



**Regular Council**

**Monday, March 24, 2025  
6:00 p.m.**

**Council Chamber, Second Floor  
New Westminster City Hall, 511 Royal Avenue**

Present: Mayor Patrick Johnstone  
Councillor Ruby Campbell  
Councillor Daniel Fontaine  
Councillor Tasha Henderson  
Councillor Jaimie McEvoy  
Councillor Paul Minhas  
Councillor Nadine Nakagawa

Corporate Officer – Hanieh Berg

**1. CALL TO ORDER & LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Mayor Johnstone called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and recognized with respect that New Westminster is on the unceded and unsundered land of the Halkomelem speaking peoples. He acknowledged that colonialism has made invisible their histories and connections to the land. He recognized that, as a City, we are learning and building relationships with the people whose lands we are on.

**2. AGENDA ADDITIONS & DELETIONS**

MOVED and SECONDED

*THAT “Flag of the United States at Queen’s Park Arena” be added under New Business.*

**DEFEATED**

Opposed: Mayor Johnstone  
Cllrs. Campbell  
Henderson  
McEvoy  
Nakagawa

MOVED and SECONDED

*THAT the Agenda for the March 24, 2025 Regular Council meeting be approved with the addition of “2025 Federal Election” as Item 9.1 under New Business.*

**CARRIED**

Opposed: Cllr. Fontaine

### **3. PRESENTATION & DELEGATIONS**

#### **3.1 Steve Kooner, Member of the Legislative Assembly for Richmond-Queensborough**

Steve Kooner, Member of the Legislative Assembly, remarked that he is pleased to serve and represent Queensborough residents and collaborate with City Council to advance the needs and interests of the community.

#### **3.2 Delegations**

Pat Muise remarked that recent work along East Columbia Street and Sherbrooke Street have resulted in “choke points.” He was of the opinion that traffic flow has been negatively affected in the area, particularly to Royal Columbia Hospital.

Larry Church and Gail Ancill spoke in favour of Item 6.1 to pause changes to the Fifth Street boulevard near Queen’s Park and cited concern with the lack of consultation with residents. Also, L. Church and G. Ancill spoke to the materials used along the boulevard, noting that they do not lend themselves well to the environment or residents’ ability to enjoy the boulevard.

Krisztina Fulop, representing the New Westminster Tenants Union, spoke in favour of Item 4.2; K. Fulop urged Council to consider additional protections for renters in relation to minimum space requirements, pets, and other securities should a project not proceed due to a developer’s inability to complete the project.

Brandi Rogocky expressed concern with the number of individuals experiencing homelessness, mental health issues, and substance use in the downtown area. She stated that the current demographic of the downtown area is hindering public safety and residents’ right to enjoy their home. B. Rogocky requested that the impact of shelters and other services aimed at supporting those experiencing homelessness, mental health issues, and substance use be considered in the broader context of the neighbourhood and its residents.

Juno Avila-Clark spoke in favour of the City’s efforts to naturalize and re-wild areas throughout the city in support of the New Westminster Biodiversity and Natural Areas Strategy.

Mike Timoffee and Karen Murray cited concern with the installation of a rain garden in their neighbourhood and the reduction of parking as a result. M. Timoffee queried the effectiveness of the garden given the area’s topography and spoke to the curb extension design, noting that the narrowing of the road may result in unsafe conditions for vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians. M. Timoffee then requested that the location of the rain garden be reconsidered.

Discussion took place and staff was instructed to provide Council and West End residents with a list of existing and forthcoming rain gardens, including a map of their locations.

Grant Penner spoke in favour of Item 6.1 to pause changes to the Fifth Street boulevard near Queen's Park, citing concerns with the lack of public consultation and future maintenance costs of proposed new materials.

Myles Liversidge spoke in favour of Item 6.1 to pause changes to the Fifth Street boulevard near Queen's Park, noting that residents should have been consulted prior to any works being carried out on the boulevard. M. Liversidge queried the cost effectiveness of the various materials to be placed on the boulevard as well as what criteria will be utilized to evaluate the effectiveness of such changes in relation to the City's Biodiversity and Natural Areas Strategy.

Naomi Perks, joined the meeting electronically and spoke against Item 6.1. N. Perks remarked that pausing changes to the Fifth Street boulevard near Queen's Park will delay implementation of the City's Biodiversity and Natural Areas Strategy, which was approved by Council following public engagement.

The meeting recessed at 8:00 p.m.

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The meeting reconvened at 8:15 p.m. with all members of Council present.

#### **4. CONSENT AGENDA**

MOVED and SECONDED

*THAT Items No. 4.1 through No. 4.4 be adopted by general consent with the removal of Items No. 4.2 and 4.4.*

**CARRIED**

##### **4.1 Minutes**

*THAT the Minutes of the Regular Council meeting held on March 10, 2025 be adopted as circulated.*

**ADOPTED ON CONSENT**

##### **4.2 Tenant Relocation Policy – Engagement and Policy Update**

Please see Page 4 for action on this matter.

**4.3 Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Miscellaneous Zoning Bylaw Amendments) No. 8495, 2025: For Consideration**

1. *THAT Zoning Bylaw No. 6680, 2001, Miscellaneous Amendments Bylaw No. 8495, 2025 be forwarded to the April 7, 2025 Regular Meeting of Council for first, second and third readings.*
2. *THAT no Public Hearing be held for Zoning Bylaw No. 6680, 2001, Miscellaneous Amendments Bylaw No. 8495, 2025 following circulation of notice, in accordance with the Local Government Act.*

**ADOPTED ON CONSENT**

**4.4 Zoning Amendment to Remove Mini-storage Use from M-1, M-5 and CM-1 Industrial Districts, and to Require Storage in Multi-family Residential Districts**

Please see Page 6 for action on this matter.

**4.5 Proclamation: World Tuberculosis Day, March 24, 2025**

**ADOPTED ON CONSENT**

**4.6 Proclamation: International Purple Day for Epilepsy Awareness, March 26, 2025**

**ADOPTED ON CONSENT**

**5. CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA**

**4.2 Tenant Relocation Policy – Engagement and Policy Update**

One piece of correspondence was circulated on table (attached to and forming part of these Minutes as Schedule 1).

In reply to queries from Council, Jackie Teed, Director, Planning and Development, accompanied by Anur Mehdic, Social Planner II, provided the following information:

- a number of legal tools can be utilized to secure provisions of the forthcoming policy, such as housing agreements or covenants;
- a Tenant Relocation Coordinator would primarily be responsible for tracking, administering, and updating the provisions of the tenant agreements and other legal documents;
- all units in the new building will need to meet other City regulations, including minimum unit size requirements; and
- the size of existing rental units in comparison to future new units has not been analyzed, however the proposed policy includes a right of first refusal to a rental replacement unit in the new building that includes the same number of bedrooms.

MOVED and SECONDED

1. *THAT the principles outlined in the Proposed Principles to Update the City's Tenant Relocation Policy Section of the March 24, 2025 report titled "Tenant Relocation Policy – Engagement and Policy Update" be used as a basis for the update to the City's Tenant Relocation Policy; and*
2. *THAT staff report back with an analysis on opportunities and consequences of including larger floor space standards in rental units as part of the Tenant Relocation Policy.*

The question on the motion was not called as the following amendment was introduced:

MOVED and SECONDED

*THAT the following be added as Part 3: "THAT staff report back with an analysis on higher compensation for seniors and people living with disabilities."*

The question on the motion was not called as the following amendment to the amendment was introduced:

MOVED and SECONDED

*THAT the amendment be amended by adding "low-income residents such as" before "seniors."*

**CARRIED**

The question on the amendment, as amended, was not called as discussion took place on the need to capture the long-term impacts of lump-sum payments in lieu of replacement units.

The question on the amendment, as amended, was then called and it was **CARRIED** with Cllr. McEvoy opposed.

The question on the main motion, as amended, was not called as the following amendment was introduced:

MOVED and SECONDED

*THAT Part 2 be deleted in its entirety and replaced with the following: "THAT staff be directed, where possible, to incorporate a comparable equivalent strategy in the Tenant Relocation Policy moving forward."*

**DEFEATED**

Opposed: Mayor Johnstone  
Cllrs. Campbell  
Henderson  
McEvoy  
Nakagawa

Discussion took place and staff advised that the consideration of pets will also be captured in the City's forthcoming Tenant Relocation Policy.

The question on the main motion, as amended, which now reads:

- “1. THAT the principles outlined in the Proposed Principles to Update the City’s Tenant Relocation Policy Section of the March 24, 2025 report titled “Tenant Relocation Policy – Engagement and Policy Update” be used as a basis for the update to the City’s Tenant Relocation Policy;*
- 2. THAT staff report back with an analysis on opportunities and consequences of including larger floor space standards in rental units as part of the Tenant Relocation Policy.; and*
- 3. THAT staff report back with an analysis on higher compensation for low-income residents such as seniors and people living with disabilities.”*

was then called and it was **CARRIED**.

#### **4.4 Zoning Amendment to Remove Mini-storage Use from M-1, M-5 and CM-1 Industrial Districts, and to Require Storage in Multi-family Residential Districts**

One piece of correspondence was circulated on table (attached to and forming part of these Minutes as Schedule 2).

J. Teed provided background information and in reply to queries from Council advised that staff are working with applicants who had previously made applications or enquiries for the construction of new mini-storage buildings; the applicants have been advised that they must submit zoning bylaw compliant applications, including compliant building permit applications, prior to adoption of the proposed zoning amendment bylaw. Staff anticipate bringing forward the proposed zoning bylaw amendment for Council’s consideration of adoption in July 2025.

MOVED and SECONDED

- 1. THAT Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Storage Amendments) No. 8518, 2025, that would remove mini-storage from the list of permitted uses in the M-1, M- 5 and CM-1 zoning districts and to add to all multi-family and/or mixed-use residential zoning districts a requirement for storage within new multi-family residential projects, be received for information.*
- 2. THAT no Public Hearing be held for the Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Storage Amendments) No. 8518, 2025, following circulation of notice, in accordance with the Local Government Act.*

The question on the motion was not called as discussion took place on the need for mini-storage use as the housing stock throughout the City is primarily townhomes and apartments, which generally do not offer adequate storage.

Discussion further took place with regard to proposed Bylaw No. 8518, 2025 and it was noted that the removal of mini-storage from the list of permitted uses in the M-1, M- 5 and CM-1 zoning districts is separate from the need to add to all multi-family and/or mixed-use residential zoning districts a requirement for storage within new multi-family residential projects. As a result, staff was directed to present two separate bylaws for Council’s consideration.

The question on the motion was then called and it was **CARRIED** with Cllrs. Fontaine, McEvoy and Minhas opposed.

## 6. MOTIONS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION

### 6.1 Placing the Naturalization and Rewilding Project in Queen's Park on Hold

14 pieces of correspondence were circulated on table (attached to and forming part of these Minutes as Schedule 3).

MOVED and SECONDED

1. *THAT the City's Biodiversity Strategy, as it pertains to the 'rewilding' and 'naturalizing' of Second Street and Fifth Street boulevards, be placed on hold until October 2026; and*
2. *THAT a neighbourhood consultation plan be developed and shared with Council regarding any future 'naturalizing' or 'rewilding' of the boulevards in Queen's Park or other neighbourhoods throughout the City.*

The question on the motion was not called as discussion took place and Council commented on the community's feedback both in favour and in opposition to the changes to the Fifth Street boulevard near Queen's Park.

As a result of the discussion, the following amendment was introduced:

MOVED and SECONDED

*THAT Parts 1 and 2 be deleted in their entirety and replaced with the following:*

- "1. THAT staff complete the revised naturalization work on the Fifth Street median between Third and Fourth streets, then take at least a year to allow the area to establish, and conduct an evaluation of the initiative with the neighbourhood regarding the initial work and any related next steps, consistent with the March 3rd, 2025 staff correspondence to residents and Council, and the 2022 City of New Westminster Biodiversity and Natural Areas Strategy; and*
- 2. THAT no further expansion of naturalized areas on Queen's Park neighbourhood boulevards be undertaken until after this evaluation, and only after consultation with the community, including considerations of the Queen's Park Heritage Conservation Area Landscape Guidelines, as per the March 3, 2025 correspondence."*

The question on the amendment motion was not called as discussion took place on addressing the community's feedback and returning the boulevard to what it was prior to recent changes.

As a result of the discussion, the following amendment to the amendment was introduced:

MOVED and SECONDED

*THAT Part 1 of the amendment be deleted in its entirety and replaced with the following: “THAT the Fifth Street boulevard be returned to its previous state prior to the Rewilding Pilot Project.”*

**DEFEATED**

Opposed: Mayor Johnstone  
Cllrs. Campbell  
Henderson  
McEvoy  
Nakagawa

The question on the amendment was then called and it was **CARRIED** with Cllrs. Fontaine and Minhas opposed.

There was agreement to consider Parts 1 and 2 of the main motion, as amended, separately.

The question on Part 1, as amended, was then called and it was **CARRIED** with Cllrs. Fontaine and Minhas opposed.

The question on Part 2, as amended, was then called and it was **CARRIED**.

## **6.2 Providing Priority to New West Residents and Businesses for City-Operated Programs and Services**

MOVED and SECONDED

1. *THAT staff report back to Council regarding options for consideration to significantly enhance a “Priority New West” policy that provides local residents and businesses with priority access to City operated programs and services.*
2. *THAT the report include a comparison of other jurisdictions in our region regarding what initiatives they have implemented to provide their citizens and business owners with priority access.*

The question on the motion was not called as the following amendment was introduced

MOVED and SECONDED

1. *THAT Part 1 be amended by deleting “regarding” and replacing it with “on existing policies and;” and*
2. *THAT the following be added as Parts 3 and 4 to the main motion:*
  - “3. *THAT staff report back on opportunities to further increase the accessibility of current recreation programs including exploring options around staggered registration dates for high-demand recreation programs; and*
  4. *THAT staff reach out to School District 40 to explore opportunities for school-aged children to participate in high-demand programs such as swimming or gymnastic lessons during school hours as part of their educational curriculum.”*



The question on the amendment was not called as the meeting recessed at 10:00 p.m.

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The meeting reconvened at 10:10 p.m. with all members of Council present.

The question on the amendment was then called and it was **CARRIED**.

The question on the main motion, as amended, which now reads:

- “1. THAT staff report back to Council on existing policies and options for consideration to significantly enhance a “Priority New West” policy that provides local residents and businesses with priority access to City operated programs and services;*
- 2. THAT the report include a comparison of other jurisdictions in our region regarding what initiatives they have implemented to provide their citizens and business owners with priority access;*
- 3. THAT staff report back on opportunities to further increase the accessibility of current recreation programs including exploring options around staggered registration dates for high-demand recreation programs; and*
- 4. THAT staff reach out to School District 40 to explore opportunities for school-aged children to participate in high-demand programs such as swimming or gymnastic lessons during school hours as part of their educational curriculum.”*

was then called and it was **CARRIED**.

MOVED and SECONDED

*THAT the Regular Council meeting be extended to 11:00 p.m.*

**CARRIED**

## **7. NOTICE OF MOTION**

### **7.1 Inventory of Municipal Arts and Culture Indoor and Outdoor Spaces**

Submitted by Councillor Campbell

*WHEREAS the arts and culture sector plays a crucial role in contributing to New Westminster’s local economy, promoting New Westminster’s tourism, and enriching community belonging and connections; and*

*WHEREAS it is important for the arts and cultural sector to have a comprehensive and centralized inventory of the availability and condition of indoor and outdoor spaces dedicated to arts and culture in the community;*

*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that staff prepare an inventory of all municipal indoor and outdoor spaces within the city that are suitable for arts and cultural use, including but not limited to: Public spaces utilized for arts events, performances, exhibitions, and installations; indoor venues such as galleries, theaters, performance halls, studios, and creative spaces; outdoor venues such as public plazas, parks, and other open-air venues used for arts programming as well as an any available data on capacity, site amenities, accessibility descriptions and types of arts programming possible in these spaces.*

In accordance with Section 100 of the *Community Charter*, Councillor Minhas declared a potential conflict of interest as he owns a business with a sidewalk patio and left the meeting (10:29 p.m.).

## **8. BYLAWS FOR ADOPTION**

### **8.1 Street and Sidewalk Patio Bylaw No. 8318, 2022, Amendment Bylaw No. 8514, 2025**

MOVED and SECONDED

*THAT Street and Sidewalk Patio Bylaw No. 8318, 2022, Amendment Bylaw No. 8514, 2025 be adopted.*

**CARRIED**

*Cllr. Minhas returned to the meeting (10:30 p.m.).*

### **8.2 Subdivision and Development Control Bylaw No. 7142, 2008, Miscellaneous Amendments Bylaw No. 8515, 2025**

MOVED and SECONDED

*THAT Subdivision and Development Control Bylaw No. 7142, 2008, Miscellaneous Amendments Bylaw No. 8515, 2025 be adopted.*

**CARRIED**

## **9. NEW BUSINESS**

### **9.1 2025 Federal Election**

MOVED and SECONDED

*THAT the April 28, 2025 Regular Council meeting be rescheduled to May 5, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber at New Westminster City Hall.*

**CARRIED**

## **10. PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mayor Johnstone announced that Lino Siracusa and Sally Bhullar-Gill were reappointed to the Utility Commission for a third three-year term to expire on April 30, 2028, and Maya Chorobik was reappointed to the Utility Commission for a second three-year term to expire April 30, 2028.

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

MOVED and SECONDED

*THAT the meeting adjourn (10:33 p.m.).*

**CARRIED**

Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Regular meeting of Council of the City of New Westminster held on March 24, 2025.

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Patrick Johnstone  
MAYOR

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Hanieh Berg  
CORPORATE OFFICER

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**From:** joshua taylor **S.22(1)Personal and Confidential**  
**Sent:** Monday, March 24, 2025 3:30 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Tenant Relocation Program

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the City of New Westminster's network. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

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Good afternoon councillors and mr. mayor

My name is Josh Taylor, I'm a ticketed journeyman working in a small business in Burnaby. I live a couple blocks away in the TOD area and I'd like to speak a little about the tenant relocation/assistance program. I wanted to come speak tonight at city council, but the list of delegates is full.

I love living in New West. I moved here with my partner in 2022 and we were lucky enough to find an apartment within walking distance to both uptown and downtown, that was affordable, and close to quite a lot of transit service. Which we both rely on.

Little did we know, that this was such a vibrant, community focused, and homey city. Many people that I've spoken to have similar living arrangements to me. We live in older apartment buildings within the TOD zone with roughly 700-800 square feet of space. Many new apartment builds today average 425 square feet for a 1 bed apartment. And studios might be as small as 325 square feet.

I'd like to see a system which helps maintain the size of a tenants home if they're relocated into the new building. Perhaps the new unit can only be 15-20% smaller than the original, even if this moves you to a 2 or 3 bedroom apartment. And maybe a small allowance for a rental increase if the number of bedrooms increases.

All in all, I think the TRP is a good starting place to protect the rights of the many renters in New West. But we can do better; and more to protect the rights of those who are often vulnerable, may not have other choices, and would love to stay in this beautiful city.

Thank you for your consideration,

Josh Taylor

March 23, 2025

**ON TABLE**  
Regular Meeting  
March 24, 2025  
Re: Item 4.4

Schedule 2 to the Minutes of the  
Regular Council meeting held on  
March 24, 2025

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

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**Re: 1013-1019 Royal Avenue – Proposed Mini-Storage**

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Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing to you on behalf of Hungerford Properties (Hungerford). We will be closing on the property at 1013-1019 Royal Avenue (site) mid April, 2025 and have submitted a Development Permit application (DP001082 DVP00728) in February of 2024 to permit the development of a mini-storage building.

We are deeply concerned with the motion that was passed by Council at the February 24 Regular Council meeting:

- *1. THAT staff prepare a bylaw and bring forward to the next Regular Meeting for Council a Comprehensive Report to initiate Council's consideration of the bylaw to amend Zoning Bylaw No. 6680, 2001 by removing mini-storage as a use permitted as-of- right from the M-1, M-5 and CM-1 zoning districts.*
- *2. THAT staff notify any current applicants whose proposal may be impacted by the change that they would need to submit a complete, zoning-compliant application prior to Council approval of the amendments.*

And further concerned with the motions being recommended and potential future bylaw amendment being considered without public hearing, each recommendation being considered on the upcoming March 24 Regular Council meeting:

- 1, THAT Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Storage Amendments) No. 8518, 2025, that would remove mini-storage from the list of permitted uses in the M-1, M-5 and CM-1 zoning districts and to add to all multi-family and/or mixed-use residential zoning districts a requirement for storage within new multi-family residential projects, be received for information.
- 2. THAT no Public Hearing be held for the Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Storage Amendments) No. 8518, 2025, following circulation of notice, in accordance with the Local Government Act.

In summary, we ask Mayor and Council to consider the following:

1. Do not opt for legal non-conformance by removing mini-storage use for existing Mini-Storage properties and the instream development applications. Grandfather mini storage use for the three (3) properties with existing self storage AND the properties that are in mid-stream DP applications (our application is at 1013-1019 Royal Avenue (DP001082 DVP00728));
2. Provide in-stream applications with sufficient time to work with staff through the DP and BP process. Mayor and Council to not put these projects under unwarranted rush/risk, and ensuring there is time to work through typical permitting issues with staff;
3. Consider the challenges (outlined below) we have seen when municipalities outright ban (or require rezoning barriers) for mini-storage use. The recommendation by staff adds to the cost of housing development, reduces the supply of self storage and reduces the benefits self-storage provides to all community uses including commercial businesses, retailers, e-commerce companies, and non-profits alike.

### Zoning Context

Our site (1013-1019 Royal Avenue) is currently zoned Light Industrial Mixed Use (M-5), which includes “household goods storage in self-contained storage units (i.e. mini storage buildings)” as a permitted use.

Based on this, Hungerford and after extensive pre-application inquiries with staff and with written feedback received, made the decision in August 2023 to purchase the site with the intention to redevelop it through a Development Permit process into a mini-storage building.

### Development Permit Application Process

In May 2023, we undertook a pre-application process where we shared our preliminary architectural plans to develop a mini-storage building with Planning staff, who provided us with written feedback in June 2023. The feedback received included review by Planning and other internal City departments, and did not indicate any issues with both the proposed use and building form and massing.

In February 2024, we submitted our Development Permit application to permit a mini-storage building in accordance with the M-5 zone and staff’s written feedback.

Following submission, staff raised concerns around setbacks, overall building height and shadowing on adjacent uses. Over the past year, we have worked collaboratively with staff to address their comments and design the building to sensitively integrate with the existing neighbourhood context, which is primarily light industrial in nature.

We are still working with staff to address a couple of proposed variances including exempting the parking level as a storey, while maintaining the overall height below 85ft due to challenges with the site grading and reducing the off-street bicycle parking requirements.

### Impacts of the Motion

The motion that was supported by Council on February 24 instructed staff to bring forward a report for consideration of removing mini-storage use from M-1, M-5, and CM-1 zones. We understand that this report is coming forward to the March 24, 2025 Regular Council meeting.

To be grandfathered and thereby legally non-conforming under the existing M-5 provisions, staff has informed us that we need to submit a compliant building permit application prior to the potential down-zoning to the M-1, M-5, and CM-1 zones are put into effect (approximately by July 2025 as per the report). This timeline is extremely challenging to meet since a building permit (Phase 1) application can only be submitted following the approval and issuance of the Development Permit, which is dependent on staff review timelines and consultant/development team production timelines. Part of the reason why our DP has taken the amount of time that it has is due to the iterative process required to work with staff, address their comments, and find solutions that work for both sides.

We are at this time a bit over a month away from providing our formal DP Resubmission #2. Based on current timelines, DP Issuance would be at best mid August with a BP application made by the end of September. Full BP set of drawings takes 6-8 weeks from commencement and only starts once a response is provided to the Prior to Letter. As such we are requesting a reasonable timeline to be given to in-stream DP applications prior to council's consideration of down-zoning the M-1, M-5 and CM-1 zones by removing Mini-Storage as an outright use.

If we are not outright permitted to have mini-storage on site and required to undertake a rezoning process, this will significantly impact the investment we have made into the City of New Westminster and undermines our trust in both staff and the process.

This motion moves the goal post on an in-stream application and negatively impacts our investment in a time of great economic uncertainty.

Prior to making significant investment decisions, we undertake comprehensive due diligence based on 5 decades of successful real estate management and development. For this site we obtained a third-party planning opinion and completed a pre-application process with Planning staff to ensure the proposed mini-storage use is permitted under the existing M-5 zone. This motion and subsequent proposed changes to the zoning bylaw does not represent good faith dealings between Planning and those looking to do business in your city, especially for applicants that are in-stream in their development application. This direction sends and sets a dark precedent in a time where investment and business expansion is needed more than ever in our municipalities, provinces and country.

We recognize that the Lower Twelfth Study Area planning work envisions an evolution of the area to more of a mixed-use form, which our application is responding to. We are simply asking Council to give existing, in-stream applications that were submitted under the current zoning framework the time they need to complete.

#### Legal non-conformance

The motion would have the effect of creating, for these in-stream applications and the three other existing mini-storage facilities in the City, legal non-conformance. These are current and future businesses that do or will contribute millions of dollars of taxes to the City in the form of property taxes. While yes, legal non-conformance is notionally conveyed in many places around the province the consequences of legal non-conformance are many for businesses and properties:

1. If a property is damaged or destroyed the ability to rebuild to the legal non-conformance is put into doubt. If there were a fire, flood – legal non-conformance puts replaceability into question. Replacement Insurance is a fundamental insurance product that property owners seek coverage against. Legal non-conformance effects insurability. As per section 532(1) of *the Local Government Act*: if a non-confirming use and its structure are damaged or destroyed “*to the extent of 75% or more of its value above its foundations....the structure must not be repaired or reconstructed except for a conforming use in accordance with the bylaw*”
2. Property values will be impacted due to uncertainty in completing alterations or augmentations. Mini-storage properties are real estate with an operating business attached. Operations of the business change overtime with technology and norms/habits of its customers. If such change necessitates augmentations



that are far beyond a simple building permit, legal non-conformance would prevent mini-storage businesses to adapt to new challenges and force them to accept the status quo (unless a rezoning were to be sought, which is an impractical process in most cases).

3. Section 528 subsection 2 of the Local Government Act states that: “If a non-conforming use authorized under subsection (1) is discontinued for a continuous period of 6 months, any subsequent use of the land, building or other structure becomes subject to the land use regulation bylaw.” Meaning if there is a lapse in a business license or operations for more than 6 months (which could occur in the event of a major disaster) then the property would no longer be legally non-conforming and be subject to the then current land use regulations.
4. Section 531 subsection 1 of the Local Government Act states that: “a structural alteration or addition must not be made in or to a building or other structure while a non-conforming use is continued in all or any part of it”. Mini Storage buildings will have mini-storage uses in them. If legal non-conformance is the goal by Council, then making structural alterations, repairs etc, would require the site to be rezoned to allow for it.

Instead of opting for Legal non-conformance we urge Mayor and Council to consider keeping Mini-Storage as a use for existing Mini-Storage properties and those that are in-stream in their current applications. This way the businesses can continue to operate without uncertainty and the issues highlighted above.

#### Bylaw Adoption Process Proposed By Staff

We note that Staff recommend that a public hearing not be held for the proposed zoning bylaw amendment. From our layperson understanding, waiving the requirement for a Public Hearing is allowed under the recently revised *Local Government Act* insofar that the bylaw change would be in accordance with the OCP. Within the existing OCP and thereby district schedules of M-1, M-5 and CM-1 zones include Mini-Storage as a outright approved use. As mini-storage is contemplated in the mix of light industrial uses in these zones, it is not reasonable to characterize the current OCP as denying Mini-Storage as a use based on perceived inconsistency with other permitted uses. As we are not aware of a specific amendment to the OCP or related planning documents that supplement the OCP in the proposed downzoning, we believe not having a public hearing to affect the proposed bylaw would be in violation of section 464 of the *Local Government Act*.

Comments and response to the Staff Report: *Zoning Amendment to Remove Mini-storage Use from M-1, M-5 and CM-1 Industrial Districts, and to Require Storage in Multi-family Residential Districts (File DP001082, Doc #2644242, Item # 2025-97)*

As council and staff have not nor are recommending for a public discussion/hearing on the topic for recommendations being proposed, we felt it necessary to provide facts and discussion related to the report provided by Staff to Mayor and Council.

- There has not been clear objectives and principals approved for the Lower Twelfth Study Area, nor has Council given clear direction on the vision for the Lower Twelfth Study Area. Removing an otherwise approved use now without clear direction on the Lower Twelfth Study Area appears to unreasonably restrict any and all applications including the reasonable ability for existing in-stream applications, like ours, from being processed.
- Adding storage as a requirement for multi-family projects is not a replacement for Mini-Storage businesses. We have operated our self-storage business for more than 9 years with locations in urban centres across all of Western Canada. The mix of tenants within our facilities are by and large residents in surrounding areas not having enough space in their condo or apartment to house large, bulky and seasonal items. Depending on the site, between 30-35% of space in our self-storage facilities are utilized by retailers, wholesalers, non-profit sport organizations, and generally act as on-demand affordable storage solutions for businesses in general.
- Safety and engineering standards for modern self storage buildings are rigorous and very different from storage cages in the parkade of residential buildings. Below grade residential storage in multi-family buildings are not secure, sprinklered appropriately for the materials stored and increase liability and risk of fire and life safety in the event of unpermitted items persisting in residential storage cages in multi-family buildings. Whereas with modern Self Storage businesses and developments, onsite staff regularly monitor goods and equipment being stored in the facilities with engineering standards and fire and life safety systems in place to meet the hazard ratings for a wide array of goods and equipment stored in our facilities.
- The recommended requirement by staff to “require 3.7m<sup>2</sup> per dwelling for residential storage in new multi-family residential buildings” will hurt affordability and suggests that every residential occupant needs additional storage. At a time where the region is struggling to deliver affordable and cost-effective housing, the recommendation will mute the efforts of all levels of governments to address the housing and affordability crisis. In a multi-family residential project – this recommendation based on hard costs

only would increase the cost of delivery by at least \$8,800 per unit, depending on depth of a parkade, structure details, soil quality, etc. With DCCs, softs costs, and other taxations, this amount increases to \$11,800 per unit. Whereas allowing for permitting and regulated self storage developments, those business can meet the market demand and grow an industrial tax base for the City.

- The recommendation to down-zone, restrict self-storage supply and impose requirements for storage in new multi-family units unreasonably discriminates between existing multi-family and new development. The effect of the down-zoning would be to restrict the supply of self-storage, which could then make it more scarce, less affordable and placing a larger burden to bear on existing multi-family residential units for the City.
- The issues with Mini-Storage Use as outlined on page 3 of the Staff Report are problematic in that:
  1. While we agree as compared to other 'employment uses', self storage provides fewer jobs per SF, the pace of change from existing jobs on site is a marketed improvement from 2-3 jobs to 20 (our application plans to include some other mixed use light industrial uses). As a result, the development of the self-storage building at our site would be a 10-fold increase to the City's tax base for this property. While we agree jobs and job spaces are important, growing the pie of a municipalities tax base should also be important.
  2. We have been collaboratively working with staff to meet the needs of the development guidelines that are in place for the area and have incorporated a higher level of materiality, articulations, and additional glazing to meet the vision staff have for the area. To suggest that Staff have no say in the development form suggests that the development permit application process is flawed and will result in unintended development.
  3. Self Storage is a development typology that is tied to an operating business. The operating business informs investment and given the long-term density that Council has either approved in the downtown area (existing approvals) suggest there will be need for such facilities in the future. Because the business is one that caters to in part to retail segments of the market, over saturation and supply and demand guides the investment in new facilities. Self storage is not a high occupancy business, in-fact stabilization levels are 5-6% below office occupancy standards, and trade areas for self-storage businesses encompass not just New Westminster but parts of south Burnaby and east Richmond.

Ultimately, we are deeply concerned about the proposed motions and recommend that these not be supported by Council, or if they are – to at the very least continue to permit Mini-Storage as an outright approved use on the existing Mini-Storage Facilities and the current in-stream applications, like ours at 1013-1019 Royal Avenue.

With utmost respect,



**Michael Hungerford**  
**Partner, Hungerford Properties**

CC: City of New Westminster: Lisa Spitale, CAO; Jackie Teed, Director of Planning and Development; Rupinder Basi, Deputy Director of Planning and Development; Kirsten Robinson, Senior Development Planner

**From:** Emiliano Carrasco  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 19, 2025 4:48 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors; External-Legislative Services  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] In appreciation and support of the Urban Rewilding efforts in New Westminster

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Good day, Mayor and Council.

My name is Emiliano. I just wanted to write in order to express my appreciation for the Urban Rewilding efforts that have been put forward throughout the city.

It is very well known how wasteful (in terms of land and water) lawns can be, and replacing them with trees and areas that can benefit the people of New Westminster is such a wonderful thing to do. These rewildings will help with the pollution caused by exhaust pipes, will provide shade and cool areas when there is hot days, and will provide a space for pollinators and other wonderful critters to live and thrive within our urban area. These are all amazing and great things; not to mention the benefits regarding the quality of the soil, the benefits with noise reduction and even with road safety, since more trees in boulevards and in street gardens prompt drivers to drive more carefully (since they have to pay more attention).

Going back to just lawns would not only be a silly waste of city resources and time -- it would also be anything *but* progressive and it would ultimately hurt all the citizens in New Westminster, mostly in terms of environmental justice. Reverting to lawns in public areas would be a short-sighted, stubborn and uninformed decision that would undo a lot of good.

So again: I truly appreciate the changes being done in this regard. The rewildings are going great and I was thrilled when I first saw it start. I encourage the Mayor and Council to keep on this path. I am confident that the City is able and amenable for all.

Thanks, and in solidarity,  
Emiliano.

Sent with [Proton Mail](#) secure email.

March 19, 2025.

Mayor and Councillors,

I am writing to support the motion being made regarding the Fifth and Second Street Boulevard 'rewilding' and 'naturalizing' as part of the Biodiversity Strategy.

Indeed I feel it is time for a reset and the project to be put on hold until October 2026. I believe both the citizens of New Westminster and the community of the Queens Park neighborhood have been failed with this project for the following reasons:

1. Lack of transparency.
2. Lack of consultation with the community.
3. Failure to follow their own Biodiversity Strategy which references the fact that Pollinator Gardens should not be placed close to traffic as it is detrimental to ground nesting bees.
4. Failure to have a figure of what this project cost to put in.. and now take out.
5. Failure to follow through on email correspondence when promised they would come up with a figure for a cost.
6. Failure to describe the interplay of the Biodiversity Strategy and the HCA Landscape Design Guidelines as well as the OCP.
7. Failure to relay consistent messaging. At a recent City Council Meeting I watched Erica Mashig state the Second Street Boulevard would also be naturalized. Some time later "no current plans" for Second Street Boulevard, and finally in a notice distributed there is no discussion of Second Street. Now, which one is it?

Imagine this. The front door of each home on both Fifth Street and Second Street pay on average \$1000.00 per month for property taxes. Yet, it seems no one can account for the amount spent on this project. Not to mention ripping it all out. This is basic accounting. I have no faith in a City that cannot do math to be capable of making wise financial decisions as is clearly illustrated here. After a 23 percent property tax increase over the past 3 years perhaps a suggestion would be to start spending the money like it is your own. My husband works incredibly hard for his income and I do not take this lightly.

In summary. Time for a reset. Time to communicate and be transparent. Most importantly, time to support the motion that this project be put on hold until October 2026.

Merilee Howley

Fifth Street

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**From:** Jennifer Duprey S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 20, 2025 3:01 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Fifth Street Boulevard

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Dear Mayor and Councillors of New Westminster,

I am writing to seek your urgent direction to the New Westminster Parks Board to return the full boulevard on Fifth Street to green grass, as it was before the experimentation with some native plants and wild grasses which are not appropriate for this boulevard.

The Fifth Street Boulevard is a heritage boulevard in an heritage district and serves as green views and beauty year round, as well as play and relaxing space for residents and the New Westminster community.

The native plants and wild grasses and pollinators trialled out are not suited to this area as they look terrible in the winter, spread weeds and other intrusive plant species, encourage rodent nesting and discourage enjoyment because they are not appropriate to walk through or play on.

It is very unfortunate that so much work and change has been undertaken without residents' input and consultation. Until that occurs, the boulevard should be returned to its previous appearance and utility so that residents may resume their enjoyment of walking, playing and resting on it as they have for decades.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and consideration of concerns about all the work that has been done that has unfortunately harmed a broad, beautiful green space beloved by residents and the many, many people in the city of New Westminster who enjoy walking through or adjacent to the boulevard and who have been so disappointed by the changes and destruction. Going forward, there should not be changes to the green grass without notice and local engagement and input.

Thank you for your attention to this.

Jennifer Duprey  
S.22(1)Personal and Confidential Fifth Street  
S.22(1)Personal and Confidential



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**From:** Katelyn Connor S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 20, 2025 8:03 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] On the naturalization of 5th Street: Comments to Council

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To whom this may concern,

At Tuesday's meeting with the New West Environmental partners, S.22(1)Personal and Confidential informed me that the naturalization of 5<sup>th</sup> street is being contested on Monday. I am deeply saddened by this news I have been a part of this city since I was born here S.22(1)Personal and Confidential. The incentives taken towards climate resilience and stewardship feel to be the right step in teaching the next generation about our relationship and responsibility to land. The location of the naturalization site is perfect as its close to schools and near where my girl guide group would meet and learn wilderness skills. It provides great opportunity to learn the difference between native and invasive plants and helps teach indigenous perspectives to decolonialize our prejudices on land management. I have lived on park row for 10 years and walked this street daily to get to high school. I liked to follow the trees and weave in-between them on my way to school as a way to feel happier and connect with outdoor spaces. I loved seeing the naturalization of this stretch for more kids to get to walk through wild spaces and care about the future generations of people who will walk this earth. I am also excited to see a deeper integration between humans and nature in society.

I hope this message reaches you well,

Kind Regards,  
Kate

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**From:** Dean Gibson  
**Sent:** Friday, March 21, 2025 2:21 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Cc:** \_CAO and Directors  
**Subject:** UPDATE: Fifth Street Median Naturalization Project  
**Attachments:** Resident ltr re 5th Street Median Naturalization.pdf

Mayor Johnstone and Members of City Council,

We are providing this email in response to a question from a member of Council during the January 27, 2025 Regular Meeting of Council regarding the Fifth Street Median Naturalization Project, and to update Council on the status of this initiative.

### **1. Project Status Update**

Further to the March 3, 2025 notice from the Parks and Recreation Department to Fifth Street households (attached), with copy to members of the Queen's Park Residents' Association, and as shared with Council on March 4, 2025 (appended), this email provides an update on the status of the Fifth Street Median Naturalization Project.

As Council is aware, the project, still in its incomplete form, has generated mixed feedback from the surrounding neighbourhood. As a result, staff have revisited the plan to allow for a more gradual approach that responds to the variety of recent feedback from the neighbourhood and aligns with the goals within the [Biodiversity and Natural Areas Strategy](#). The work towards the revised plan commenced this week and includes the following actions:

- Removing logs and mulched leaf material, and transplanting the plants to other locations across the city.
- Applying top-dressing soil and seeding the area with a low-maintenance, pollinator-friendly grass and wildflower seed mix (see image below).

This seed mix was selected to provide a more gradual, lower profile, and visually appealing naturalization, while also supporting pollinators (growing approximately six inches in height). The expected germination period for the seed mix is 4-6 weeks (dependent upon spring temperatures and precipitation). The grass and wildflower mix remains green year round, similar to traditional lawn, and is foot-traffic friendly. In contrast to typical lawn, this ground cover characteristically requires mowing from one to three times per year.

- New trees planted in the median within the past two years are to remain in place.



Image of pollinator friendly grass and wildflower mix.

It is intended to allow the seeded median to establish for approximately one year at which time an evaluation will be conducted in consultation with the neighbourhood regarding the initial work and any related next steps.

## **2. Project Costing Question**

A question has been asked by a member of Council as to the cost of the naturalization initiative. This work has involved a limited degree of direct expenditures supported by the deployment of existing staff resources towards the work.

### **Initial Installation**

- Scope of work: soil de-compaction and turf removal, mulched leaf application, log placement, plant installation
- Plant Material: \$5,000
- City Staff and Equipment: Approximately 8-10 days of staff time (with crew sizes ranging from 2-4 staff).
- Funding Sources for above: 2025 Operating and Capital budgets

### **Project Revision towards Completion**

- Scope of work: plant relocation, mulched leaf removal, log removal, top-dressing soil and seed application.
- Pollinator grass and wildflower seed mix: \$1,000 to \$1,500
- City Staff and Equipment: Approximately 5-6 days of staff time (with crew sizes ranging from 2-4 staff)
- Contracted Services: Accommodated within scope of existing capital budget project for tree services
- Funding Sources for above: 2025 Operating and Capital budgets

We encourage Council to direct questions and comments from the public to the Parks and Recreation Department ( [active@newwestcity.ca](mailto:active@newwestcity.ca) ) in order to support a timely response. We remain available for any questions that Council may have.

Sincerely,

**G. Dean Gibson** | Director  
T 604.527.4628 | E [dgibson@newwestcity.ca](mailto:dgibson@newwestcity.ca)

 City of New Westminster | Parks & Recreation  
511 Royal Avenue, New Westminster, BC V3L 1H9  
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**From:** Dean Gibson  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 4, 2025 10:59 AM  
**To:** \_Mayor & Councillors <\_Mayor&Councillors@newwestcity.ca>  
**Cc:** \_CAO and Directors <\_CAOandDirectors@newwestcity.ca>  
**Subject:** Fifth Street Median Naturalization Project

Mayor Johnstone and Members of City Council,

Over the past few weeks the Parks and Recreation Department has been copying you on responses to correspondence to the City and some Councillors regarding the recent naturalization initiative on the 300 block of the Fifth Street median. While staff have responded to each inquiry, we are taking additional steps to ensure the residents in the immediate vicinity of the median are provided with information about the nature of the project and the current status of the work. Accordingly, the attached letter has been hand delivered to households whose properties abut Fifth Street (between Third and Sixth Avenues) and a select number of addresses on Third Avenue that face the south end of the median.

Additionally, staff are providing the letter to the Queen's Park Resident's Association with a request to share with their members.

Parks and Recreation staff will continue to work with the neighbourhood as outlined in our letter to residents. We encourage you to direct questions and comments to our department ([active@newwestcity.ca](mailto:active@newwestcity.ca)) so that they can be addressed in a timely manner. Please feel free to also contact me directly.

Sincerely,

**G. Dean Gibson** | Director  
T 604.527.4628 | E [dgibson@newwestcity.ca](mailto:dgibson@newwestcity.ca)

 City of New Westminster | Parks & Recreation  
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**March 3, 2025**

**Residents of Fifth Street (between 3rd Ave and 6th Ave)**

Dear Residents,

**Subject: Fifth Street Median Naturalization Project**

We have been hearing from many of you about the recent naturalization work on the Fifth Street median. The intent of this letter is to summarize the project goals, address key questions or concerns raised, and outline next steps. To ensure everyone has the same information, all residents on Fifth Street between 3rd and 6th Avenue are receiving this letter. We have also shared a copy of this correspondence with the Queen's Park Residents Association.

**Addressing Your Concerns**

The Parks and Recreation Department recognizes that information regarding this phase of the Fifth Street median project needed to be better communicated with the neighbourhood. We appreciate that the recent changes to the median (between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenues), particularly the logs, have caused concern. We agree that the logs are over-scaled for the space and will be removed in the coming weeks. The planting is not yet complete, and once the logs are removed, more pollinator-friendly plants will be added to the area where the lawn has been removed.

We also understand your concern about maintaining the heritage character of the area. While the Queen's Park Heritage Conservation Area (HCA) Landscape Guidelines primarily focus on residential properties, we acknowledge that the heritage significance of city-owned features should be considered with any changes. We are committed to ensuring that any biodiversity enhancements to the median are balanced with the area's heritage aesthetic.

**Project Goals and Rationale**

This initiative is rooted in the City's Biodiversity Strategy, which aims to enhance biodiversity across the city. The strategy highlights the limited ecological value of mowed turf on medians and boulevards and suggests enhancing biodiversity in these areas by introducing vegetation that provides cover and food for pollinators. The Fifth Street median is a pilot project to test this approach.

## **Moving Forward**

The current work plan includes:

- Removal of the logs (anticipated week of March 17).
- Completion of the planting.
- Allowing the garden to establish for a year before conducting an evaluation with the neighborhood, through the Queen's Park Residents Association.

No further work on the Fifth Street median, other than that listed above, or any work on the Second Street median will be contemplated until after this evaluation is complete and next steps are determined and communicated in advance to the neighbourhood.

## **Commitment to Collaboration**

We value your feedback and going forward are committed to working together to achieve a design that balances ecological goals with the area's heritage aesthetic. We will continue to keep you informed throughout the project and will provide opportunities for you to share your thoughts and ideas.

To share any subsequent comments or feedback during the upcoming months, please direct email to the Parks and Recreation Department at [active@newwestcity.ca](mailto:active@newwestcity.ca).

Sincerely,



Erika Mashig

Deputy Director- Parks, Policy and Planning

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**From:** Suzette LAQUA **S22(1) Personal and Confidential**  
**Sent:** Friday, March 21, 2025 5:31 PM  
**To:** Erika Mashig  
**Cc:** 'Gail QPRA'; Daniel Fontaine; Tasha Henderson; Mayor and Councillors; Dean Gibson  
**Subject:** RE: [EXTERNAL] Queens Park 5th Street Blvd  
  
**Importance:** High

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Hi Erika,

Thank you for sharing the additional information and the photo. We appreciate your efforts and look forward to further discussions and gaining additional clarity during our meeting on Monday.

Sincerely,  
Suzette

PS: I'm Ms. Laqua - **S22(1) Personal and Confidential**.

---

**From:** Erika Mashig <emashig@newwestcity.ca>  
**Sent:** March 21, 2025 4:29 PM  
**To:** **S22(1) Personal and Confidential**  
**Cc:** 'Gail QPRA' <presidentqptra@gmail.com>; Daniel Fontaine <dfontaine@newwestcity.ca>; Tasha Henderson <thenderson@newwestcity.ca>; Mayor and Councillors <mayorandcouncillors@newwestcity.ca>; Dean Gibson <dgibson@newwestcity.ca>  
**Subject:** RE: [EXTERNAL] Queens Park 5th Street Blvd

Hello again Mrs. Laqua,

Thank you for your follow-up email and for sharing your additional concerns. I hope the following information clarifies the points you raised.

In response to the mix of feedback received from the neighborhood, we distributed a letter on March 3, 2025, to residents on Fifth Avenue (from Third to Sixth), the Queen's Park RA, and Mayor and Council, outlining a revised plan. This plan, aimed at a more gradual approach to biodiversity improvements, between Third and Fourth Avenues, aligning with the City's [Biodiversity and Natural Areas Strategy](#).

The revised plan, which began implementation this week, includes:

- **Removal and Relocation:** Removing logs and mulched leaf material and transplanting the existing plants to other city locations.
- **Seeding with a Low-Profile Mix:** Applying top-dressing soil and seeding with a low-maintenance, pollinator-friendly grass and wildflower mix (see image below). This mix is designed for a visually pleasing, gradual naturalization, growing to approximately six inches. It offers year-round green



coverage, similar to traditional lawns, requires minimal mowing (1-3 times annually), and is foot-traffic friendly. Germination is expected within 4-6 weeks, depending on spring conditions.

- **Preservation of New Trees:** Retaining the trees planted in the median within the last two years.



We plan to allow the seeded median to establish for approximately one year, after which we will conduct an evaluation with neighborhood input to determine any further steps. There is no further work planned (beyond what is outlined above for the Fifth Street Median between Third and Fourth Ave) for the Fifth Street or Second Street median.

Staff will be present at the Regular Council meeting on Monday to answer any questions from Council members.

Thank you, Erika

**Erika Mashig** | Deputy Director- Parks, Policy and Planning  
T 604.527.4530 | E [emashig@newwestcity.ca](mailto:emashig@newwestcity.ca)

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[newwestcity.ca/rec](http://newwestcity.ca/rec) |  [\[redacted\]@newwestrec](mailto:[redacted]@newwestrec)

*We recognize and respect that New Westminster is on the unceded and unsundered land of the Halkomelem speaking peoples. We acknowledge that colonialism has made invisible their histories and connections to the land. As a City, we are learning and building relationships with the people whose lands we are on.*

---

**From:** Suzette LAQUA S22(1) Personal and Confidential

**Sent:** Thursday, March 20, 2025 10:00 PM

**To:** Erika Mashig <[emashig@newwestcity.ca](mailto:emashig@newwestcity.ca)>

**Cc:** 'Gail QPRA' <[presidentqpra@gmail.com](mailto:presidentqpra@gmail.com)>; Daniel Fontaine <[dfontaine@newwestcity.ca](mailto:dfontaine@newwestcity.ca)>; Tasha Henderson <[thenderson@newwestcity.ca](mailto:thenderson@newwestcity.ca)>; Mayor and Councillors <[mayorandcouncillors@newwestcity.ca](mailto:mayorandcouncillors@newwestcity.ca)>



**Subject:** RE: [EXTERNAL] Queens Park 5th Street Blvd

**Importance:** High

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Dear Erika,

We appreciate the removal of the logs, mulch, and plants from the 5<sup>th</sup> Street boulevard between Blackman & 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue. However, we were led to believe that this was a step toward restoring the boulevard to its original, well-maintained condition—consistent with the grass-covered boulevard along 5th Street between 4th Avenue and 6th Avenue.

We are deeply disappointed that the city has once again moved forward with a proposed plan for "wild" grass and pollinator-friendly plantings without consulting Queen's Park residents. This lack of transparency is unacceptable, especially given the significant concerns this plan raises.

Beyond aesthetics, the proposed approach creates an environment that attracts rodents, fails to provide a safe and accessible space for residents to walk their dogs or for children to play, and limits the median's usability in a way that does not benefit the neighborhood. Additionally, this design is inconsistent with the well-maintained boulevard that has long been a point of pride for our Queen's Park community.

We also seek clarification on the long-term plan. Will the 'wild' grass and pollinator concept be expanded along 5th and 2nd Streets in the future? When the boulevard was previously altered, residents consulting with realtors were informed of declining property values. The current proposal does not align with the character and historic charm that Queen's Park is known for.

It is disappointing that our voices have been disregarded once again in this process. As residents, we have the right to be consulted on decisions that directly impact our neighborhood. No opportunity for input was provided, and no alternatives were presented.

We strongly urge you to respect the wishes of our community by reconsidering this plan and actively involving residents in decisions that shape the future of Queen's Park. We ask that the boulevard be restored to its original grass condition, maintaining the character and integrity of our neighborhood.

We look forward to your response and a plan that aligns with the needs and priorities of Queen's Park residents. This matter will be addressed at the Council Meeting on Monday, March 24th.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Suzette Laqua  
Fifth Street

S22(1) Personal and Confidential

**From:** Erika Mashig <[emashig@newwestcity.ca](mailto:emashig@newwestcity.ca)>

**Sent:** March 20, 2025 4:43 PM

**To:** S22(1) Personal and Confidential

**Cc:** 'Gail QPRA' <[presidentqptra@gmail.com](mailto:presidentqptra@gmail.com)>; Daniel Fontaine <[dfontaine@newwestcity.ca](mailto:dfontaine@newwestcity.ca)>; Tasha Henderson <[thenderson@newwestcity.ca](mailto:thenderson@newwestcity.ca)>

**Subject:** RE: [EXTERNAL] Queens Park 5th Street Blvd

Hi Mrs. Laqua,

I understand your disappointment with the rapid changes to the Fifth Street Median. We recognize that the initial implementation did not adequately consider the community's perspective, and we sincerely apologize for that. Per Councilor Henderson's email, staff did communicate the next steps to amend the area in a way that better balances the biodiversity enhancements with feedback received from the neighbourhood.

As you know, we are taking these steps to correct the situation. Staff have removed the logs and mulched leaf debris, relocated plants, and are preparing the area for seeding with a pollinator-friendly grass and wildflower mix. This seed mix was chosen to provide a more gradual, lower profile, and visually appealing naturalization, while also supporting pollinators. We anticipate the seed will germinate over the next 4-6 weeks (dependent upon spring temperatures and precipitation).

We have learned valued lessons from this experience. Moving forward, we are committed to more thorough neighbourhood engagement before implementing any changes to boulevards and medians.

I am happy to answer any further questions you have. Please feel free to contact me if you would like to speak before then the council meeting on March 24<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you,  
Erika

**Erika Mashig** | Deputy Director- Parks, Policy and Planning  
T 604.527.4530 | E [emashig@newwestcity.ca](mailto:emashig@newwestcity.ca)

 City of New Westminster | Parks & Recreation  
[newwestcity.ca/rec](http://newwestcity.ca/rec) |  [\[redacted\]@newwestrec](mailto:[redacted]@newwestrec)

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**From:** Tasha Henderson <[thenderson@newwestcity.ca](mailto:thenderson@newwestcity.ca)>

**Sent:** Thursday, March 20, 2025 11:47 AM

**To:** **S22(1) Personal and Confidential**

**Cc:** 'Gail QPRA' <[presidentqpra@gmail.com](mailto:presidentqpra@gmail.com)>; Daniel Fontaine <[dfontaine@newwestcity.ca](mailto:dfontaine@newwestcity.ca)>; Erika Mashig <[emashig@newwestcity.ca](mailto:emashig@newwestcity.ca)>

**Subject:** RE: [EXTERNAL] Queens Park 5th Street Blvd

Hi Suzette

Thanks for reaching out. I'd be happy to meet with you to chat more. I'm just away until tomorrow afternoon but could meet over the weekend if that works for you.

I am in regular contact with the RA President with any and all updates Council receives. While I am the RA rep, I don't receive any additional information beyond what is shared with all of Council about this project (or any other). I've attached the letter that was distributed to the RA and directly to the residents who live near the boulevard in case you didn't receive it.

As I understand it, there was a miscommunication between staff teams that led to the original design/plan in the first place and once brought to their attention, it was immediately agreed that the logs were not appropriate for the space. I know that staff have really taken to heart the concerns of the residents and decided to pivot in their approach to hopefully find something everyone feels good about. Key concerns that we heard were around the height of any new plants and sightlines, complementing the more manicured neighbourhood aesthetic, and fire and rodent concerns with the mulch. I would assume they are addressing these concerns with the work underway, but for more detail I've CC'd Erika Mashig here who would be best suited to provide the more detailed operational information.

I would also like to reiterate that staff have made it clear there is no additional work on the 5<sup>th</sup> Street boulevards on other boulevards in QP in their work plans. They want to wait an entire growing season and have a chance to engage and speak to residents before they would even consider additional work elsewhere.

Looking forward to seeing you on Monday and I'm always happy to meet up in-person if that works on your end.

Cheers,

Tasha Henderson (she/her)  
Councillor, City of New Westminster

C 604.619.8297 | E [thenderson@newwestcity.ca](mailto:thenderson@newwestcity.ca)

*I recognise and respect that New Westminster is on the unceded and unsurrendered land of the Halkomelem speaking peoples.*

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**From:** Suzette LAQUA S22(1) Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 20, 2025 10:35 AM  
**To:** Tasha Henderson <[thenderson@newwestcity.ca](mailto:thenderson@newwestcity.ca)>  
**Cc:** 'Gail QPRA' <[presidentqptra@gmail.com](mailto:presidentqptra@gmail.com)>; Daniel Fontaine <[dfontaine@newwestcity.ca](mailto:dfontaine@newwestcity.ca)>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Queens Park 5th Street Blvd  
**Importance:** High

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Dear Ms Henderson,

I am writing to express our deep and profound disappointment regarding the lack of communication with Queen's Park residents as you are the Queens Park liaison about the ongoing disruption on our boulevards, particularly on 5th Street. It is concerning that all the mulch and plants have been removed without any prior notice or explanation. Residents were previously informed that the logs would be replaced with smaller ones, yet there has been no update on this matter.

We will be attending the council meeting on March 24th and expect you to address the situation on behalf of Queen's Park residents—providing clarity on what has transpired and outlining the plans moving forward. Additionally, my husband, S22(1) Personal and Confidential, and I hope to speak for five minutes during Monday night's meeting to discuss our concerns regarding the boulevards.

If you are available, I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to discuss this matter further, particularly regarding the current state of the boulevard, which has been left with only dirt.

I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Suzette Laqua  
522(1) Pe Fifth Street  
522(1) Personal and Confidential

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**From:** Mike Hoy S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 23, 2025 9:32 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Rewilding in Queens Park

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Dear Mayor and Councillors,

I just wanted to write and provide what may be a different perspective on the rewilding of the 5th street in Queens Park. I'm fully in favor of this change, and actually find it a refreshing and progressive approach to city landscaping. Part of why I love living in BC is we have an abundance of natural beauty. This initiative feels like it is bringing some of that beauty into our neighbourhood. I also like the idea of landscaping that is less reliant on fertilizers, irrigation and labour, and replacing it with something that will thrive and evolve on its own. I'm frankly perplexed that there are so many people out there that seem to view the only acceptable version of a city Boulevard to be a highly manicured patch of grass.

Keep up the good work,

Mike

March 24, 2025

Dear Mayor and Council,

We are writing to offer our strong support for the upcoming Motion at Council on March 24<sup>th</sup> to halt the “rewilding and naturalization” of the wide 5<sup>th</sup> St. and 2<sup>nd</sup> St. median boulevards until a full and proper consultation with, and evaluation by, all Queen’s Park residents occurs. We have written to you before, but below, we highlight the issues most pertinent to the motion.

### Inadequate Consultation

The residents along these boulevards were never properly consulted about this project prior to its start in 2023. **By consultation, we mean having a back and forth dialogue with the residents in which ideas are exchanged and debated and mutually agreeable solutions and fully informed decisions are arrived at.** The City seems to have forged ahead with this project without even advertising it on the BeHeard site, or even informing Council, prior to beginning what is a major project in our HCA. The residents of Queen’s Park, and particularly the residents of 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Sts., deserve to be consulted on a project that represents a major change to the neighbourhood. As of today, no formal consultation has taken place and thus we are hopeful that Council will halt the progression of this project and develop a formal consultation plan. This is a very reasonable request – all that the residents are asking for is something we should have been given in the first place – proper community engagement. Of course, this plan should also address the means by which the initial phase of the landscaping work will be evaluated and specify the a priori criterion for proceeding with the master plan (i.e., what level of support constitutes success?).

The need for consultation has become readily apparent in the last week. Without any consultation or information sharing with the community, the first two sections of the wilding were stripped, and a newspaper article on Friday indicates that this original wilding will be replaced with another one (i.e., a particular wildflower, clover, wild grass mix), that according to the Deputy Director, has not been used in the City before. This is concerning because the use of such mixes is complicated to say the least (i.e., maintenance, weeds, mowing, overgrowth of certain plants, etc.) and it appears that no preliminary experimentation in a small area has been done.

Even though the Parks Department apologized to some residents weeks ago for not consulting with or providing information to the neighbourhood earlier, they just did the same thing again even though they promised that “moving forward” they will do a better job! This behaviour makes it obvious that a detailed neighbourhood plan for consultation-evaluation be developed – particularly given that 75% of the people who submitted letters for this meeting (as of Wednesday) expressed opposition to rewilding. It is really quite sad that a motion is required to get a consultation/evaluation plan in place. The Parks Department could have easily done this much earlier, preventing a waste of taxpayer money, and province wide news reports that are rather embarrassing to the City.

### Inadequate City Response to Requests to Disseminate Information

The information provided to the QP neighbourhood has been very inconsistent, and for many residents, lacking altogether. First, we heard from the Deputy Director at Council that the City is proceeding with naturalizing both boulevards to create wildlife corridors. Shortly after, a couple of residents were told that the boulevard project is just a small pilot project for a pollinator garden and that no work would occur on 5<sup>th</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> Sts. until evaluation occurs. Because of the confusion created by the lack of consultation with the neighbourhood as a whole, and the inconsistent information conveyed, we requested, on two separate occasions (Feb. 20<sup>th</sup> and March 1<sup>st</sup>), that the Deputy Director send out a letter explaining the project in full to the whole QP neighbourhood. We simply requested that the letter describe the original master plan for both boulevards (i.e., lengthy wildlife corridors), revisions to the plan (i.e., that the project is just a small-scale pilot dependent on strong community support), and the precise details of consultation/ evaluation. We received no response to our request, even though she said she would get back to us, and no letter from Parks to the neighbourhood as a whole has been sent out. A very recent letter addressed to 5<sup>th</sup> St. residents, focusing on 5<sup>th</sup> St. changes, was distributed to only a limited subset of the community (QPRA members) and created more confusion because the failure to deliver a similar letter to 2<sup>nd</sup> St. residents led many to think the 2<sup>nd</sup> St. plan was abandoned. Most recently, the plan provided to 5<sup>th</sup> St. residents was changed yet again without notifying the public. This has been a very confused and limited information roll-out.

The City has been asked by many about the costs involved in creating this significant landscaping project, properly maintaining it, and removing it, particularly in comparison to some seasonal lawn mowing costs. A Council member requested information from the Deputy Director at the Council meeting and she said she would get back to him – even weeks later, this had not happened. Many residents have also asked about the breakdown of the costs, and again, no responses other than “we have a sustainable maintenance plan” or “operating costs/Capitol budget”. These comments are not an adequate response to the community.

We truly hope that you will seriously consider passing this eminently reasonable motion to develop a consultation/ evaluation plan with our neighbourhood before proceeding with any more naturalization experiments. Unlike some motions, this one seems ideal for reaching over the aisle for the good of the neighbourhood. Thanks so much for your time and consideration.

Cathy McFarland and Gary Mockler

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**From:** Garry Yoshizawa S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Monday, March 24, 2025 12:41 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Second and Fifth Street Boulevards

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To Mayor Johnstone and Councillors,

I strongly oppose the proposed “rewilding” and “naturalizing” of our heritage boulevards on Second and Fifth Streets. Regardless of the choice of words used to spin this, Queens Park is an **urban neighbourhood**. There is and always has been a level of aesthetic formality with boulevards. The “rewilding” should be left to the parks. The new installation on Fifth Street is unsightly and very inconsistent with the character of this heritage neighbourhood. I’m not sure how this can, or will this affect property values along both streets if fully implemented? Was that even considered?

Second Street is an emergency response route so it does get quite busy with through traffic. Good visibility is vital for public safety and the current boulevard provides this. Many children walk to and from Herbert Spencer Elementary and Glenbrook Middle School along this street. Unmaintained “wild” vegetation, can potentially obscure vision for both driver and pedestrian. In addition, people cross the street using the boulevard median. Particularly, customers of the Meat Shop at Second and Fourth when they park on the opposite side of the street. The proposed boulevard landscaping will be an impediment and potentially a hazard.

Second Street is also used for the annual garage sale. The boulevard, with good exposure, is well suited to accommodate this event. Long standing community events like this should not be displaced. Curbside boulevards without the center median cannot accommodate the usual number of participants and public.

Lastly, it’s unacceptable to make neighbourhood changes without proper consultation and engagement of owners directly affected. City changes have been implemented and later removed only after residents/owners expressed their concerns. The logs and leaves on the Fifth Street boulevard have now been removed and the areas reseeded with grass and flowers. Bike share parking installed in front of the Queens Park Meat shop then later removed is another example of the lack of proper communication and misuse of tax dollars. Common sense would dictate that proper public consultation take place before physical implementation.

Please do not overlook the value of good communication and community relations.

Thank you.

Regards,

G. Yoshizawa

Queens Park, Second Street resident



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**From:** mlakoster S22(1) Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Monday, March 24, 2025 1:34 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] FW: Fifth Street Boulevard

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Sent from my Galaxy

----- Original message -----

From: melinda koster S22(1) Personal and Confidential  
Date: 2025-02-04 9:53 a.m. (GMT-08:00)  
To: active@newwestcity.ca  
Subject: Fifth Street Boulevard

Dear Sebastian

I'm writing to let you know that I love the change to the boulevard in front of my house (I live at S22(1) Pw Fifth Street). I know there have been a lot of negative rumblings about it, and I do not want you to take them to heart.

I am the kind of person who chats to everyone who walks by my house when I am outside. I have not yet met anyone (with certain exceptions) who has said that they hate it. The comments I have heard are not so negative. The worst ones are 'I don't know, it's kind of messy' and 'well it looks kinda bare, might take a few years to grow on me'. The best are 'it's about time' and 'look at the kids enjoying the logs'. The actual path outlined by the logs is already being flattened out by curious walkers. My immediate neighbours like it or are passive about the change. Passive, or even 'it looks messy' are absolutely **not** the same as 'take it out'.

I know you must be having a hard time right now, navigating the process, and especially because it seems that the loudest voices are negative. That is not fair either. As I've said, many people to whom I have spoken love it, especially those who are walking by. While I know that there are strong neighbourhood associations that have done a lot of good in Queens Park, such as the HCA, it is not ok to assume that it always represents everyone, or even a majority.

As in all things, take time, and carry on.

Sincerely,

Melinda Koster  
Fifth Street



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**From:** Roald Liset S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Monday, March 24, 2025 2:04 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Tonight's council meeting

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Dear Mayor and Council,

I support Daniel Fontaine's motion to halt the proposed "rewilding" and "naturalizing" of the heritage boulevards on 2nd and 5th Streets.

Thank you,

Roald Liset  
S.22(1)PA Second Street  
New Westminster  
S.22(1)Personal and Confidential

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**From:** Michael Allina S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Monday, March 24, 2025 2:29 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Fifth street Boulevard

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Dear Mayor and Councillors,

I am a resident of S.22(1)P6 Fifth Street and I feel that your project to change the boulevard is really out of place and out of character of the Queens Park neighbourhood. The Boulevard should be a green space with grass and trees. I am happy that you have removed all the logs and ferns etc from your previous plan, however, I hear your plan is to put wild grasses. Again, this is out of character. Please put the normal grass back in and let us all enjoy the Boulevard we have enjoyed for many years. The Boulevards on Fifth as it was before the same and the Boulevard on Second Street, should be left alone, taken care of by reseeding and cutting the grass plus treated so that it's not overrun by weeds.

I hope you take our opinion as we are the ones who live on the boulevard should count and the greater neighbourhood on neighbouring streets maybe not so much. We were never consulted in the first place. We all pay a fair amount of taxes and we should be able to enjoy the boulevard in the front of our houses.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Mike Allina  
S.22(1)P6 Fifth Street.

Sent from my iPad

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**From:** Deane Gurney S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Monday, March 24, 2025 3:42 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Naturalization of Boulevards on 2nd and 5th Street  
**Attachments:** 1st & 5th Street Wildlife Corridor.pptx

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Please circulate the attached to the mayor and councillors

To restrict the speakers to 10 people is unacceptable in a system in which council is to represent the people. Ten people is not a representation of the whole community and we should be heard.

Deane Gurney

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**From:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Sent:** Monday, March 24, 2025 5:59 PM  
**To:** Kristin Unger  
**Subject:** FW: [EXTERNAL] Second and Fifth street Boulevards

Marius Miklea | Assistant Corporate Officer  
T 604.636.4487 | E [mmiklea@newwestcity.ca](mailto:mmiklea@newwestcity.ca)

**From:** Sue Yoshizawa S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Monday, March 24, 2025 5:31 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors <mayorandcouncillors@newwestcity.ca>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Second and Fifth street Boulevards

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To Mayor Johnstone and councillors,

I strongly oppose the plans to naturalize the boulevards on Second and Fifth streets. The new plan is aesthetically unsuitable for heritage residential area and potentially create more issues with rodent and invasive plants. Also, it's disappointing that city implemented changes without consulting with residents of Queens Park. I hope moving forward residents will be consulted prior to implementing any new plans.

Thank you,

Sue Lee