

The District of North Vancouver INFORMATION REPORT TO COUNCIL

March 15, 2017

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AUTHOR: Nicole Foth, Community Planner

SUBJECT: Upper Capilano Potential Small Lot Infill Areas - Public Engagement Results

REASON FOR REPORT:

At the Council Workshop on July 4, 2016, staff presented an overview of public engagement results regarding the potential for small lots in the Upper Capilano Study Area, identified in Figure 1. Council requested that staff complete a second round of public engagement for the two Potential Small Lot Infill Areas (SLIAs) within the Upper Capilano Study Area (Figure 1). Council also expressed interest in further consultation with the same residents about other housing options (e.g. duplex, triplexes and fourplexes). This report summarizes the results of this second round of public engagement which occurred in the fall of 2016.

This information is being provided to Council in advance of a Council Workshop on this subject, which is anticipated to be in early fall 2017. This Workshop is being scheduled after Council's consideration of the OCP Implementation Review.



Figure 1: Upper Capilano Study Area

SUMMARY:

Residents were asked for input on the two potential SLIAs (Figure 1) and other housing options. Staff received 132 completed questionnaires from 104* households in or near the Study Area.

The results, which are detailed in the Public Engagement Results section and Attachment 2 of this report, are summarized here as follows.

Clements/Canyon potential SLIA:

- There are 45 existing households on 45 lots in this potential SLIA.
- There are 24 existing lots within this potential SLIA that have the potential to be subdivided into small lots. If all 24 lots were subdivided, 24 new lots would be created, bringing the total number of lots in this potential SLIA to 69 (i.e. 45 existing lots plus 24 new lots).
- 18 of 26 respondent households in this potential SLIA indicated they agree or strongly agree to this area becoming a designated SLIA.
- In total, 51 of 101* respondent households in the Upper Capilano area indicated they agree or strongly agree to this area becoming a designated SLIA.

Montroyal potential SLIA:

- There are 46 existing households and 50 lots in this potential SLIA.
- There are 8 existing lots within this potential SLIA that have the potential to be subdivided into small lots. If all 8 lots were subdivided, 9 new lots would be created bringing the total number of lots in this area to 59 (i.e. 50 existing lots plus 9 new lots)
- 10 of 16 respondent households in this potential SLIA indicated they agree or strongly agree to this area becoming a designated SLIA.
- In total, 50 of 98* respondent households in the Upper Capilano area indicated they agree or strongly agree to this area becoming a designated SLIA.

* The questionnaire response totals are not the same because some questionnaires were only partially completed.

There was not strong overall public support for exploring alternative housing options (e.g. duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes) in the potential SLIAs. More detail on the residents' responses to alternative housing options may be found in Attachment 2 of this report.

A number of land owners continue to contact the District about small lot infill subdivision in the Study Area. Consistent with current practice, these requests will be processed on a site-by-site basis.

BACKGROUND:

At Council's direction, staff initiated a public engagement process in spring 2016 to assess the level of community interest, as well as identify issues and ideas relating to small lot subdivisions in the Upper Capilano area. The majority of houses in the area were built in the 1950s and 1960s and there is growing interest by homeowners to renovate or redevelop their homes. The public engagement process was initiated to respond to enquiries regarding

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subdivision potential, and to work with community members to develop a long-term vision for neighbourhood character.

An initial open house and questionnaire was held in May 2016. Staff reported the results of the public input at the July 4, 2016, Council Workshop. At that workshop Council requested further public engagement on the two potential SLIAs in the Upper Capilano Study Area, and to explore other housing options with the public.

The two potential SLIAs are:

- Two blocks of Clements Avenue and Canyon Boulevard between Cliffridge Avenue and Belvedere Drive/lane (identified in this report as the "Clements/Canyon potential SLIA"), and
- Three blocks on the north side of Montroyal Boulevard between Ranger Avenue and Cliffridge Avenue (identified in this report as the "Montroyal potential SLIA").

See Attachment 1 for further background on existing SLIAs, the Upper Capilano Study Area, and small lot subdivision.

EXISTING POLICY:

Official Community Plan 2011 (OCP)

Respecting the importance of maintaining single-family uses and neighbourhood character, the OCP recognizes there may be opportunities to sensitively introduce more housing choices in established single-family neighbourhoods. Examples include small lot subdivisions, designating additional SLIAs, duplexes, and coach houses (Policy 2.3.5, 7.1.2).

Subdivision Best Practices

At the November 5, 2013 Committee of the Whole meeting, Council considered the Approving Officer's subdivision best practices. The best practices pertain primarily to small lot subdivisions and enhance the review of subdivision applications in the District. The best practices include prohibitions for: secondary suites on small lots without lane access, mirror image or identical house designs, and tandem parking for suites. In addition, outside of SLIAs generally more than 50% of the block faces needs to already be developed as small lots.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS (Fall 2016):

Residents in the Upper Capilano Study Area (Figure 1) and nearby neighbours were invited to attend an open house on October 5, 2016, from 6:00 to 8:00 pm at Canyon Heights Church. Approximately 100 people attended this open house, and many completed a questionnaire. The purpose of the open house and questionnaire was to determine residents' level of interest in the two potential SLIAs and other housing options. An online version of the same questionnaire was available on the District website, as well as the open house display material.

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Following the open house, staff went door-to-door to households in the two potential SLIAs that had not yet responded to the questionnaire. Staff spoke with these residents or left a postcard encouraging residents to share their views via the online questionnaire.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT RESULTS (Fall 2016):

The public engagement results are presented here, as well as in Attachment 2. In addition, verbatim comments from the open house and questionnaire will be available on the project website, www.dnv.org/small-lots.

Two Potential SLIAs in the Upper Capilano Study Area

Staff received 132 completed questionnaires from 104 households in or near the study area. The results have been presented here at the household level. The total number of household responses to each question varies as some questionnaires were only partially completed. Of the 104 households represented in the questionnaire results, 87 households are located in the Study Area and 17 households are from near the Study Area (i.e. within a 75-metre radius of the study area).

In summary, more respondent households agreed with the two potential SLIAs than disagreed (Figure 2).

For the Clements/Canyon potential SLIA, 51 of 101 respondent households indicated that they agree or strongly agree to the Clements/Canyon potential SLIA, whereas 39 of 101 respondent households indicated they disagree or strongly disagree. Eleven households responded unsure or had a mixed response, while 3 were blank (i.e. not completed).

For the Montroyal potential SLIA, 50 of 98 respondent households indicated that they agree or strongly agree to the Montroyal potential SLIA, whereas 41 of 98 respondent households indicated they disagree or strongly disagree. Seven households responded unsure or had a mixed response, while 6 were blank (i.e. not completed).

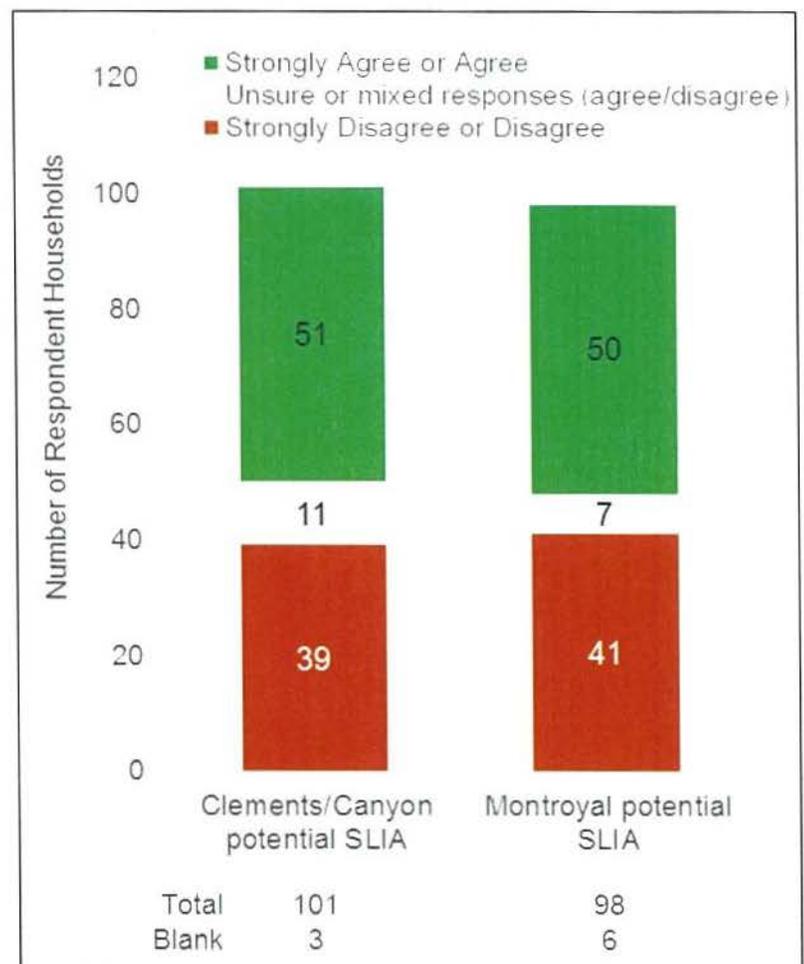


Figure 2: Household responses for the two potential SLIAs (study area and nearby neighbours)

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In the two potential SLIAs, there are currently 95 lots. Thirty two of these lots have the potential to subdivide into small lots. This represents a potential net increase of up to 33¹ lots for a total of 128 lots within the two potential SLIAs as shown in Table 1. In the whole study area, there are 356 households and a total of 365 privately-owned lots.

Potential SLIA	Existing			Potential with Designated SLIAs		
	Small Lots	Other Lots	Total	Small Lots	Other Lots	Total
Clements/Canyon	20	25	45	68	1	69
Montroyal	42	8	50	59	0	59
Total	62	33	95	127	1	128

Table 1: Subdivision potential in the two potential SLIAs

On average 3 to 4 small lots are created by subdivision across the entire District each year. If Council approves these two potential SLIAs, and the rate of subdivision remains generally the same as in past years, it could take an estimated 8 to 15 years or more for the 32 existing lots within the two proposed SLIAs to be subdivided.

Clements/Canyon Potential SLIA

In this area, 26 households responded of a total 45 households in this potential SLIA (Figure 3). Overall, more respondent households agreed with the SLIA than disagreed. Eighteen of 26 respondent households indicated that they agree or strongly agree to this area becoming a designated SLIA, whereas 8 of 26 respondent households indicated they disagree or strongly disagree (Figure 3).

Of the total 45 lots, 24 lots have the potential to subdivide into small lots. This represents a potential net increase of up to 24 houses over time should homeowners choose to pursue subdivision. Five lots on Clements Avenue in the Slope Hazard Development Permit Area are excluded.



Figure 4: Clements/Canyon potential SLIA

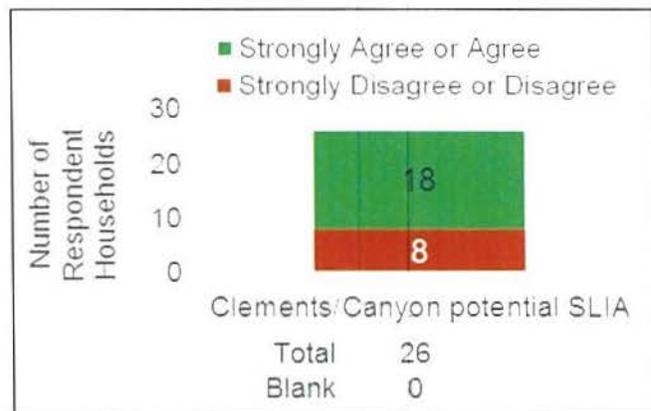


Figure 3: Clements/Canyon potential SLIA respondent households

¹ One parcel in the Montroyal potential SLIA has been identified with sufficient width to potentially accommodate two new small lots; the number of lots would be subject to subdivision review and approval process.

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Montroyal Potential SLIA

In this area, 16 households responded of a total 46 households in this potential SLIA (Figure 6). Overall, more respondent households agreed with the SLIA than disagreed. Ten of 16 respondent households, indicated that they agree or strongly agree to this area becoming a designated SLIA, whereas 4 of 16 respondent households indicated they disagree or strongly disagree (Figure 5). Two households indicated they were unsure or had a mixed response.

Of the total 50 lots, 8 lots have the potential to subdivide into small lots. This represents a potential net increase of up to 9 houses² over time, should homeowners choose to pursue subdivision.

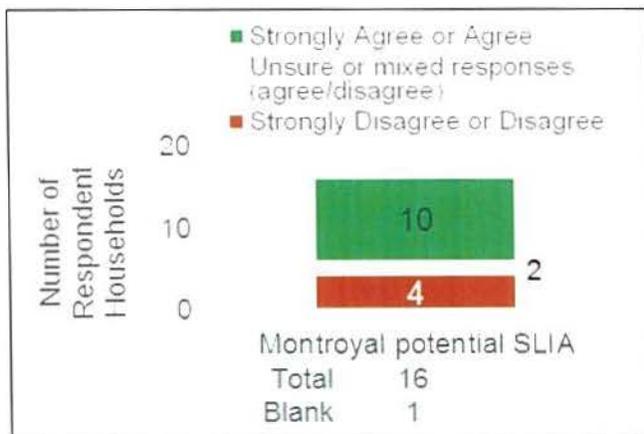


Figure 5: Montroyal potential SLIA respondent households



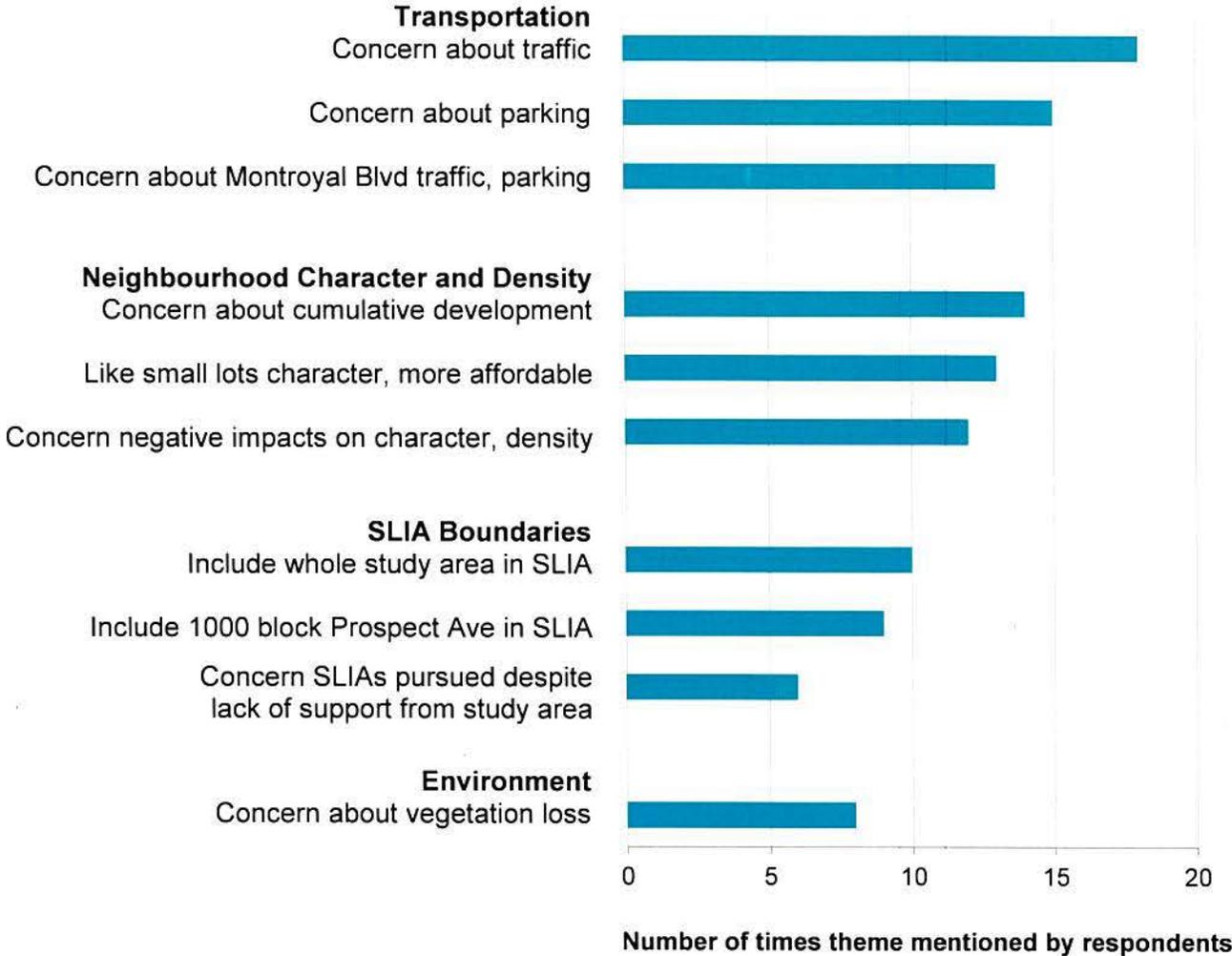
Figure 6: Montroyal Potential SLIA

² One parcel in the Montroyal potential SLIA has been identified with sufficient width to potentially accommodate two new small lots; the number of lots would be subject to subdivision review and approval process.

Other public comments on the potential SLIAs

The questionnaire also gathered other comments, concerns, and ideas about the potential SLIAs. Key themes are summarized in Figure 7, and Attachment 2 provides further details. Each themes noted in Figure 7 was mentioned five or more times by respondents.

Figure 7: Response themes of comments or ideas on the two potential SLIAs



While having adequate width for small lot subdivision, 5 lots on Clements Avenue were excluded from the potential Clements/Canyon SLIA as these lots are in the Slope Hazard Development Permit Area (Figure 8). Three of 4 respondent households in this area expressed a desire to include these 5 lots in the potential SLIA. Any subdivision applications in this area would continue to be assessed according to the Approving Officer subdivision best practices, and applicable development permit guidelines.



Figure 8: Lots on Clements Ave. in Slope Hazard Development Permit Area

In the 1000 block of Prospect Avenue, as indicated within the dashed line in Figure 9, from Capilano Road to Cliffridge Avenue, 8 of 10 respondent households indicated their desire to be part of a SLIA. There are 37 households in this block on 38 lots. There are 21 large lots (20 metres wide or greater) with adequate width for small lot subdivision. This block was not suggested as a potential SLIA because slightly less than half of the respondent households indicated interest in small lots during the initial round of public engagement. Although not recommended at this time, this area could be considered a candidate for future SLIA designation.



Figure 9: Prospect Ave. between Capilano Rd. and Cliffridge Ave.

Other housing options (duplex, triplex, fourplex)

Respondents indicated their level of interest in other housing options in the two potential SLIAs (See Attachment 2 for further details). Duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes were discussed as moderately denser residential development forms compared to single-family houses.

In general, more respondent households indicated they were not interested in duplexes, triplexes or fourplexes than households that indicated they were interested these housing options. The Montroyal potential SLIA was an exception where more respondent households were interested in duplexes compared to respondent households not interested.

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The public input shows that there is not strong overall support for exploring other housing options (duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes) in the potential SLIAs at this time. Some respondents identified areas that may be more appropriate, such as near centres, density, and transit (10 respondents). The public input results for other housing options and the potential SLIAs are anticipated to be discussed during a future Council Workshop.

Timing/Approval Process:

This information is being provided to Council in advance of a Council Workshop on this subject, which is anticipated to be in early fall 2017, after the OCP Implementation Review.

In the meantime, Council may see applications from individual property owners seeking small lot subdivision in this area through the currently available process of site-by-site rezoning applications.

Conclusion:

The OCP identifies small lot infill as an opportunity to expand housing choices through sensitive infill in existing single-family neighbourhoods by enabling a variety of lot and house sizes. Staff will present the public engagement results, and options for small lot infill development, at a future Council Workshop.

Respectfully submitted,



Nicole Foth
Community Planner

- Attachment 1: Background
- Attachment 2: Public Input Summary

REVIEWED WITH:					
<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Community Dev.	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Clerk's Office	_____	External Agencies:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Development Services	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Library Board	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Utilities	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Finance	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> NS Health	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering Operations	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Fire Services	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> RCMP	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Parks	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> ITS	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> NVRC	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Environment	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Solicitor	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum & Arch.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Facilities	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> GIS	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate	_____		

ATTACHMENT 1: BACKGROUND

The following is excerpted from the "Upper Capilano Small Lots Study: Public input and next steps" Report to Council, June 24, 2016.

SLIAs were first adopted by the District in the 1980s. There are currently 23 SLIAs across the District, including one in the Upper Capilano area. In 2004, residents proposed a SLIA for the 1000 block of Clements Avenue and Canyon Boulevard. At the time, Council deferred the proposal until the Upper Capilano Official Community Plan³ was reviewed. Since then, the current 2011 District-wide Official Community Plan (OCP) was adopted with policies that support exploration of infill housing (see Existing Policy section).

In April 2014, Council asked staff to look at issues related to small lot subdivisions in the Upper Capilano area in response to reoccurring issues that typically arise with individual subdivision and rezoning applications, such as parking and traffic. As a result of Council's direction, staff embarked on a public engagement process to assess the level of interest, as well as issues and ideas relating to small lot subdivisions in the Upper Capilano area.

The process seeks to develop a long-term vision for housing needs and neighbourhood character now and in the future as homes rebuild in this area. The existing SLIA in Upper Capilano is nearly exhausted of subdivision potential (two eligible lots remain). Staff receive frequent enquires at the planning counter about the subdivision potential of lots in the Upper Capilano area outside the existing SLIA.

Study area

The selected study area for exploring the public's interest in small lots is located in Upper Capilano approximately between Montroyal Boulevard, Ranger Avenue, Prospect Avenue, and Capilano Road. It is adjacent to the existing Small Lot Infill Area 4A. A majority of houses in the study area were built in the 1950s and 1960s with many of these homes currently changing or likely to be renovated or rebuilt. Consultation at this juncture presents a timely opportunity to ask residents about their ideas for the future of the neighbourhood.

Small lot subdivision

The study area is zoned RS3, which permits a minimum lot width of 18 metres. Small lots are considered to be less than 13.875 metres (45 feet) wide and a minimum of 10 metres (33 feet) wide. To create a small lot outside of a SLIA, a property owner must apply for rezoning in addition to subdivision. The rezoning requires a text amendment to the Zoning Bylaw to add the lot to the Zoning Bylaw Section 310 "Special Minimum Lot Sizes".

A SLIA establishes a long-term vision for lot sizes in an area and provides greater clarity to residents regarding what type of lot sizes they may expect in the future. If approved by Council, new SLIAs would be added to the Zoning Bylaw. Zoning Bylaw Section 312 "Small Lot Infill Areas" permits parcels in SLIAs to have a minimum lot width of 10 metres, and specifies the locations of approved SLIAs. Within an approved SLIA, an applicant seeking a small lot subdivision would apply for subdivision, but no rezoning would be required.

³ Repealed with the adoption of the current Official Community Plan, but remains a policy reference document.

ATTACHMENT 2: PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARY

This attachment provides a summary of the responses and key themes from the questionnaire at and following the October 5, 2016 open house.

Invitation letters were mailed to property owners in the Upper Capilano Study Area and nearby neighbours within a 75-metre radius of the study area, which is the same distribution area as the initial open house in May 2016. The questionnaire was provided in hardcopy at the open house, and digitally online after the open house for a total period of about four weeks.

Summary statistics

132 individual questionnaire responses were received from addresses within the study area and within a 75-metre radius (the notification area) of the study area, representing 104 households (lots with addresses).

It is noted that 16 individual questionnaire responses were received that did not have an address or were from addresses beyond a 75-metre radius of the study area. Because the public input is summarized by household and with a focus on the study area and households nearby, these responses are not included in the following summary of questionnaire responses. The input will be available in the verbatim comments on the project website, www.dnv.org/small-lots.

Questionnaire Responses

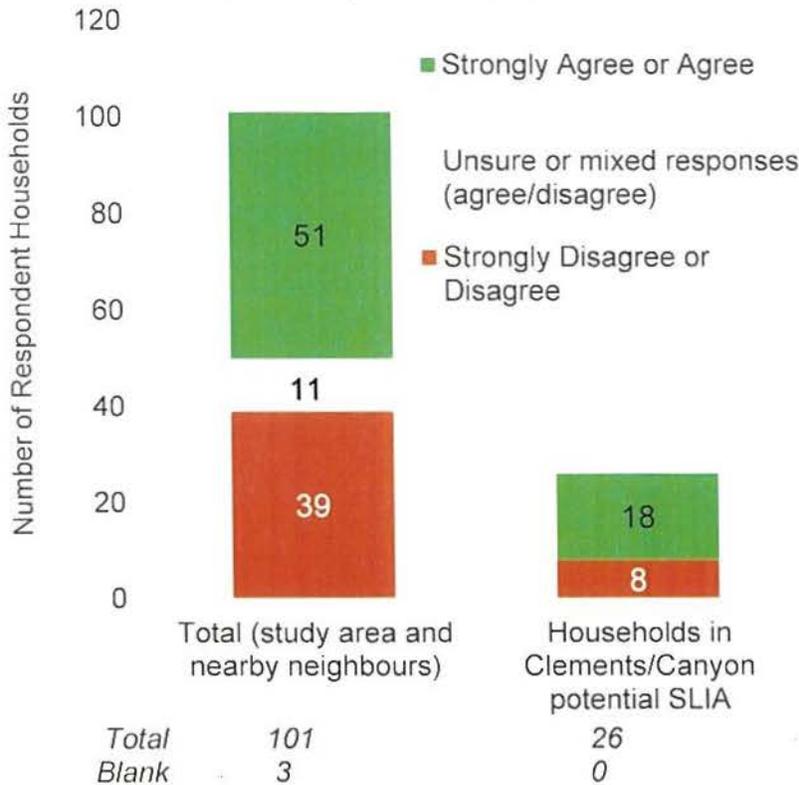
The questionnaire responses are shown by household (addresses) within the study area and a 75-metre radius. If households submitted more than one questionnaire, the responses to questions are grouped by affirmative or negative, for example strongly agree and agree. If a household submitted more than one questionnaire with both affirmative and negative responses, these answers are reported as 'mixed response'.

For the open text questions, response themes that were mentioned five or more times by respondents are highlighted in this summary.

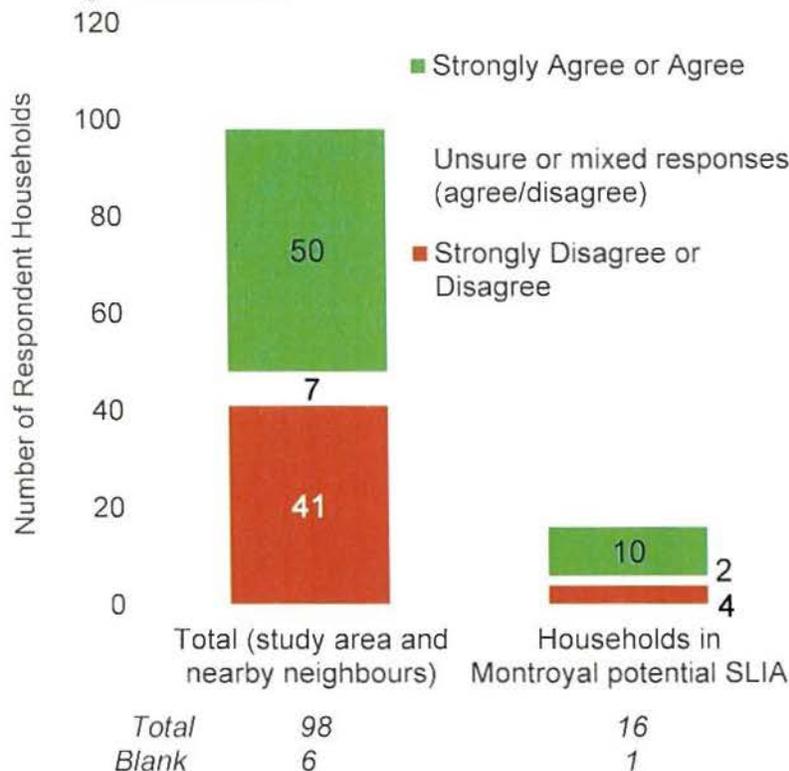
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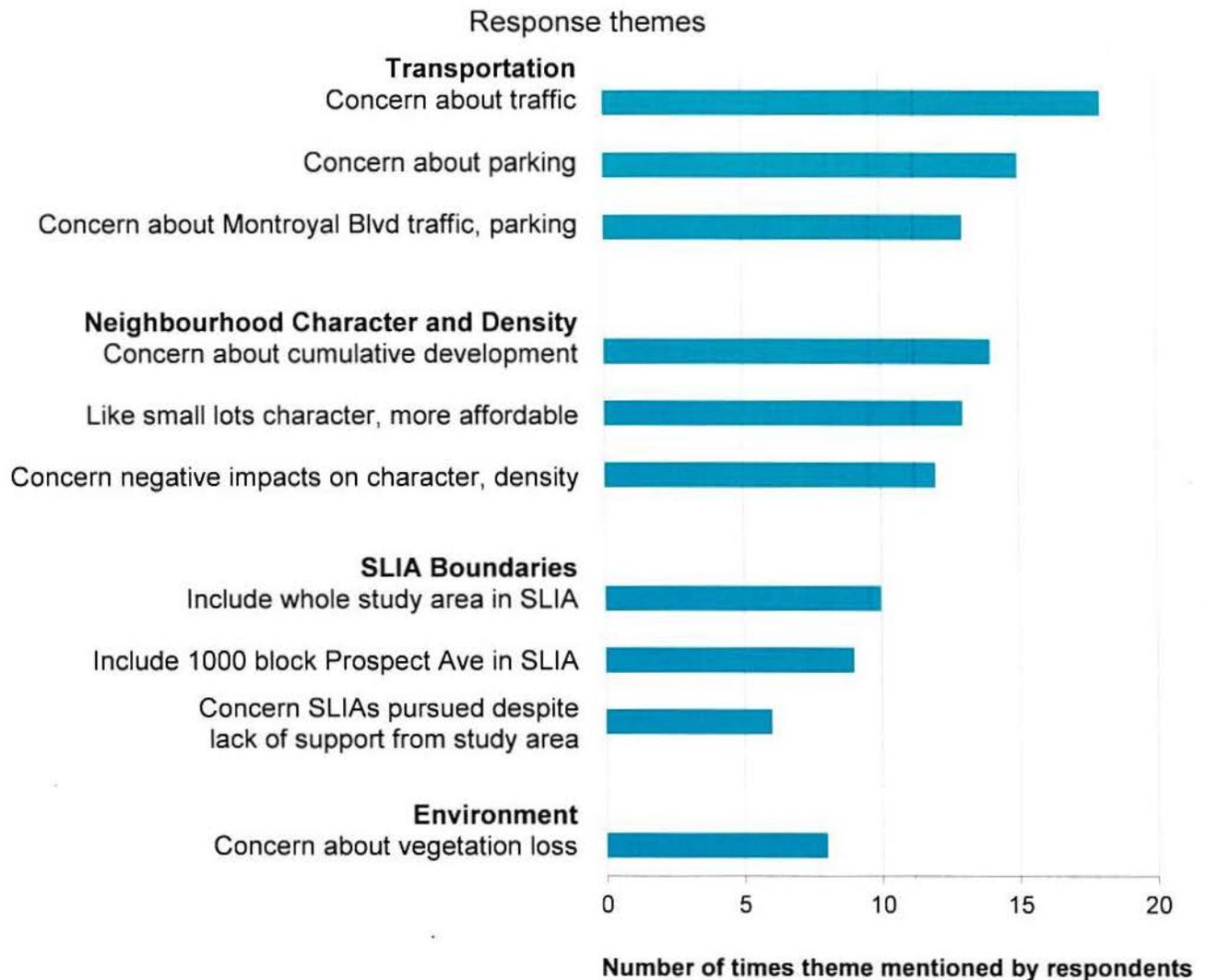
Question 1: Please indicate whether or not you agree with the potential Small Lot Infill Area on Clements Avenue and Canyon Boulevard?



Question 2: Please indicate whether or not you agree with the potential Small Lot Infill Area on Montroyal Boulevard?



Question 3: Do you have other comments or ideas about either (or both) of the potential SLIAs in Upper Capilano?



Further details about the key response themes

Transportation

- Traffic concerns include: increase with development, congestion, poor transit.
- Parking concerns include: on-street, sufficient off-street parking, should park on property, garages used for storage.
- Montroyal Boulevard concerns include: traffic volume, lack of on-street parking, safety, driveways, no sidewalk on one side.

Neighbourhood character and density

- Cumulative development concerns include: impact of overall Upper Capilano/North Shore development, lack of infrastructure to support additional density, Capilano Heights Chinese Restaurant redevelopment with SLIAs.
- Small lot support includes: fits with existing small lots, more affordable single-family housing compared to houses on large lots.
- Negative impact concerns include: changing character and increasing density.

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SLIA boundaries

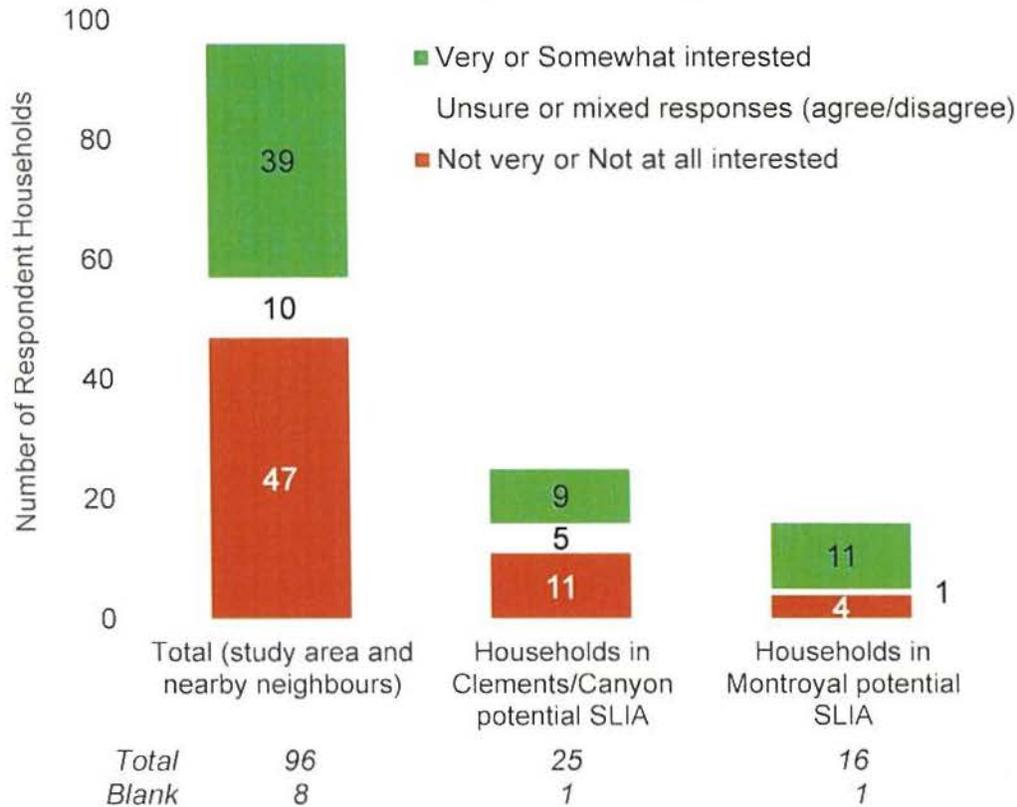
- Support for the whole study area to be considered for a SLIA.
- Support for 1000 block Prospect Ave (Capilano Road to Cliffridge Ave) to be considered for a SLIA.
- Concern that SLIAs are being pursued and considered despite lack of support from overall study area as a whole during the initial public input.

Environment

- Vegetation concerns include loss of trees, greenery, natural resources

Question 4 to 6: Please indicate your level of interest in other housing forms in the potential Small Lot Infill Areas.

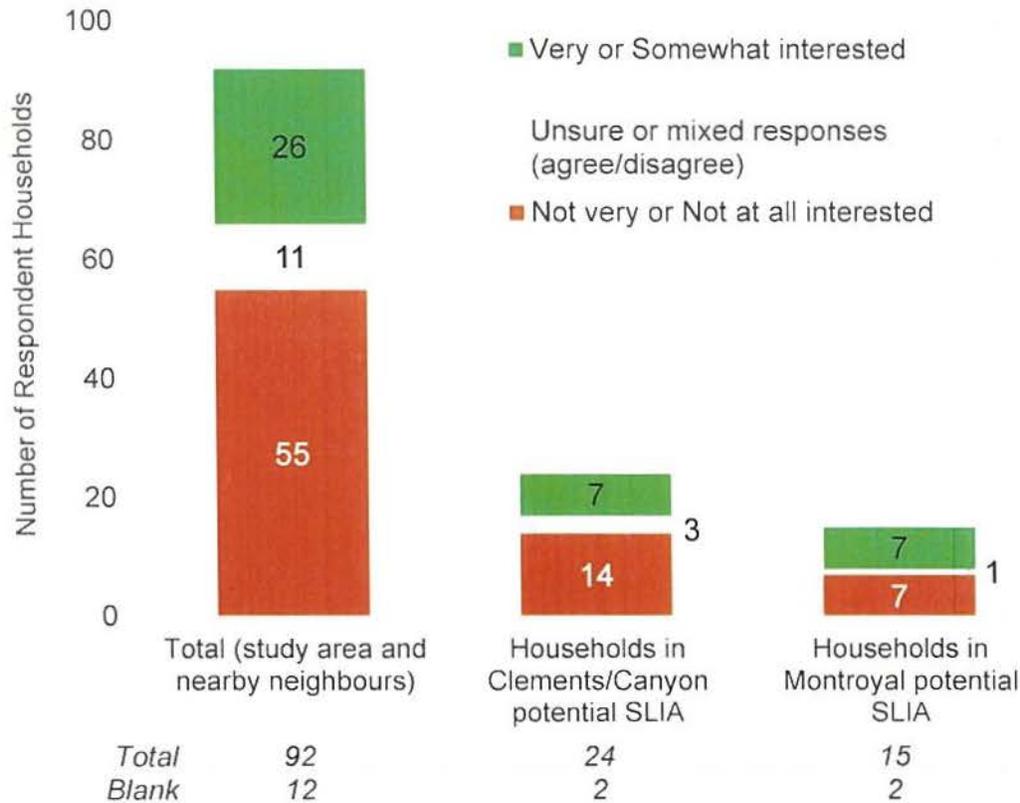
Question 4: I am interested in the potential for duplexes.



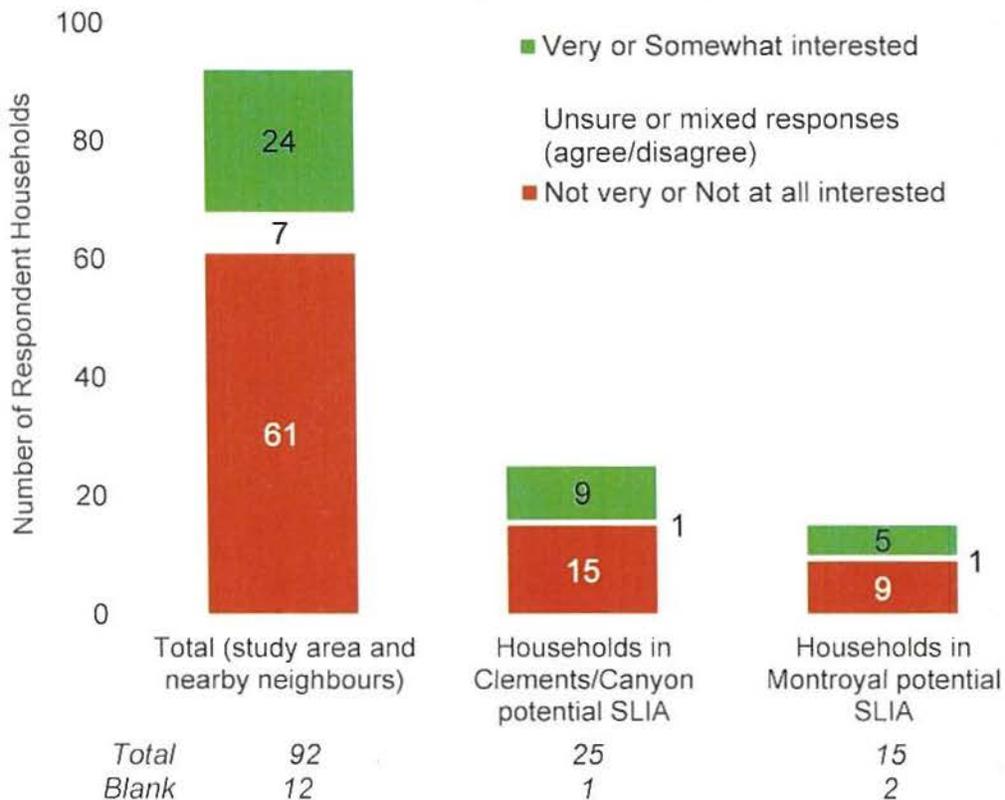
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Question 5: I am interested in the potential for triplexes.



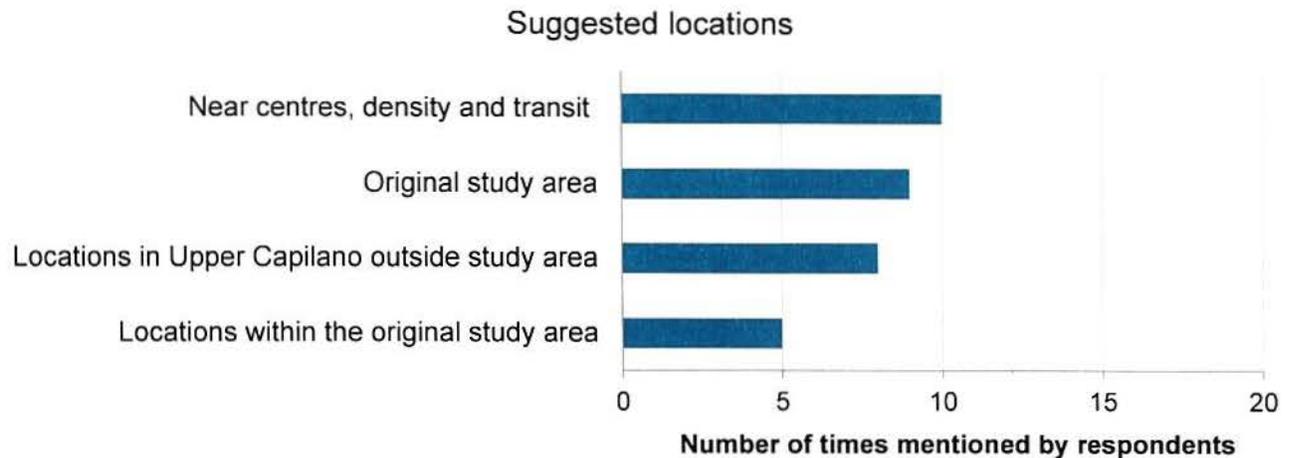
Question 6: I am interested in the potential for fourplexes.



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Question 7: Should we consider other locations for other housing options in the Upper Capilano neighbourhood, besides the potential Small Lot Infill Areas? If so, please describe.

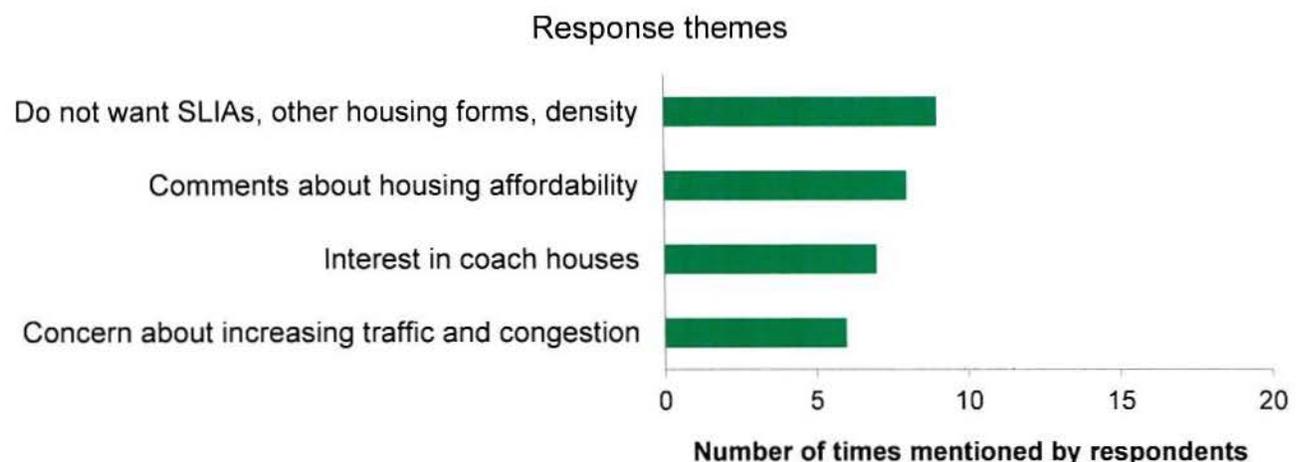


Locations suggested in Upper Capilano outside the study area include: Capilano Road, south of Montroyal Blvd, Edgemont, Highlands, near Montroyal school.

Locations suggested within study area include: 1000 block Prospect Ave, Clements Ave, Prospect Ave, Montroyal Blvd.

Some responses identified concerns about other housing options: lack of amenities and transit, affordability, negative impact on property values, negative impact on character, increase in traffic, lack of parking.

Question 8: Do you have other comments or ideas about other housing options?



Comments about housing affordability include: large houses expensive, small houses more affordable, small houses not affordable, more affordable housing for families, need to provide housing options.