

REPORT

Planning and Development

To:	Advisory Planning Commission	Date:	November 19, 2024
From:	Amanda Mackaay, Development Planner	File:	OCP00044 REZ00253
		Item #:	2024-646
Subject:	Official Community Plan Amendment and Rezoning: 1084 Tanaka Court		

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Advisory Planning Commission provide a motion of support or non-support for the proposed Official Community Plan Amendment and Rezoning applications.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides information to the Advisory Planning Commission (APC) in regards to Official Community Plan (OCP) and Zoning Bylaw amendment applications that have been received for 1084 Tanaka Court.

The applications propose to amend the land use designation from (QC) Queensborough Commercial to (QME) Queensborough Mixed Employment, update the OCP Development Permit Area (DPA) to Queensborough Industrial and Mixed Employment to be consistent with the permitted land use, and rezone the property from Comprehensive Development District (1084 Tanaka Court) (CD-82) to Light Industrial Districts (M-1). The applicant has made these applications so that the site can be sold to and developed by an industrial developer. No form of development is proposed at this time; a Development Permit would be submitted separately at a later date.

Community engagement on this project has been ongoing since October 2024.

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide information to the APC (Commission) on the proposal, and to request that the Commission provide a motion of support or non-support for this application.

2.0 PROPOSAL

2.1 Overview

In 2018, Council approved rezoning the property from Heavy Industrial Districts (M-2) to Comprehensive Development District (1084 Tanaka Court) (CD-82). At that time, the applicant had the intention of developing a banquet hall with retail and office uses. The applicant has indicated that the banquet hall proposal has not been commercially viable, and as such has submitted a proposal to amend the site’s land use designation and revert to industrial zoning with the purpose of selling to an industrial or employment user.

The proposal is to rezone the site to Light Industrial Districts (M-1) and amend the OCP land use designation from Queensborough Commercial (QC) to Queensborough Mixed Employment (QME). Although no form of development is proposed at this time, the applicant has indicated that they have received interest from potential purchasers that require that property to be zoned Light Industrial Districts (M-1).

As part of the OCP amendment, the Development Permit Area (DPA) would be amended from Queensborough Commercial to Queensborough Industrial and Mixed Employment to be consistent with the permitted land use. A Development Permit (DP) has not been submitted at this time as no form of development is proposed. A DP application would be submitted separately at a later date once the site has been sold and a new owner is ready to develop.

The applicant’s project summary letter is attached as Appendix A.

3.0 POLICY AND REGULATIONS

3.1 Official Community Plan

Land Use Designation

The subject site is designated (QC) Queensborough Commercial in the Queensborough Community Plan (QCP), Schedule D to the Official Community Plan (OCP). The land use designation is described, in part, as follows:

Purpose: To allow retail, service and office commercial uses at ground level and may include commercial or office above the ground level.

Principal Forms and Uses: Retail, service and office commercial uses.

The application proposes to amend the QCP land use designation to (QME) Queensborough Mixed Employment, which is described, in part, as follows:

Purpose: To allow a variety of office, light industrial and service commercial uses with a focus on employment generation.

Principal Forms and Uses: Light industrial, service and office commercial uses.

Development Permit Area

The subject site is located within the QA2 Queensborough Commercial Development Permit Area (DPA), which aligns with the current land use designation, but is not consistent with the proposed land use. Through the OCP amendment application, the DPA for the site would be amended to QC1 Queensborough Industrial and Mixed Employment. Future Development Permit applications will be subject to the design guidelines within this DPA.

The subejct site is also located within the QE1 Flood Hazard DPA; however, industrial uses that are not adjacent to a dyke are exempt from the requirements of this DPA.

3.2 Zoning Bylaw

The subject site is currently zoned Comprehensive Development District (1084 Tanaka Court) (CD-82). The CD-82 zone permits commercial uses such as public assembly and entertainment uses, business and professional offices, cafes and restaurants, child care, commercial schools, retail stores, and personal service establishments.

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 Site Characteristics and Context

The subject site is currently vacant. It is approximately 4,790 sq.m (51,559.1 sq. ft.), located north of Boyd Street and west of the Queensborough Bridge. A rail line runs along the southeast side of the site. The site is surrounded by commercial and industrial uses. Immediately to the west is 315 Gifford Street, which is zoned M-2 (Heavy Industrial Districts) and designated Queensborough Commercial. Further to the west is Starlight Casino, zoned C-CD-1 (Queensborough Destination Casino Comprehensive Development Districts) and designated Commercial Entertainment. Immediately to the north is a currently vacant building formerly occupied by Lowes, which is zoned M-1 (Light Industrial Districts) and designated QME. Also to the north of the site is 1135 Tanaka Court (also zoned M-1), which went through a site-specific rezoning process in 2021 to permit a cannabis infused product manufacturing facility as a permitted use. Further to the north and northwest are sites zoned M-2 and designated Industrial. To the south, across Boyd Street and Highway 91A, are residential (mix of single-detached and multiple unit dwellings) and commercial uses. A site context map is provided in Figure 1 below.

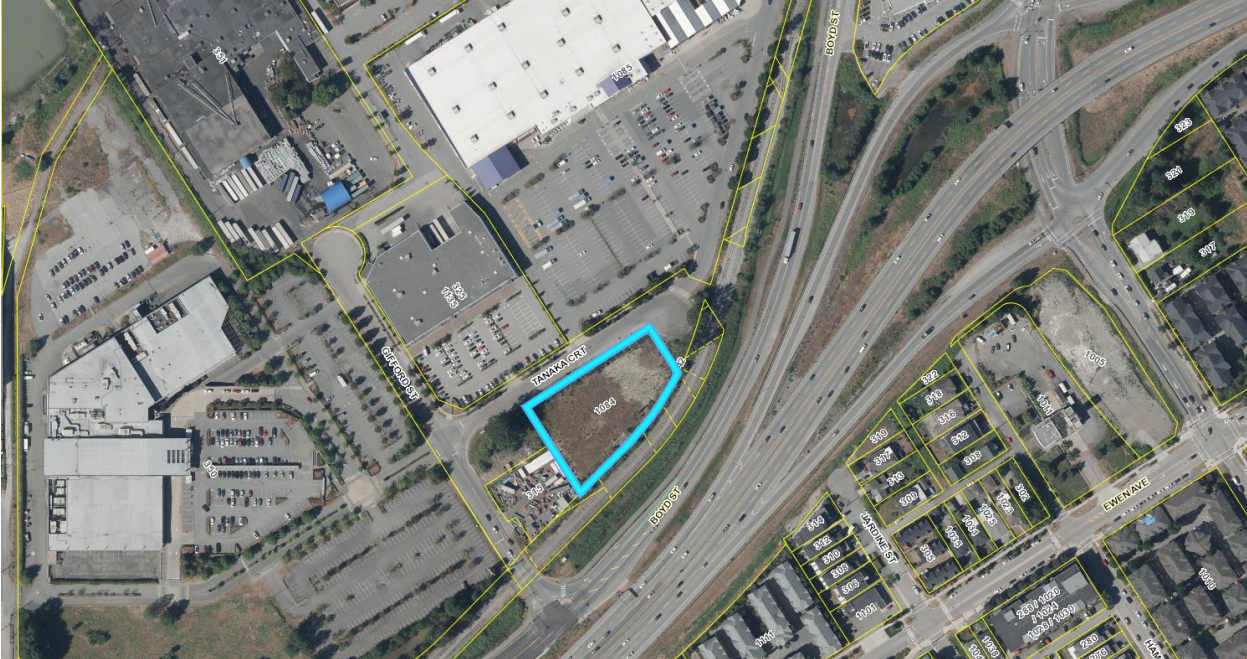


Figure 1 - Site Context Map with 1084 Tanaka Court outlined in blue.

4.2 Trees

There are currently no trees on site; 18 trees were previously removed in order to preload the site. These trees were removed ahead of the tree permit issuance, and as such, a no-build covenant was registered on title to secure replacement trees as well the retention of seven cottonwood trees flanking the site, prior to development occurring on the property. The legal agreement would require the replacement trees to be provided as part of future development of the site.

4.3 Previous Applications

In 2018, the property was rezoned from M-2 (Heavy Industrial Districts), to Comprehensive Development District (1084 Tanaka Court) (CD-82) to facilitate the development of a three storey commercial building with retail at grade, public assembly on the second level (banquet hall) and office use on the third level plus attached four storey parking structure.

The applicant has indicated that the banquet hall proposal has not been commercially viable, and as such, has submitted a proposal to amend the site’s zoning and land use designation to allow industrial with the purpose of selling to an industrial user.

4.4 Proximity to Transit Service and other Sustainable Transportation Options

The site is located approximately 220 m (722 ft.) from Boyd Street via Gifford Street and Tanaka Court, which has an existing bicycle route. Nearby transit service is outlined in the table below.

Bus Service	Approx. Frequency	Approx. Distance
#418 Kingswood/22 nd Street Station	30 minutes	260 m. (853 ft.) to Westbound stop at Boyd Street and 270 m (886 ft.) to Eastbound stop at Boyd Street

Table 1: Site Proximity to Transit Service

5.0 DISCUSSION

5.1 Official Community Plan (OCP) Amendment

Overall Evaluation

The region is facing shortages of industrial and employment lands which play a crucial role in supporting the local and regional economy. This application would provide additional industrial and employment zoned lands which include multiple options for use of the site in the future. This would be consistent with the intent of regional and City policy supporting industrial growth and intensification.

The application is consistent with the City’s general approach in locating industrial and employment land and would be compatible with the surrounding existing and future land uses including the Starlight Casino to the west and the surrounding mix of industrial, and large format commercial uses. The proposed applications for this site are considered reasonable as they would:

- align with regional and City policy to project, intensify and expand the city’s industrial land supply
- be consistent with the findings and direction in the City’s Retail Strategy;
- be consistent with surrounding OCP designations and zoning; and
- be compatible with adjacent uses.

5.2 Industrial and Mixed Employment Land Demand

Over time, industrial lands have faced redevelopment pressure to convert to other land uses such as residential and commercial; as such, there has been erosion of industrial land supply in the region. The region is facing shortages of industrial lands despite the crucial role they play in supporting local the local and regional economy. Demand for industrial lands have increased as supply diminishes, as local through to global markets shift (e.g. increases in online retail and shipping), and as the region continues to grow. As such, New Westminster and other local and regional governments have focused for many years on protecting and intensifying existing industrial lands.

The Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Strategy (2020) (MVRILS) acknowledges this shortage in availability of all types of industrial lands in the region, including those in the employment lands category. New Westminster policy, including the Official Community Plan (2017), the Economic Development Plan (2018) and the Industrial Land Strategy (2008) all align with the regional policy (such as the MVRILS)

and acknowledge the need to retain limited existing industrial lands. Policy 2.3 and 2.4 of the QCP encourage the intensification of existing industrial businesses and land, and aim to reduce conflict between industrial uses, goods movement corridors, and adjacent land uses.

5.3 Official Community Plan Land Use Designation

Initially, the current (QC) Queensborough Commercial Official Community Plan land use designation for this site was thought to be appropriate to support the Starlight Casino located to the west. However, since the completion of the Queensborough Community Plan in 2014, there have been changes to the retail landscape and, as noted above, to the demand for industrial and employment lands.

In the last ten years, as acknowledged in the City's Retail Strategy, there has been an acceleration in the growth of online and e-commerce based services. There is an on-going shift in traditional brick and mortar locations to more experiential based retail which is more focused on "prioritizing customer engagement with a retailer's brand across all key shopping and information channels, blurring the lines between customers' experience in store, on social media platforms and on company websites". Given this shift, the Retail Strategy has sought to focus retail energy in key mixed-use nodes rather than have it stretched out and diluted.

The general approach to locating industrial and employment land uses in New Westminster has been to locate heavier, potentially impactful uses (e.g. manufacturing, processing, large-scale transportation facilities, etc.) adjacent to key transportation infrastructure such as rail, highways, and rivers. These areas are generally designated "I (Industrial)" within the OCP and often zoned Heavy Industrial (M-2). Lighter or employment based uses (e.g. self-storage, auto repair, small-scale assembly/manufacturing) are permitted in areas in closer proximity to commercial or residential uses and are often used to transition from heavier industrial into these areas. The Queensborough Community Plan also seeks to support light industrial and mixed employment uses on smaller parcels and reserves large parcels for heavier uses. As such, the (I) Industrial land use designation is not considered appropriate for the site.

The QME designation is considered the right fit for this site as it provides more flexibility in allowing for a mix of light industrial and employment uses permitted in the M-1 zone including: light manufacturing, trade schools, self-storage, truck and industrial equipment repair, sales, rental, and storage, retail building supply establishments, trade contractor offices and workshops, scientific laboratories, and taxi offices. This designation would shift away from requiring retail or office only and be supportive of regional and municipal industrial and employment policies allowing light industrial, service and office commercial uses.

5.4 Zoning and Compatibility with Adjacent Uses

The application would be consistent with the general approach to locating industrial and employment land uses in New Westminster as it would continue the transition from zoned Heavy Industrial (M-2) and designated Industrial along the waterfront to the

north, to Light Industrial (M-1) zoned and QME designation on this property and the property on the north side of Tanaka Court continuing to the residential and commercial areas directly to the south of Highway 91A and Boyd Street. The proposed QME land use designation and Light Industrial (M-1) zoning would also be compatible with the property directly to the west, which is zoned Heavy Industrial (M-2) and is currently being used as a storage yard.

The proposed Light Industrial Zoning District (M-1) on this site would be consistent with the general approach for locating industrial and employment land uses and be consistent with the M-1 zoning on other properties surrounding the site.

5.5 Site Servicing and Off-Site Improvements

The proposal has been reviewed by the City’s Engineering Services Department regarding required site servicing and off-site improvements. The attached Engineering Servicing Memo (Appendix D) outlines the improvements that would be required to facilitate development once a Development Permit application is received for the site. Such improvements would be provided in accordance with City standards, as determined by the Director of Engineering.

6.0 PUBLIC AND COMMITTEE CONSULTATION

As outlined in the applicant’s Project Summary Letter (Appendix A), the applicant presented the proposal to the Queensborough Residents Association on September 10, 2024. There were 20 participants at the meeting and no questions were raised.

City-led consultation included a project website and online survey, published on Be Heard New West and open between October 11 and October 28. Residents within 100 metres of the project were notified of the survey, and an invitation to participate was posted in one issue of the New West Record.

One survey response was received which was focused on conservation of native habitat in the area where possible. This feedback was provided to the applicant for consideration as part of a future development. The City-led Consultation summary report can be found in Appendix E.

6.2 OCP Amendment *Local Government Act* Consultation

Section 475 and 476 of the *Local Government Act* provides requirements for consultation prior to consideration of an OCP amendment. Following direction from Council, staff submitted a request for written comments to local First Nations. Local First Nations were subsequently advised of the APC meeting.

Feedback received to date through consultation with Local First Nations is summarized below. This feedback has been provided to the applicant for consideration.

Squamish Nation recommended that the applicant engage a consultant to provide an archeological assessment. Tsawwassen First Nation also requested copies of interim

and final environmental and archaeological reports produced. Staff note that at this time, the City does not have a requirement for archaeological monitoring to take place on these types of development projects; however, staff have identified this topic as requiring further study, and intend to develop a more robust policy on archeological assessments in partnership with local First Nations and Council. In the interim, the applicant has indicated that they will voluntarily retain an archaeological consultant to assess the site.

Squamish Nation also recommended that the project consider implementation of climate resilient standards, that building designs anticipate future climate impacts, and that buildings be designed to net zero carbon emissions and the highest sustainability standards. They also provided feedback that they expect job/business opportunity creation for Squamish Nation members as part of the developmental/construction phase of the project.

While no form of development is being proposed at this time, staff will continue to work with the applicant to address the feedback received by the Nations as part of this rezoning and OCP Amendment application.

6.3 Advisory Planning Commission

Consideration by the Advisory Planning Commission is required for this project since an Official Community Plan amendment is proposed. The meeting has been advertised by:

- Mailing postcards to all owners and occupants within 100 m. (328 ft.) of the site. A total of 19 postcards were distributed;
- Sending letters to the Queensborough Residents’ Association, New Westminster School District, and local First Nations; and
- Posting information on the Be Heard New West project page and on the City’s website.

The applicant has also installed a development information sign on the site more than 14 days prior to this meeting.

7.0 INTERDEPARTMENTAL LIAISON

The City has a project-based team approach for reviewing development applications. A staff-led project team was assigned to review this project and consists of staff from Engineering (Servicing and Transportation), Fire, Electrical, Parks and Recreation, and Planning and Development (Building, Planning, and Trees) Departments who have provided comments throughout the development review process.

8.0 PROCESS

8.1 Application Review Process

The application is progressing through the City’s development process. The following steps have been completed to date:

- 1. Preliminary Report to Council (August 26, 2024)
- 2. Community-led Consultation (October 11 to 28, 2024)
- 3. Presentation to Advisory Planning Commission (**WE ARE HERE**);

Next Steps:

- 4. Report to Council for Consideration of First and Second Readings of OCP Amendment and Rezoning Bylaws;
- 5. Public Hearing and Council consideration of Third Reading of OCP Amendment and Rezoning Bylaws;
- 6. Applicant Completion of Adoption Requirements;
- 7. Council Consideration of Final Adoption of OCP Amendment and Rezoning Bylaws.
- 8. Development Permit considered by Director of Planning and Development.

9.0 LAND USE QUESTIONS FOR APC

The Advisory Planning Commission is being asked to review the Official Community Plan amendment application for this project, and provide feedback related to the following:

- 1. Does the Commission support changing the Official Community Plan land use designation at this location to “Queensborough Mixed Employment” to allow for a mix of light industrial and employment uses.

APPENDICES

- Appendix A: Applicant Project Summary Letter
- Appendix B: Draft Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 7925, 2017, Amendment Bylaw (1084 Tanaka Court) No. 8483, 2024
- Appendix C: Draft Zoning Bylaw No. 6680, 2001, Amendment Bylaw (1084 Tanaka Court) No. 8484, 2024
- Appendix D: Engineering Services Memo
- Appendix E: City-Led Consultation Summary Report

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