the Planning Principles being brought forward to guide rezoning for the Little Mountain site [see Appendix D]. This executive summary outlines main points*

*from that document. We request that Council members review the more complete document, because it provides explanations, elaborations and caveats crucial to interpreting these recommendations.*

*While the CAG has worked in good faith to focus on planning principles, it must be noted that deep concerns have been expressed about the ways in which the early stages of development unfolded, including the disposition of the land, displacement of the tenants, and length of time the site has remained vacant (5 years).*

*Overall, the CAG is in favour of developing the Little Mountain site in ways that will provide benefits to the local community and to Vancouver as a city. But while the CAG supports Vancouver's goals in relation to sustainability, affordability, and livability, this project needs to be considered as one of many initiatives that, together, achieve Vancouver's vision.*

*Little Mountain is located within the heart of an existing community, and is bounded by the Main Street corridor, Queen Elizabeth (QE) Park, and surrounding single-family neighbourhoods. The scope, scale, and quality of any development on the Little Mountain site needs to integrate well into this distinct, existing community as a unique neighbourhood within the City of Vancouver.*

*The CAG supports the site plan as developed through the consultation process, including the central street, a village centre at Main Street and other public spaces, protection of greenways/ bikeways, retention of the heritage trees, and pedestrian permeability.*

*With carefully planned design that performs well to address potential impacts to the surrounding community, a minimum of 20% below-market housing on the site, and achievement of priority amenities, the CAG could support densities of up to a maximum of 2.2 to 2.3 gross FSR.*

*The CAG does not support the building heights proposed by the developer for the Little Mountain site. At issue is not just the height of a single building, but also the number and scale of high buildings proposed for the site. The CAG proposes that the majority of buildings on the site be 4 to 6 storeys (40 to 60 feet), and that no building be greater than 10 storeys (100 feet).*

*The CAG agrees with prioritizing social, affordable, and family housing on the Little Mountain site, and giving first priority to returning former Little Mountain residents.*

*The CAG supports the amenities outlined in the Little Mountain Policy statement which are: a Little Mountain Neighbourhood House; a 69-space Childcare Facility; Transportation and Safety Improvements; and QE Park Improvements.*

*The CAG urges the City to include in its principles direction for the Little Mountain planning process to acknowledge and communicate the history of the Little Mountain site and overall community in meaningful ways.*

*The CAG supports a vision of sustainability that includes both the built environment (buildings and landscape) and social sustainability.*



*The CAG is very concerned about the potential traffic, safety and parking impacts to the surrounding community associated with the scope, scale and density of the Little Mountain site.*

*The CAG strongly recommends that flaws in the planning process for the LM site not be repeated in the future, and that "lessons learned" here be taken forward to inform future planning processes.*

*The CAG supports planning for universal design and how to meaningfully include persons with disabilities during rezoning and design processes.*

*The CAG advises that principles adopted for the Little Mountain site be taken up and considered seriously during the rezoning process and subsequent design.*

*The CAG requests the opportunity to be involved in the process through the rezoning stage."*

## **Proponent's Comments (Holborn Properties)**

### ***"Introduction***

*The Little Mountain Policy Statement is the result of a comprehensive public consultation process of over two and a half years. The City, Holborn, and the community have worked together in a collaborative process to produce a policy statement where all stakeholders are in general consensus with regards to the majority of the urban design principles and guidelines being recommended. Notwithstanding this general consensus, we would like to highlight several challenges to the project that we feel will require further in depth study during the next phase of planning/re-zoning.*

### ***Replacement of Existing Social Housing***

*It was disclosed to the City by BC Housing and Holborn that the cost of the replacement of the 234 units of social housing onsite is part of Holborn's purchase price of the Lands. The City's financial analysis has taken the assumption that the funding of the social housing will come directly from BC Housing. Under this assumption, the amount of density that will be needed to provide the identified amenities on site is at the recommended 2.3 to 2.5 fsr range. As this assumption is not consistent with the agreement between BC Housing and Holborn where Holborn has to bear the cost of the replacement social housing, the project struggles to be economically viable and provide the amenities on site at the recommended density levels. It is critical to the success of the project that the cost of the social housing units be properly recognized in the financial analysis in the next phase of planning. Holborn's objective is to deliver as many social housing units as possible in the first phase, subject to financial viability.*

### ***Housing Mix***

*The MOU between BC Housing and the City of Vancouver dated June 8, 2007 states "the City agrees to accept the 224 units of replacement housing as the social housing requirement for Little Mountain".*

*Holborn acknowledges the City's decision that there will be no further requirement to achieve a 20% social housing component typically targeted for the development of large sites. It is understood that the City recognizes that the proceeds from the land sale of the Little Mountain site will be directed towards delivering more social housing elsewhere in the City of Vancouver.*

### **Development Cost Levies**

*City staff has acknowledged the intent of the MOU of investing the dcls into the site to support the amenities. However, Holborn has been advised by City staff that a Neighbourhood House cannot be funded through dcls and the costs to deliver the neighbourhood house may form part of the CAC package. Holborn looks forward to working with the City to find an economically viable solution to provide the identified amenities on site.*

### **Number of Storeys**

*Holborn recognizes City Staff's recommendation for a building height limit of 12 storeys (or 120 feet) on site. However Holborn would like to seek council's support to explore going up to 14 storeys (or 140 feet) in the next phase of planning. Holborn believes that a certain "punctuation mark" on the site works well from an urban planning perspective and would not impact on the views from Little Mountain. The Holborn team would like to be given the opportunity in the next phase of the planning/rezoning process to "prove out" that this 14 storey option could be acceptable within the parameters of the design principles that have been developed for this site.*

### **Adjacent Area**

*Holborn recognizes the importance of the planning and redevelopment of the Adjacent Area as an integral part of the Little Mountain planning process, and strongly supports Option IV (that was proposed by Staff in March 2012). Holborn also supports the notion of the Adjacent Area's planning and redevelopment process to run in tandem or soon after the Little Mountain rezoning is completed.*

### **Conclusion**

*This policy document lays out a clear collective vision for the Little Mountain lands while identifying those issues that will require further study during the next phase of planning/rezoning. Holborn is committed to work with the community and the City to find solutions to the afore-mentioned challenges. Holborn is very excited for the future of Little Mountain and its special place in the City of Vancouver. We believe Little Mountain will be a model development and a most desirable place to live in the most livable city in the world."*

*CONCLUSION*

The draft Little Mountain Policy Statement has been prepared following an extensive planning process involving City staff, the local community, the Little Mountain Community Advisory Group, the proponent and other stakeholders. Staff believe that the Policy Statement will guide a development that meets the diverse interests of the community, the former Little Mountain tenants, and the proponent. The Policy Statement also embodies City priorities and targets around affordable housing and sustainable development. The next stage of planning will involve working within the framework established by the Policy Statement to rezone the site.

\* \* \* \* \*

See agenda page for Appendix A.

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
BETWEEN  
BC HOUSING MANAGEMENT COMMISSION (BC HOUSING) AND  
THE CITY OF VANCOUVER (THE CITY)  
REGARDING  
THE REDEVELOPMENT OF LITTLE MOUNTAIN  
DATED JUNE 8, 2007  
AND APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL ON JULY 26 2007**

## **Introduction**

On February 16, 2007, BC Housing, through the Provincial Rental Housing Corporation (PRHC), became the sole owner of Little Mountain. BC Housing wants to redevelop Little Mountain and would like the City to consider rezoning the site. This Memorandum of Understanding sets out the general objectives of BC Housing and the City with respect to the redevelopment. Site

Little Mountain occupies 15.26 acres (664,725 sq. ft.) located east of Queen Elizabeth Park between 37th and 33rd Avenues, and between Ontario and Main Streets, with an address of 5299 Main St. It consists of a single parcel legally described as Parcel C (Reference Plan 3508) of District Lots 637 and 638 Group 1 New Westminster District PID: 002-546-787 (the Site).

## **Existing Social Housing**

Little Mountain consists of 224 units of social housing (40 1-bedroom units, 92 2-bedroom units, 92 3-bedroom units). The total floor space is 178,136 sq. ft. The units were built in 1954 under Section 79 of the National Housing Act. BC Housing owns and manages the units. Approximately 197 units are currently occupied. All tenants must be in core-need and are charged rent geared to income.

## **Current Zoning**

The Site is zoned RM-3A. RM-3A allows a maximum Floor Space Ratio (FSR) of 1.45 and a maximum height of 10.7 metres. The existing development has an FSR of 0.27. The zoning schedule for RM-3A is set out in the City's Zoning and Development By-law (By-law No. 3575). The current RM-3A zoning provides for a base FSR of 1.0 and the potential to increase the FSR if parking is provided underground, site coverage is less than 50% and if site size exceeds 837 m<sup>2</sup> (9,000 sq. ft.). Given the large consolidated ownership of the site, a density of 1.5 FSR should be achievable with good site planning and urban design. Depending on the dedications for street and lanes required to provide access to the redevelopment, a total floor space in the range of 800,000 sq. ft. to 900,000 sq. ft. should be possible under the current RM-3A zoning.

## **Riley Park/South Cambie Community Vision**

On November 1, 2005, City Council approved the Riley Park/South Cambie Community Vision (RP/SC Vision). Little Mountain is within the RP/SC Vision area and many of the vision's directions are relevant to any future redevelopment of the Site. In addition, Little Mountain is

one of several large sites for which specific Directions were considered (31.1, 31.2, 31.3 and 31.4):

- Direction 31.1 recommends that the number and mix of social housing units be maintained in any redevelopment of the site, that relocation assistance be provided to the tenants and that existing tenants have priority for the replacement social housing units.
- Direction 31.2 recommends that a mix of uses be considered, including retail and commercial uses along Main St. and limited institutional uses such as a seniors centre or childcare, subject to analysis of traffic, parking and other impacts.
- Direction 31.3 rejected any development higher than 4 storeys. Development over 4 storeys is not to be considered when additional planning occurs for the site.
- Direction 31.4 recommends that the northeast quadrant in the block bounded by 37th, Main, 33rd and Ontario that consists of properties not owned by BC Housing be included in any planning and rezoning of Little Mountain.

### Redevelopment Potential

Little Mountain's buildings and infrastructure are obsolete, and the Site is underdeveloped. The City and BC Housing believe that a substantial increase in density and number of units can be accommodated, and that redevelopment of the Site should be considered. A comprehensive redevelopment may allow densities to be achieved that are greater than those allowed under the current zoning.

The City and BC Housing believe that redevelopment options that include buildings taller than 4 storeys should be considered as 4-storeys over the whole site may be suboptimal in terms of design, may limit the Site's potential to create a higher density liveable environment, and limit the capacity of the redevelopment to provide amenities to serve the new development and the surrounding neighbourhood. Both the City and BC Housing acknowledge that buildings taller than 4 storeys contradict the RP/SC Vision, but believe that buildings taller than 4 storeys in the Site's redevelopment should be considered.

### Redevelopment Objectives

The City and BC Housing believe that the redevelopment of Little Mountain is an opportunity to:

- create a high quality, higher density, socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable community that will be an asset within the larger Riley Park neighbourhood;
- provide a range of housing options for Vancouver's growing and changing population; and
- generate funds that can be used by BC Housing to develop social, including supportive, housing in the city and in the rest of the province.

### Replacement of Existing Social Housing

Whether the Site is rezoned or not, BC Housing will replace the existing 224 units of social housing on site of which at least 184 will be suitable for families with children. BC Housing will relocate the tenants during the redevelopment, and the tenants relocated due to the redevelopment will have priority for moving into the new social housing units that are appropriate to the size of their households. BC Housing will consult with the current tenants

regarding the replacement social housing and the tenants' relocation while the site is being redeveloped.

### **Housing Mix**

The City would normally apply its 20% affordable (social) housing requirement to a project of the size of Little Mountain. As BC Housing will be reinvesting all the proceeds from the redevelopment of Little Mountain in the development of social housing in city and the province, the City agrees to accept the 224 units of replacement housing as the social housing requirement for Little Mountain.

### **Demolition of Existing Buildings**

The existing tenants will be relocated and the resulting vacant units will not be re-rented. As buildings become vacant, there is an increased risk of fire and vandalism. The City and BC Housing believe that the existing buildings should be demolished as soon as they become vacant. The City will provide demolition permits in advance of a Development Permit.

### **Selection of Developer**

BC Housing wishes to partner with an experienced real estate developer who would lead the redevelopment of Little Mountain. BC Housing will be undertaking a Request for Proposals (RFP) to obtain a suitable development partner (the Developer). This Memorandum of Understanding will be provided to prospective developers.

The City will make itself available to meet with the prospective developers individually or collectively as BC Housing may request. Any information that the City may provide to any one prospective developer will be relayed to BC Housing who will ensure that information all prospective developers should have access to is made available to them.

### **Development Cost Levies**

The City will reinvest all of the Development Cost Levies generated by the redevelopment of the Site into the development of the public amenities to serve the site and to address any service gaps in the immediate neighbourhood.

### **Investment of Sale Proceeds**

BC Housing will invest all of the net proceeds from the sale of the Site (after the existing social housing is replaced on site) into the development of social housing throughout the province. Half the net proceeds (after the existing social housing is replaced) will be invested in the City of Vancouver. The City of Vancouver will make sites available for nominal 60 year leases to BC Housing for the development of social housing in the city that will be funded from the net proceeds.

### **Schedule**

Execution of Memorandum of Understanding	July 2007
Report to Council	July 2007

BC Housing Request for Proposals  
Selection of Developer  
Initiation of Planning Process

September 2007  
Fall 2007  
Fall 2007

### Conclusion

Upon execution of this Memorandum of Understanding by the City and BC Housing, it will be forwarded to Vancouver City Council and BC Housing's Executive Committee for approval. No legal rights or obligations will arise or be created by the execution of this Memorandum of Understanding or by its approval by Vancouver City Council or by BC Housing's Executive Committee. Approval of this Memorandum of Understanding does not limit or compromise Vancouver City Council's ability or obligation to maintain an open mind at any Public Hearing at which a rezoning application for the Site is considered.

For BC Housing

For the City of Vancouver

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Chief Executive Officer

City Manager

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Date




**Letter of Understanding (LOU)**  
**Between BC Housing Management Commission (BC Housing) and the City of Vancouver**  
**(the City) regarding the redevelopment of Little Mountain**  
**Date: September 20, 2009**

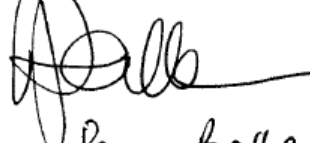
As part of the partnership forged between the City and the Province of British Columbia to create more affordable housing in Vancouver, BC Housing and the City of Vancouver agreed to a MOU, dated for reference June 8, 2007, regarding Little Mountain. BC Housing has applied to the City for building permits to demolish and remediate hazardous materials on the Little Mountain housing site. The building permit is needed to begin the process of removing the identified hazardous materials from the site. A building permit for demolition is needed to start clearing the site of structures. This Letter of Understanding builds from the original MOU and describes the commitments of both parties.

- The tenants will be accommodated by being offered the option of moving into buildings in Area 3 if they chose to remain on site during demolition of the other buildings. This offer will be made prior to the issuance of eviction notices. BC Housing will ensure the building and area are habitable and safe and will fund the work necessary to achieve this.
- BC Housing will offer the remaining tenants assistance to move to a new location if they choose.
- BC Housing and the City will give priority to the building of social housing in the redevelopment, which will include the replacement of the existing 224 units. As part of the rezoning process, the City will require that social housing components of the project will be built as a priority in the first phase of development
- Given the large site, it will be divided into 3 major areas. Demolition will be sequenced area by area in accordance with the Little Mountain Deconstruction Project map (attached).
- Demolition of Area 1, where no tenants are living, will be substantially underway within one week of the issuance of the demolition permits.
- BC Housing commits to substantial work being underway as indicated by the signing of construction contract agreements on the four remaining supportive housing sites before the end of November 2009 (188 East 1st Avenue; 525 Abbott Street; 377 West Pender Street and 3595 West 17th Avenue).
- BC Housing and the City will continue to work co-operatively to identify and address issues with the intent to engage in a public policy process as identified in the MOU. The City will expedite a rezoning application (assuming approval by Council) and Development and Building Permits.
- The City of Vancouver will issue the necessary building permits for hazardous material removal and clearance of structures.

For BC Housing

  
(Name) Sharyne Ramsay  
CEO  
Date: Sept. 24, 2009

For the City

  
(Name) Penny Baller  
City Manager  
Date: Sept 25/09

## LITTLE MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP COMMENTS ON DRAFT PLANNING POLICY

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### Introduction

In this document, the Little Mountain Community Advisory Group (CAG) puts forward our collective feedback on the Planning Principles being brought forward to guide rezoning for the Little Mountain site. The CAG is a diverse group of community stakeholders that has engaged for well over 2 years in research and deliberation, informed by input from city planners, consulting design professionals, the developer and the community at large. In this document, we present points on which CAG members collectively agree.

*Overall, the CAG is in favour of developing the Little Mountain site in ways that will provide benefits to the local community and to Vancouver as a city.*

While the CAG has worked in good faith to focus on planning principles, it must be noted that deep concerns have been expressed about how the early stages of development unfolded, including the disposition of the land, displacement of the tenants, and length of time the site has remained vacant (5 years).

We emphasize that planning principles cannot be developed in ways that are just “internally focused” on Little Mountain as a “large-site” opportunity. It is crucial to consider this development in the context of the large number of significant projects taking place simultaneously in the Riley Park/South Cambie area.

While the CAG supports Vancouver’s goals in relation to sustainability, affordability, and livability, this project cannot be expected to take on undue responsibility for achieving those goals. This project needs to be considered as one of many initiatives that, together, achieve Vancouver’s vision.

Similarly, potential impacts and challenges (for example, traffic, parking, access to transit, and community amenities) must be considered in light of how they will be significantly amplified given stresses created by adjacent developments.

Planning for this development needs to be based, not on financial pressures, but on appropriate urban design principles that reflect a long-term vision of Vancouver that respects and enhances the existing neighbourhood character and assets.

Our recommendations, presented below, reflect principles we believe will accommodate all stakeholder needs. Our position should not be interpreted as a starting point from which a “compromise” should be constructed.

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## Context and Implications

*Little Mountain is located within the heart of an existing community, and is bounded by the Main Street corridor, Queen Elizabeth (QE) Park, and surrounding single-family neighbourhoods. The scope, scale, and quality of any development on the Little Mountain site needs to integrate well into this distinct, existing community as a unique neighbourhood within the City of Vancouver.*

Establishing a fit with the Little Mountain site's "place in the city" requires planning for appropriately scaled building forms and massing, and for ground-plane oriented lifestyles, that transition to and complement those of the existing community.

QE Park is this area's central, dominant, "iconic" physical feature. Views to and from QE Park, and other public view corridors, are of high value to city residents and Vancouver's visitors. This needs to be considered when setting limits on heights and massing.

The Little Mountain site is located in an area already severely stressed by expanding development and activity. Community and city wide facilities such as the destination pool, ice rink, and Hillcrest Centre have indicated they are at or near capacity. The scope and scale of development must take these existing stresses into consideration.

The Little Mountain site is not within easy walking distance of the Canada Line or a major employment area and therefore is not a strategic site for locating a very high-density development.

The Little Mountain site is adjacent to destination recreational areas (QE Park, Hillcrest Centre), and is bordered by two greenway/ bikeways. The challenges associated with reconciling multiple uses must be considered when planning population density at Little Mountain. Strategies for ensuring safe co-mingling of pedestrians, bicycles and cars are essential.

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## Site Plan

*The CAG supports the site plan as developed through the consultation process, including the central street, a village centre at Main Street and other public spaces, protection of greenways/ bikeways, retention of the heritage trees, and pedestrian permeability.*

Public spaces (e.g., the village centre), shared open spaces (e.g., community gardens), and water features need to be useable, animated, and sustainable. Building heights and ground coverage need to be planned to ensure sufficient sunlight is available to support valued activities at ground level.

The CAG supports further study of the site edge conditions, including transitions in scale, height and overall massing to the existing single-family residential neighbourhoods.

The CAG supports the principle of protecting the greenways and bikeways, achieved through channeling traffic flow along arterials and implementing traffic calming and control measures. This includes the plan for a single access/exit at 36<sup>th</sup>/ Main Street and a single access/exit at 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue/ James Street.

The CAG supports the principle of an additional vehicular access/exit at 35th Avenue if the "Adjacent Area" (Northeast Quadrant) is rezoned.

Traffic impacts should be carefully monitored over time, with potential for additional entry/exit locations being considered if necessary.

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### **Density**

*With carefully planned design that performs well to address potential impacts to the surrounding community, a minimum of 20% below-market housing on the site, and achievement of priority amenities, the CAG could support densities of up to a maximum of 2.2 to 2.3 gross FSR.*

The Council-approved (November 1, 2005) RPSC Community Vision Directions for the Little Mountain development advised including no buildings over 4 stories, which could provide building density of about 1.45 FSR. Through the consultation process, the CAG and the public have moved to recognize the need for additional density to achieve project and City goals.

From an urban design perspective, massing appropriate to this context would fit with the character of the Main street corridor and the surrounding communities, with a design and density similar to Quilchena Park (1.4 FSR) or Arbutus Walk (1.9 FSR).

However, if the full 20% of social housing and priority amenities are provided, and urban design principles are effectively applied, the CAG could support a density of 2.2 to 2.3 FSR. Given the character of the neighbourhood and its place in the city, this level of density is between Arbutus Walk and the Olympic Village.

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### **Heights and Massing**

*The CAG does not support the building heights proposed by the developer for the Little Mountain site. At issue is not just the height of a single building, but also the number and scale of high buildings proposed for the site.*

The CAG proposes that the majority of buildings on the site be 4 to 6 storeys (40 to 60 feet), and that no building be greater than 10 storeys (100 feet).

The CAG does not support a single building of 14 storeys as a dramatic feature for the development. In terms of height, QE Park and the Bloedel Conservatory dome are, and should remain, the iconic landmarks for the area. There is ample latitude for architectural distinction, including a focal point, if desired, without exceeding 100 feet in height.

Heights of buildings must not interfere with important sight lines, from QE Park toward the Northeast, East, and Southeast. "Walls" of imposing buildings should not unreasonably block views towards QE Park or the North Shore Mountains from public spaces in surrounding neighbourhoods.

Heights and locations of buildings need to be planned to avoid shadowing of surrounding public amenities such as QE Park, existing neighbouring properties, and the public and open spaces within the site.

The site edge conditions to the existing single family neighbourhoods along 33<sup>rd</sup> and 37<sup>th</sup> Avenues need to transition gradually and sensitively in scale, height and overall massing. The CAG does not support sudden transitions to higher building forms, as these create 'walls' of imposing buildings.

If the Northeast quadrant rezoning is approved, the CAG supports studying the possibility of redistributing massing (adding floors) to the building forms adjacent to that quadrant in order to reduce building heights on other parts of the site.

In order to reduce the overall heights of buildings, the CAG supports distributing more of the building massing onto areas now occupied by large open spaces, the water feature, and even some of the site perimeter (to the extent that other principles are met, such as creating gradual transitions to neighbourhoods and preserving mature trees). Important functions can be maintained while reducing size of those site plan elements.

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### **Social, Affordable, and Family Housing<sup>1</sup>**

*The CAG agrees with prioritizing social, affordable, and family housing on the Little Mountain site, and giving first priority to returning former Little Mountain tenants.*

The CAG strongly supports that at least 20% of the dwelling units be allocated to social housing. The development must include at least the 224 replacement units and 10 aboriginal units, funded by BC Housing.

First right of refusal must be given to former tenants to return to the Little Mountain site (either to social or affordable housing, as appropriate). Ensuring their expedited return must be part of the planning and rezoning process.

The CAG agrees that social housing units should be distributed throughout the site. At least 20% of dwellings in each of the first and second phases of construction should be replacement social housing units.

The CAG strongly encourages a development model that will create a full, mixed community (singles, couples, young families, median-income earners, seniors, individuals with disabilities), including 35% of total dwelling units for families with children.

The CAG strongly recommends exploring options for achieving rental and housing affordability other than through increased density (such as co-operatives, not-for-profit or government

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<sup>1</sup> We use "social housing" in this document to refer to the goal of 20% of housing supported by government to serve low or modest income households. We use the term "affordable housing" more broadly to reference housing options that enable median-income Vancouver households to invest 30% or less of income in rent or mortgage, considering the full housing continuum (see <http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/planning/westend/pdf/housing.pdf>).

operated; co-housing; or flexible use spaces that can be added to units to accommodate growing/ intergenerational families).

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### **Community Amenities**

*The CAG supports the amenities outlined in the Little Mountain Policy statement which are: a Little Mountain Neighbourhood House; a 69-space Childcare Facility; Transportation and Safety Improvements; and QE Park Improvements.*

The Neighbourhood House serving the full community, and the Childcare Facility should be located around a sunny community square fronting Main Street. Grounded by the 'three sisters' tree grouping, these programs, together with community gardens, playgrounds, arts, and ground-level residential doors on the street, have the potential to activate the square and the project.

The CAG does not support increasing density beyond 2.3 FSR in order to achieve these or additional amenities. If density at 2.2 - 2.3 FSR does not provide sufficient funding to provide the amenities outlined in the Little Mountain Policy Statement, the CAG advises that the QE Park Improvements are of lowest priority, as they may be achieved over time through other means.

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### **History and Memory**

*The CAG urges the City to include in its principles direction for the Little Mountain planning process to acknowledge and communicate the history of the Little Mountain site and overall community in meaningful ways.*

Representing the site's physical history (i.e., the former off-grid buildings, trees, and pathways) through the site plan is a valuable way to acknowledge the neighbourhood's history. Preserving the existing trees is a visible way to achieve this that could contribute to a person's experience of place. In contrast, the road angle is a plan-based tool that, at the level of human experience, is less convincing in evoking the community's history.

As planning progresses, it is essential to define additional strategies for visibly and tangibly communicating the community's social and cultural history for future generations, beyond preserving some aspects of the physical environment such as the trees.

The CAG supports further consideration on how the public art component of the project might be used to meaningfully represent the community's history for future generations.

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### **Sustainability**

*The CAG supports a vision of sustainability that includes both the built environment (buildings and landscape) and social sustainability.*

The CAG supports applying the City's principles for sustainability in ways that take best advantage of opportunities associated with the Little Mountain site.

Particularly important for the Little Mountain site, given its low-lying location in relation to QE Park, will be managing rain/storm water in ways that ensure effective drainage and allow for collection/ re-use.

The CAG supports the protection of bikeways/greenways, and strongly supports design and policy that encourage use of alternative forms of transportation (e.g., car share programs; ample and safe bicycle storage; advocacy or cost sharing to improve transit).

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### **Traffic, Parking and Safety**

*The CAG is very concerned about the potential traffic, safety and parking impacts to the surrounding community associated with the scope, scale and density of the Little Mountain site.*

With traffic channeled to the arterials (Main Street and 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue), measures to ensure traffic is slowed down through traffic calming and control are absolutely essential.

Ensuring that increased traffic flow and off-site parking are not channeled into the surrounding neighbourhood streets and lanes is crucial.

Efforts to control traffic flow must be considered, not only after the project is completed, but also through all phases of redevelopment.

It is essential to establish strong, clear and safe connections for pedestrians, strollers, and cyclists, including for persons with disabilities, across the arterials to the nearby community amenities, schools and parks.

Additional vehicular access/exit from 35th Avenue should be considered if all or part of the "Adjacent Area" (Northeast Quadrant) is rezoned.

Transit options along Main St and 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue are already heavily strained. Planning an appropriate level of density for Little Mountain must take into account that the site is not located within easy walking distance of the Canada Line. Negotiations with Translink will be essential to ensure adequate surface transit for an increasing population.

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### **Concluding Remarks and Process Recommendations**

This document summarizes feedback from the CAG developed out of an extensive planning process. In this, we provide our collective feedback on the City's planning principles. We have represented points on which we collectively agree.

But in this document we have not represented important ideas about ways in which some of these goals might be achieved, comments more appropriate to the next steps of planning, during rezoning. Thus In closing, we offer four process recommendations:

*1. The CAG strongly recommends that flaws in the planning process for the LM site not be repeated in the future, and that “lessons learned” here be taken forward to inform future planning processes.*

*2. The CAG supports planning for universal design and how to meaningfully include persons with disabilities during rezoning and design processes.*

Given the history of the Little Mountain site and community, which has traditionally accommodated a diverse community, attention to accessibility and inclusion for individuals with disabilities is particularly important.

The CAG supports applying current “best practices” in universal design for accessibility, both in the design of residential dwellings and when planning for associated amenities (e.g., the Neighbourhood House, child-care facility, transportation and park improvements).

*3. The CAG advises that principles adopted for the Little Mountain site be taken up and considered seriously during the rezoning process and subsequent design.*

It is especially important to ensure that these principles are applied and reviewed during formative stages of the design process, not just in a final review of a worked out proposal.

*4. The CAG requests the opportunity to be involved in the process through the rezoning stage.*

It is essential to maintain a community voice during the rezoning phase, which will be pivotal in determining how planning principles are applied to the Little Mountain site as design and development continues.

A CAG that includes community members with diverse perspectives and substantial local knowledge about a full range of issues, achieved through the extensive consultation process undertaken to date, will provide an important complement to feedback generated through an Open House process.

The CAG feels strongly that it is particularly relevant to ensure an informed community perspective (informed by area residents, archivists, historians, artists) is included throughout the re-zoning process, and that this group would explore the local community history and it's representation through the making of meaningful public art.

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SUMMARY OF LITTLE MOUNTAIN PLANNING PROCESS PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Open Houses			
Date	Location	Attendees	Comment Forms
December 5 & 8 2009	Riley Park Community Centre	250	87
June 12 & 15 2010	Riley Park Community Centre	230	65
July 9 & 12 2011	Riley Park Community Centre	370	236
January 26 & 28 2012	Brock Elementary School	600	469*

\*143 on-line

Little Mountain Community Advisory Group meetings		
2010	2011	2012
January 26	March 30	January 23
March 25	April 28	February 28
April 15	May 31	March 8
March 4	June 5	April 3
May 11	September 20	April 10
May 20	December 8	April 19
May 25		May 15
June 8		June 5
September 13		

Additional Public Consultation				
	2009	2010	2011	2012
Co-Design Workshop with community		February 3		
Adjacent Area (Northeast Quadrant) Residents		January 27 May 10 October 19	May 19	January 10
Riley Park South Cambie Visions Implementation Committee	December 8	March 10		January 18

Holborn-initiated Consultation			
	2010	2011	2012
Former Little Mountain Residents	March 3 June 8 December 4	February 26 March 30	May 2
Little Mountain Neighbourhood House	January 13 September 8	March 3	
Riley Park Community Centre Board	September 23		
Drift Arts Group	March 9		May 28
Chinese-speaking Community		February 12	January 10

Main Street Business Community		February 12	
Musqueam First Nation		June 10	

## URBAN DESIGN PANEL COMMENTARY

### July 14, 2010 Workshop

At a non-voting workshop session on July 14, 2010, the urban design panel reviewed and commented on site plan scenarios that were presented at the second open house series in June 2010.

Four site plan scenarios were presented: *Grid*, *Central Street*, *Lane Street*, and *Squares and Plazas*. Key messages from the panel at the time were that it is the angled building orientation and patterning of open space that distinguished little mountain, and that existing trees and the open space relationship to Queen Elizabeth Park embody the memory of previous development.

It was suggested by the panel that the *Central Street* and *Squares and Plazas* scenarios could be combined to form the basis of a site plan that reflects the past of the little mountain site and creates a diversity of gathering spaces and public spaces.

**July 14, 2010 minutes:**

<http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/planning/udp/2010/Minutes/Jul14.html>

### May 9, 2012 Workshop

The draft policies and plans for Little Mountain were reviewed in a non-voting workshop session by the Urban Design Panel on May 9, 2012.

In summary, the Panel was highly supportive of the Little Mountain site plan and proposed massing, and acknowledged the value and depth the public process brought to the results. The panel supported the proposed density of 2.3 to 2.5 FSR and the height limit of 12 storeys. The panel thought that keeping the height below the horizon as viewed from the summit in Queen Elizabeth Park was a compelling idea. Some Panel members were supportive of studying one building exceeding this to a height of 14 storeys provided architectural excellence was demonstrated.

The Panel provided advice to increase the sustainability of the buildings as Little Mountain moves forward, and to provide greater greening and public access to the water's edge in the proposed rainwater management element.

**May 9, 2012 minutes:**

<http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/planning/udp/2012/Minutes/May9.html>

## DRAFT ADJACENT AREA HOUSING TYPES OPTIONS

### OPTION 1

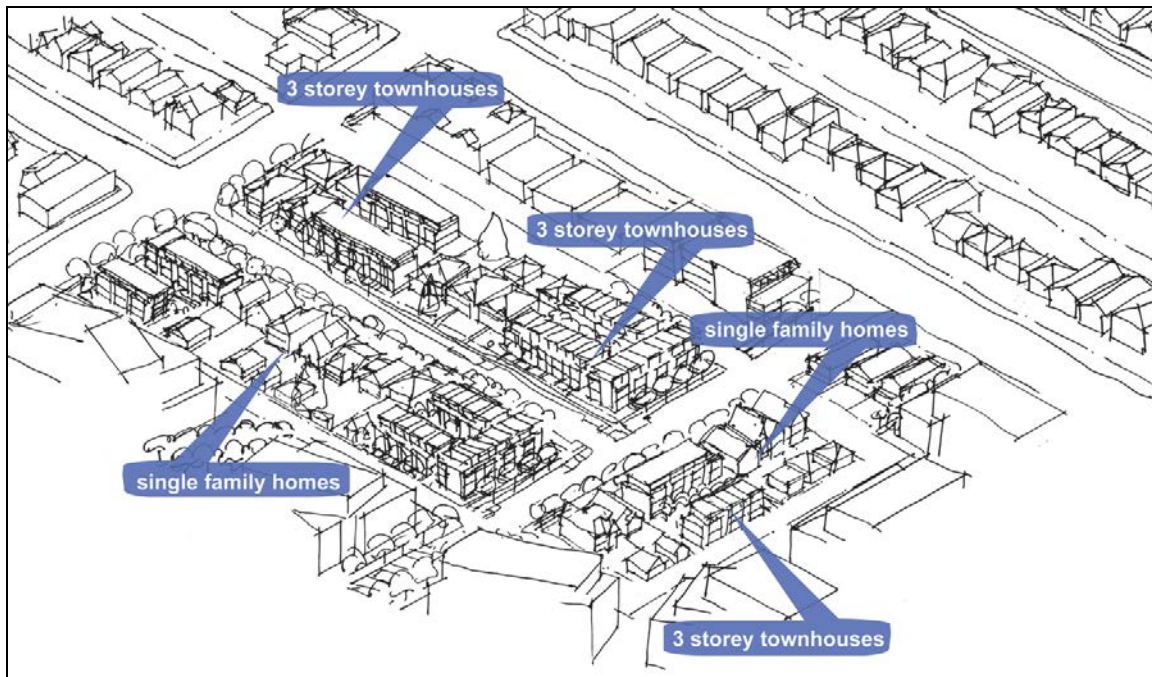
**Building Type:** Townhouses with underground parking

**Number of Storeys:** 3

**Density:** approx. 1.2 FSR

**Description:** This option allows for incremental change through the neighbourhood to a low scale townhouse form within the existing single family homes. Approximately half of the properties would be viable for redevelopment into townhouses in the near future, while others could stay as single family dwellings for the longer term.

*Housing type supported for some single family areas in RPSC Community Vision.*



**OPTION 2**

**Building Type:** 4 storey apartment buildings

**Number of Storeys:** 4

**Density:** approx. 1.5 to 1.8 FSR

**Description:** In this option the majority of the properties would be viable for redevelopment in the near future. All could rezone to a similar building type, height and density.

*A housing type supported by the RPSC Community Vision.*



**OPTION 3**

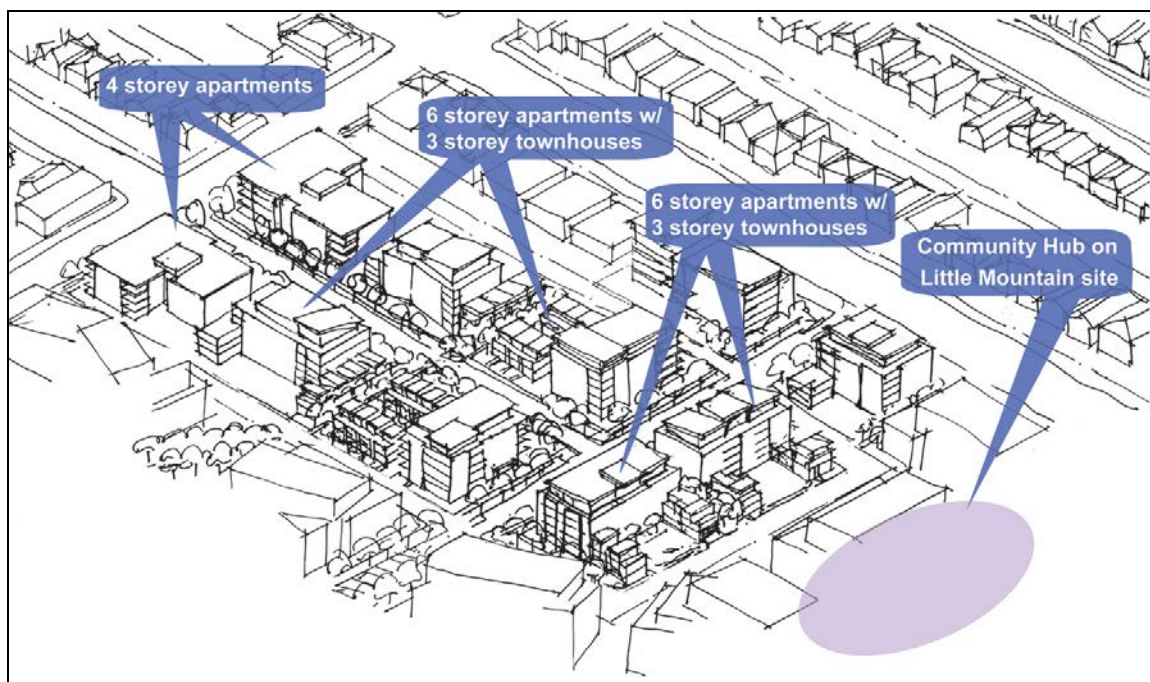
**Building Type:** 6 storey Apartments, 3 storey Townhouses, 4 storey Apartments

**Number of Storeys:** 6 storey apartment with 3 storey townhouses; stepping down to 4 storey apartments at 33<sup>rd</sup> Ave.

**Density:** approx. 1.8 to 2.25 FSR

**Description:** This option presents a variation in height, density and building type across the area with a gradual transition down from the Little Mountain community hub to 33rd Ave. 6 storey apartments and 3 storey townhouses are combined on each development site in order to provide a variety of ground level and high density housing types.

*Not a housing type supported by the RPSC Community Vision.*



**OPTION 4**

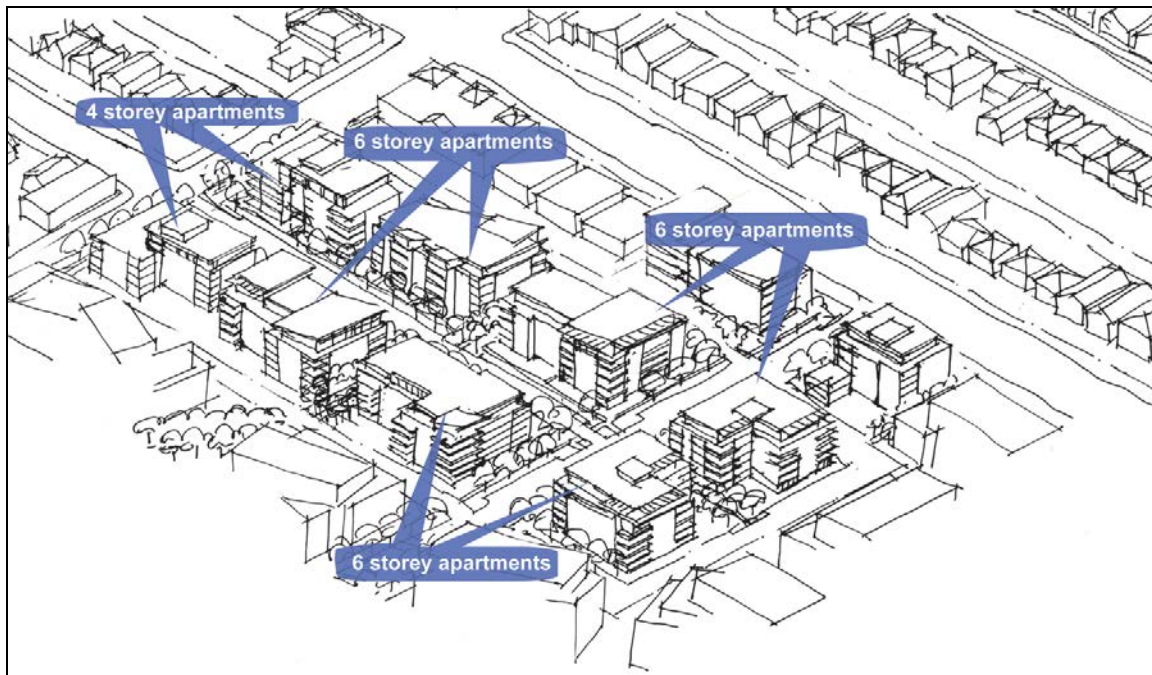
**Building Type:** 6 and 4 storey apartment buildings

**Number of Storeys:** 6 storeys stepping down to 4 storey apartments at 33<sup>rd</sup> Ave.

**Density:** approx. 2.0 to 2.5 FSR

**Description:** Properties at 33rd Ave. step down in height and density to make transition to the properties across 33rd Ave.

*Not a housing type supported by the RPSC Community Vision.*



**OPTION 5**

**Building Types:** 6 storey apartments and 3 storey townhouses.

**Number of Storeys:** 6 storey apartments and 3 storey townhouses

**Density:** approx. 1.8 to 2.25

**Description:** Partial area re-development. Focus development and heights on 35th Ave. and the adjacency to the future Little Mountain community hub with 6 storey apartments and 3 storey townhouses. Properties near 33<sup>rd</sup> Ave. could remain as single family dwellings.

*Not a housing type supported by the RPSC Community Vision.*

