

REPORT

Climate Action, Planning and Development

To: Land Use and Planning Committee **Date:** August 29, 2022

From: Emilie K. Adin, MCIP **File:** PAR01427
Director of Climate Action, Planning and
Development

Item #: 2022-575

Subject: **Proposed Quadruplex: 1031 Cornwall Street – Preliminary Application Review**

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Land Use and Planning Committee endorse the recommendations summarized in Section 8 of this report, and instruct staff to include the recommendations and other feedback from the Land Use Planning Committee in the Preliminary Application Review letter to the applicant.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Preliminary Application Review (PAR) inquiry has been received for a proposed ground-oriented residential quadruplex (four total units) at 1031 Cornwall Street. The development would replace one single detached dwelling unit and would have an overall Floor Space Ratio (FSR) of 1.205. All of the proposed units would be family-friendly, containing four bedrooms, and freehold. The applicant has indicated that the project would achieve Step 5 of the BC Energy Step Code (net-zero energy ready).

Staff is seeking feedback regarding the proposal from the Land Use Planning Committee (LUPC), which would be incorporated with staff's comments into the resulting PAR letter to the applicant.

1. PURPOSE

To elicit preliminary feedback from the Land Use and Planning Committee regarding the redevelopment proposal.

2. POLICY AND REGULATIONS

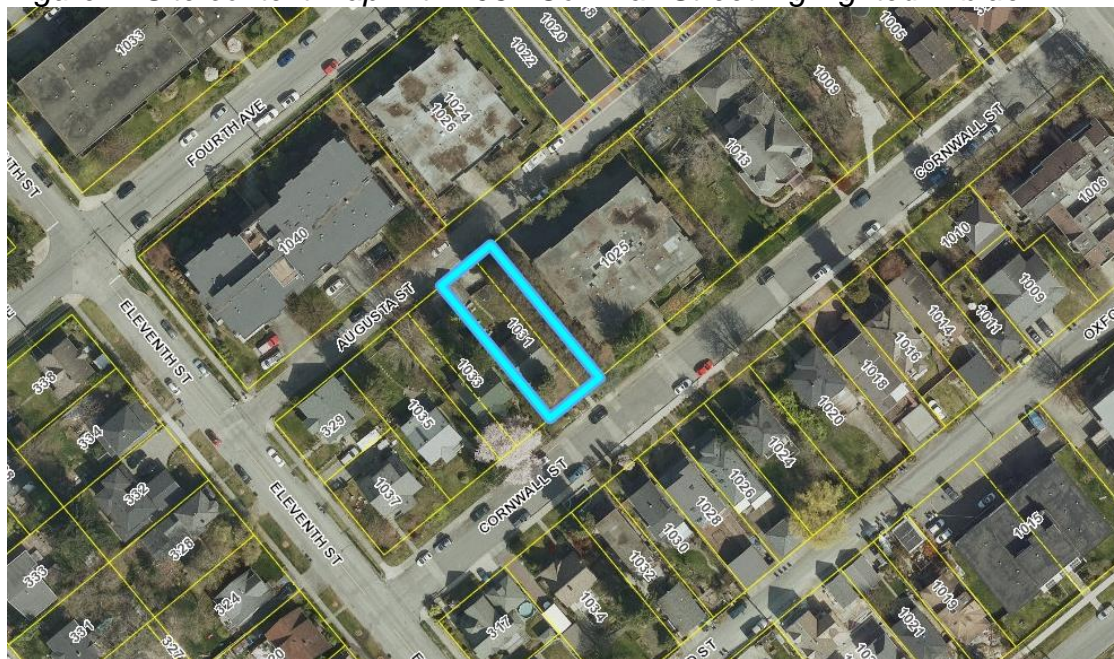
The Official Community Plan (OCP) designation for the subject property is Residential – Ground Oriented Infill Housing (RGO), which allows for a quadruplex. The property is zoned Single Detached Residential Districts (RS-1) and would require rezoning to allow the proposed development. The *Duplex, Triplex, and Quadruplex: Interim Development Review Policy* provides policy context for rezoning for a quadruplex on properties with this designation. A summary of these and other related City policies and regulations are included in Appendix A.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Site Characteristics and Context

The subject property is approximately 607.0 sq. m. (6,534 sq. ft.) and located in the Brow of the Hill neighbourhood, in an area of single detached dwellings and low-rise apartment buildings. The site has primary frontage on Cornwall Street and secondary frontage on Augusta Street, and is proximate to bus service on Twelfth Street, identified as a potential future Frequent Transit Network (FTN). One single detached dwelling, built in 1926, is currently situated on the lot. Additional site characteristics and context information is provided in Appendix B.

Figure 1: Site context map with 1031 Cornwall Street highlighted in blue



overall density of 1.205 FSR. Unit sizes are proposed at approximately 183.0 sq. m. (1,970 sq. ft.), with all units containing four bedrooms. A total of four off-street resident parking spaces are proposed.

Figure 2: Proposed Project Rendering (view from Cornwall Street)



The applicant's project summary letter and select preliminary drawings are included in Appendices C and D. A preliminary project statistics table is provided in Appendix E.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 Density

Council has endorsed the *Duplex, Triplex, and Quadruplex: Interim Development Review Policy* to facilitate pilot project applications, create opportunities for ground-oriented infill housing, and inform development of the Infill Housing Program. The policy provides interim requirements related to density, design form and character, parking, and access. The proposed development would be the first quadruplex project considered under this policy.

The interim policy indicates that quadruplex proposals should not exceed a maximum density of 0.75 FSR. However, the policy also notes that additional floor area may be considered for energy efficient buildings. This is consistent with the City's Passive Design Exclusion Policy, which provides additional FSR to single detached dwellings built to higher performance standards. For example, a Step 5 house would be entitled to an additional 0.05 FSR. Staff consider it reasonable to apply an additional 0.05 FSR to this project, given it is proposed to Step 5. With this addition, the maximum density for a Step 5 quadruplex would be 0.80 FSR.

To verify that the building would achieve Step 5 requirements, submission of an energy model, prepared by a certified energy advisor, would be required as part of a future rezoning application.

Preliminary plans indicate an overall density of 1.205 FSR. The project allocates 0.80 FSR above grade and 0.40 FSR below grade. Based on the proposed elevations, the additional density would have little impact on height, form, or character, and the building would read as two storeys from each elevation. The units would contain four bedrooms and be larger than those achievable under the existing policy, per the table below:

Table 3: Comparison of Proposed Unit Sizes

Unit Sizes per Interim Review Policy (0.80 FSR) ¹	Proposed Unit Sizes (1.205 FSR)
121.4 sq. m. (1,307 sq. ft.)	183.0 sq. m. (1,970 sq. ft.)

¹ Assumes total permitted density is divided equally between four units.

Does the LUPC support staff advising the applicant that the proposed density is considered reasonable, provided that 0.40 FSR is allocated below grade, and the project achieves Step 5 requirements?

5.2 Tree Retention

The applicant has submitted an arborist report that states that four trees are present on-site and 17 trees, including four specimen trees, are located off-site. The majority of the off-site trees (16) are located atop a retaining wall that borders the south-east property line of the subject site. Staff note that this retaining wall is in need of structural repair.

A preliminary evaluation of the off-site trees by the City arborist indicates that, given their maturity and valuable ecological benefits, their retention should be prioritized in support of the City's urban forest goals. It is the opinion of the City arborist that retention should have minimal impact on the development potential of the site, given their location. Should the applicant proceed with a formal application, staff would require that the retaining wall be stabilized using methods that minimize health impacts to the trees, while maximizing the safety of future residents.

Does the LUPC support that staff advise the applicant that the retention of all off-site trees should be a priority of future development applications for this site?

5.3 Building, Massing, and Site Design

Based on the preliminary information provided by the applicant, only a limited review of the project's consistency with applicable policy was possible. However, some aspects of the current plans that would need to be addressed include, but are not limited to:

- The proposed rear units should provide secondary entrances visible from Cornwall Street, inclusive of exterior lighting;

- Consideration must be given to waste servicing, including but not limited to how bins will be screened from public view, their location, staging, and access;
- If any equipment is proposed (e.g., heat pumps), its location would need to be shown and strategies proposed to mitigate visual and noise impacts on adjacent properties;
- One shared visitor/loading space is expected from this type of development.

Additional and more detailed comments will also be included in the PAR letter to the applicant.

Does the LUPC support that staff advise the applicant to revise the proposed development consistent with the urban design comments in Section 5.3 of this report, as part of a formal application?

5.4 Proposed Ownership Structure

The applicant has indicated that the proposed ownership structure for this project would be freehold, which means that the project would be subdivided along shared walls and lot lines (i.e., the four units would not form part of a strata but own individual small lots). Freehold ownership of this form of development would contribute to overall housing choice, and would be consistent with City policy and objectives. However, at this stage, the applicant has not provided sufficient information for evaluation of this proposal. Should the applicant move forward with a formal application, they would be required to submit detailed information describing how the site would meet subdivision requirements, such as those pertaining to site servicing, solid waste collection, and access.

Does the LUPC support further consideration of freehold ownership of the quadruplex units, provided that the applicant can submit additional information on how the proposal would meet subdivision requirements as part of a formal application?

6. REVIEW PROCESS

The PAR inquiry has been circulated to various City departments for review and comment. Feedback from the LUPC and staff will be incorporated into a PAR letter that would be forwarded to the applicant. The PAR letter would also outline the application requirements from other City departments. Should the applicant choose to proceed with formal applications, the proposed project would be reviewed in accordance with the City's development review process.

7. INTERDEPARTMENTAL LIAISON

The City has a team-based approach for reviewing development proposals. Staff from various departments, including Climate Action, Planning and Development; Engineering Services; and Parks and Recreation, has conducted an initial review of this preliminary application review inquiry.

8. FEEDBACK FROM THE LAND USE AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

Staff is seeking general feedback and direction from the LUPC on the proposal, as well as support from the LUPC on the following recommendations:

That the LUPC direct staff to:

- 1. Advise the applicant that the proposed density is considered reasonable, provided that 0.40 FSR is allocated below grade, and the project achieves Step 5 requirements;*
- 2. Advise the applicant that the retention of all off-site trees should be a priority of future development applications for this site;*
- 3. Advise the applicant to revise the proposed development consistent with the urban design comments in Section 5.3 of this report, as part of a formal application.*
- 4. Support further consideration of freehold ownership of the quadruplex units, provided that the applicant can submit additional information on how the proposal would meet subdivision requirements as part of a formal application.*

9. OPTIONS

The following options are offered for consideration of the Land Use and Planning Committee:

1. That the Land Use and Planning Committee endorse the recommendations summarized in Section 8 of this report, and instruct staff to include the recommendations and other feedback from the Land Use and Planning Committee in the preliminary application review letter to the applicant.
2. That the Land Use and Planning Committee provide staff with alternative feedback.

Staff recommends Option 1.

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A: Summary of Related City Policies and Regulations

Appendix B: Site Characteristics and Context

Appendix C: Applicant's Project Summary Letter

Appendix D: Preliminary Project Drawings (Select)

Appendix E: Preliminary Project Statistics

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