

DATE OF MEETING December 1, 2021

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SUBJECT REIMAGINE NANAIMO POLICY UPDATE AND REVIEW

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To update and involve the Environment Committee in the ongoing REIMAGINE Nanaimo policy review process, with a specific focus on greenhouse gas reduction.

Recommendation

That the Environment Committee recommend that Council:

1. Endorse the approach for policy development in regards to greenhouse gas reduction.

BACKGROUND

REIMAGINE Nanaimo is an integrated planning and engagement process focussed on updating the City of Nanaimo's Official Community Plan (now called CityPlan) in a holistic manner that involves the plan functioning as the City's Climate Action Plan. The project is currently in its third Phase, which is focussed on the development of a draft land use scenario as well as confirming policies both existing and new.

DISCUSSION

Currently, CityPlan is being drafted by organizing policies under five goal areas. While environmental policies can be organized under all the goal areas, the majority of the draft environmental policies (including those related to green house gas reduction/climate change mitigation) are being organized within the Green Nanaimo goal.

The draft Table of Contents for the new CityPlan document organizes policies under five goals developed using the Nanaimo's doughnut economics framework. Targets, indicators, and action plans that are essential to implementing the draft CityPlan, will sit in separate stand-alone documents that are intended to be reviewed and updated on a more regular basis than the CityPlan.

Existing and newer/enhanced policies are being incorporated into the draft CityPlan through the following three methods:

1) Policy Elevation:

The contents of approximately 40 secondary policy documents have been considered for integration into the draft CityPlan. These documents have been previously approved by City Council, however policies in the existing 2008 Official Community Plan may not reflect these documents. Some of these documents include the Climate Resiliency Strategy, Sustainability Action Plan, Urban Forestry Plan, Step Code Implementation Strategy, Community Wildfire Action Plan, Transportation Master Plan, Parks Recreation and Culture Master Plan, Invasive Plant Strategy, and Emergency Food and Nutrition

Strategy. Many policies from these secondary documents are being incorporated into the draft CityPlan.

2) *Development Permit Area Review and Updating:*

Several of the nine existing Development Permit Areas (DPAs), are being updated and three new ones are being developed through the REIMAGINE Nanaimo process. To stay current with best practices and enhance enforceability, justification for these DPAs will remain in the CityPlan document while guidelines will be included an updated zoning bylaw.

Throughout Phase 1 and 2 of the REIMAGINE Nanaimo process, Staff teams, professional consulting biologists, and the development community have reviewed watercourse and environmental protection information, in DPAs 1 (Watercourses) and 2 (Environmentally Sensitive Areas). Feedback from this review has been incorporated in updated policy language in both DPAs. This will be addressed in more detail in a separate report on the Committee's agenda.

As recommended by the Climate Resiliency Strategy and through the REIMAGINE Nanaimo engagement process, new DPAs are under development for Sea Level rise, Coal Mine Hazard, and Wildfire Interface. These DPAs will have both policy and mapping components.

3) *Enhanced and New Policy Development:*

Although policies exist in the 2008 OCP and other City documents related to partnerships, relations with First Nations, GHG reduction and contaminated sites, to give greater emphasis to the importance to these focus areas it is proposed that the draft CityPlan build on these policies to include several new and enhanced policy areas.

Some of the bullets below on enhanced and new policies show how GHG reduction policies are being included in the draft CityPlan.

- **Greenhouse gas (GHG) Reduction**—These policies will be the focus of a presentation and discussion during the December 1 meeting. Enhanced and new policies build upon existing policies from several sources including the 2008 OCP, Transportation Master Plan, and Community Sustainability Action Plan. Policies are also being revised to meet targets set by Council's Climate Emergency Declaration. High-level actions that the City can undertake to reduce GHG emissions and increase climate resiliency will also be discussed.
- **Partnerships**—Existing partnership policies will be enhanced to build on ongoing collaboration with First Nations, other levels of government, and local community organizations. Partnerships with higher levels of government are essential to many carbon reduction programs. Community partnerships are also essential to stewarding natural assets, planting trees, and removing invasive plants. New partnerships will also be necessary to move forward with some infrastructure and climate resiliency projects.
- **Reconciliation**—Existing policies are being enhanced and new ones developed relating to strengthening the City's relationship with Snuneymuxw First Nation and Snaw-Naw-As (Nanoose First Nation). As well, other new policies related to

the City's role in advancing reconciliation are also being developed. There is opportunity to explore how these can be related to GHG reduction and climate resiliency.

- **Contaminated Sites**—Existing policies are being enhanced and new policies being added to address contamination issues on City owned properties and private properties within the context of Provincial legislation. As part of this policies to support incentives and initiatives to encourage redevelopment of brownfield sites are under consideration.

SUMMARY POINTS

- The REIMAGINE Nanaimo process is providing an opportunity to enhance existing, and develop new policies related to GHG reduction/climate change mitigation and climate resiliency.
- Existing Development Permit Area policies to support green goals are being updated and new Development Permit Area policies are being developed.
- Targets, indicators, and action plans that are essential to implementing the draft CityPlan, will sit in separate stand-alone documents that are intended to be reviewed and updated on a more regular basis than the CityPlan.

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