

DATE OF MEETING April 1, 2019

AUTHORED BY BRIAN ZUREK, PLANNER, COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL PLANNING

**SUBJECT REGIONAL CONTEXT STATEMENT REVIEW (REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY)**

## **OVERVIEW**

### **Purpose of Report**

To obtain Council approval to retain the Official Community Plan's existing Regional Context Statement regarding the Regional District of Nanaimo's Regional Growth Strategy.

### **Recommendation**

That Council:

1. retain the existing Regional Context Statement in the Official Community Plan; and
2. direct Staff to provide the existing Regional Context Statement to the Regional District of Nanaimo Board for its continued acceptance and advise that it will be updated through the scheduled 2019 Official Community Plan review.

## **BACKGROUND**

The City of Nanaimo's Official Community Plan (OCP) contains a Regional Context Statement that identifies how the OCP is consistent with the goals contained in the Regional District of Nanaimo's Regional Growth Strategy. In accordance with Section 448(c) of the *Local Government Act*, the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) Board must review the Regional Context Statements of member municipalities at least once every five years. The Board last accepted the City of Nanaimo's Regional Context Statement on 2013-OCT-22.

The Regional Context Statement includes the following text that anticipated a change to the City's OCP:

"The City will be conducting a targeted review of the OCP during the fall of 2013 and the spring of 2014. As part of that review, the City will revise Map 1 – Future Land Use to indicate that the City Boundary and the RGS Growth Containment Boundary are contiguous. It is not expected that any Resource Protection or Parks and Open Space lands outside the UCB will be developed for urban growth and moved inside the UCB within the term of the Plan."

The City amended Map 1 of the OCP on 2015-FEB-05 to align the Growth Containment Boundary with the municipal boundary, as per the Regional Growth Strategy. This was done while still retaining the City's existing Urban Containment Boundary (UCB) to manage growth and protect lands outside the UCB for environmental protection and resource uses.

When the Map 1 amendment was made, there was no corresponding housekeeping update to the text in the Regional Context Statement. At the same time, the remainder of the Regional

Context Statement (which was written to account for the mapping change) meets the requirement to explain how the OCP is consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy. In order to update this paragraph in the Regional Context Statement, an OCP amendment would be required. Given that an OCP review is scheduled to start in 2019, it would be more efficient to ask the RDN Board to continue to accept the existing Regional Context Statement until this housekeeping update is made through the OCP review.

## OPTIONS

1. That Council:
  1. retain the existing Regional Context Statement in the Official Community Plan; and
  2. direct Staff to provide the existing Regional Context Statement to the Regional District of Nanaimo Board for its continued acceptance and advise that it will be updated through the scheduled 2019 Official Community Plan review.
    - **Political Implication:** The City satisfies its obligation under the *Local Government Act* to review its Regional Context Statement and at the same time respects its relationship with the Regional District of Nanaimo by doing so.
    - **Policy Implication:** The Regional Context Statement currently meets the requirement under the *Local Government Act* to explain how the OCP is consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy. Retaining the existing language until the OCP is updated does not impact the application of any policies in either the OCP or the Regional Growth Strategy.
    - **Financial Implication:** There is no financial implication to retaining the existing Regional Context Statement in the OCP. Updating the Regional Context Statement as part of the 2019 OCP review would be a more efficient and effective use of Staff time and resources.
  
2. That Council:
  1. amend the Official Community Plan “Official Community Plan Bylaw 2008 No. 6500” to update the City’s existing Regional Context Statement; and
  2. direct Staff to notify the Regional District of Nanaimo Board that the City will provide an updated Regional Context Statement following the required amendment of the “Official Community Plan Bylaw 2008 No. 6500”.
    - **Political Implication:** The City satisfies its obligation under the *Local Government Act* to review its Regional Context Statement and at the same time respects its relationship with the Regional District of Nanaimo by doing so.
    - **Policy Implication:** The Regional Context Statement currently meets the requirement under the *Local Government Act* to explain how the OCP is consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy. Retaining the existing language until the OCP is updated does not impact the application of any policies in either the OCP or the Regional Growth Strategy.
    - **Financial Implication:** Amending the Official Community Plan Bylaw 6500 at this time solely to update the Regional Context Statement would require Staff time and resources that otherwise could be used as part of the 2019 OCP review.

### **SUMMARY POINTS**

- The City's OCP contains a Regional Context Statement that describes how the OCP is consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy.
- The City is required by the *Local Government Act* to review its Regional Context Statement every five years.
- Since the Board last accepted the Regional Context Statement in 2013, the City amended the OCP to align the Growth Containment Boundary with the municipal boundary while retaining the Urban Containment Boundary to manage growth. When this mapping amendment was made in 2015, the text referencing this change in the Regional Context Statement was not updated after the change was made. However, the remainder of the text in the Regional Context Statement meets the requirement to explain how the OCP is consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy.
- Updating the text in the Regional Context Statement would require an OCP amendment. It is proposed that this update be considered a housekeeping amendment that can be included as part of the proposed Official Community Plan review scheduled to start in 2019.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

ATTACHMENT A: Regional Context Statement Review Letter

ATTACHMENT B: OCP Excerpt – Regional Context Statement

**Submitted by:**

Lisa Bhopalsingh  
Manager, Community and Cultural Planning

**Concurrence by:**

Dale Lindsay  
Director, Community Development