

WHITING-APPIAN DENSITY TRANSFER AREA FAQ



On February 7, 2022, revised land use concepts for three Burquitlam-Lougheed neighbourhood pockets were presented to Council-in-Committee. The revised concept for the Whiting-Appian pocket includes changes to the proposed land use designations and to the density transfer area. These changes represent a unique approach to development for the City, and many people may have questions. This FAQ is intended to clarify several key elements of the updated plan. City planning staff are also happy to discuss the changes with residents and stakeholders. The SWHR Team can be reached via email: swhr@coquitlam.ca or phone: 604-927-3400.

1. What is a “density transfer” and why is it being used in Whiting-Appian?

A density transfer is a formal but voluntary agreement to transfer development rights from one property to another. In Whiting-Appian, density transfers will be used to realize the development potential of properties in the Austin Creek Green Link by transferring that potential to building sites west of Bosworth Street. Green Link properties would then be transferred to the City, at no cost, to create the park in the future. The density transfer concept was originally introduced with the previous version of the Whiting-Appian land use concept.

2. The “high density” land use designation has been removed and replaced with the “medium density” land use designation*. Does this mean that only medium density development, such as low-rise apartments, can be built?

No. Within the density transfer area, a range of building options would be available from medium density to high density. The options available are:

Option 1: Low-rise buildings

Build low-rise buildings ranging from townhomes to 8-storey apartment buildings.

This is the typical range of building types for areas designated “medium density”. The most common building type is the 6-storey wood frame apartment with RM-3 (multi-storey medium density apartment residential) zoning.

Option 2: Mid-rise buildings

Build mid-rise apartment buildings up to 12-storeys using the encapsulated mass timber (EMT) construction method and RM-4 (multi-storey high density apartment residential) zoning. The RM-4 zone is typically only available in areas designated “high density”, but is being allowed here provided that EMT construction is used.

Option 3: High-rise with Density Transfer

Build high-rise buildings by transferring density from sites within the Green Link area. High-rise developments will use a Comprehensive Development (CD) zone that is based on the RM-5 (multi-storey high density apartment residential) zone. The RM-5 zone is typically only available in areas designated “high density”, but it is being allowed here provided that the assembly includes properties within the Green Link. See Question 4 below for a description of CD zones.

**The official names for these land use designations are High Density Apartment Residential and Medium Density Apartment Residential.*

3. Why was the land use designation changed to “medium density” if high density buildings can still be built?

The previous land use concept would have required that every high density development involve a density transfer from the Green Link, with no alternatives provided. The updated concept is more flexible by providing alternative options. It establishes medium density development as the basic option, as well as the conditions that need to be met in order to unlock the higher density options (see the descriptions of Options 2 and 3 in Question 2 above for a description of conditions that need to be met for higher density).

4. The RM-5 (multi-storey high density apartment residential) zone has a height limit of 20 storeys. Will high-rises in Whiting-Appian be limited to 20 storeys?

No. All developments that involve a density transfer will use a Comprehensive Development (CD) zone that is based on RM-5. A CD zone is a site-specific zone where certain regulations can be adapted to fit the unique characteristics of the site. A CD zone based on RM-5 will retain the density requirements of the RM-5 zone, but it can vary the height limit as needed to fit the unique characteristics or constraints of the site in question. The City planning team is reviewing if an alternate height limit for the Whiting-Appian neighbourhood should be included in the final draft land use plan.

5. Why is the density of the RM-5 (multi-storey high density apartment residential) zone being applied to high rises in Whiting-Appian?

Density transfers will result in building sites that are denser than would typically be allowed. Using the density of the RM-5 zone will help to avoid concentrating too much density, such that buildings become inappropriately tall or bulky for their location or the development becomes less feasible.

6. Why are properties along the eastern side of Bosworth Street now designated “Parks and Recreation”?

The Austin Creek Green Link is a popular and vital part of the Whiting-Appian land use concept, and will be a valuable community asset in the future. Since the updated land use concept introduced more flexibility around how properties assemble and develop, it is necessary to clearly identify the intended long term plan for the Green Link as a park. Any properties within the Green Link that are not part of a density transfer arrangement would, over time, be purchased by the City at market value, in order to create the park.

7. If I want to sell my property, how do I find out its value?

The value of your property is dependent on a number of factors, but is especially dependent on how much potential floor area (i.e., density) can be built. Assemblies that include properties in the Green Link unlock the highest potential (see Option 3 of Question 2 above), and are likely to result in a higher land value.

We encourage all residents who are interested in selling their property to retain the services of a qualified real estate professional with knowledge and experience in land assembly and development.

8. What does this mean if I do not want to sell my property and plan to stay in the Whiting-Appian area?

Rezoning for development only occurs when owners are ready to sell their property to a developer, and that developer applies to the City for a rezoning. Property owners may choose to keep and use their land for as long as they choose. Homes can even be renovated or rebuilt using the existing zoning.

If a property owner within the Green Link chooses to sell in the future and there are no opportunities to be part of an assembly, the City will purchase their property at market value, in order to create the park.

9. What are my next steps if I want to share further feedback on this?

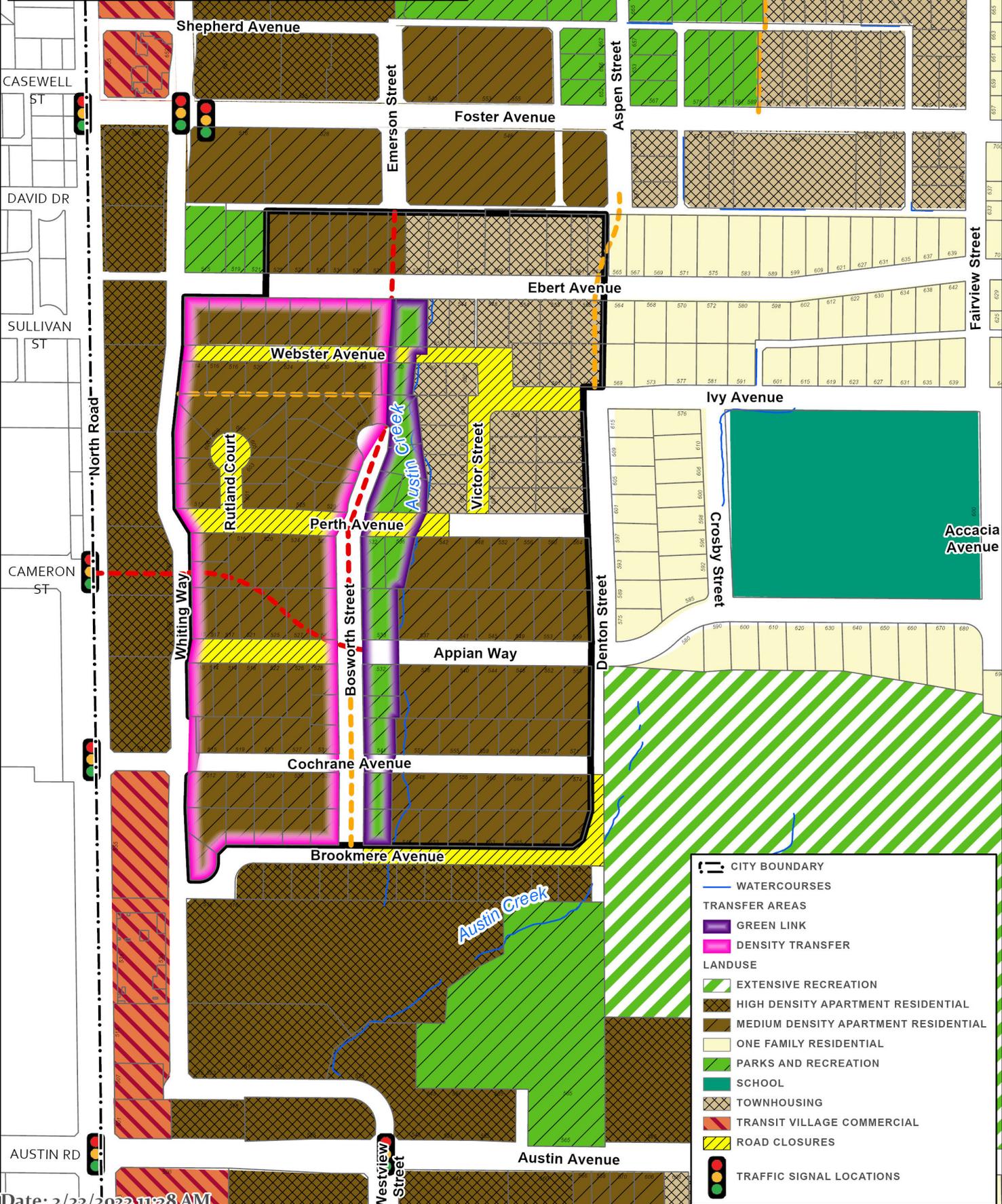
City staff will be preparing Official Community Plan amendments and related bylaws for Council's consideration this spring. Those amendments would come to Council as part of a Public Hearing—and any member of the public is invited to provide their feedback during the Public Hearing process. We expect the Public Hearing will take place in the spring of this year. We will be sharing information with project followers at letstalkcoquitlam.ca/swhr, and you can also watch for details at coquitlam.ca/publichearing or in the Tri-City News.

Our planning team is also available at any time to answer your questions and hear your feedback on this proposed land use concept. You can reach us at swhr@coquitlam.ca.



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PROPOSED LAND USE & ROAD ALIGNMENT



- CITY BOUNDARY
- WATERCOURSES
- TRANSFER AREAS**
- GREEN LINK
- DENSITY TRANSFER
- LANDUSE**
- EXTENSIVE RECREATION
- HIGH DENSITY APARTMENT RESIDENTIAL
- MEDIUM DENSITY APARTMENT RESIDENTIAL
- ONE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- PARKS AND RECREATION
- SCHOOL
- TOWNHOUSING
- TRANSIT VILLAGE COMMERCIAL
- ROAD CLOSURES
- TRAFFIC SIGNAL LOCATIONS