

ATTACHMENT A

Neighbourhood Association Organizational Capacity Review, Support and Engagement Process - Additional Input Summary (2021-JUN-23)

Bradley Street Neighbourhood Association:

Working on getting members together to move forward with an election of officers to our Association. We would like to continue to be part of the Neighbourhood Network and be recognized as such by the City.

Brechin Hill Community Association:

No additional input - our original comments stand with nothing additional.

Chase River Community Association:

This is the response from the Chase River Community Association (CRCA) with regards to the proposed guidelines that City staff have put forward for consideration by Council. Our Association welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback as follows:

- We agree with most of the recommendations that staff have put forward to Council.
- We are very interested in the concept in the Partners in Community Program but would want to know what will be required to access the funding, as we are not a Registered Society. Does this limit us to receive the funding? Will there be other stipulations that City staff will apply?
- We appreciate the support that staff provide to use whenever we make a request of them for input or clarification on a project. In addition, having staff attend association's monthly meetings allows residents to ask specific questions, which has been very helpful.
- We would like staff to respond in writing to our Association whenever we make a written submission in support or opposing any proposal. This would include the reasons or rationale why staff would be accepting or opposing the points of our submission. This would then lead to further discussion or consultation which leads to greater understanding between the parties and builds a strong sense that our opinion or input is valued.
- We request that all our input be forwarded to Council as part of the package from staff regarding all projects or developments. Again, this helps with building trust that the opinions or residents are considered at the time that information is formally given to Council before a decisions is made.
- Our Association would appreciate written notice from all City departments whenever a city project is going to occur in our area or City funding is being

applied. The Association often finds out that a particular project is going ahead from resident then they get a letter as a property owner about the project.

- We recommend that when a developer makes a financial donation as part of a rezoning or development project that at least half of these funds remain in the area and be used to enhance the local community. The rezoning or development project directly impacts the specific community, so improvements to that community should occur using those funds.
- We would also request that the City consider providing general liability insurance coverage to non-profit associations such as the CRCA. This coverage would extend to any community events or projects sponsored by our Association. Our Association does not have the ability to fund general liability insurance and the executive members of the Association work for our community on a voluntary basis.
- We realize that the Chase River area will change significantly should the proposed Sandstone Development Project proceed. We request that the City move forward in meeting the “Needs” of the area immediately and not wait to see how this project may impact us in the future. There are many “Needs” for our area, and we want them to be addressed as soon as possible, as we are not prepared to wait any longer while potential projects are studied, reviewed and put aside until funding becomes available from third parties. For far too many years the Chase River area appears to be neglected regarding improvements to roads, parks, meeting space and other basic amenities.
- Lastly, we request that the City provide a general update to our Association which details how taxes collected by the City from our residents benefits those same residents. With the lack of improvements to our area and the continual increase in the building of new homes, we feel that the City has received a significant increase in revenue from these new residents, but no real improvements have occurred to our area.

In closing, the CRCA has worked hard to include area residents in planning for projects, giving guidance to residents about how to engage with City staff and supporting them to understand how the development or rezoning process works. We also enjoy bringing a supported project or development to fruition because of consultation and collaboration with both the developers and City staff. We value the long-term relationship we have with both City Council and staff, as it leads to a better understanding on issues and assists when necessary in reaching a compromise.

Cilaire Neighbourhood Association:

No additional input – just appreciate staff support (information) when needed.

College Park Neighbourhood Association:

No additional input.

Departure Bay Neighbourhood Association:

No additional input.

Dover Community Association:

No additional input. Looking to move forward organizationally and become a registered non-profit society in the next few months.

Harewood Neighbourhood Association:

The Harewood Neighbourhood Association is one of the longest-standing Neighbourhood Associations, born out of the community of Harewood when the area was annexed by the City. Harewood has worked extensively with the city over the years. Harewood-Centennial Park and Sherry Fields is a testament and proof that the Neighbourhood and the City can work effectively together.

The Harewood Association has a concern that issues such as sharing of information; transparency; consultation; and interpretation of neighbourhood plans had not been addressed in the report to the GPC.

Also discussed was the Re-Imagine Nanaimo/Doughnut Economics process and how it will impact neighbourhoods and their ability to influence future development and improvements to their communities. It was noted that City Council would be having another workshop on May 31, 2021 to review goals and indicators for the official plan and important social foundations of Doughnut Economics like “political voice” have been left out of the discussion so far.

There is reason to believe that after the City spent over \$1M in developing these neighbourhood plans, just in consulting fees, untold 100’s of staff hours and huge community effort on top, the plans are being abandoned and new planning staff suggests they will provide a list of their priorities for neighbourhoods to pick 3-4 that appeal to them every three or four years. Coincidentally, evens up with City elections and Council’s “strategic plan”.

This sounds more like a proposal to appease the current Council, rather than a legitimate concern with the neighbourhoods the associations represent.

In response to the City staff report and work underway on a revised Official Community Plan, the following were considered as “must-haves” that would need to be included in a report back to Council about neighbourhood engagement.

- If this new concept is implemented as described up to this point, it could wipe out the neighbourhood plans. The last twenty years of work and any framework for long-term planning for the diversity of each neighbourhood. Look at what has happened to the downtown plan and the mess created by the convention centre’s

failures. The City has still not got a functional hotel to go with the convention centre. The history of the quaint shops and architecture of the core has been forever lost.

- A more complete engagement by neighbourhood associations in all aspects of the development process starting with “political voice” being included under the Doughnut Economics goal of Empowerment with targets and indicators developed as part of a public consultation package in Re-Imagine Nanaimo. Complete engagement would also include elements such as the sharing of information as to projects and work plans with neighbourhood associations by all City departments, and neighbourhood associations being involved in determining neighbourhood priorities for community amenity contributions.
- Development of a standard concrete consultation process that can be utilized by all neighbourhood associations. At the moment, some associations have direct links with staff; others use What’s Building, and still others have asked just for a simple document or tutorial that outlines the various types of development applications and where participants can take place. Even those “current links” to staff can and have been severed on the whim of staff with some associations, simply because the association questions or disagrees with individual staff members.
- Commenting on the proposed “Partners in Community (PIC)” program was premature since the process is not refined enough to offer constructive feedback. As the concept is further developed, it is essential, that the identification of neighbourhood priorities be based on a consultative, neighbourhood by neighbourhood needs assessment approach.

Looking forward to receiving much more information on the reasoning behind these changes and much more collaboration before embarking on changes.

Hospital Area Neighbourhood Association:

No additional input.

Lost Lake Neighbourhood Association:

No additional input.

Nanaimo Old City Association:

In general, NOCA’s Board of Directors has a positive response to the Neighbourhood Association Organizational Capacity Review.

We are comfortable with the organization criteria laid out in the report. We presently meet all the criteria that you looked at except registration as a non-profit society so we have already recognized that these criteria (except non-profit status) are necessary for NOCA to represent its neighbourhood.

We look forward to the Partners in Community Program as we see that it could offer us support in community projects like neighbourhood cleanup days. With the program and the support it provides in place, we would feel more comfortable about introducing and carrying out community projects that enhance our neighbourhood and develop community spirit.

However, we feel that there needs to be an ongoing needs assessment consultation process that sets out priorities for the Partners in Community Program in each neighbourhood and involves the City and the Neighbourhood Associations.

The one area of the report that raises grave concerns for NOCA is replacing our Neighbourhood Plans with a process of setting priorities every two to three years. We know that the Neighbourhood Plans do not get updated regularly and that can mean that they are not addressing new issues and priorities. However, much in the Old City Neighbourhood Plan is still relevant and our members refer to it often in our own discussions and in discussion with the City.

We would like you to give us and City Council more information on the following:

- The structure that would be set up whereby consultation and the setting of priorities would take place. Your survey of the Neighbourhood Associations' Top Five Challenges and Priorities in the Capacity Review seems to correctly identify NOCA's needs and priorities, so a good survey and further discussion could set priorities for our Neighbourhood and this would not be too time-consuming for staff to carry out every two to three years.
- How consultation to set priorities would take place. Just an on-line survey? Or face-to-face discussion as well?
- Would NOCA set the priorities or would staff set them after consultation? There is a need for transparency or community members will doubt that their priorities drive the process.
- Would they be part of a written document that could be referred to when necessary? Our present Neighbourhood Plan, as a document, is referred to like the Bible by members.
- Would the priorities be referred to and respected as part of the development process? And would the Neighbourhood Associations be automatically brought in to explain and discuss these priorities with the developers from the beginning to the end of the development process? With that in mind, the Neighbourhood Network sees an important need for a Neighbourhood Association Workshop on the Development Process.
- Would a record be kept of actions on the priorities to form a part of the consultation for setting the next priorities?
- Would City staff be held to a commitment to consult with the neighbourhood associations and set new priorities every two to three years? Consulting with neighbourhood associations would fulfill a large piece of the Political Voice component in Doughnut Economics.

Neighbours of Nob Hill Society:

No additional input.

Newcastle Community Association:

The Newcastle Community Association strongly suggests that Council, as part of Re-Imagine Nanaimo, engages with neighbourhood associations in a workshop format to address the issues of Neighbourhood Association Organizational Review, Support and Engagement. Perhaps together we can arrive at systems, procedures, and programs for neighbourhood engagement that can meet our respective expectations.

We, the Newcastle Community Association, believe that we must be credible and accountable to our residents. For that reason, we consider it necessary to hold annual general meetings and elections for our Board of Directors; to communicate regularly with our members; and to obtain input from our residents on issues of concern to the neighbourhood. We would hope that Council would offer us the same benefit.

We are concerned that the “Partners in Community” (PIC) proposal completely changes the neighbourhood association engagement process and implements new systems, criteria and requirements. It is further concerning that the foundation of the program is not based on a comprehensive consultation process which clearly identifies engagement issues and a path to resolving them but rather on surveys and statistical findings which were not intended to be used to develop a new “neighbourhood program.”

We are also concerned about the intention to move away from updating or creating new neighbourhood plans as these are the glue that hold the character and spirit of a neighbourhood together. These plans are not just a list of infrastructure priorities but provide guidelines and standards and opportunities for development that maintain the integrity of the neighbourhood.

We look forward to working together to achieve utopia!

Newcastle Neighbourhood Association:

No additional input.

Protection Island Neighbourhood Association:

No additional input.

South End Community Association:

No additional input.

Stephenson Point Neighbourhood Association:

No additional input other than a series of corrections/edits to Attachment D – Partners in Parks Project List, and Attachment E – Neighbourhood Association Priorities Summary contained within the 2021-Apr-26 GPC report and pertaining to the Stephenson Point Neighbourhood Association area.

Wellington Community Association/Wellington Action Committee:

No additional input.

Western Neighbourhood Association:

No additional input.

Westwood Lake Neighbourhood Association/Friends of Westwood Lake:

One additional planning priority for our local neighbourhood in the Westwood Lake area - Improve the safety for walking in the small area along Arbot Road which is past the sidewalk of Resort on the Lake (approx.) where Arbot Road bends and the side drops off on one side and there is a ditch on the other side and a small road running parallel to the major road. Given the increased traffic with the tennis courts, restaurant and now the bikers, it's becoming more of a hazard for pedestrians especially the elderly or Mom's with strollers.

Planning question to Council – How does Council determine how much weight to give to the developers versus community residents when looking at a zoning issue? What parameters do they use?