

DATE OF MEETING November 04, 2020
AUTHORED BY ROB LAWRENCE, ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNER
SUBJECT REIMAGINE NANAIMO STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report:

To provide information to the Environment Committee on the Phase 1, REIMAGINE Nanaimo Stakeholder Engagement Update.

BACKGROUND

At the 2020-OCT-07 Special Environment Committee meeting, the following motion was passed.

It was moved and seconded that Staff liaise with Environment Committee members to develop focus group stakeholder engagement around environmental objectives of the Official Community Plan. The motion carried unanimously.

In order to provide background information prior to meeting with committee members to discuss opportunities for stakeholder engagement, Staff are providing background on the REIMAGINE Nanaimo public engagement process and an update on the work completed to date.

REIMAGINE Nanaimo

The City of Nanaimo is initiating a comprehensive update of a number of key strategic planning policy documents in 2020-2021. Central to this undertaking is an update of the City's 2008 Official Community Plan, the 2005 Parks, Recreation and Culture Plan, and the Active and Sustainable Transportation Plan.

Planning and engagement of these plans will be done as part of a broader process that involves coordinating engagement to inform the review of other strategic plans including:

- Economic Development Strategy;
- Water Supply Strategic Plan Update; and,
- Sustainability Action Plan Update.

Coordinating community engagement on these interrelated policy documents intends to maximize community participation, ensure consistency between the plans, efficient resource use, and prevent public confusion and potential engagement fatigue from multiple overlap planning processes.

In the initial phase of the process, the project team has been coordinating with Staff from several departments, including environment Staff. A coordinated planning and engagement process for the review has been developed by the project team and the consultant that achieves the International Association of Public Participation 'Consult', and 'Involve' levels of engagement, while respecting Council's decision-making authority.

With the aid of the project consultant, engagement intends to achieve inclusive and meaningful participation of residents, stakeholders, and those typically marginalized and with barriers to participation in traditional planning processes. The consultation process will also involve engagement with key stakeholders, including those identified at the project outset, and those that may come forward at later points in the consultation process.

The three phases in the engagement process are:

Phase 1: What is our community vision for the future?

- This is the initial kick-off where the focus is raising awareness about REIMAGINE Nanaimo and taking in initial idea gathering from the public.

Phase 2: How are we going to achieve our community vision for the future?

- Exploring policy options formed to reflect initial community input. This phase will involve developing community scenarios that take into account varying interests and trade-offs in order to determine the best direction that reflects the community's vision.

Phase 3: Refining the Plan

- The final phase of review, where Staff report back to the community on 'what was heard' to date, what draft plans have been prepared in response, and to provide opportunity for public feedback to refine the recommendations, before proceeding to Council for adoption.

DISCUSSION

Currently, Phase 1 of the REIMAGINE Nanaimo process is underway and is expected to continue until the end of November.

In order to best coordinate and take advantage of a number of synergies, a series of stakeholder sessions have been organized. These include a broad range of community groups, including environmental organizations, recreational clubs, stewardship/volunteer groups, neighbourhood associations, and general interest groups.

To date, the following organizations have been contacted and will be participating in as part of the Phase 1 stakeholder engagement sessions. It is expected that this list will increase as we continue to receive confirmations over the coming weeks:

Environmental Organizations

- Nanaimo Area Land Trust
- Nature Nanaimo
- Nature Trust of British Columbia
- Buttertubs Marsh Conservation Management Area Committee
- Nanaimo Estuary Management Committee
- Nanaimo River Watershed Roundtable
- Departure Bay Streamkeepers
- Walley Creek Streamkeepers
- Morrel Nature Sanctuary Society
- Nanaimo Science and Sustainability Society

Alternative Transportation Organizations

- BC Cycling Coalition
- MODO Car Share
- Greater Nanaimo Cycling Coalition
- Hub City Cycles Community Co-op
- Slowpokes
- Mid-Island Velo Association

Neighbourhood Associations

- Harewood Neighbourhood Association
- Hospital Neighbourhood Association
- South End Community Association
- Protection Island Neighbourhood Association
- Nanaimo Old City Association
- Friends of Westwood Lake
- Departure Bay Neighbourhood Association |

CONCLUSION

There is opportunity for Environment Committee members to consider developing focus group stakeholder engagement around environmental objectives of the Official Community Plan. Consideration could be given to the following:

1. Are there specific community organizations in the City who should be contacted to participate?
2. Does the Committee wish to host a focused discussion on the City Climate Emergency Declaration or other Climate and Environmental Issues? If so, are there committee members who wish to coordinate with Staff to organize either an online or an in-person meeting?
3. Are there committee members who wish to sit-in on any of the ongoing stakeholder meetings? |

SUMMARY POINTS

- In order to provide background information prior to meeting with committee members to discuss opportunities for stakeholder engagement, Staff are providing background on the REIMAGINE Nanaimo public engagement process and an update on the work completed to date.
- In order to best coordinate and take advantage of a number of synergies, a series of stakeholder sessions have been organized. These include a broad range of community groups, including environmental organizations, recreational clubs, stewardship/volunteer groups, neighbourhood associations, and general interest groups.
- There is opportunity for Environment Committee members to consider developing focus group stakeholder engagement around environmental objectives of the Official Community Plan.

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