

Appendix A  
*Land Use Rationale*



**SMARTCENTRES®**  
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March 19, 2024

City of New Westminster  
511 Royal Avenue  
New Westminster, BC  
V3L 1H9

Attention: Dilys Huang, Development Planner and Hanna Jarrett, Development Planner

**Re: 805 Boyd Street, New Westminster, BC OCP and Zoning Amendment(s) and Development Permit and Development Variance Permit Application(s) – Project Summary**

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SmartCentres submitted an Official Community Plan and Zoning Amendment(s) and Development and Development Variance Permit(s) to accommodate a mini-storage (“self-storage facility”) on 1.111-acres of land at the Queensborough Landing Shopping Centre located at 805 Boyd St., in New Westminster, BC.

More specifically, following application(s) were submitted to the City of New Westminster:

**1. Official Community Plan:**

OCP Amendment to amend 1.111-acres of land from Queensborough Commercial (QC) to Queensborough Mixed Employment (QME) to permit the self-storage use on the subject property

**2. Zoning Amendment:**

Zoning Amendment to amend 1.111-acres of land from the Large Format Commercial District (C-10) to a Comprehensive Development Zone designation to permit the use, density, and setbacks of the proposed self-storage building on the subject property

**3. Development Permit and Development Variance Permit:**

Development Permit for the proposed self-storage facility and Development Variance Permit(s) to reduce the number of parking stalls required for the self-storage use and the number of bicycle parking stalls required for an industrial use

A subdivision application to create a 1.111-acre parcel will be submitted following Council’s first and second readings.

SmartCentres completed a Pre-Application for the proposed self-storage use on April 20, 2021. The Pre-Application materials were circulated to the relevant City departments and were presented to the Land Use and Planning Committee on July 12, 2021. Comments were circulated and received by SmartCentres in a letter dated August 18, 2021.

SmartCentres submitted formal applications for an Official Community Plan and Zoning Amendment(s) and Development and Development Variance Permit(s) on November 23, 2022; and received comments / feedback from Engineering and Transportation on January 27, 2023. Subsequent applications addressing interdepartmental reviews were submitted on February 7, 2023; May 1, 2023; August 18, 2023; January 8, 2024; February 1, 2024 and March 4, 2024; with public consultation and open house completed in September 2023.

## **QUEENSBOROUGH LANDING SHOPPING CENTRE:**

The Queensborough Landing Shopping Centre is a 35.059-acre unenclosed shopping centre consisting of 40,440-sm (435,292.28-sf) GFA of retail space, located at the intersection of Boyd St. and Howes St. in the City of New Westminster, BC. Construction of the shopping centre commenced in 2003 and has continued throughout the years with the addition of new buildings and renovations to existing buildings to accommodate new retail and commercial tenancies. The shopping centre is anchored by Walmart and currently consists of service and fashion-oriented retailers.

Changes in the retail landscape as well as retailers changing and modernizing their offerings by increasing their online presence and right sizing their brick-and-mortar locations, have been accelerated due to the current economic environment that has contributed to increased vacancies as the demand for retail space within existing shopping centres has decreased. The Queensborough Landing Shopping Centre has not been exempted from the changing trends in the commercial marketplace.

SmartCentres has been working to diversify and to strategically reposition the existing shopping centre by eliminating existing vacancies and by introducing new complementary uses such as self-storage that would support and enhance the Queensborough Community.

## **PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:**

SmartCentres has partnered with SmartStop Self-Storage to develop self-storage facilities across Canada. The partnership has developed over 20 facilities in Ontario, operating as SmartStop Self-Storage ("SmartStop"), and is currently expanding to Western Canada. The partnership has identified Queensborough Landing as a suitable location due to its direct access to Highway 91A and its proximity to an existing commercial and industrial node.

SmartStop is striving to offer a more modern, bright, inviting form of self-storage operation, which has a more urban form, and which is compatible with a commercial environment.

SmartStop, provide cost-effective, flexible, and secure storage solutions for small businesses, offering convenient access, scalability, and seasonal inventory management options.

SmartCentres, in partnership with SmartStop, are proposing to redevelop a portion of the existing vacant retail at the Queensborough Landing Shopping Centre with the following:

- Four (4) storey, urban-style, fully enclosed 12,241-sm (131,766-sf) GFA self-storage facility consisting of approximately 1,081 climate-controlled units and ancillary office space
- Demolition of approximately 2,038.41-sm (21,941.28-sf) GFA of existing vacant retail space located in the southeast quadrant of the site, in Building F
- Subdividing the existing 35.059-acre parcel to create a 1.111-acre parcel to accommodate the proposed self-storage use with a Floor Area Ratio of 2.72 and Site Coverage of 68.16%
- In order to fully integrate the new self-storage use into the site the proposed setbacks to the new property lines are as follows—north (0.305 m), west (4.606 m to 27.975 m), south (4.516 m to 7.846 m), east (2.790 m)
- Development Variance Permit to address municipal parking requirements to reduce the number of parking stalls required for the self-storage use from 38 parking stalls to 20 parking stalls
- Development Variance Permit to address municipal Loading Spaces requirements to reduce the number of loading spaces required from 5 to 3 spaces
- Development Variance Permit to address municipal bicycle parking requirements to reduce the number of short-term stalls from 74 bicycle parking stalls and 13 long-term bicycle spaces to 4 short term bicycle parking stalls and no long-term bicycle parking spaces.
- As an alternative to the bicycle parking, two Level-2 electric vehicle charging stations will be included as part of the development. There are no minimum bylaw requirements for electrical charging stations for commercial or industrial developments from the City of New Westminster

The existing shopping centre and the proposed self-storage parcels will be subdivided and have separate ownerships, although they will function as a single site with a cohesive design and aesthetic that is integrated and in keeping with the existing shopping centre. Site circulation, parking, and access will remain seamless, safe and functional for both the shopping centre and self-storage use. All access points from Boyd St. will remain as part of the commercial lands. A Mutual Easement Operating Agreement will be registered on title for parking and cross-access for pedestrian, vehicular, cycling movements and collection of garbage and recycling, including maintenance of garbage enclosures and bins. This will ensure the proposed site layout as subdivided will function as a single site providing for integrated pedestrian, vehicle, and cycling connectivity. SmartCentres will remain the owner of the shopping centre and will be a joint venture partner on the self-storage parcel.

As part of the Pre-Application feedback, it was noted that the Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Strategy discourages the fragmentation of large industrial parcels greater than 20 acres (8+ hectares). While the City of New Westminster categorizes self-storage as industrial, the proposed multi-storey, urban design aligns more closely with commercial functionalities. This form of self-storage is well-suited for the proposed location within the shopping center, showcasing compatibility with its surroundings.

Furthermore, SmartCentres does not intend to convert Queensborough Landing into an industrial area as it will remain predominantly a commercial node vital to the local Queensborough community. The proposed change in designation to Queensborough Mixed Employment is limited to the 1.111 acres and will only further support the industrial lands strategy by supporting businesses in the City of New Westminster.

The overall site is constrained by numerous rights of way and easements from the City of New Westminster, BC Hydro, and Southern Railway that significantly encumber the property limiting the ability to modify the current configuration of the existing shopping centre. Also, there are several long-term leases in place that require Queensborough Landing to remain predominantly as a commercial use.

In addition to the self-storage use, SmartCentres is working with the City of New Westminster to diversify the permitted uses allowed under the Large Format Commercial District (C-10), to further support the viability of the commercial centre. The intent is to broaden the range of permitted commercial uses to reflect leasing demands, with the overall intent of keeping the core designation of the shopping centre as commercial. The proposed rezoning of the subdivided parcel to permit the self-storage use will not impede on the ability of the shopping centre from continuing to support employment generating uses. A rezoning (text amendment) application to permit additional uses on the existing shopping centre was submitted to the City of New Westminster in January 2023.

The self-storage parcel is also configured to reflect a possible future development area for a prospective 2,000 sf. drive-thru restaurant that will remain as part of the shopping centre. The proposed parcel lines support this additional density. The proposed restaurant will be subject to a separate and future Development Permit Application.

### **OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN AMENDMENT (“OCP”):**

The OCP (Queensborough Community Plan) identifies the site as being designated as Queensborough Commercial within the Business and Entertainment Node and is subject to the regulations of Development Permit Area # 2 Queensborough Commercial. The Queensborough Landing Shopping Centre is also encumbered by several rights-of-ways from BC Hydro, the City of New Westminster, and Southern Railway, which limit the ability for a larger scale redevelopment of the property. SmartCentres is proposing to re-designate 1.111-acres of land in the southeast quadrant of the property to Queensborough Mixed Employment to accommodate a four (4) storey, urban-styled, fully enclosed, self-storage facility. The proposed self-storage use is aligned with the vision of the Queensborough Mixed Employment designation by providing for a light industrial use with the purpose of supporting individuals and local businesses that further generate employment. The balance 33.738-acres of the existing shopping centre will remain as Queensborough Commercial, and no further changes are proposed to the current OCP designation.

The City of New Westminster classifies self-storage (“mini-storage”) as an industrial land use. Facilities are typically found on industrial designated properties and are designed as single-storey drive-up locations. Although the proposed amendment to the OCP is intended to address the use, the proposed self-storage facility will be designed, integrated and function as part of the Queensborough Landing Shopping Centre.

Although the City of New Westminster classifies self-storage as industrial, the proposed multi-level, urban design better corresponds to commercial functions. This type of storage facility is ideally suited for placement within the shopping center, demonstrating harmony with its environment.

The self-storage facility will be a multi-storey fully enclosed building designed and constructed to modern urban standards incorporating design elements from the Queensborough Landing Design Guidelines and the Queensborough Industrial and Mixed Employment Development Permit Area Guidelines of the Queensborough Community Plan. The intent is to have an attractive facility that is in keeping with the community context, that has a contemporary and flexible design, and that is complementary to the existing shopping centre. The proposed development would incorporate specific design features and elements that help achieve the goals of the Queensborough Community Plan.

### **ZONING AMENDMENT:**

The City of New Westminster Zoning Bylaw #6680, 2001 identifies the subject property as Large Format Commercial District (C-10) for the purpose of permitting Large Format Retail Development and associated office and business park uses. The uses currently located on site meet the intent of the existing land use designations and zoning bylaw. The Queensborough Landing Shopping Centre is the only property within the City of New Westminster with the C-10 zoning designation.

In conjunction with the OCP amendment, SmartCentres is proposing a Zoning Amendment to a Comprehensive Development Zone designation to permit the self-storage use on the 1.111-acre subject parcel.

### **LAND USE AND POLICY:**

This application would trigger the need for Council and community consideration of an amendment to the Queensborough Community Plan, to change the land use designation of the site from Queensborough Commercial (which supports retail, service, and office commercial uses). An OCP amendment to the Mixed Employment designation, to facilitate intensification of the uses on the site, would be consistent with policy 2.2 of the Queensborough Community Plan, which encourages intensification of existing regional commercial uses and land. The Mixed Employment designation is also seen to be appropriate in this location given the adjacencies of commercial and industrial uses.

### **DEVELOPMENT PERMIT:**

The proposed self-storage development will be subject to the regulations of the Queensborough Industrial and Mixed Employment Development Permit Area guidelines and the Natural Hazards Development Permit Area #1 – Flood Hazards of the Queensborough Community Plan. The proposed development permit aims to meet the intent of the guidelines while providing for a modern design that is incorporated into the existing shopping centre and surrounding land uses. Colours, materials, wood-like elements, landscaping details, light fixtures, etc. that are of high quality will provide for a cohesive appearance that enhances the overall character of Queensborough. The design will integrate with the existing shopping centre by maintaining the village character design and keep with the riverfront heritage of Queensborough and the industrial context of the site, as well as providing for links between the community and the riverfront.

In addition, there will be an insignificant impact to adjacent properties given the proposed use is considered a Light Industrial use under the City of New Westminster Zoning Bylaw 6680, 2001; and the adjacent properties are currently designated Industrial.

The following outlines the design features that are proposed to be incorporated as part of the self-storage development:

- The siting of the self-storage building will be in the southeast quadrant of the shopping centre, adjacent to Boyd St.
- The design will include a variety of high-quality materials such as insulated metal panel, wood finishes, stone, and glazing
- The west building façade will include vertical tower elements inset with glazing and framed by corrugated metal to provide depth and dimension to the building
- Pedestrian scale elements such as glazing, wood, and stone will be used on all facades, to correspond with the existing storefronts of the adjacent building in the shopping centre and to reduce the scale of the building
- The building articulation through the vertical tower elements and variations in colours and materials including vertical breaks with glazing will be used to break up the massing and to provide for natural internal lighting
- An industrial and commercial colour palette with muted earth tones is intended to contextualize with the existing commercial uses and the finish materials are harmonized in its form, texture, and provide for a fresh modern aesthetic
- The self-storage main entrance will be animated with glazing and an extended canopy complete with wood elements will provide for weather protection
- The landscape design will incorporate hard and soft landscaped elements including: employee amenity area, bicycle parking, replacement trees required per the arborist report, and new shrubs along the southern edge of the building
- The proposed development will meet the requirements for the construction level of 3.53 m above Geodetic Survey of Canada datum for Area A of the Natural Hazards Development Permit Area #1 – Flood Hazards of the Queensborough Community Plan. The existing shopping centre and buildings currently meet this requirement
- The garbage and recycling enclosure proposed on the east area of the proposed parcel will be of exclusive use of the proposed mini-storage facility, and will function as part of the overall shopping centre
- A Mutual Easement Operating Agreement will be registered on title for parking and cross access for pedestrian, vehicular, cycling movements and collection of garbage and recycling, including maintenance of garbage enclosures and bins

#### **DEVELOPMENT VARIANCE PERMIT – MINIMUM PARKING REQUIREMENTS:**

The City of New Westminster Zoning Bylaw #6690 sets a minimum of 1.0 parking stall per 325.15-sm (3,499.89-sf) of net floor area (Gross Floor Area) for self-storage use. Zoning Bylaw Section 140 also limits the maximum number of compact parking spaces to 30%. However, this quantity of parking is excessive, based both on ITE standards, and practical experience at existing facilities, as demonstrated by a supporting parking and traffic study conducted by CTS – Traffic Engineering Specialists.

The total parking required by the bylaw for the use is 38 parking stalls, and the site plan is currently providing 20 parking stalls. The maximum number of compact parking spaces permitted by the bylaw would be 6 stalls, and the site plan is currently providing for 8 compact stalls.

As this parcel will be subdivided, a Development Variance Permit is being requested to reduce the minimum parking requirements for the proposed self-storage use as well as permission to have 40% of proposed parking as compact stalls.

All compact parking stalls are proposed to be located on the east side of the building, providing direct access to the proposed drive-up units, while all parking located by the office and close to the three loading bays would be regular parking stalls, including two accessible stalls directly adjacent to the west sidewalk.

The self-storage use is a low traffic generator and requires minimal parking. The proposed development will be a multi-storeyed fully enclosed and secure facility that will include three main interior loading areas, minimal at-grade exterior access units, and internal elevators for the movement of goods.

A parking and traffic trip generation review has been provided in support of the reduction in the number of parking stalls required for the self-storage use. The study concludes that the quantity of parking proposed for the use of 20 parking stalls, exceeds the ITE recommendation of 13 parking stalls. Furthermore, with the demolition of a portion of the existing commercial building (21,941.28-sf) and the change in use to self-storage, the quantity of trips generated to the site will decrease by 114 trips in the Saturday peak hour. Therefore, the study concludes there is sufficient parking provided to accommodate the use and that Transportation Demand Management measures are not required due to the nature of the self-storage use and the reduction in trips.

The total parking provided for the existing shopping centre including the proposed self-storage facility is 1767 parking stalls and the City of New Westminster requires a total of 857 parking stalls. There is an excess of 910 parking stalls on the overall site and there will be sufficient parking to accommodate the additional density.

#### **DEVELOPMENT VARIANCE PERMIT – MINIMUM BICYCLE PARKING STALL REQUIREMENTS:**

In addition to the minimum parking requirements, a Development Variance Permit is also being requested to reduce the minimum number of bicycle stall parking requirements for the proposed self-storage use. The City of New Westminster zoning bylaw sets a minimum number of short-term bicycle parking spaces of 6.0 spaces for each 1,000 sm. of net floor area) or 74 bicycle parking stalls for an industrial use. The bylaw also requires a minimum number of long-term bicycle spaces of 1.0 space up to 1,000 sm. of net floor area or 1 space per every 25 employees employed at the site, whichever is greater, which equates to a total of 13 long term bicycle spaces. This is far in excess of the need for this particular use.

The current proposal includes 4 short term bicycle parking stalls and does not include any long-term bicycle parking stalls based on the practicalities of the self-storage use and the small number of employees required to manage the facility.

In addition to the short-term bicycle parking stalls, although not a requirement of the zoning bylaw, SmartCentres will be providing for two level-2 charging stations as part of the development, which is more in keeping with the functionality of the self-storage use. This will provide for a balanced approach to incorporate multi-modal transportation to the proposed development.

#### **COMPREHENSIVE SIGN PLAN:**

A comprehensive sign plan for the self-storage facility has been provided as part of the development permit application. The sign details include all proposed building signage including materials, size, type of installation and location. At this time, there is no proposal for an additional freestanding sign.

Should you require any additional information pertaining to the Official Community Plan, Rezoning, Development Permit and/or Development Variance Applications, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,  
SmartCentres REIT

Cristiana Valero  
Development Manager