
Report to the Surrey School District Board of Education on the Expansion of French Immersion Programs

March 2019

LEADERSHIP IN LEARNING

Executive Summary

The Surrey School District is challenged with how to meet the demand for French Immersion in the context of rapid residential growth and development. This Report to the Surrey Board of Education outlines key factors to consider in the expansion of French Immersion, specifically; current waitlists, teacher availability, research on Early French Immersion Programs as compared to Late French Immersion Programs, and demographic information and potential space in the three regions which have the highest demand for French Immersion and new capital projects. A summary of the key themes in this report are as follows:

- Research shows that both Early and Late French Immersion Programs are viable options for students to become bilingual and achieve oral fluency and literacy in both English and French.
- Demand for Early French Immersion Programs is greatest in the Cloverdale/Clayton, South Surrey/White Rock, and South Newton regions. Waitlists in all three regions indicate enough demand to support an Early French Immersion Program.
- Data from the previous three years indicates the District's Late French Immersion classes often do not fill to capacity. There are currently very few students on the waitlist for our Late French Immersion Programs.
- The enrolment data of Elementary French Immersion Programs indicates that most of the students who attend these programs come from schools adjacent to, or in close proximity to, the schools where the programs are located. École Laronde Elementary has a broader enrolment pattern as the data indicates that students come from across the South Surrey/White Rock region.
- Although the Surrey School District faces on-going challenges with recruiting and hiring French Immersion teachers, hiring one additional teacher per year to support a new French Immersion Program should be feasible.
- There are many variables which can affect the timelines for the rate of residential growth, and therefore, alter future enrolment numbers in individual schools. While communities that are fully developed have predictable enrolment patterns, communities that are experiencing rapid development have enrolment patterns that are much harder to predict because they are dependent upon development and occupancy timelines. While it is difficult to predict which new capital projects will have space for a fully-matured French Immersion Program in 8-10 years, current data indicates that Douglas Area Elementary or Site #207 are more likely than other new capital projects to have space for an Early or Late French Immersion Program.

Background

The Surrey Board of Education and our community value flexibility and parent choice in schools and educational programs. French Immersion is the District's most popular Program of Choice with over 3000 students enrolled in French Immersion amongst 16 schools across Surrey. Although French Immersion Programs are currently located in all regions of Surrey, the District is continually challenged with how to meet the demand for French immersion in the

context of rapid residential growth and development. With over 7000 students in portables, the ability of the District to find space to begin a new Program of Choice, such as French Immersion, is significantly limited. A new Early French Immersion Program would require 8 classroom spaces and the regions which have the greatest demand for French Immersion are the same regions which are developing most quickly and have the least available classroom space. In most catchments, beginning a new French Immersion program would result in displacing other students from their neighbourhood school, or would result in having to move the French Immersion Program after it becomes established in a school.

The Surrey Board of Education is committed to supporting French Immersion and to look for ways to increase the availability of this program. Recently, the Surrey School District opened a new secondary school, École Salish Secondary, and has received approval for the construction of four new elementary schools and one new secondary school. In light of the new capital projects that have been approved, the Surrey Board of Education passed the following motion at the September 19th, 2018, Public Board meeting:

It is recommended:

THAT staff explore the possibilities of the expansion of French Immersion in the context of our new capital announcements and to report back to the Board of Education by March 31, 2019.

This Report to the Surrey Board of Education outlines key factors to consider in the expansion of French Immersions, specifically; current waitlists, teacher availability, research on Early French Immersion Programs as compared to Late French Immersion Programs, and demographic information and potential space in the three regions which have the highest demand for French Immersion and new capital projects.

Current French Immersion Programs and Waitlists:

The Surrey School District currently holds a district lottery for entry into its Early French Immersion Program. There are 240 spaces available amongst 6 schools throughout the district. The waitlist snapshot below indicates students' first choice of school programs. This snapshot is from September each year, and displays the number of students still requesting French Immersion after the lottery is completed and students have been placed into programs. The waitlist numbers vary throughout the school year as parents can request to be added to the waitlist at any time. The lottery system in the Surrey School District is further impacted by sibling registrations. In the current system, a family that obtains a seat in French Immersion for one child through the lottery is allowed to register siblings in the program without entering the lottery. This reduces the number of actual spaces available for other families, sometimes by up to 50%. The current system is intended to keep families together as otherwise it would often result in children from one family attending two different schools, however, this system does reduce the number of truly available seats each year.

Early French Immersion Waitlists for the Previous 3 Years:

School	2016	2017	2018	3 Year Average
Laronde	20	29	32	27
Martha Currie	26	38	46	36.7
Peace Arch	13	36	28	25.7
Riverdale	0	0	5	1.7
Simon Cunningham	7	13	17	12.3
Woodward Hill	26	18	44	29.3

A new Early French Immersion Program would require a demand of 18-20 students for kindergarten registration. An analysis of each school and where Early French Immersion students reside indicates that most French Immersion students come from the schools in close proximity to the school in which the program is located, or at least come from schools in that community region. Generally speaking, the data indicates parents are much less likely to accept a space in a French Immersion Program if it is not within their community. This is further evidenced by a recent attempt to begin an Early French Immersion Program at Cougar Creek Elementary School. Despite waitlists in other regions of the district and available spaces at Cougar Creek, parents were not willing to accept a placement in a program if it was outside of their community.

In regards to Late French Immersion, registration is a school-based process for students entering grade 6. The data from the last three years indicates that our Late French Immersion Programs are often not filled to capacity each year. Our current waitlists for Late French Immersion Programs indicate very little demand. Depending on the community, approximately 30% to 50% of students enrolled in Late French Immersion Program come from the school where the program is located. The class capacity for a Late French Immersion Program is 29 students.

Late French Immersion Grade 6 Enrolment and Current Waitlists:

	Grade 6 Enrolment				
School	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	3 Yr Average	2019 Waitlist
Crescent Park	23	27	23	24.3	7
Henry Bose	14	25	20	19.7	0
Jessie Lee	24	22	26	24	1
K.B. Woodward	28	28	22	26	1
Sunrise Ridge	19	24	28	23.7	1

Early French Immersion Compared to Late French Immersion

There has been quite a bit of research conducted on Early and Late French Immersion Programs with a view to understanding if students achieve the same or similar levels of French language proficiency regardless of which program they participate in. Most of this research is from the 1980's, 1990's and early 2000's, but there are some more recent studies as well. As would be expected, the results of the research vary somewhat in their findings based on different variables. There is enough information on this topic that a literature review could be a separate report unto itself. For the purposes of this report, consistent themes indicated by the research are as follows:

1. Students in both Early and Late French Immersion Programs develop fluency and proficiency with oral and written French.
2. Students in Early French Immersion Programs, as opposed to Late French Immersion Programs, do experience some benefits with respect to oral fluency and listening comprehension, most notably, spontaneity of language use.
3. Students in Early and Late French Immersion Programs achieve similar results in reading and writing.

Research shows that both Early and Late French Immersion Programs are viable options for students to become bilingual and achieve oral fluency and literacy in both English and French.

French Immersion Teacher Supply

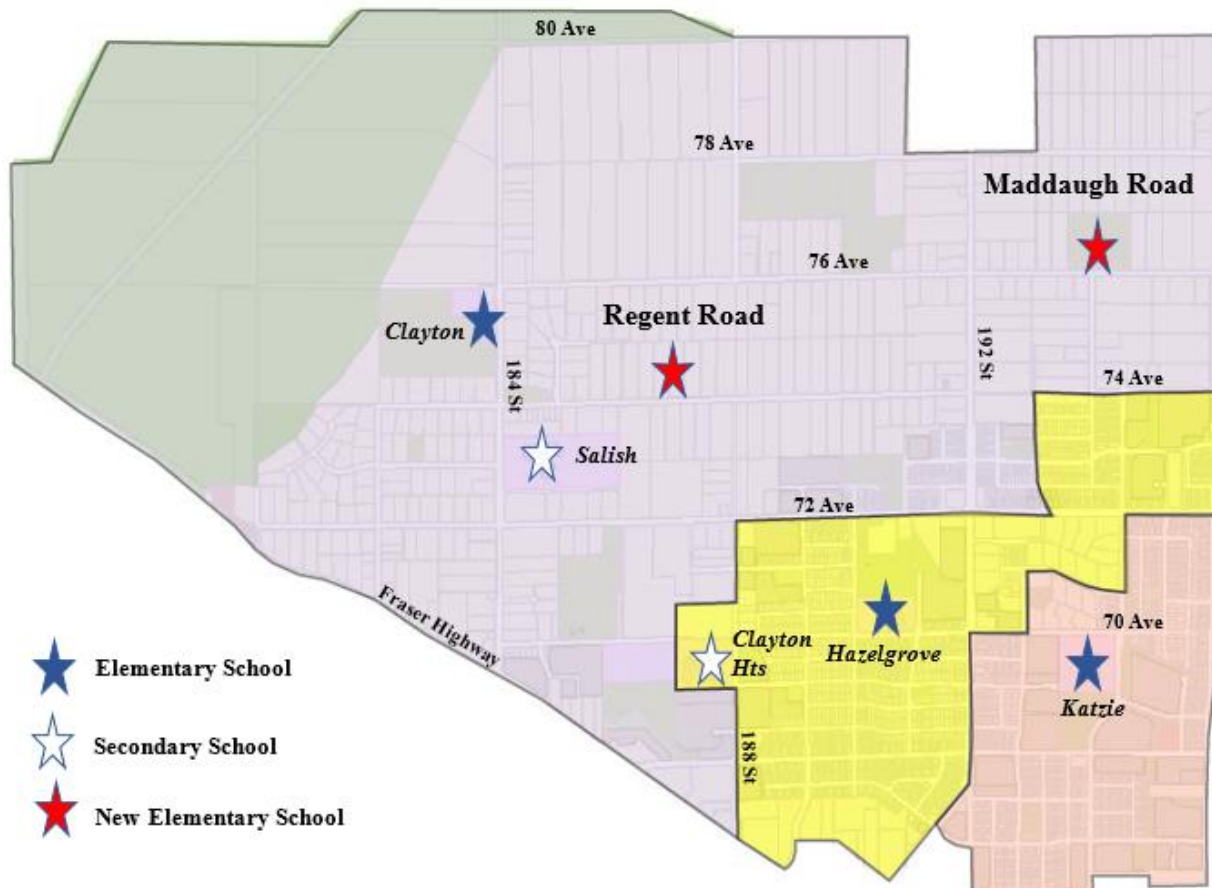
Historically, the Surrey School District and other school districts in British Columbia have difficulty recruiting enough French Immersion teachers to fill available teaching positions. Although the District may have enough French Immersion teachers at different times of the school year, it is often difficult to fill a long-term vacancy if a teacher is on leave, or fill a vacancy with a teacher who is trained or has the experience necessary in a certain teaching area (e.g. Secondary French Immersion Science or French Immersion Kindergarten). Annually, the Surrey School District employs approximately 130 teachers per year in French Immersion assignments. The District currently has all of its positions filled with qualified teachers and 4-5 French Immersion teachers on the Temporary Teachers On-Call (T.T.O.C.) list. Adding an Early Elementary French Immersion Program would require an additional 8 Elementary French Immersion Teachers and 2.125 Secondary French Immersion Teachers over the implementation of the Program (13 years). Adding a Late French Immersion Program would require an additional 2 Elementary French Immersion Teachers and 2.125 Secondary French Immersion Teachers over the implementation of the Program (7 years). Although the District faces ongoing challenges with recruiting and hiring French Immersion teachers, it is reasonable to assume that in most cases, the District could hire one additional French Immersion teacher per year over the implementation timeline for a new program.

Regional Demographics

Clayton

The Clayton community in north Cloverdale has experienced rapid growth over the past 15 years and that growth continues today. The community currently has three elementary schools; all of which are significantly over-capacity. The community also has two secondary schools, one of which recently opened in September 2018. To relieve the overcrowding at the three elementary schools and accommodate future growth, there are two new capital projects that are approved and, in the tender/construction process: Regent Road Elementary and Maddaugh Road Elementary. These new schools are anticipated to open in September of 2021. The map and chart below indicate the location, capacity, and enrolment of current schools and new capital projects in Clayton:

Current Schools and New Capital Projects in Clayton



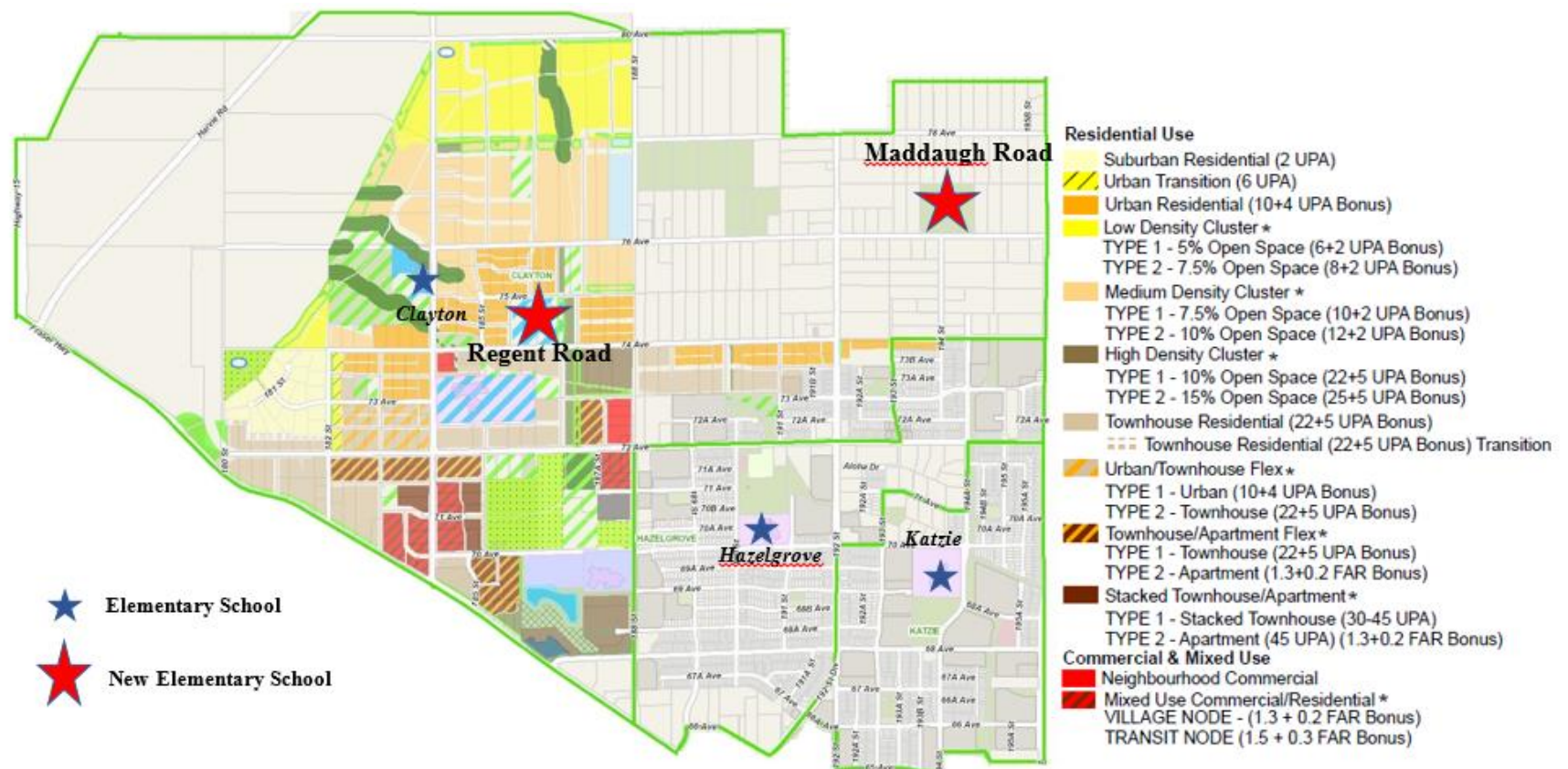
Elementary Schools' Capacity and Enrolment in Clayton:

School	Capacity	2018 Enrolment	Number of Portables
Clayton	190	255	4
Hazelgrove	530	823	14
Katzie	650	904	14
Maddaugh Road	605	New Capital Project	NA
Regent Road	655	New Capital Project	NA

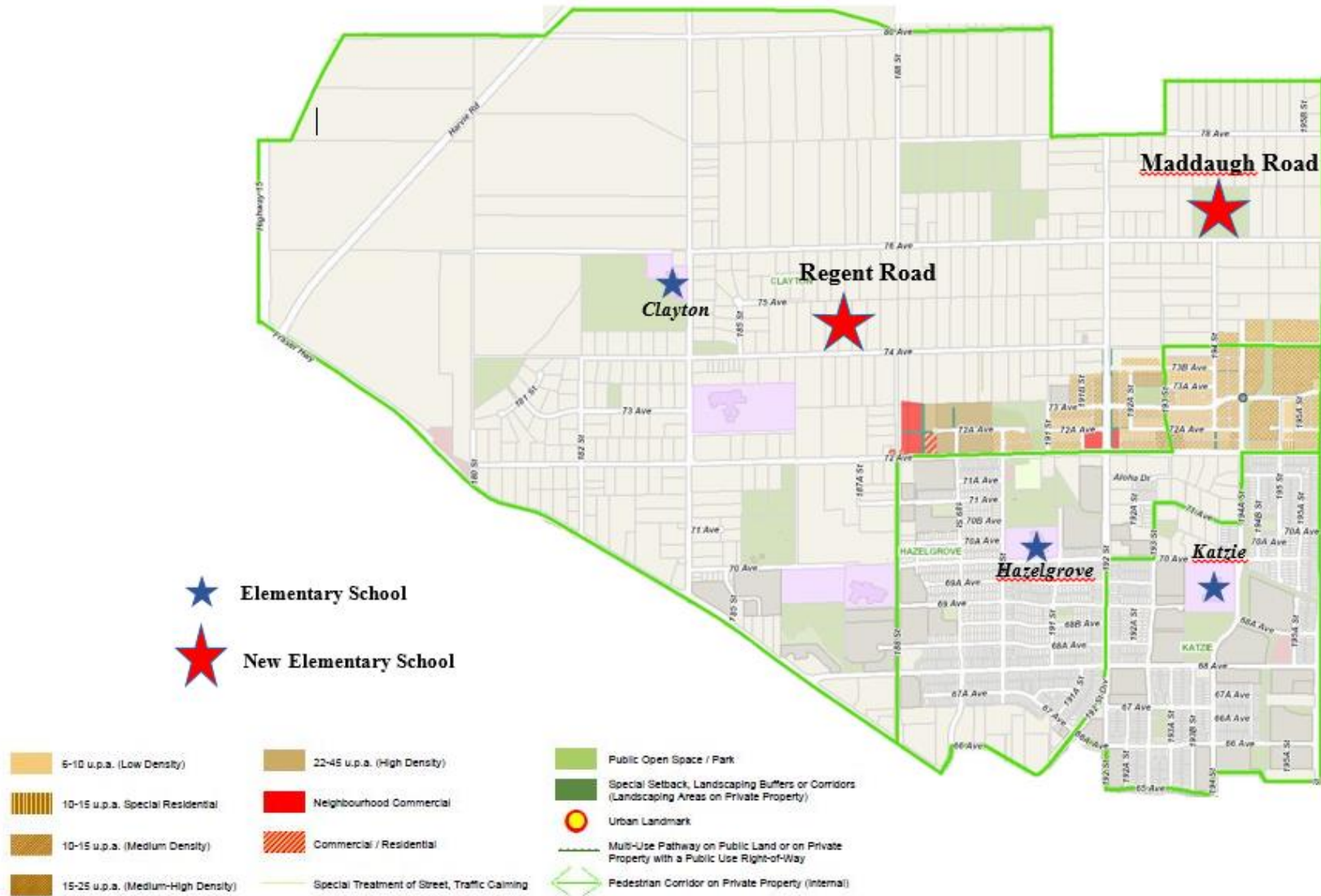
Regent Road Elementary is located in the West Clayton Neighbourhood Concept Plan (NCP) which indicates replacing many of the current one-acre lots with medium to high-density residential units in the form of small lot single family homes, high-density townhomes, and low-rise apartments. Although Regent Road Elementary will likely open with space available for future growth, when the West Clayton community builds out, Regent Road Elementary will fill to or beyond capacity. What is unknown is the timeline for the build out of West Clayton, however it would be reasonable to assume that this could occur before a new French Immersion Program that began at Kindergarten matured to a full K-7 Program (8 years after school opening).

Maddaugh Road Elementary is located just north of the East Clayton Extension Neighbourhood Concept Plan. When Maddaugh Road Elementary opens, it will provide classroom space for many students who currently attend Katzie Elementary and Clayton Elementary. There is currently no Neighbourhood Concept Plan for the area just north of 74th Avenue that surrounds the Maddaugh Road site, however, if this area was to follow the same development pattern as the rest of East Clayton, Maddaugh Road Elementary would be at or beyond capacity. Again, a timeline for this is unknown but it would be reasonable to assume this could occur before a French Immersion Program fully develops at the school (8 years after school opening). Diagrams of the West Clayton NCP and East Clayton Extension NCP are included in the next two pages.

West Clayton Neighbourhood Concept Plan (NCP)

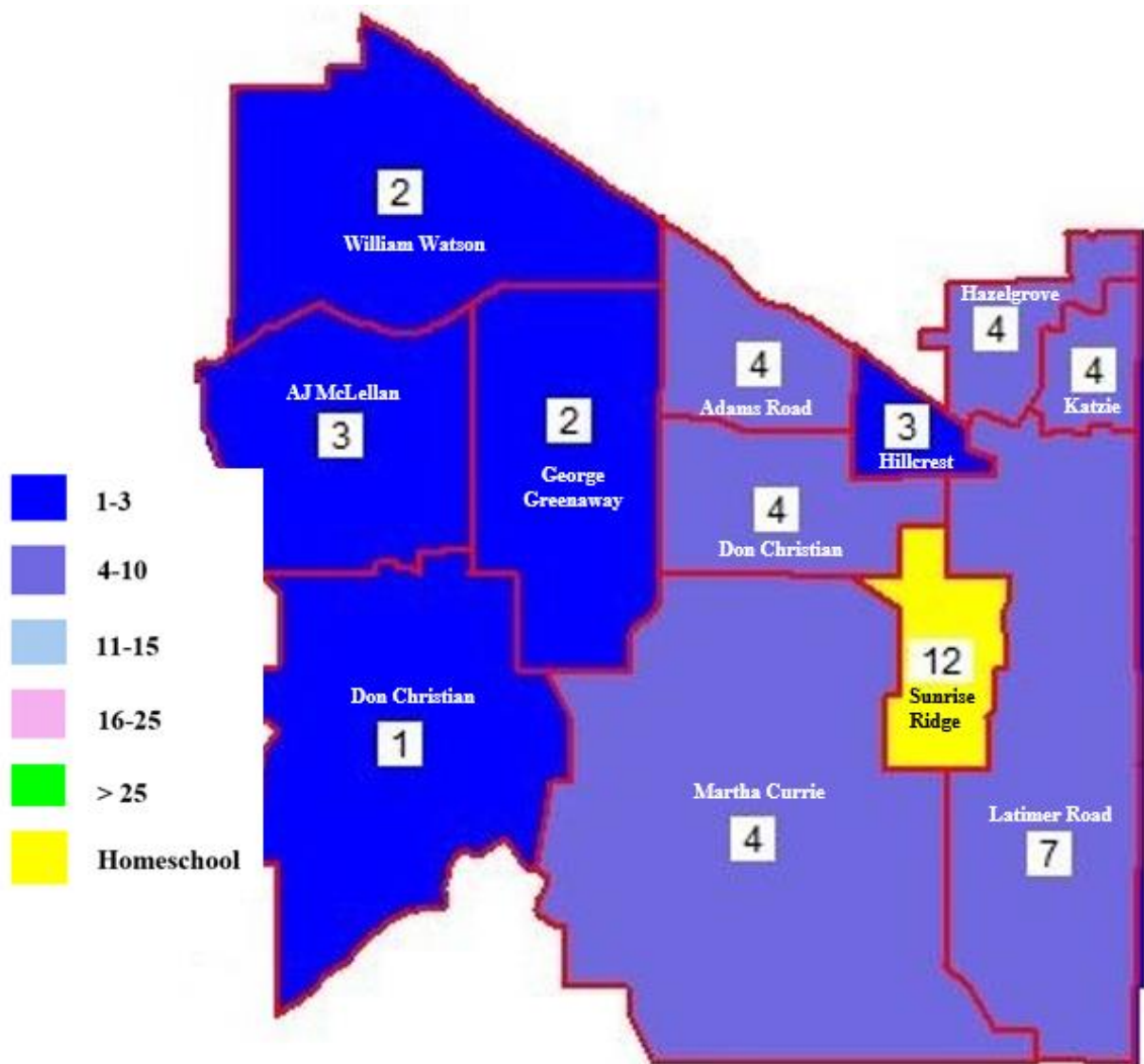


East Clayton Extension Neighbourhood Concept Plan (NCP)

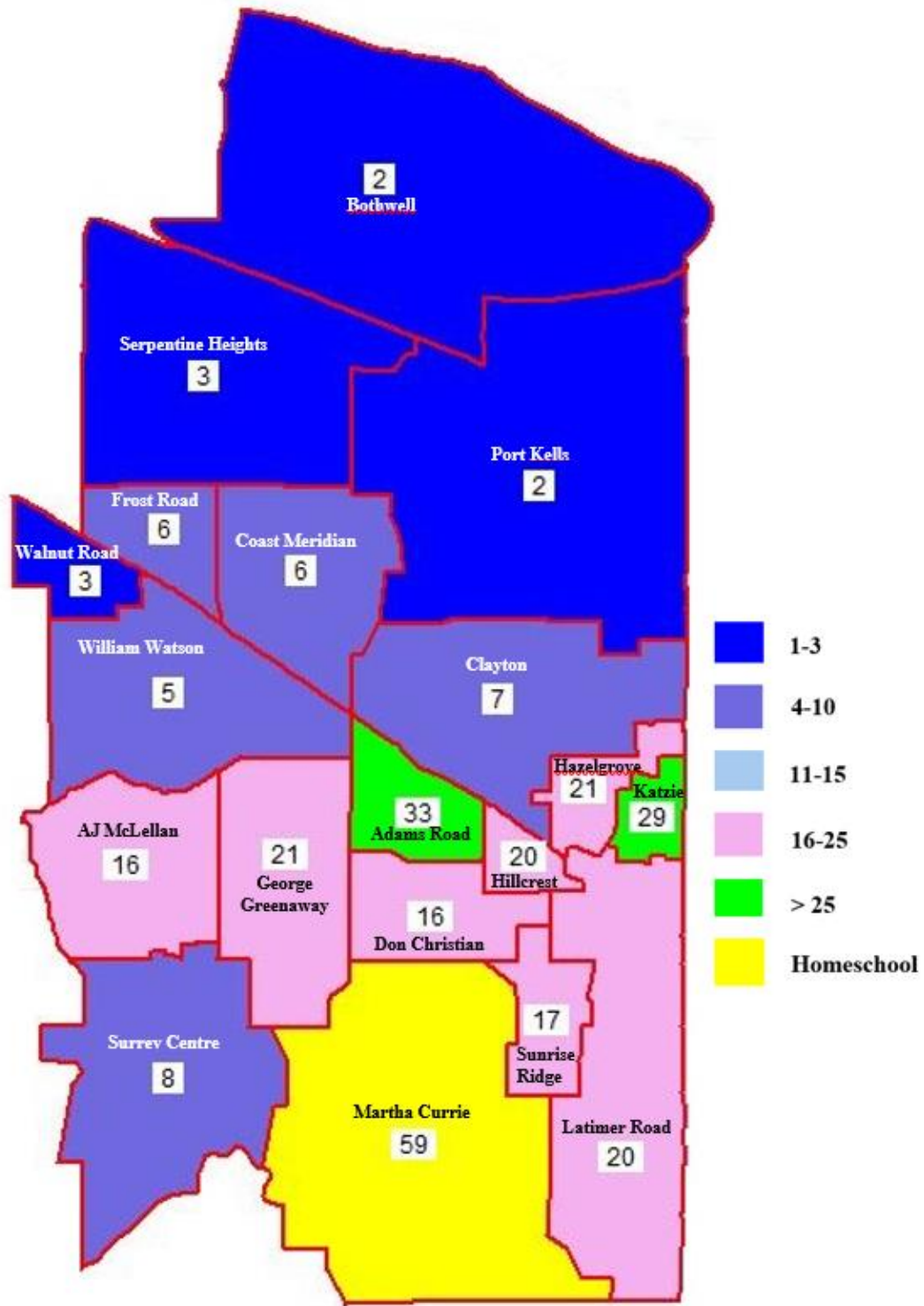


The Clayton community is currently served by the Early French Immersion Program at École Martha Currie Elementary (321 students), the Late French Immersion Program at École Sunrise Ridge Elementary (54 students), and the Secondary French Immersion Programs at École Salish Secondary and École Lord Tweedsmuir Secondary (237 students). The enrolment pattern of the elementary programs indicates that most of the students who attend these programs come from either these two schools, or schools adjacent to, or in close proximity to, the schools where the programs are located. There are currently 65 elementary students who reside in the catchments of Clayton Elementary, Hazelgrove Elementary, and Katzie Elementary that attend a French Immersion Program in Cloverdale.

Where Students who Attend French Immersion at École Sunrise Ridge Elementary Reside:



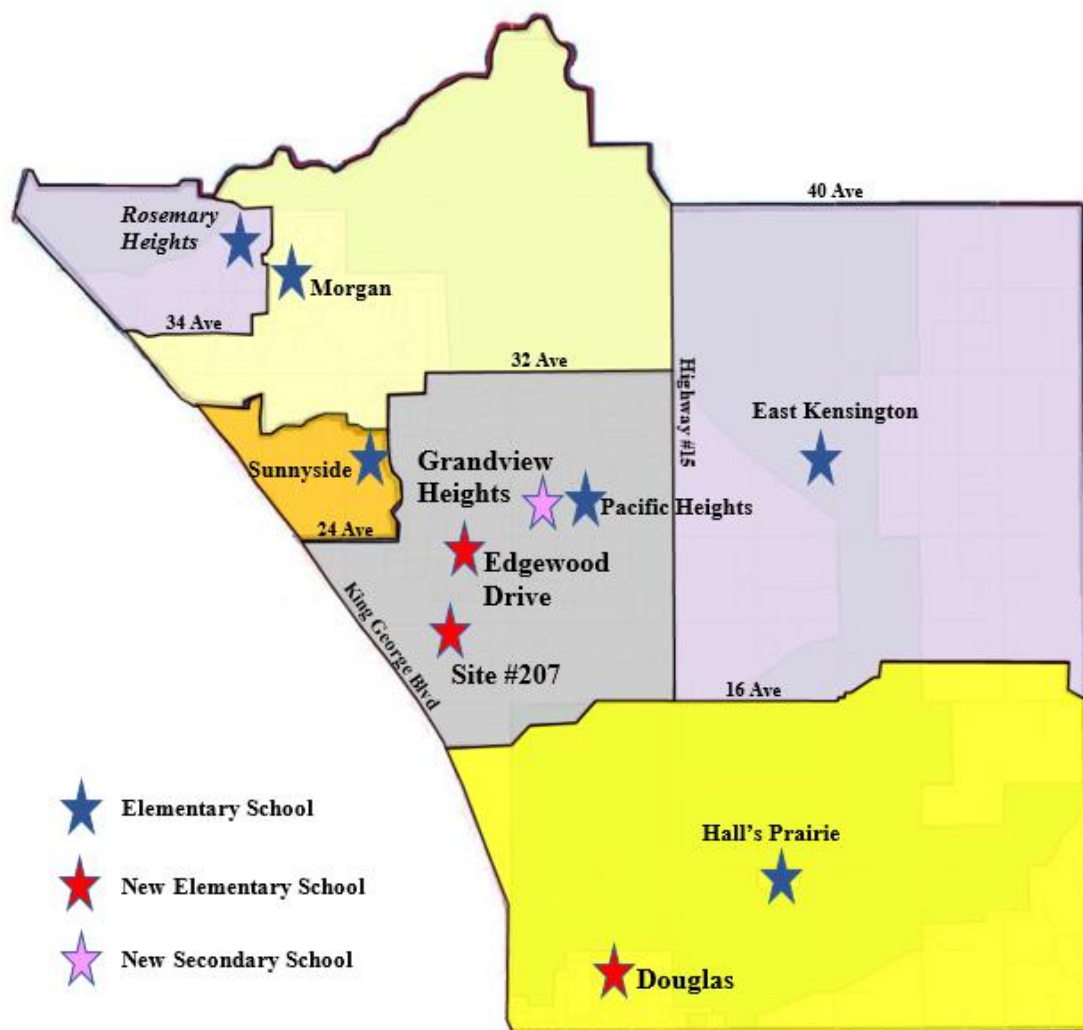
Where Students who Attend French Immersion at École Martha Currie Elementary Reside:



South Surrey/White Rock

The Grandview community, east Highway 99, is developing at a remarkable pace. Suburban single-family properties are being replaced with small lot single family homes or high-density townhomes. There are 6 elementary schools in the community; 5 of which are overcapacity and 1 where the EKOLogy Program is located. To relieve the overcrowding at these schools and accommodate future growth, there are 2 new elementary schools, Edgewood Drive and Douglas Area Elementary, and 1 new secondary school, Grandview Heights Secondary, that are approved, and in the construction/tender process. There is also an addition currently under construction at Pacific Heights Elementary, and one more new elementary school being planned for at Site #207, located at 1960 – 165A Street. Edgewood Drive is anticipated to open in September 2021, with the other elementary schools and secondary school anticipated to open between September 2021 and 2023. The map and chart below indicate the location, capacity, and enrolment of current schools and new capital projects in the Grandview area:

Current Schools and New Capital Projects in the Grandview Area:

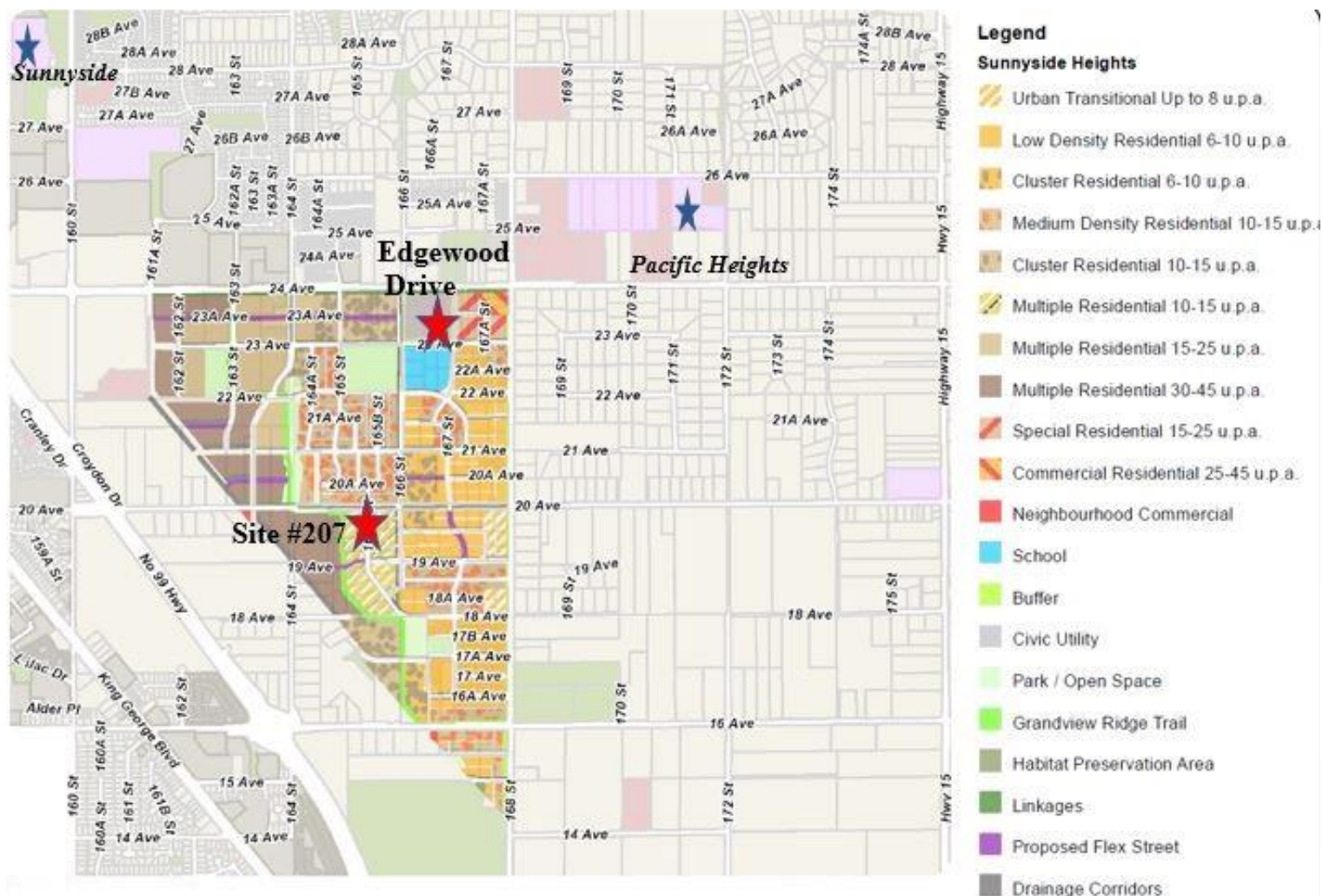


Elementary Schools' Capacity and Enrolment in the Grandview Area:

School	Capacity	2018 Enrolment	Number of Portables
Rosemary Heights	510	536	3
Morgan	435	532	5
Sunnyside	450	655	9
Pacific Heights	330	451	7
East Kensington	100	57	0
Halls Prairie	120	201	5
Edgewood Drive	605	New Capital Project	NA
Douglas Area	605	New Capital Project	NA
Site #207	360	New Capital Project	NA

Edgewood Drive and Site #207 are both located in the Grandview Heights Neighbourhood Concept Plan #2 - Sunnyside Heights and border on the area of the Grandview Heights Neighbourhood Concept Plan #3 – Dart's Hill. The City initially approved the Sunnyside Heights NCP in 2010, and then in 2017, the City reviewed and reapproved the NCP with an increase in density. This increase in density meant that a second elementary school was required to serve the community, and this resulted in the purchase of Site #207 in 2018. The City has yet to adopt the Dart's Hill NCP. This plan is similar to Sunnyside Heights NCP and proposes to change the once suburban/rural area into a new high-density community that will bring 8,000 people to the area. The Dart's Hill NCP calls for a mix of single-family homes and townhomes that will increase in density from 16th Avenue moving north towards 24th Avenue. The build out of the Dart's Hill and Sunnyside Heights NCPs will bring a significant number of school-aged children to the Grandview area. Again, the timeline for development has many variables but based on the current pattern of development, Edgewood Drive Elementary would be at capacity soon after opening, however Site #207 may be a possible location for a French Immersion Program. Diagrams of the Sunnyside Heights NCP and Dart's Hill NCP are included in the next two pages.

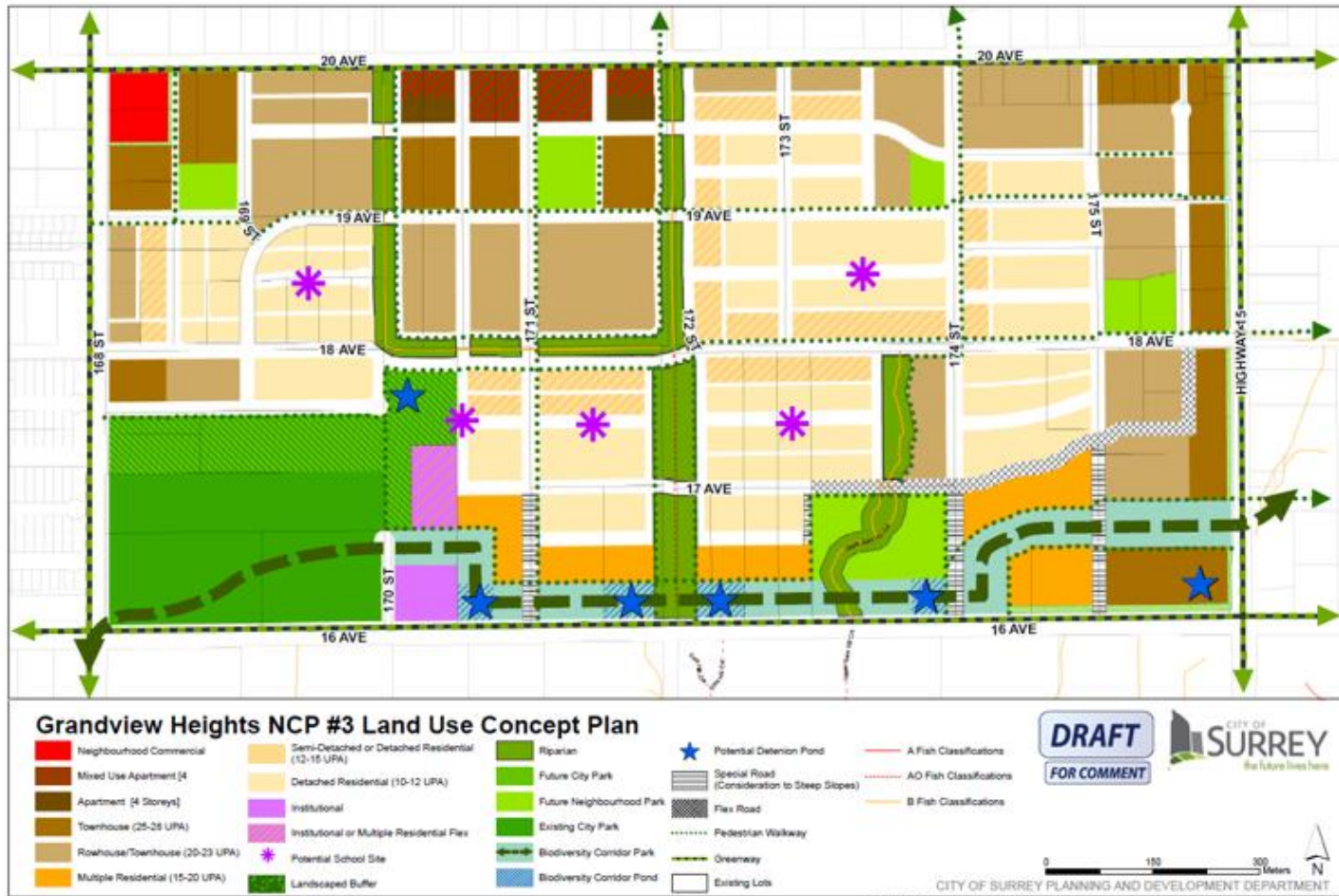
Sunnyside Heights Neighbourhood Concept Plan (NCP)



★ Elementary School

★ New Elementary School

Dart's Hill Neighbourhood Concept Plan (NCP)





Grandview Heights NCP #3 (Dart Hill's) is currently awaiting council adoption.

The Douglas Area Elementary school is located in the Douglas Neighbourhood Concept Plan. This NCP was approved in 2007 and allows for the build out of townhouses and single-family residential units south of 4th avenue in the Douglas area. Although there is still some development in this NCP, much of this development has occurred and this may be a possible location for a French Immersion Program. A diagram of the Douglas NCP is included in the next page.

Douglas

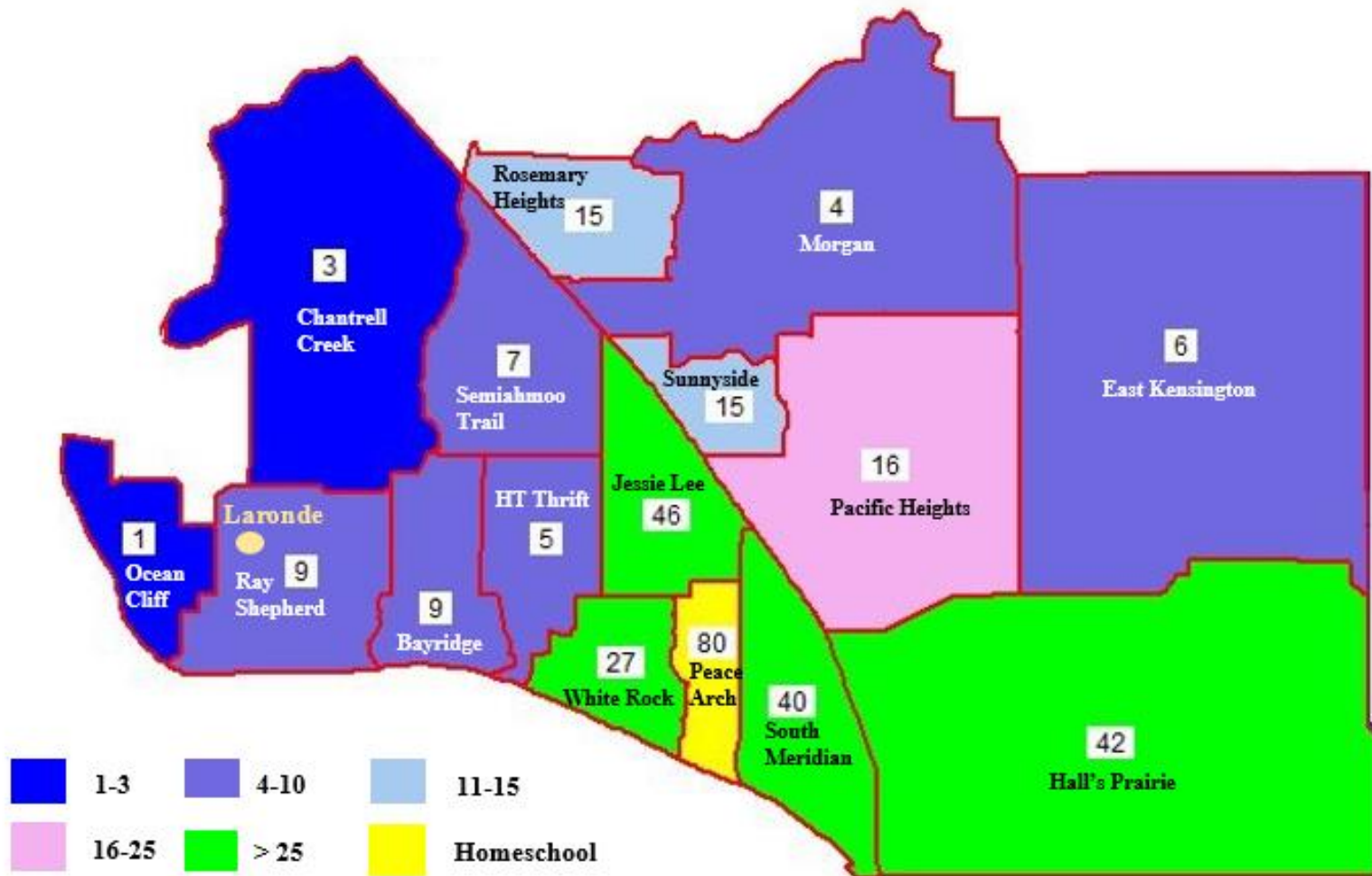
-  Douglas, Strata Lots
-  Townhouse (15 u.p.a.)
-  Townhouse (20 u.p.a.)
-  Townhouse (30 u.p.a.)
-  Small Lot Single Family (10 u.p.a.)
-  Urban Single Family (6 u.p.a.)
-  Single Family Flex (6-14.5 u.p.a.)
-  Suburban Transition (2 u.p.a.)
-  Suburban 1/2 Acre (2 u.p.a.)
-  Commercial/Residential
-  Open Space
-  School/Park Site
-  Special Paving Areas
-  Pond Buffers

 **Elementary School**

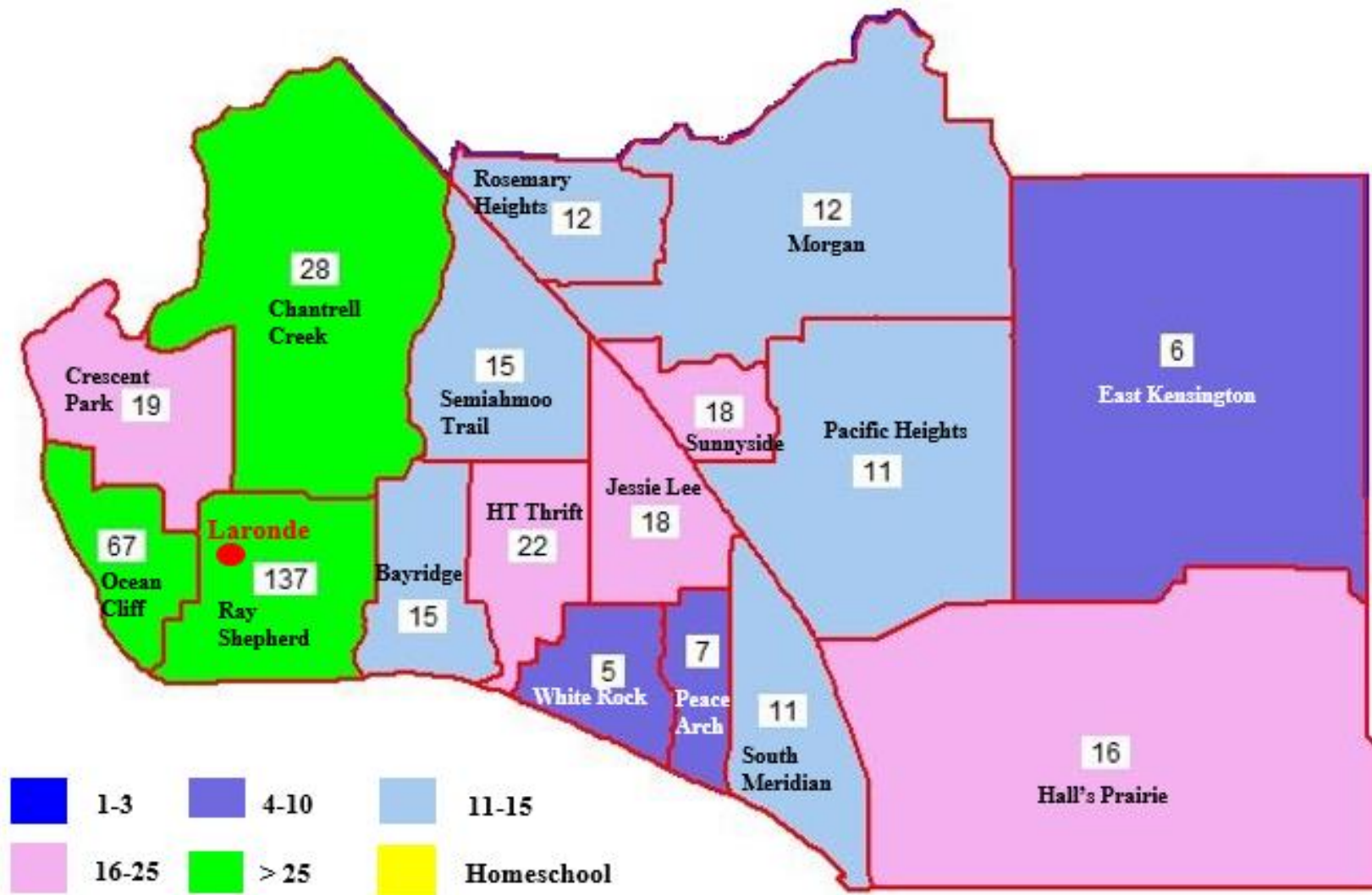
 **New Elementary School**

The South Surrey/White Rock region is served by the Early French Immersion Programs at École Laronde Elementary (450 students) and École Peace Arch Elementary (348 students), the Late French Immersion Program at École Jessie Lee Elementary (47 students), and the Secondary French Immersion Program at École Earl Marriott Secondary (434 students). The enrolment patterns of École Peace Arch Elementary and École Jessie Lee Elementary indicate that most of the students who attend these programs come from either these two schools, or schools adjacent to, or in close proximity to, these schools. In regards to École Laronde Elementary, the enrolment pattern indicates that most students come from across the South Surrey/White Rock region. Currently, 184 elementary students that reside east of Highway 99 in the Grandview Heights community attend French Immersion Programs in South Surrey/White Rock.

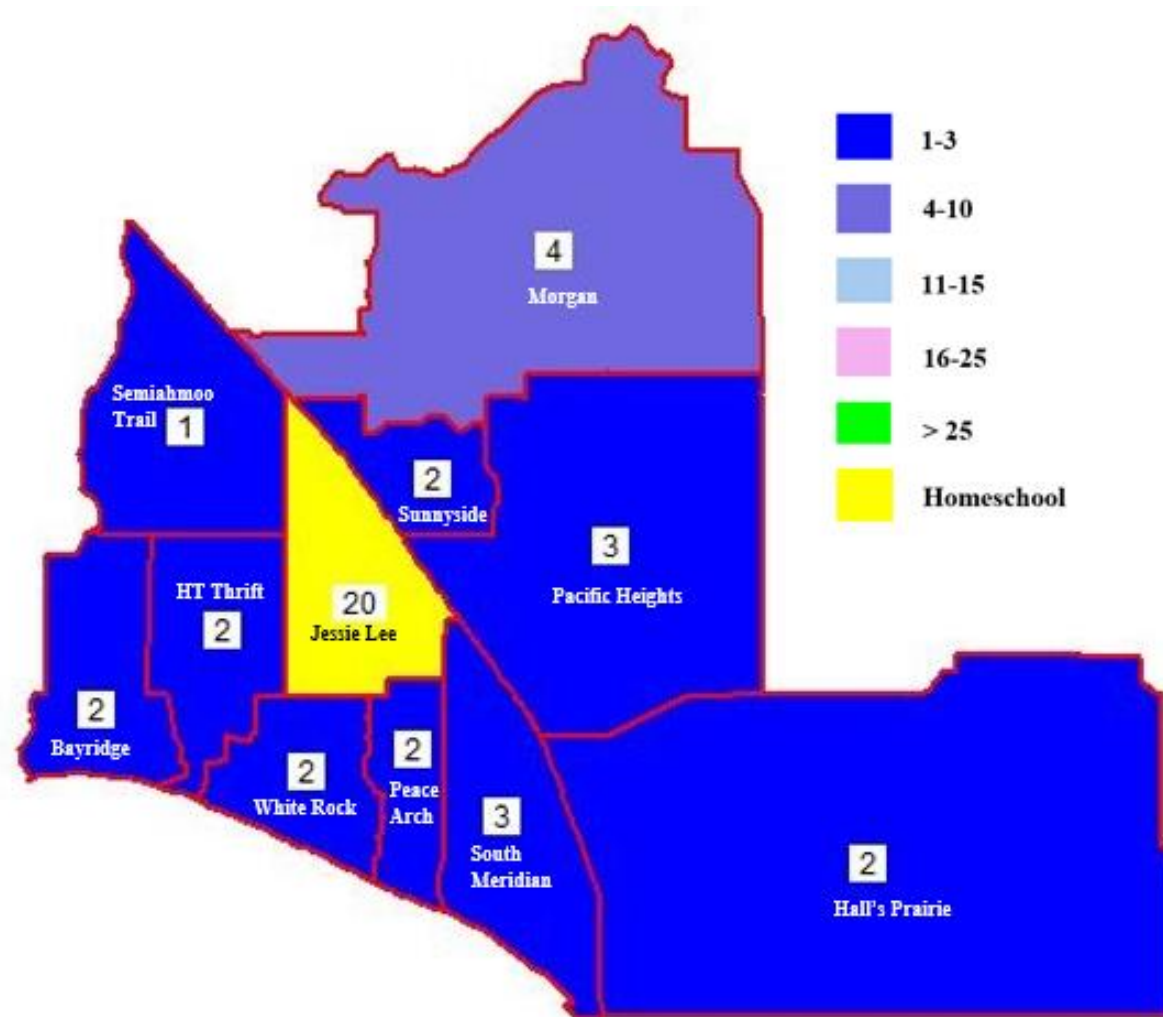
Where Students who Attend French Immersion at École Peace Arch Elementary Reside:



Where Students who Attend French Immersion at École Laronde Elementary Reside:



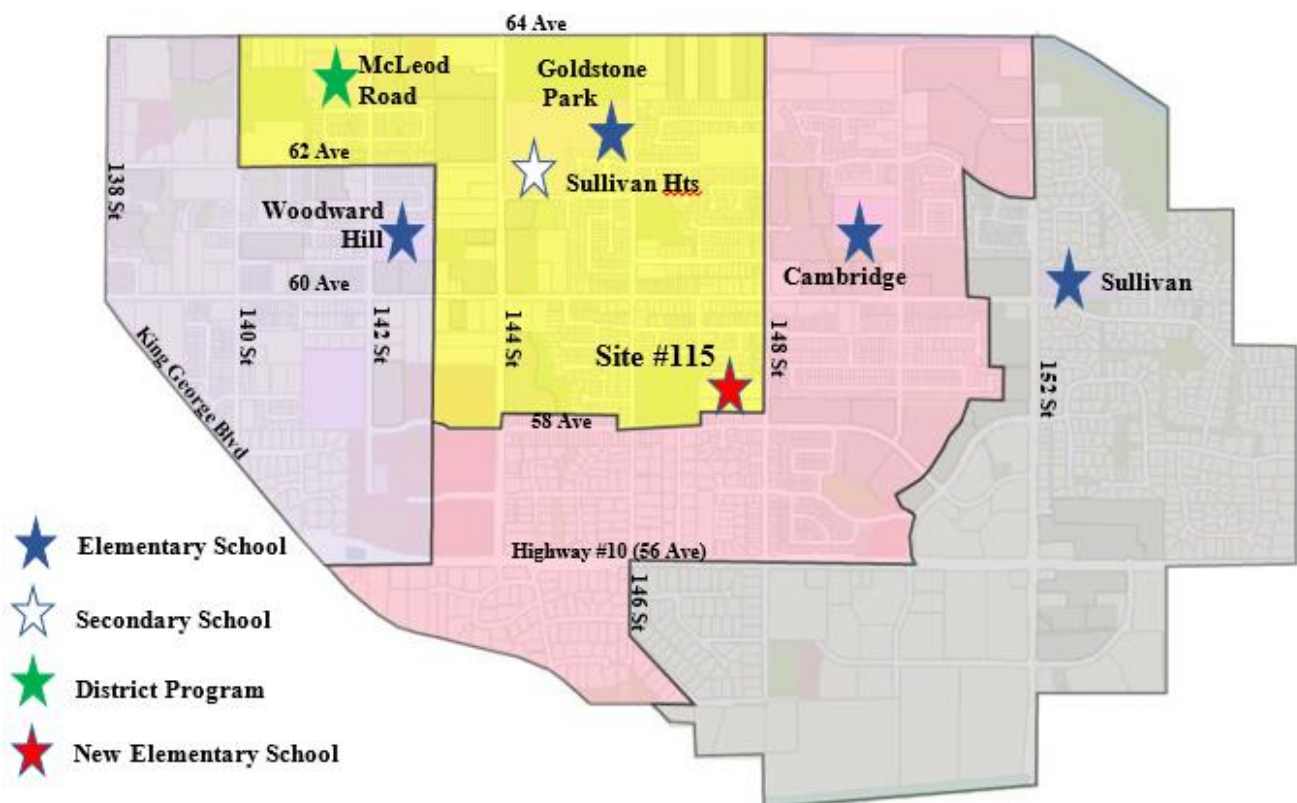
Where Students who Attend French Immersion at École Jessie Lee Elementary Reside:



South Newton

The South Newton region of Surrey is also experiencing considerable residential growth and development. There are currently 4 elementary schools, another elementary school which hosts the Traditional Program, and 1 secondary school in the area. Three of the elementary schools and the secondary school are significantly over-capacity. Sullivan Secondary and Sullivan Elementary have both been approved for additions and are in the tender/construction process. Currently, the District is looking to purchase a site for a new elementary school located north of Highway 10 and west of 152nd street within the South Newton community. The map and chart below indicate the location, capacity and enrolment of current schools and new capital projects in the South Newton area:

Current Schools and Potential Capital Projects in South Newton:

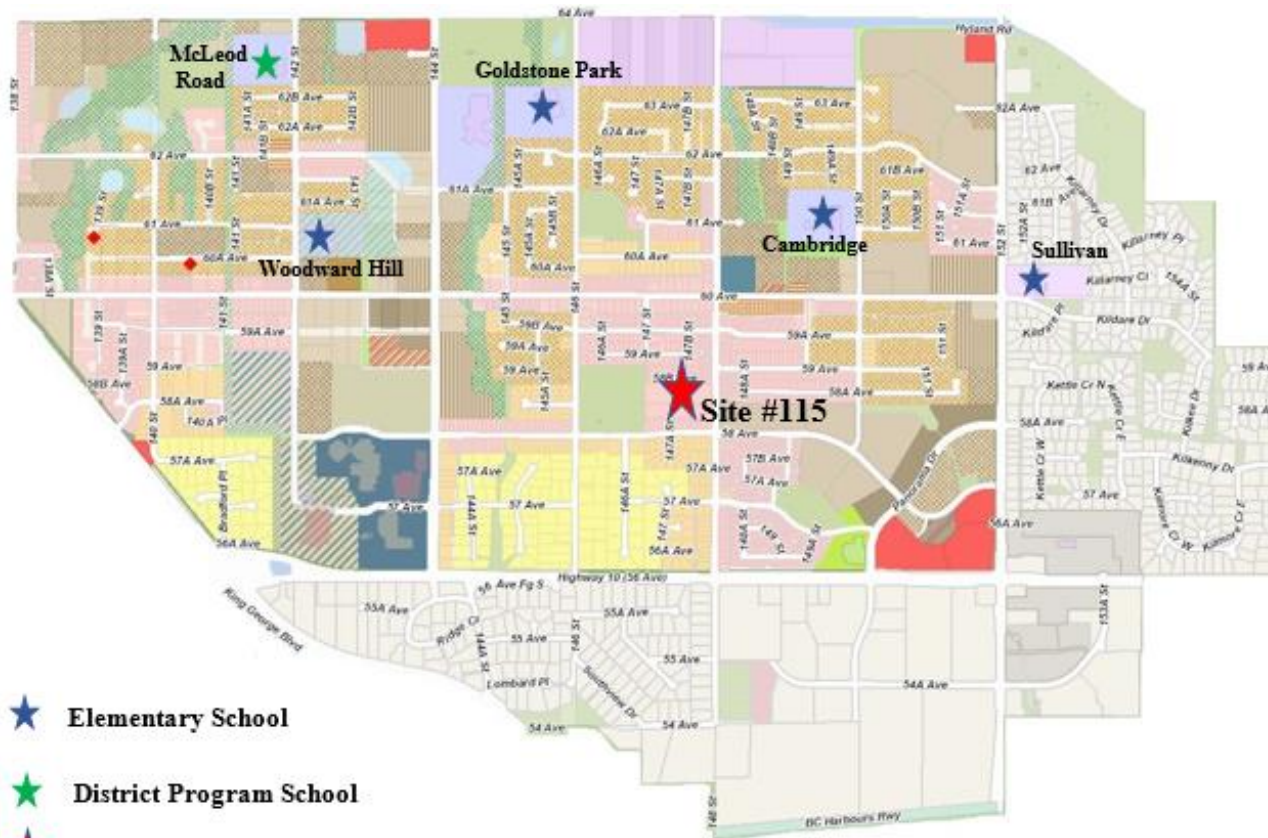


Elementary Schools' Capacity and Enrolment in the South Newton Area:

School	Capacity	2018 Enrolment	Number of Portables
Woodward Hill	710	671	2
Cambridge	530	728	12
Goldstone Park	600	732	6
McLeod Road Traditional	195	210	0
Sullivan Elementary	215	299	4
Site 115	655	New Capital Project	NA

Though several NCPs have been adopted to manage land use and residential density in South Newton, the City is now fielding requests from developers to further increase residential densities in the community. The proposed increase in density will only increase the demand for school spaces to be made available. As Site #115 is the only proposed new school in the region, and there is already significant overcapacity at existing schools, this area is less likely to have space for a French Immersion Program with its current number of schools. A diagram of South Newton NCP information is included in the next page.

South Newton Neighbourhood Concept Plan (NCP):



★ Elementary School

★ District Program School

★ New Elementary School

Apartments 65 upa max
 Apartments 45 upa max
 Townhouses 30 upa max
 Townhouses 25 upa max
 Townhouses 20 upa max
 Townhouses 15 upa max

Single Family Small Lots
 Row Housing
 Single Family Residential Flex 6 to 14.5
 Single Family Residential
 Suburban Residential 1/2 Acre
 Mixed Com/Res Apartments
 Mixed Com/Res Townhouse

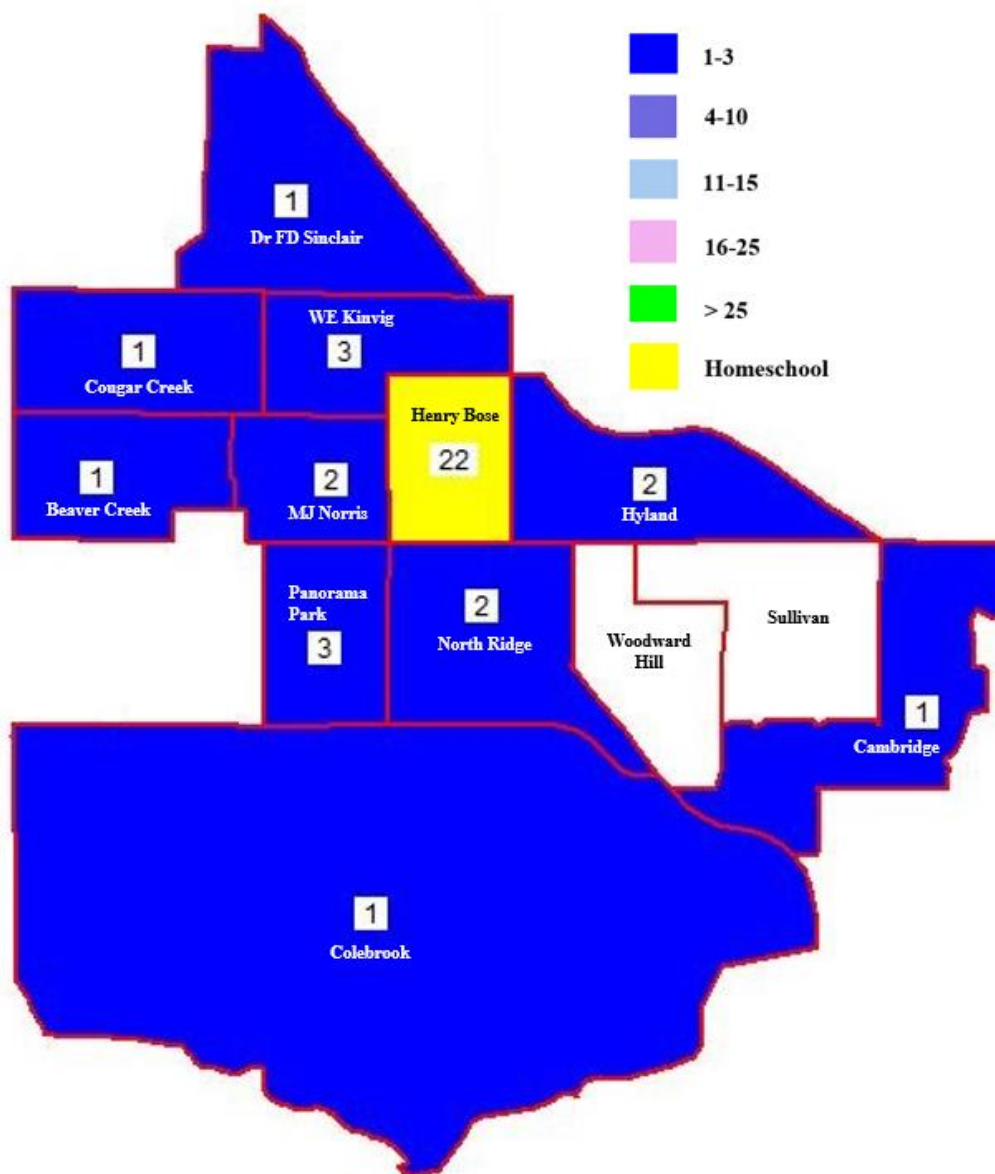
Commercial
 Institutional
 Office Park
 Industrial
 Schools
 Proposed School

Proposed School and Park
 Parks
 Proposed Park and Walkway
 Recreational
 Creeks and Riparian Set-back

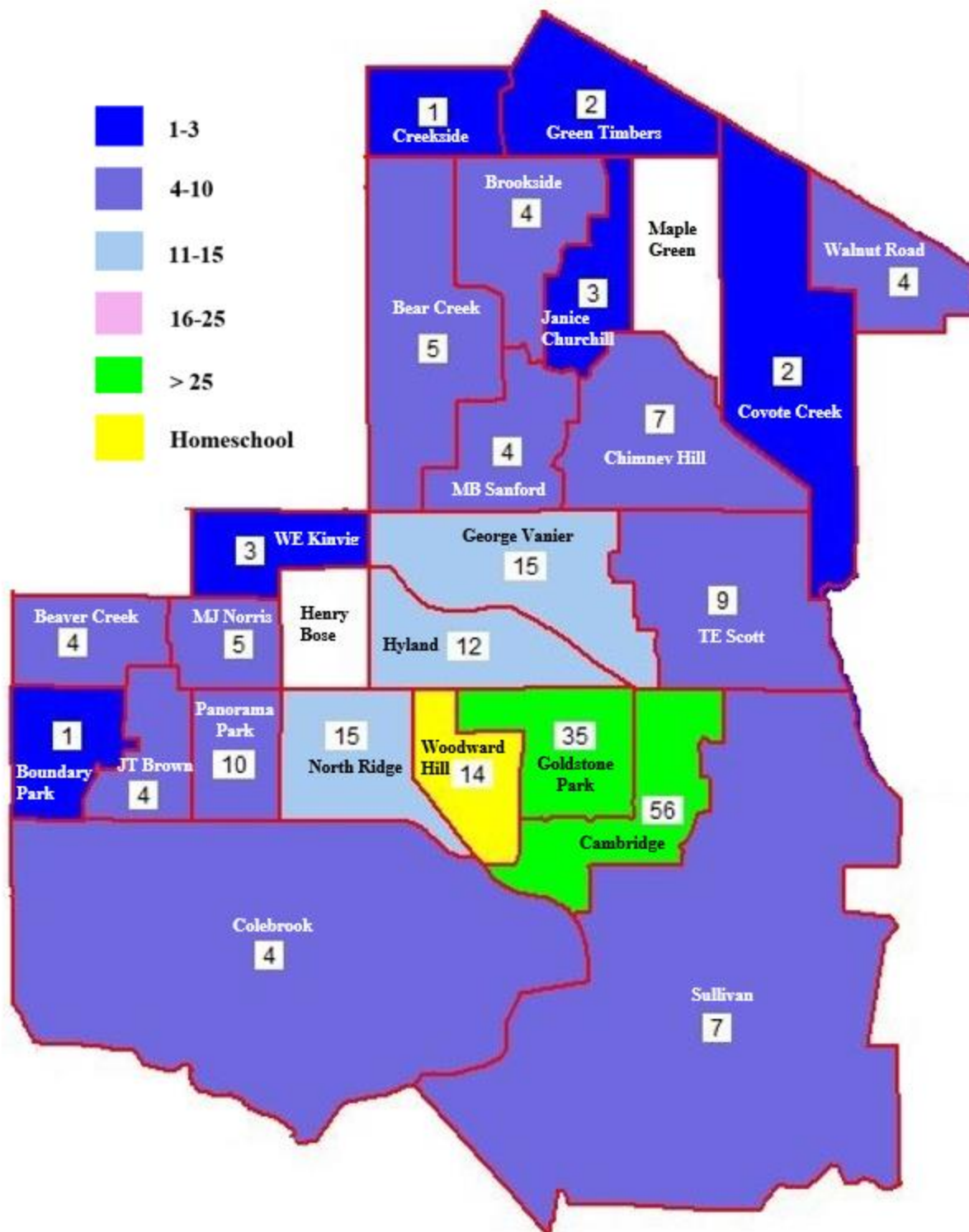
Buffers
 Detention Ponds
 Utility R/W Greenway
 WALKWAY

The South Newton region is served by the Early French Immersion Program at École Woodward Hill Elementary (251 students), the Late French Immersion Program at École Henry Bose Elementary (42 students), and the Secondary French Immersion Program at École Panorama Ridge Secondary (240 students). The French Immersion enrolment patterns for this area are very similar to Cloverdale/Clayton and South Surrey/White Rock in that most of the students who attend these programs come from either these two schools, or schools adjacent to, or in close proximity to these two schools. There are currently 64 students enrolled in French Immersion Programs in South Newton that reside in the Cambridge Elementary or Sullivan Elementary catchment areas, close to where Site #115 could be located.

Where Students who Attend French Immersion at École Henry Bose Elementary Reside:



Where Students who Attend French Immersion at École Woodward Hill Elementary Reside:



Summary

This Report to the Surrey Board of Education outlines key factors to consider in the expansion of French Immersions, specifically; current waitlists, teacher availability, research on Early French Immersion as compared to Late French Immersion, and demographic information and potential space in the three regions which have the highest demand for French Immersion and new capital projects. A summary of the key themes in this report are as follows:

- Research shows that both Early and Late French Immersion Programs are viable options for students to become bilingual and achieve oral fluency and literacy in both English and French.
- Demand for Early French Immersion Programs is greatest in the Cloverdale/Clayton, South Surrey/White Rock, and South Newton regions. Waitlists in all three regions indicate enough demand to support an Early French Immersion Program.
- Data from the previous three years indicates the District's Late French Immersion classes often do not fill to capacity. There are currently very few students on the waitlist for our Late French Immersion Programs.
- The enrolment data of Elementary French Immersion Programs indicates that most of the students who attend these programs come from schools adjacent to, or in close proximity to, the schools where the programs are located. École Laronde Elementary has a broader enrolment pattern as the data indicates that students come from across the South Surrey/White Rock region.
- There are many variables which can affect the timelines for the rate of residential growth, and therefore, alter future enrollment numbers in individual schools. While communities that are fully developed have predictable enrollment patterns, communities that are experiencing rapid development have enrollment patterns that are much harder to predict because they are dependent upon development and occupancy timelines. While it is difficult to predict which new capital projects will have space for a fully-matured French Immersion Program in 8-10 years, current data indicates that Douglas Area Elementary or Site #207 are more likely than other new capital projects to have space for an Early or Late French Immersion Program.