



## **Follow-Up Information – Main Areas of Concern**

### **Proposed Rezoning of 1006 College Drive and 421 Clarence Avenue North**

Public engagement undertaken in relation to the proposed rezoning of 1006 College Drive and 421 Clarence Avenue North identified a number of areas of concern relating to the development proposal. It is necessary to ensure that potential impacts of the development on the surrounding area are mitigated, so concerns expressed were followed up on by Civic Administration to ensure that they can be appropriately addressed.

The information provided herein is intended as a follow-up to the main questions and concerns that were raised in relation to this proposal.

#### **1.0 TRAFFIC AND CIRCULATION**

##### **How does the City ensure capacity for ever-increasing use of roads and sidewalks in Varsity View?**

- Neighbourhood traffic reviews are completed with intensive community engagement to identify the neighbourhood's concerns and develop recommendations. We continue to implement recommendations, as funds allow, from the Varsity View Neighbourhood Traffic Review conducted in 2014.
- The capacity of roads is largely controlled by the form of the traffic control at the end of the segment; along the roads internal to the Varsity View neighbourhood two-way stops are common. Where long delays or collision concerns have been raised, the City of Saskatoon (City) has modified the parking to improve visibility and installed traffic calming where appropriate.
- The inventory of sidewalks in the Varsity View neighbourhood is monitored, and gaps existing in the network have been identified and placed on a prioritization list. Critical pedestrian facilities and paths to transit are the highest priority to complete.

##### **Traffic Impact Assessment**

A Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) was completed by Stantec on behalf of the developer. All new development of this size and scale requires a TIA to be submitted and accepted by the City's Transportation Division as part of the rezoning and development permit process. The following reiterates the findings of the TIA and responds to public concerns.

A TIA examines a site's proposed land use and determines if any modifications are needed to the proposal to ensure that people can continue to move safely by automobile, transit, bike, and foot. This study also assesses current and future conditions. Future condition analysis includes background traffic growth correlated with population growth along with new development within the study area.

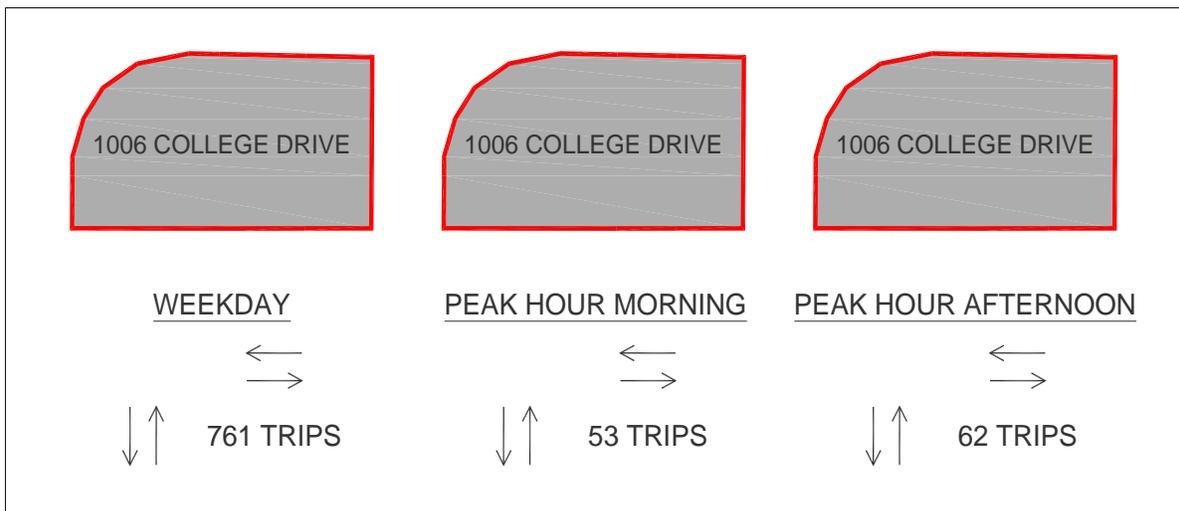
The operation of each intersection identified in the study is evaluated using standard transportation methodologies to determine average delays per vehicle, queue lengths, and assess signal timings. A TIA is prepared and sealed by a Transportation Engineering professional licenced to practice in the Province of Saskatchewan.

Each TIA is reviewed in detail by City transportation engineers. A TIA may need to be amended and resubmitted if there are inaccurate assumptions or new issues arise through the initial assessment. If improvements in the public right-of-way are identified, then the City initiates agreement regarding the specific actions that must be taken at the cost of the developer. Only at this point will the Transportation Division approve a development application.

**Development Generated Traffic**

**Changes with new development**

- The proposed development of 1006 College Drive will generate approximately 761 new vehicle trips to and from the site on a typical weekday.
- In the peak hour of morning traffic, there will be 53 new trips added to the lanes accessing the site over the course of the hour.
- In the peak hour of afternoon traffic, there will be 62 trips added to the lanes accessing the site over the course of the hour.



**Why does the site access have to be in the lane? What about adding driveways on Clarence Avenue and College Drive?**

- Inadequate corner clearance between accesses and signalized intersections with high traffic volumes can create serious operational problems.
- A new access on Clarence Avenue would interfere with the transit stop and right-turn movements. Motorists wanting to turn left into an entrance may also be blocked; the resulting traffic will back up and may extend into the intersection area.
- A new access on College Drive would impede eastbound through traffic. Motorists that have made a right turn at the intersection are still focused on that maneuver and

are ill-prepared to perceive and react to an unexpected vehicle entering/exiting the roadway.

### **Clarence Avenue and College Drive Intersection**

#### **Existing conditions**

- The intersection is congested and, as the population grows, the congestion is likely to continue. The Transportation Division monitors the intersection operation with the goal of balancing both operational efficiency and safety of all users.
- Currently, the traffic signal is timed to favour the very high demand of eastbound and westbound traffic; unfortunately, that increases the delay for northbound Clarence Avenue traffic. This is not expected to change.
- Northbound traffic queues spill back through the intersection with University Drive during periods of heavy demand.

#### **Changes with new development**

- Average delay per vehicle travelling through the intersection is expected to increase by approximately four seconds during the evening peak hour.
- Motorists making left turns from Clarence Avenue onto the University Bridge will continue to experience the most delay.

#### **Can a dedicated right-turn lane from Clarence Avenue to College Drive be constructed?**

- Yes, the right-of-way is available; however, changes to the placement of the transit stop on Clarence Avenue and the increasing volume of pedestrians using this crossing suggest retaining the current configuration of the approach are appropriate.
- Some physical changes to the intersection are likely in the future to facilitate the development of a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor along College Drive.

### **Clarence Avenue and University Drive Intersection**

#### **Existing conditions**

- University Drive traffic, both eastbound and westbound, currently experience long delays to cross and/or enter Clarence Avenue during peak hours; however, non-peak hours are often much faster.
- Clarence Avenue southbound traffic attempting to turn left onto University Drive experience long delays during peak hours; however, non-peak hours are often much more manageable.
- The existing pedestrian signal is well used.
- As the population grows, congestion is likely to continue. The Transportation Division monitors the intersection operation with the goal of balancing safety, crossing demand, and the operation of the nearby signal at College Drive.
- A review of the last five years of collision reports shows that no collisions with severe injuries or fatalities occurred out of a total of 18 incidents. The majority of collisions occurred when vehicles were moving in the same direction (e.g. sideswipes, rear-ends, and passing).

### **Changes with development**

- Average delay per vehicle travelling through the intersection increases by less than one second during the evening peak hour.
- Motorists making left turns from University Drive onto Clarence Avenue heading north will experience delay (less than two seconds) as a result of the congestion at College Drive.

### **What about a full traffic signal at this intersection?**

- A full signal is not warranted today, nor after full buildout of the new development.
- A full signal would interfere with the operation of the signal at College Drive and likely increase congestion for all turning movements.
- A full signal would increase the traffic on University Drive by developing an easy shortcut to avoid the congestion at College Drive.

### **University Drive and McKinnon Avenue Intersection**

#### **Existing conditions**

- This intersection is operating well as an all-way stop where U-turns are permitted.
- A review of the last five years of collision reports shows that no collisions with severe injuries or fatalities occurred out of a total of five incidents; none involved U-turns.

#### **Changes with new development**

- There will be no change in delay.
- The number of vehicles making U-turns will increase (which is a legal and permitted movement, when safe to do so).

### **University Drive**

#### **Shortcutting**

- Motorists have been observed shortcutting on University Drive to avoid the intersection of College Drive and Clarence Avenue. This issue was identified in the Varsity View Neighbourhood Traffic Review, and additional pavement markings to indicate stop lines were recommended.

#### **Proposed New Median Opening**

- The 2014 Varsity View Neighbourhood Traffic Review did not identify any concerns regarding traffic volumes or safety of the lanes.
- The proposed eastbound left-turn bay is long enough to manage left-turn forecast demand without queuing on University Drive.
- Additional traffic in the north-south lane will require all users to be more attentive their surroundings.

## **Rear Lanes**

- City Council will be asked to approve a recommendation that the north-south and east-west lane segments serving this site be paved by the developer as a condition of development.
- The pavement design to City standards will include consideration for drainage.

## **2.0 PARKING**

### **On-street parking availability in the area is challenged.**

Residents have identified parking to be a significant issue in the area, and it is important to ensure that the appropriate amount of on-site parking in relation to this development is constructed to mitigate potential impacts on the neighbourhood.

A total of 232 parking spaces are proposed to be constructed in relation to his development. This is an appropriate supply of parking for residents given the context. Future residents will have the ability, when purchasing a unit, to be self-selecting in terms of their parking needs. Given that the Residential Parking Permit Program in the area restricts on-street parking for vehicles without permits and that residents of this development will not be eligible to obtain a parking permit, on-street parking will not be a viable long-term solution for any resident.

In addition, this development is uniquely situated in a location that provides significant opportunity for residents to move around by alternative means:

- College Drive has a high degree of existing transit service with BRT service proposed in future.
- Proximity to Downtown (~19,000 jobs), Royal University Hospital (~4,800 jobs), University of Saskatchewan (~25,000 students and ~9,000 jobs), future Jim Pattison Children's Hospital, and the Meewasin Trail supports active transportation.
- Varsity View residents already choose an alternative mode of travel to work at higher rates than city wide. This includes transit use of 7.4% versus 5.1% city wide, walking at a rate of 24.8% versus 4.6%, and cycling at a rate of 12.1% versus 2.2%. Just under half of Varsity View residents travel to work by car versus 80.5% city wide.

### **Is 16 parking spaces for visitors sufficient?**

A point of discussion at the Public Information Meeting on September 13, 2018, concerned the 16 parking spaces that the Zoning Bylaw requires to be dedicated for visitors to this development. Feedback received expressed that it was an insufficient amount given the parking issues in the area.

Visitor parking is normally required by the Zoning Bylaw at a rate of 0.125 spaces per dwelling unit. However, an exemption exists in the "M" class of zoning districts for dwelling units with a floor area of 50 m<sup>2</sup> or less, where no visitor parking is required in relation to these units. Given the large number of small units in this development, this exemption provided an outsized reduction in the number of visitor parking spaces required: a total of 16 spaces opposed to 21 spaces if no exemption existed.

Due to concerns received through public engagement, the unique circumstance of this site having no immediately adjacent on-street parking, and existing parking pressures in the area, a total of 21 visitor parking spaces is recommended instead of 16.

### **3.0 INFRASTRUCTURE**

#### **How do we know that there is enough sewer and water capacity to accommodate this project?**

The Saskatoon Water Division manages detailed water and sewer models for all areas of the city. The impact of each proposed new development is tested using these models and, where applicable, additional monitors are installed to verify system capacities.

Based on the City's sanitary model and monitoring information, it is confirmed that there is sufficient capacity in the sanitary lines for this development. The City's water model also shows no adverse impact on water pressure in the area as a result of this development.

#### **How can we be certain that stormwater will not negatively impact the riverbank slope, the storm system, or neighbouring properties?**

The site will be required to connect to the storm sewer system. Development run-off (i.e. any precipitation that falls within the parcel area) will be required to be collected on site and discharged to the storm sewer system at a controlled rate of release to ensure no adverse effect on the storm system. Surface run-off will not be permitted to discharge to the slope or neighbouring properties.

There was some misunderstanding at the Public Information Meeting that stormwater may be discharged to the surface of the rear lane. The City would not permit drainage of stormwater from this development to the surface of a lane.

With respect to the riverbank slope stability, the City has completed a technical review of the geotechnical report provided with the development application. The report demonstrates the proposed building does not impact the stability of the slope both at the property line and as a whole (i.e. the riverbank, Saskatchewan Crescent, and University Bridge east abutment). The City completes an annual reconnaissance of the east riverbank and any signs of slope instability will be recorded and monitored as a result. The design recommendations from the geotechnical report must be complied with in final foundation and building design when submitting for a building permit.

### **4.0 URBAN PLANNING / GROWTH PLAN**

#### **How does this proposal align with the City's Growth Plan?**

The Growth Plan identifies College Drive as a corridor for redevelopment and growth. The Red and Green lines of the BRT system are proposed to run on College Drive, with the nearest station at College Drive and Munroe Avenue. Fifteen percent of future population growth is projected to occur along corridors to support the BRT, which will require the construction of 11,000 to 22,000 new dwelling units. To achieve the objective of corridor growth, increasing the density and scale of development along these corridors above what current zoning allows is imperative.

The proposal supports the Growth Plan in the following ways:

- Increased density and population is provided in a transit-supportive location.
- Residents are offered viable opportunities to move around by alternative means given proximity to high-frequency transit, the Meewasin Trail, and significant generators of employment and activity such as the Downtown, University of Saskatchewan, and Royal University Hospital.
- Existing land and infrastructure is more efficiently utilized.
- The range of housing choices in the area to meet the needs of existing and future residents is enhanced.
- Attractive neighbourhood edges enhance connectivity between and within neighbourhoods.
- The pedestrian environment of College Drive is improved through design elements such as ground floor dwelling units with individual street-oriented entrances, landscaping, and a minimal building setback that helps frame and define the street and provides pedestrian comfort.
- High density housing is placed in a strategic and intentional manner along major corridors, rather than in a more random pattern that does not support the Growth Plan's objectives.
- It contributes to the creation of a community that is ultimately more affordable to run in the long term.

### **How is this proposal being considered in light of the goals and wishes of the Varsity View Local Area Plan?**

A Local Area Plan (LAP) provides important guidance for land use and development in a neighbourhood. The Varsity View LAP established several land use goals that are relevant to this proposal, including preserving the low-density residential heart of the neighbourhood, sensitive land redevelopment along the major corridors that form its boundaries, and a general recognition of the need to increase neighbourhood density through thoughtful, considered development.

The zoning along College Drive has been in place since long before the Varsity View LAP was formulated. The Growth Plan, which was approved after the Varsity View LAP, takes a city-wide view of the choices required as we grow to 500,000 people. The Administration recognizes that community expectations of how much density or height is appropriate at this location may differ from what has ultimately been proposed by North Prairie Developments Ltd. It is also acknowledged that some feel that density should not exceed existing zoning, given that the Varsity View LAP did not recommend a change.

The Growth Plan, which was approved by City Council after the Varsity View LAP, requires significant change along our corridors to support a successful implementation of the BRT and the plan as a whole. In this respect, zoning along many of our corridors is out of date with respect to accommodating the increased density and scale of development required.

The challenge in considering this application is in reconciling the city-wide objectives of the Growth Plan with the vision and wishes set out by a community through its LAP. In this respect, this proposal provides increased density in a deliberate and rational location, along a major corridor to support the Growth Plan, while respecting the local community's wishes to preserve the low-density heart of Varsity View that exists within its perimeter corridors. It

does not replace any single-family housing, nor does it represent an encroachment of higher-density zoning into the neighbourhood's interior. The Administration believes that this proposal, in this specific location, balances the objectives of both plans as a result and is of an appropriate height and density.

### **How does the City expect College Drive to look in the future?**

As part of achieving the Corridor Growth objective of the Growth Plan, the Corridor Planning Program was established in Bylaw No. 8769, The Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2009 (OCP), in order to provide a framework for where detailed land use planning activities will occur along these corridors, including College Drive, which is identified as a "Corridor Growth Area."

A land use vision for the corridors, including College Drive, is presently being developed. Details around density, height, and other development standards are still to be determined, and stakeholders in the community will be engaged on potential options for redevelopment. In addition, future improvements to public space within the College Drive right-of-way will also enhance the pedestrian experience, connectivity, and general look and feel of the area. Taken together, interventions in both the private and public realm are intended to evolve College Drive to a walkable and urban transit street that is more inviting as a people place and that knits areas together.

Eventually, the policies of the Corridor Planning Program will be implemented through Bylaw No. 8770, Zoning Bylaw, to establish and regulate the form of development that can occur along the corridors. In the interim, consideration of proposals that align with the Growth Plan are encouraged by the OCP and require consideration on their site-specific merits. The height and density that is considered to be appropriate in this location should not be taken to necessarily apply to the rest of College Drive.

### **Can the building be constructed with a greater setback from College Drive to provide more greenery and open space?**

The property line is located a few metres back from the College Drive street curb, and the building will be required to be set back approximately 2.0 m from the property line. A key design principle of transit-oriented development is to site and design buildings to frame streets and public open space, in part, by minimizing the distances buildings are set back from the street to create a sense of enclosure and pedestrian comfort. For illustration, buildings on Broadway Avenue with very little or no setback from the property line contribute to the pedestrian friendliness and feeling of comfort on the street by establishing a more human scale for people on foot.

With this proposal, ground floor dwelling units with individual street-oriented entrances, including front stoops and landscaping areas, provide a friendly interface with the adjacent streets. Required landscaping in open areas will further improve aesthetics.

### **Will this development set a precedent for high-density housing to encroach further into the neighbourhood?**

As mentioned above, one of the key land use goals of the Varsity View LAP is to preserve the low-density residential heart of the neighbourhood. This proposal is located on a major corridor on the edge of the neighbourhood. The Growth Plan's objective is to focus

increased density in an intentional manner along major corridors, rather than in a more scattered or random pattern throughout neighbourhoods. The low-density residential heart of Varsity View will continue to be R2 – One- and Two-Unit Residential. This proposal responds to the Growth Plan’s objective to focus increased density along major corridors, while preserving the stable, single-family interior of the neighbourhood per the Varsity View LAP.

**It has been suggested that high-density areas experience more crime.**

A causal relationship between increased density and increased crime has not been established. A number of social and environmental factors contribute to the incidence of crime, not the density of an area alone. It is necessary to consider the context of an area and, in the case of Varsity View, the fundamentals of a safe and cohesive neighbourhood are strong.

The opportunity for crime can be mitigated through thoughtful site design, good management practices (in this case, of a future property manager/condo board), and the social cohesion of the neighbourhood. There is an opportunity for future residents of this development to provide an increased number of invested community members and “eyes on the street” that contribute positively to community safety.