

Concept Plan Amendment Application – Willows Neighbourhood

APPLICATION SUMMARY

Dream Development Ltd. (Dream) applied to amend the Willows Neighbourhood Concept Plan (Concept Plan). The proposed amendments are primarily to the western portion of the neighbourhood and provide for a reconfiguration of development sites and streets, increased density, the introduction of fee-simple residential lot development, addition of municipal parks and changes to the layout of the existing golf course. The amendments also include the addition of approximately 6.4 hectares (15.8 acres) of land in the northern portion of the Concept Plan, intended to accommodate a hotel/spa, as well as low- and medium-density multiple-unit dwellings.

The application also includes amendments to Bylaw No. 9700, Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2020 (OCP) Land Use Map, a minor OCP text amendment, amendments to the Direct Control District 4 (DCD4) regulations contained in Bylaw No. 8770, the Zoning Bylaw, 2009 (Zoning Bylaw), and a Zoning Bylaw map amendment to extend the DCD4 District.

RECOMMENDATION

That a copy of this report be submitted to City Council recommending that, at the time of the Public Hearing, City Council consider Administration's recommendation that proposed amendments to the Willows Neighbourhood Concept Plan, Bylaw No. 9700, the Official Community Plan, 2020, and Bylaw No. 8770, Zoning Bylaw, 2009, as outlined in this report, be approved.

BACKGROUND

In 2003, the OCP was amended to incorporate objectives and policies for golf course communities. Golf course communities integrate residential development with an operating golf course, providing low- to medium-density residential development, which is accessory to a golf course and associated commercial development.

The original development of the Willows was proposed as a unique neighbourhood, providing a lower density residential development surrounded by a privately owned and operated golf course with associated commercial uses. When the Concept Plan was approved in 2003, the neighbourhood was required to be developed as condominiums to ensure the low-density development did not cause an undue financial risk to the City of Saskatoon (City) for increased costs of services.

In 2020, Dream applied to amend the Concept Plan and relevant sections of the OCP and Zoning Bylaw. That application proposed amendments, primarily to the western portion of the neighbourhood, and provided for a reconfiguration of development sites and streets, expanded the boundary of the Direct Control District, increased residential density, as well as introduced fee-simple development and land for a centrally located hotel/spa and additional commercial uses. The application was defeated by City Council at the Public Hearing on November 22, 2021.

In February 2022, Dream retained Martin Charlton Communications to assist in gathering input from residents within the Willows regarding the proposed amendments to the neighbourhood.

Throughout June and July of 2022, Dream and Martin Charlton Communications held 14 in-person and virtual meetings which provided an opportunity for residents to ask questions and provide feedback on proposed amendments. Invitations to meetings were emailed to residents and sent for distribution to all the condominium associations within the Willows. Posters advertising the events were placed in buildings within the Willows, and door hangers were distributed to all addresses. In total, 138 individuals attended the meetings hosted by Dream and Martin Charlton Communications. Dream also held ten informal one-on-one or small group meetings and received numerous phone calls and emails. A survey was also conducted with the survey information posted in the buildings and sent to all residents to ensure everyone had a chance to submit comments and make suggestions. All comments from meetings and the survey were recorded and used by Martin Charlton Communications to produce a report summarizing what was heard (see Appendix 1).

The findings of the report were used by Dream to draft a revised plan, which was presented to the community through open houses held in-person and virtually in the first two weeks of November 2022. A comparison of the application from 2021 and the revised application is included (see Appendix 2).

DISCUSSION

Proposed Amendments

Proposed Amendments to the Willows Neighbourhood Concept Plan

Dream is proposing an amendment to the existing Concept Plan, which primarily redesigns the western portion of the neighbourhood (see Appendix 3). Detailed information, on the proposed changes, is provided in the Willows Neighbourhood Concept Plan Amendment Report (see Appendix 4) and include the following:

- 1) Removal of the requirement for all residential development to be incorporated as part of a condominium and provide for one-unit dwellings to be developed on fee-simple lots;
- 2) Reconfiguration of the golf course, from a 27-hole to an 18-hole course;
- 3) Inclusion of additional development area adjacent to Cartwright Street, referred to as the North Development Area;
- 4) Land use changes including:
 - Provision for a hotel/spa on a commercial site located on the North Development Area;
 - Provision for municipal reserve parcels; and
 - To accommodate an increase in the number of dwelling units and density within the neighbourhood, while maintaining a density below the standard for Saskatoon neighbourhoods by reconfiguring the westerly portion of the neighbourhood and including a mix of one-unit, low and medium density multiple-unit dwellings in this area;
- 5) Additional local roads developed as public right of way;
- 6) Provision for access to the western portion of the Willows from Cartwright Street;

- 7) Provision for access onto Highway 219 (Lorne Avenue) as an all-directional intersection;
- 8) Provision for a southern access road onto Clarence Avenue; and
- 9) Inclusion of signalized intersections at Cartwright Street & Lorne Avenue and Cartwright Street & Clarence Avenue.

The existing Concept Plan was approved for an estimated population of 1,557 residents, and the proposed amendments would increase the neighbourhood's population to an estimated 2,396 residents; 860 from the existing easterly development, 1,222 from the redesigned westerly portion of the neighbourhood and 314 from the inclusion of the North Development Area.

A comparison between the current Concept Plan and proposed changes is included in Appendix 5.

Proposed Amendments to the Official Community Plan

Section G3.2(2)(d) of the OCP states:

“Golf course communities may include low to medium-density residential development and a mix of commercial development regularly associated with, and of a scale appropriate to, the daily operations of a golf course and the daily needs of golf course community residents”.

Dream is proposing the OCP be amended to permit expanded forms of commercial development within golf course communities, particularly a hotel with accessory uses. To accommodate this, Section G3.2(2)(d) of the OCP is proposed to be amended to provide for commercial uses, which may serve beyond the daily operations of a golf course or daily needs of the community but are complementary to the use and are of an appropriate scale.

The inclusion of the North Development Area within the Willows will also require an amendment to the OCP Land Use Map to redesignate this land from CP – Saskatoon Planning District to Direct Control District (see Appendix 6).

Proposed Amendments to the Zoning Bylaw

Proposed changes to the Concept Plan will require amendments to Section 13.4 Direct Control District 4 (DCD4) of the Zoning Bylaw, which regulates all development within the Willows neighbourhood. Proposed changes include:

- 1) Update the objectives of the DCD4 to reflect current sections of the OCP, inclusion of fee-simple lots and expanded commercial use (hotel and related accessory uses);
- 2) Reduce minimum lot width for one-unit dwellings located on sites designated as one-unit dwellings from 18 metres to 16 metres;
- 3) Reduce minimum site area for one-unit dwellings on sites designated as one-unit dwellings from 630 square metres to 560 square metres;
- 4) Reduce the maximum allowable dwelling units per acre for sites designated as low-density multiple-unit dwellings from 17 dwelling units per acre to 12 dwelling units per acre;
- 5) Provisions for a 3-metre rear yard setback for sites designated as low density and medium density;

- 6) Clarify what type of dwellings can be developed as part of a dwelling group;
- 7) Addition of a commercial area to provide for a hotel and accessory uses such as a spa and associated regulations;
- 8) Provision for municipal public works yard – type I to accommodate facilities for public park maintenance; and
- 9) Adjustment of the Phase 1/Phase 2 Boundary on the DCD4 Map;

The inclusion of the North Development Area within the Willows will also require the site to be rezoned from D – Agricultural 1 District (from the Corman Park – Saskatoon Planning District Zoning Bylaw which was in place when the property was brought into Saskatoon) to DCD4 (see Appendix 7).

Policy Review

The OCP includes policies for golf course communities, with the objective of providing residents a desirable alternative type of neighbourhood while integrating residential development with an operating golf course. The intention of a golf course community is to provide for low- to medium-density residential development, which is accessory to a golf course and associated commercial development. The key policy sections which support the proposed amendment include:

- Section G3.2(2)(a):
Golf course communities, such as the Willows, must include a maintained active golf course.
The amendments, as proposed, continue to ensure the focus of the neighbourhood is around a maintained golf course and associated commercial development.
- Section G3.2(2)(b) & (c):
Neighbourhoods designed as golf course communities should be individually designed for local conditions and regulated through a Direct Control District.
The amendments as proposed restrict the uses, size and location of proposed land uses in conjunction with a Direct Control District. Proposed changes to residential land uses and densities align with these policies by continuing to maintain low- and medium-density development. Proposed changes continue to provide for a low gross per acre density, below that of required densities for neighbourhoods referenced in the OCP.
- Section G3.2(2)(d):
The proposed amendment requires a change to this policy, which requires commercial development to be regularly associated with and of a scale appropriate to daily operations of a golf course and daily needs of golf course community residents.
The proposed amendment includes a commercial land use (hotel), which would be considered outside the scope of the current policy. While a hotel is complementary and of a scale appropriate to the land use of a golf course, it is not regularly associated with operations of one. Subject to this section being amended, the inclusion of a hotel in the Willows neighbourhood would be regulated under a Direct Control District, limiting its size and location.

- Section G3.2(2)(e):

The proposed amendment includes the provision for fee-simple lots, as opposed to requiring all development to be the responsibility of a Bare Land Condominium Association, as required under the previous Concept Plan approval. The OCP supports development of City-owned and maintained services in golf course communities. Administration evaluated the costs of servicing for the proposed area (amendment area only) in comparison to expected tax revenues and it has been determined there would be no undue financial risk to the City for increased costs of services based on the proposal.

Technical Review of Proposal

As part of the Concept Plan amendment application process, this application was circulated to civic divisions and external agencies for review. Comments compiled during this review were submitted to the applicant for response and all items have been appropriately addressed. Outline of the required work and any financial responsibilities are included in Appendix 8.

COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

Notification of the proposed amendments was provided to area residents and the public in the following ways:

1. The application was placed on the Engage Page in March 2023 and has been updated throughout the review. The Engage Page contained information on proposed development, public engagement, a video presentation outlining the application and amendment process and developer contact information;
2. Details of the application and notice of an in-person public open house mailed to all registered property owners of the Willows on March 3, 2023;
3. An in-person public open house was held at the Willows Clubhouse on March 22, 2023, from 4:30 pm to 7:30 pm;
4. Phone calls and email correspondence with residents; and
5. A Notice outlining revisions to the amendment, as well as dates of the Municipal Planning Commission and Public Hearing at City Council, mailed to all registered property owners of the Willows on May 5, 2023.

The in-person public open house provided residents and members of the public an opportunity to discuss the application and ask questions of Administration and Dream. There were 72 individuals who signed the attendance sheet, and nine comment sheets were submitted at this event. As of the writing of this report, Planning and Development has received eight written responses and three phone calls from property owners within the neighbourhood.

Positive feedback received from the public consultation process included the appreciation of Dream for listening to the Willows' residents and addressing most major concerns. Favorable changes to the amendment include:

1. The installation of additional walking paths;
2. New location of hotel/spa;
3. Removal of a road connecting Phase 2 to the Cartwright Street roundabout; and
4. The proposal for the south access road onto Clarence Avenue.

Concerns about the amendment include:

1. Increases in traffic and noise;
2. Inequity of taxation between fee simple lots and bare land condominium units;
3. Decrease in property values due to an increase in density/development;
4. The need for additional sidewalks/pathways in select locations;
5. The need for more centralized public park spaces; and
6. Opposition to the proposed south access road onto Clarence Avenue.

A summary of all feedback received during the engagement process for this application is included in the Community Engagement Summary (see Appendix 9).

As a result of the administrative review and public engagement process, the following revisions were made to the application:

1. The addition of 1.75 ha of Municipal Reserve (MR) along Cartwright Street;
2. Extension of the sidewalk along the east side of Cartwright Street north of Cartwright Terrace; and
3. Addition of a pathway along the north side of the south access road to accommodate pedestrian connectivity.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice is required for consideration of this matter, pursuant to Section 11(a) of Policy C01-021, the Public Notice Policy.

Once this application has been considered by the Municipal Planning Commission, it will be advertised in accordance with Policy C01-021, the Public Notice Policy, and a date for a public hearing will be set. A notice will be placed in The StarPhoenix two weeks prior to the public hearing.

APPENDICES

1. Willows Public Consultations
2. Willows Concept Plan Amendment Comparison - 2021/2023 Proposals
3. Location Map
4. Willows Concept Plan Amendment Report
5. Willows Concept Plan Comparison Map
6. Proposed OCP Map Amendment
7. Proposed Zoning Bylaw Map Amendment
8. Technical Review of Proposal
9. Engagement Summary

REPORT APPROVAL

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