

ATTACHMENT B

Neighbourhood Association Organizational Capacity Review, Support and Engagement Process – Continuing the Conversation Meeting Notes (Jul/Aug, 2021)



Join us to continue discussing improvement ideas for the neighbourhood association organization, the neighbourhood planning process, and Partners in Community program. We have received feedback from a number of groups but would like to take some deeper dives into the input, clarify information, and answer questions.

Tuesday, July 13 Noon

In-person picnic at Colliery Dam Park
(at the picnic shelter by the lower dam)
635 Wakesiah Avenue

Wednesday, July 21 Noon

Virtual option via Zoom
Details will be emailed prior to meeting

Thursday, July 29 Noon

In-person picnic at Linley Point Park
(at the picnic shelter by the playground)
5772 Linley Valley Drive

Wednesday, August 4 7:00 PM

Virtual option via Zoom
Details will be emailed prior to meeting

Refreshments will be provided for in-person sessions.

Please email or call Toni at Toni.Humpherville@nanaimo.ca or 250-755-4464 to confirm which session you are attending.



DRAFT
2021-Jul-12



Neighbourhood Association Organizational Status & Proposed City Support Level (2021-Jul-09)

GROUP A:

Groups that are formally organized as registered non-profits

PIC Funding Eligibility

Staff Liaison

Informational Support

What's Building in my Neighbourhood

Printing Support

Meeting Room Access

Smoke Alarms

Report a Sidewalk/Road Issues

Neighbourhood Plan Annual Status Review (where applicable)

Development Referrals

Community Police - Speed Team

Block Party Kits

Tree Voucher

Capital Projects as per Neighbourhood Plans/Priorities

Operational Grant Funding

PIC Funding Eligibility

Staff Liaison

Informational Support

What's Building in my Neighbourhood

Printing Support

Meeting Room Access

Smoke Alarms

Report a Sidewalk/Road Issues

Neighbourhood Plan Annual Status Review (where applicable)

Development Referrals

Community Police - Speed Team

Block Party Kits

Tree Voucher

Capital Projects as per Neighbourhood Plans/Priorities

GROUP C:

Groups that are not formally organized as registered non-profits and are loosely organized

PIC Funding Eligibility

Staff Liaison

Informational Support

What's Building in my Neighbourhood

Meeting Room Access

Smoke Alarms

Report a Sidewalk/Road Issues

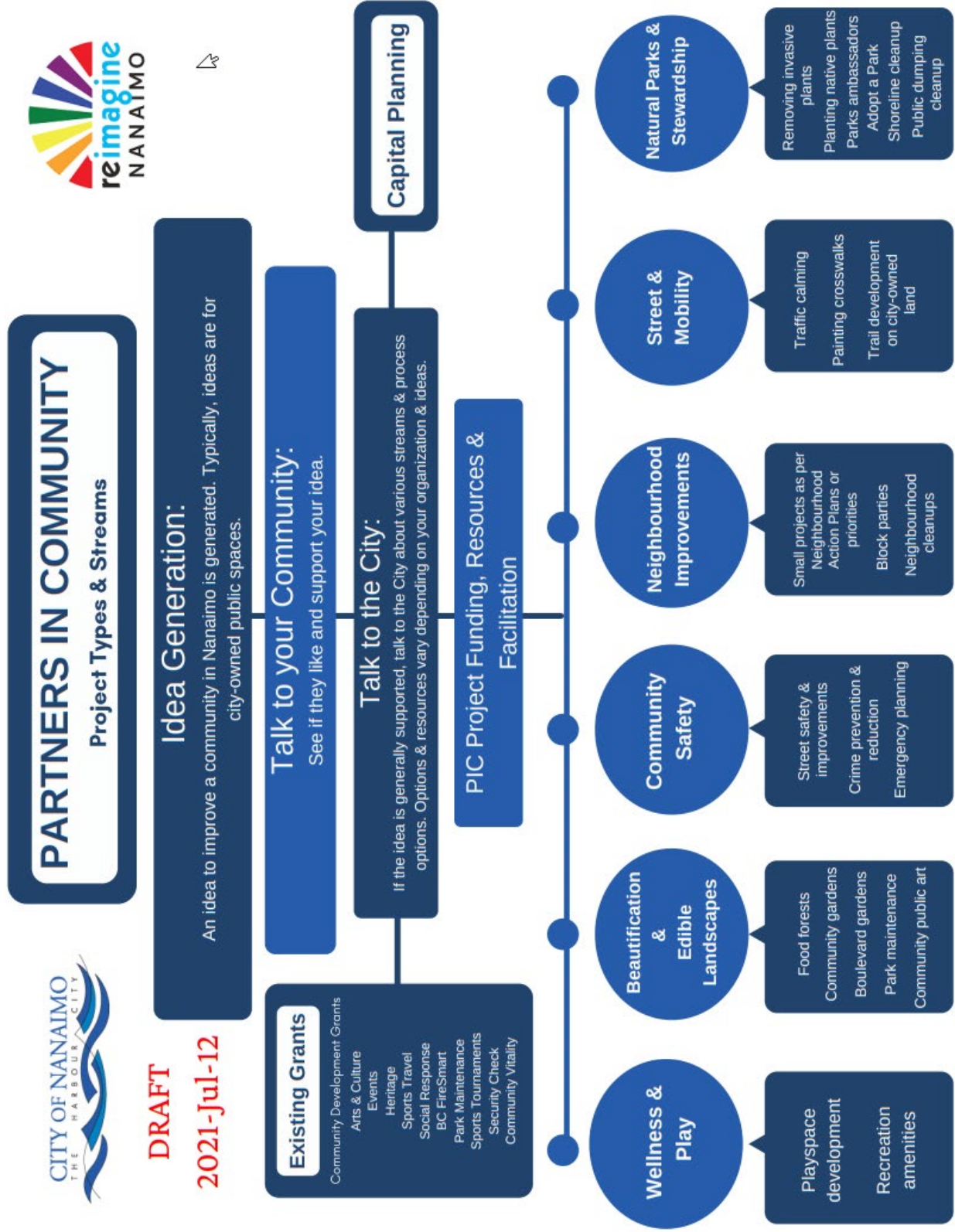
Community Police - Speed Team

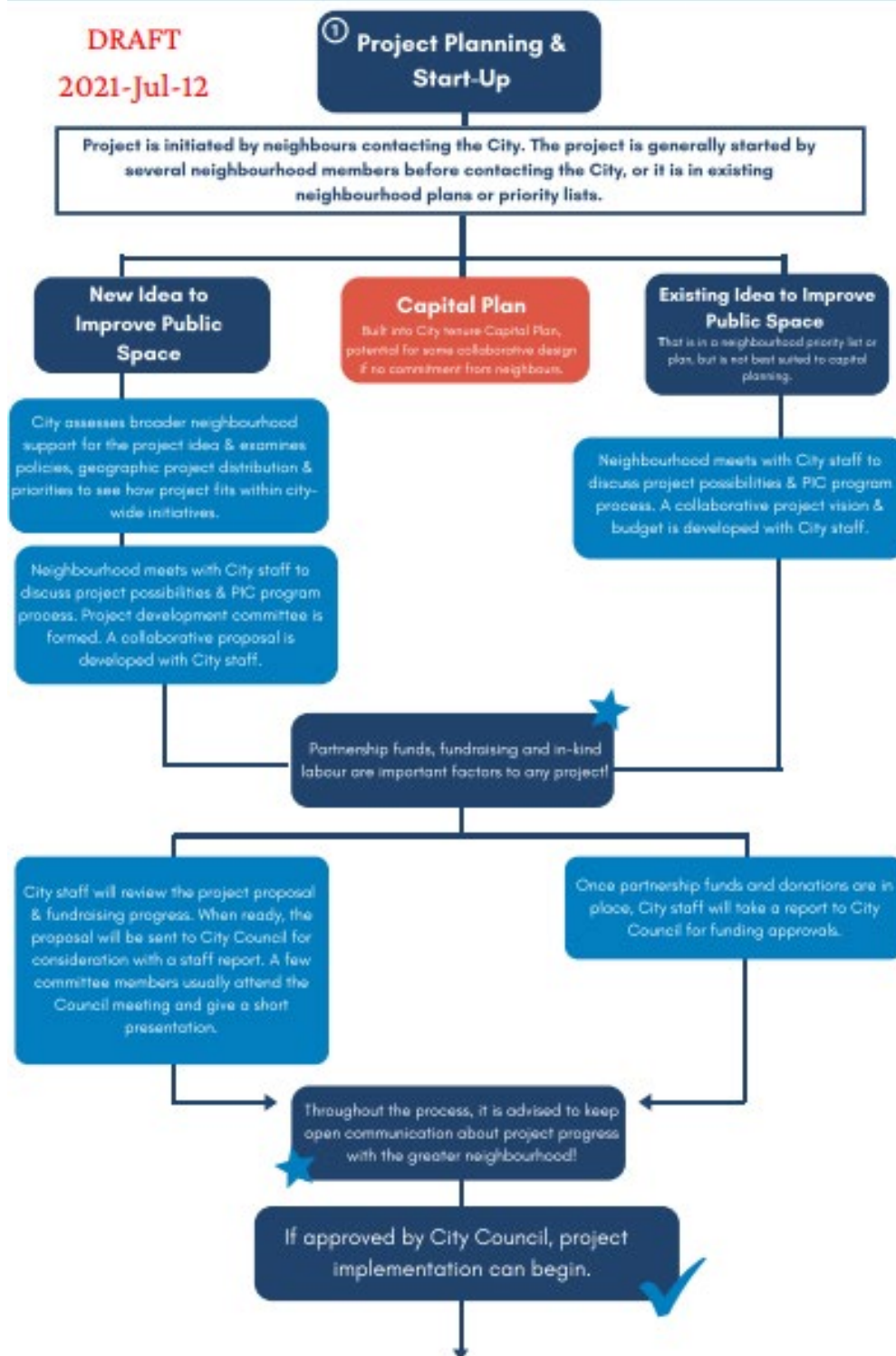
Block Party Kits

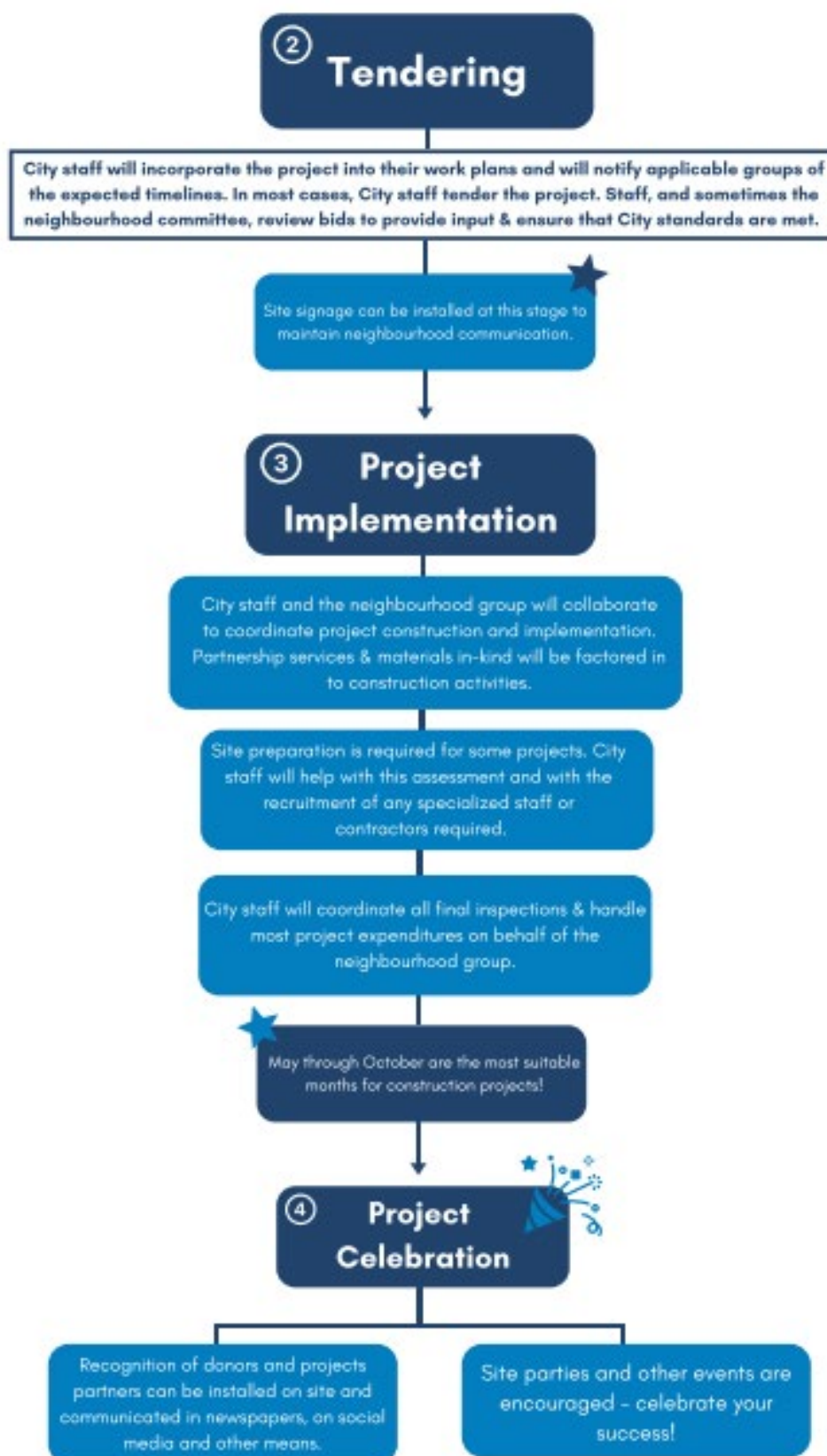
Tree Voucher

DRAFT

2021-Jul-12







Discussion of Themes from July and August Engagement with Neighbourhood Associations:

The following focal points emerged during the summer engagement with the neighbourhood associations:

- 1) Concerns were raised about the accuracy of Staff's summary provided at the 2021-APR-26 GPC meeting with respect to the level of neighbourhood association support for the implementation of organizational criteria. In particular, it was felt by some of the groups that the general position of the majority of neighbourhood associations may have shifted away from supporting the implementation of criteria.

To address this concern, in August 2021, the neighbourhood associations were asked to confirm their previous positions with respect to the implementation of organizational criteria, with the following results:

In the February 2021 survey, the position of the 14 associations who responded was as follows:

- 8 favoured criteria, 5 did not, 1 ambivalent

Based on the August 2021 survey, the position of the associations (with two additional groups responding) was as follows:

- 11 favoured criteria, 5 did not

While there is no consensus among the associations on this issue, it is clear that a majority of those who responded to the August survey felt that the City should formally recognize and support neighbourhoods based on a set of clear organizational criteria.

To broaden the scope of input related to the use of organizational criteria, a brief survey was released through the Get Involved Nanaimo site in late October to check on public preferences regarding criteria and a number of related questions. Out of the 220 who responded to the survey, 127 (57.7%) supported the use of criteria, while 56 (25.5%) opposed their use, and 37 (16.8%) were unsure. An additional question related to how people prefer to engage with the City on issues and opportunities in their neighbourhood indicated a clear preference for direct engagement via email, mail, and phone, as well as through a neighbourhood association. A detailed summary of the survey input received can be found in Attachment D (Nanaimo Neighbourhood Association Survey Summary, 2021-Nov-16).

With respect to organizational structure, it was noted during the summer engagement that in British Columbia only three people are required to form a registered non-profit society and meeting the formal organizational criteria does not necessarily mean the group is representative. It was also suggested that the City consider applying the criteria only to neighbourhood associations that form in the future, and exempt the recognized status of the associations that currently exist from the new standards.

- 2) Concern about how the proposed PIC Program would be implemented and supported, and which projects and priorities will remain in future capital plans.

A detailed draft PIC Program (including budget) is currently being worked on by Staff, and upon completion will be presented to Council in a separate report for consideration.

- 3) Concern about the status of the City's existing neighbourhood plans and the creation of future neighbourhood plans.

As Phase 3 of REIMAGINE NANAIMO rolls out, policies that are consistent between all neighbourhood plans will be integrated into new City Plan neighbourhood policies for Council consideration. In addition, options for existing neighbourhood plans and priority project and implementation lists will be presented in Phase 3 REIMAGINE NANAIMO materials for Council consideration. If adopted, this approach will help to determine geographic equity throughout the City with respect to City projects and investment.

- 4) Concern over lack of formalization of the City's existing relationship with neighbourhood associations, and more specifically, reluctance to implement engagement recommendations contained in the Community Engagement Task Force: Final Report received by Council in early 2019. (The final report for the Public Engagement Pilot Program was received by Council for information on 2019-JAN-28 but Council did not pass any motions to implement its recommendations at this time).

MEETING NOTES

NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION ORGANIZATIONAL REVIEW, SUPPORT AND ENGAGEMENT PROCESS - CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION WITH CITY STAFF COLLIERY DAM PARK, NANAIMO, BC TUESDAY, JULY 13, 2021 AT 12:00PM

Present: Kevin Pistor, Protection Island Neighbourhood Association
Kathryn Hazel, South End Community Association
Karen Kuwica, Newcastle Community Association
Nancy Mitchell, Newcastle Community Association
Jean Playdon, Bradley Street Neighbourhood Association
Tim McGrath, President, Nanaimo Neighbourhood Network
Lois Powell, Westwood Neighbourhood Association
Janice Magnuson, Harewood Neighbourhood Association
Damian, Harewood Neighbourhood Association
Alexis Petersen, Harewood Neighbourhood Association

Staff: Kirsty MacDonald, Parks & Open Space Planner
Chris Sholberg, Community Heritage Planner
Mallory Lowes, Community Planning Co-op Student

1. INTRODUCTION

Chris introduced purpose of meeting and packages.

2. RECOGNITION OF NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATIONS

What's the point? Why is Council going through this process?

- Council had concerns about neighbourhood association capacity and representation.
- Some conflicts and history issues with neighbourhood groups.
- Looking to introduce minimum Organizational Criteria for recognitions purposes.
- Who is credible?
- Neighbourhood associations are informational conduits to City Hall.
- Development 101 workshop recently provided to South End Community Association – can be requested by any neighbourhood association that is interested.
- Noted that “Newcastle” label on Planning Area map included in reference package should be changed to “Newcastle/Brechin Hill” to accurately reflect area.

3. NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION ENGAGEMENT

- Hope that new engagement procedures will be different, current engagement system is almost non-existent.
- Historic engagement with neighbourhoods is through neighbourhood plan process or self-directed contact with Community Planning Staff Liaison.
- Not always Council involvement.

- Knowing which planners are assigned to each association would be good, as contact information hasn't been circulated for some time.
- Let neighbourhoods know about plans and developments sooner and not just minimum Local Government Act requirement (i.e. Public Hearing). Not just planning, but parks, streets, transportation, engineering etc. All development projects and City initiatives that impact an active neighbourhood association geographic area of interest should include much more comprehensive engagement with the impacted neighbourhood. Engagement should be "Early and Often". Let people/teams be involved earlier in development and project processes. City should be a part of a team with neighbourhood associations.
- Neighbourhoods aren't happy if they are reacting to "done deals" and completed development applications.
- City's Neighbourhood Planning page on City website needs updating. One idea would be to include an active map layer on City Map that highlights neighbourhood association boundaries and allows folks to click on the map for contact information to the association.
- Facebook pages serve a purpose but websites are preferred communication vehicle for neighbourhood associations. Could the City build a website to act as a communication hub for the neighbourhood associations? Need access to tools and website for effective communication.
- As organizations, neighbourhood associations need access to tools and website for effective communication, including:
 - Subdomains for each association
 - Storage of minutes
 - Zoom account
 - Toolkit to start
 - How-to toolkit on how to start an association
 - Financial statements
- Provide educational and capacity supports to neighbourhood associations – examples include Nation Builder software, to help associations better organize their groups, also operational funding program (annual grants would be great). Look to 2018 Public Engagement Task Force report for further engagement/support ideas.
- Will council commit to the engagement process and levels in the Task Force report? City needs to commit.
- Missing piece in materials provided is engagement – engagement supports need to be articulated in report back to Council in the fall for consideration and implementation.
- All City departments need to be on the same page with respect to neighbourhood engagement and aren't. Examples identified include
 - I.e. Old City Rezoning (Old Hospital Site) – major change to OCP and Old City Neighbourhood Plan supported counter to residents input;
 - Transit Exchange proposal on old Jean Burns site (no local neighbourhood associations, or businesses have yet been engaged);
 - Fourth Street and Howard development (proposal percolating but no engagement with Harewood Neighbourhood Association yet).
- Empowerment and political voice needs clarity in REIMAGINE NANAIMO – e.g. targets and indicators need to be articulated.
- Need to implement 2018 engagement report in all areas and departments as well as formalize development consultation process.

- Need education for neighbourhood associations and community members on how City processes work.
- Associations could save Staff time and money.
- Need associations in new areas too. City needs to provide resources and organizational tool/guidance for them to be set up (residents need to have direction similar to that provided for Block Watch start-ups).
- It's important to support neighbourhood engagement and associations to meet population growth and new demographic changes.
- It is costly and time consuming for neighbourhood associations to effectively communicate with the rest of the neighbourhood – how are neighbourhood associations going to be financed to provide neighbourhood engagement?
- Information and updates sent from City to community needs to be more user-friendly and summarized. Or provide an executive summary.

4. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

- Are they being thrown out? No.
- Are they even being followed? Yes.
 - i.e. concern that Downtown Plan hasn't been updated in years, and may not have been followed in recent years with respect to downtown development (i.e. transit exchange proposal on and around old Jean Burns building site – is this supported under Downtown Plan?).
- With respect to the proposed system, how often will we be setting neighbourhood plan priorities? Every three years?
- Will this be in coordination with the election of new Councils?
- Will Council guide selection of projects.
- Need a mutual understanding (for both staff and community) on the interpretation of neighbourhood plans.
- How can neighbourhood priorities be fairly determined?

5. PARTNERS IN COMMUNITY PROGRAM

- Would rather see more money invested in capacity support for neighbourhood associations than PIC program.
- New program needs to have buy in from all City departments.
- Yes there is Council direction, but what will make Staff work collaboratively?
- Add bubble about neighbourhood plans to draft PIC diagram.
- Operating grants for neighbourhood associations? This would be good.
- Is PIC needed? Who benefits? What's the importance?
- Understanding how City budgets and distributes project money among departments would be useful for neighbourhood associations to understand. Understanding the City's project prioritization process would also be good in this respect.
- How will the PIC budget be allocated?
- In terms of the proposed PIC program budget, associations discussed direct access to funding and resources rather than funding going to internal organizational operations within the city and only a limited portion of funding making its way to community.
- Liaising is the issue – how will community members effectively access the City for PIC? What will the internal structure look like?

MEETING NOTES

NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION ORGANIZATIONAL REVIEW, SUPPORT AND ENGAGEMENT PROCESS - CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION WITH CITY STAFF WEDNESDAY, JULY 21, 2021 AT 12:00PM VIA ZOOM

Present: Tim McGrath, President, Nanaimo Neighbourhood Network
Barry Lyseng, Stephenson Point Neighbourhood Association
Tereza Bajan, Nob Hill Neighbourhood
Brian Rice, Nob Hill Neighbourhood

Staff: Kirsty MacDonald, Parks & Open Space Planner
Chris Sholberg, Community Heritage Planner

1. INTRODUCTION

Chris gave introduction to materials and conversational context noting reference package content.

2. DISCUSSION RE: DRAFT ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND SUPPORT

- How will groups be affected who don't formalize e.g. six groups considered to be informally organized (e.g. Westwood Lake). Stephenson Point Neighbourhood Association already follows the proposed criteria – but we are opposed to them being required of all neighbourhood associations, or as a pre-condition to recognizing a neighbourhood association's existence. Also, City has not answered our Nov 2020 question of "what constitutes a regular meeting?". Depending on City's answer SPNA may not meet the criteria as proposed. Like a lot of neighbourhood associations, we meet as there is a need to meet or some progress to report.
- Concern about separation of neighbourhood associations into three categories based on organizational criteria – would service levels still be the same, or how would they differ with respect to things like staff relationship? Concerned that groups such as Westwood Lake would not be served anymore from City's perspective.
- We will recognize any group that forms and encourage them to grow capacity. Interaction with all groups at a staff level will still occur.
- Staff liaison from Community Planning will be assigned to all groups. In addition, Staff from Parks, Engineering etc. will still liaise with all groups.
- Depending on organizational status, groups may not be eligible for grant funding and may not be able to respond formally to development referrals – this is the main difference with respect to service level changes.
- But all groups will be recognized in some fashion and have access to resources (see draft diagram in reference package).
- Noted that diagrams and process provided are just drafts.

- Unclear on how formalizing and registering neighbourhood associations helps the neighbourhood itself.
- Groups often form in reaction to an issue in both new and established areas.
- Need to articulate communication, expectations, and methods for groups, especially in regard to development proposals. Need to formalize these processes so both the associations and City staff understand what is involved and what are the expectations from both City and Neighbourhood Association perspectives. Currently, no indication that engagement would be better with organized or unorganized neighbourhood groups.
- Goal to have a policy statement about how we interact with neighbourhoods in new REIMAGINE Nanaimo.
- Goal is to be more of a team under PIC Program and that relationships don't change when staff leave or retire.
- Structures should be clear on how to bring issues to the table.
- Why are we doing this? Why the change now? Seems as though Council and Staff want to set up recognition structure, but it's not what most of the neighbourhood associations want.
- Neighbourhoods are about passion – want to be part of ongoing conversation with City. Referrals are fine – but how is neighbourhood input actually being considered? This input needs to be heard and taken seriously in Council deliberations, particularly with respect to development in the community. Shouldn't this be about creating greater communication, not less – why does Council want to lay organizational criteria on neighbourhoods? Why the formality?
- SPNA doesn't take any position on development applications. They stay neutral or at most provide multiple views to City and leave it at that. With respect to development – may not want to give input for or against a development proposal unless it's overwhelmingly clear what neighbourhood supports.
- Are there municipalities with neighbourhood engagement structures that work well? Staff have been researching how other municipalities engage with and support their neighbourhood associations. We will share draft comparison summary with those in attendance at this meeting. The final version of this chart will be included as an attachment to the draft Council report that is shared with all the neighbourhood associations prior to the report going back to Council (anticipated to be either in late September or in October).
- City is changing quickly. Neighbourhoods are changing and groups are forming and reacting to this change.

3. ENGAGEMENT WITH COMMUNITY AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

- Where are the community engagement task force findings? (2018 report?)
- This Council has not moved forward on the 2018 engagement report findings. Received by the current Council early in their term. No direction came out, only receipt of the report.
- Through this process (REIMAGINE Nanaimo), can we implement some of these findings? Yes, that is possible.
- Is Council going through this process because they don't want to follow the 2018 recommendations? No, that is not staff's understanding.

- It's hard for neighbourhood associations to do engagement i.e. Harewood has few volunteers and no resources to rent a hall. What does Council expect with respect to associations ability to undertake neighbourhood engagement? Please clarify.
- By way of illustration, some key engagement issues include proposed transit exchange in downtown which is in conflict with Downtown Plan and adjoining neighbourhood plans (e.g. Old City Neighbourhood Plan).
- Lots of neighbourhood input into those plans but not followed. Why?
- Need to make it clear how neighbourhood associations bring issues to the table?
- How is it policed? How is it transparent? How is it administered? City is proposing a system that will require City to police. So what are the details of how that will be done? Staff acknowledged that the upcoming revised report should make clear to Council the ramifications of adopting the proposed criteria, including the need for staff time/energy to police/administer/manage the new system.
- If adopted, what level of evaluation does Council want when dealing with a group?
- Concern noted by SPNA that staff mischaracterized the level of support for staff's position/conclusion regarding the neighbourhood associations' support of the organizational criteria in original report (April 26), and did not acknowledge the nuanced positions of the neighbourhood associations. The April 26 report states "Based on feedback from neighbourhood associations . . . it is recommended the City establish . . . criteria." That suggests that the neighbourhood associations definitively came out in support of criteria. SPNA suggests that at the very least further clarification through discussion with the neighbourhood associations is required to confidently make this link.

4. PARTNERS IN COMMUNITY PROGRAM (PIC)

- Staff provided intro to the program via high level program outlines contained in reference package. Not intended to replace capital planning but provide an alternative tool for implementing smaller scale community building projects focused on quality of life.
- Builds on the existing Volunteers In Parks (VIP)/Partners in Parks (PIP) Program which has been in place for 40 years by expanding the program's scope beyond parks and recreation oriented projects. By expanding the program we can include other forms of community building as well.
- PIC program could be a one stop portal for all community building oriented projects that take place in the City.
- If endorsed by Council, likely in place for 2023 at the earliest, due to budget cycles and resourcing.
- Criteria still needs to be established to determine which projects to fund.
- Currently \$100,000 annually in PIP budget, but expanded PIC program would likely require more funding depending on the final scope that is determined.
- Could be more team work under PIC – with multiple staff involved in its administration across different City departments. Having a program in place will also ensure that as staff change the program remains and continues to function from year to year.

- Still need to develop program details and review with Staff teams this fall before detailed program outline can be created and shared with the neighbourhood associations.
- Question about 50/50 support for projects – staff noted it is fluid – neighbourhood support of a project can vary significantly – can also be majority City resources, with some support from neighbourhood, it depends on the project.
- How do we ensure program is not monopolized by one or two neighbourhood or community groups? We would need to build equity and balance into the program structure – likely based on geographic distribution, community priorities, and city-wide priorities. Organizational structure of neighbourhood groups would be an issue for grants, but not for general PIC projects as a whole.

MEETING NOTES

NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION ORGANIZATIONAL REVIEW, SUPPORT AND ENGAGEMENT PROCESS - CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION WITH CITY STAFF LINLEY POINT PARK, 5784 LINLEY VALLEY DRIVE, NANAIMO, BC THURSDAY, JULY 29, 2021 AT 12:00PM

Present: Tim McGrath, President, Nanaimo Neighbourhood Network
Barry Lyseng, Stephenson Point Neighbourhood Association
Tereza Bajan, Nob Hill Neighbourhood
Alexis Petersen, Harewood Neighbourhood Association
Nancy Mitchell, Newcastle Association
Bill Manners, Dover Neighbourhood Association

Sent Regrets: Cheryl Headey, Stephenson Point Neighbourhood Association
Karen Kuwica, Newcastle Community Association

Staff: Kirsty MacDonald, Parks & Open Space Planner
Chris Sholberg, Community Heritage Planner
Mallory Lowes, Co-op Student

1. INTRODUCTION

- Chris introduced reference materials
 - 1) Neighbourhood association recognition, capacity and engagement
 - 2) PIC Program overview

2. COUNCIL DIRECTION

- Chris introduced Council direction—why Staff are doing the review. Looking to take follow up report back to Council in Fall, 2021 (Sept. or Oct.)
- Provided short review of key input received at past meetings (July 13 and 21) including the “missing middle” or need for policy about neighbourhood engagement, and whether staff’s review/analysis of input received from neighbourhood associations and included in Apr. 26 GPC report was accurate.
- Noted that this information will be reviewed and incorporated into draft Council report for review by the associations, prior to proceeding to Council.
- Comparative analysis chart of how other municipalities support and engage with neighbourhood associations has been drafted and will be sent to associations for review as attachment to new Council report.

Requested that chart also be sent to those in attendance at the meeting.

3. ISSUES

- Ebb and flow of neighbourhood association formation is generally issue based when things come up in the community.
- Printing support is important to groups.
- Associations need more time to respond to development referrals (Official Community Plan amendments, Rezoning applications and Development Permits) to be representative and thoughtful. Usually only 2 weeks given but 1 month, at the least, would be better.
- Look at Fairview community in Victoria re: bus shelters provided by neighbourhood associations as an example of what associations can do.
- Providing a Development 101 session for neighbourhood associations to understand the development approval process and where neighbourhood associations can act so they don't miss key dates would be very useful. Could be a separate workshop with each association, or a combined workshop through the Neighbourhood Network.
- Develop tool kits so every citizen knows how to interact through development process even if not an organized association. Citizens need user friendly understanding City's development approval process.
- Development Permits should be required to go to community for input, particularly where variances are being proposed.
- Consider updating development process review with neighbourhoods as part of REIMAGINE Nanaimo – put requirements to engage with associations in writing through policy. Need to discuss development process with Neighbourhood Network members and where it needs to be changed from public engagement perspective.
- Adopt policy which requires developer to meet with local community within a specified radius of the project at the pre-application phase. Make this expectation clear as part of the development process. Engagement should be early and often (example would be recent development proposal in Harewood on Fourth Street – developer initiated contact with neighbourhood association before any plans were created, which was great.
- Any development application submitted to the City should have a paragraph about how the developer will engage the community as they put together their development proposal.
- Why is the new plan for Commercial Street underway when there already is a plan for Downtown and Old City Quarter, we also already have Front Street Master Plan? Why a new plan, and not the existing one being followed?
- Neighbourhood plans need to be monitored, updated, and utilized on a regular basis. Need to have this reinforced through a policy statement.

- Update criteria and priority list for the creation of new neighbourhood plans through REIMAGINE Nanaimo.
- How will the new OCP have urban design guidelines that are specific to each neighbourhood? How will that be accounted for without neighbourhood plans?

4. PIC PROGRAM

- PIC program is a scope expansion to address Council's direction from July 2020 related to Transportation as well as REIMAGINE Nanaimo principles/Phase 3 implementation.
- Clarified what goes into PIC Program vs. Capital plan.
- Need to make implementation strategies of all plans very clear.
- Neighbourhood network input clear that groups want more resources for neighbourhood plans, and want to continue to create new neighbourhood plans and updated old neighbourhood plans in the future.
- Why do Staff not know what's going on and why current plans aren't getting implemented? Also, who is responsible and how are new plans conceived and acted upon, often ignoring existing plans and diverting resources away from other neighbourhood priorities?
- What's the plan to deal with special issues in Downtown? Why do a beautification plan without a social plan? Why do Jean Burns bus project? Community backlash will be huge.
- Why the PIC Program required and what are the objectives. How does it make project implementation better? Seems to be a solution in search of a problem.
- Can we have a session with Transportation and other applicable City departments regarding the PIC Program? What will the engagement look like for pedestrian plan, sidewalk criteria, meeting space and Phase 3 REIMAGINE Nanaimo details? How do infrastructure projects get onto the Five Year Capital Plan?
- Are priorities for neighbourhoods being taken into consideration in pedestrian plan?
- What developer incentives are there to improve streetscape (trees, sidewalks etc.) at neighbourhood level?
- A non-profit only needs 3 people. That doesn't seem representative. How is the formation of a small non-profit society any better than informal groups that include and reach hundreds of people?
- Each neighbourhood association does their own thing that works for them organizationally. Let them do it and keep the status quo.
- Key idea – recognitions of community input – community priorities should be recognized and incorporated into City planning/infrastructure efforts.

MEETING NOTES

NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION ORGANIZATIONAL REVIEW, SUPPORT AND ENGAGEMENT PROCESS - CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION WITH CITY STAFF VIA ZOOM, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 04, 2021 AT 7:00PM

Present: Sharon Kofoed, Westwood Lake Neighbourhood Association/Friends of
Westwood Lake
Connie Barritt, Westwood Lake Neighbourhood Association/Friends of
Westwood Lake
Gerry and Marilyn, Westwood Lake Neighbourhood Association/Friends of
Westwood Lake
Tim McGrath, President, Nanaimo Neighbourhood Network
Barry Lyseng, Stephenson Point Neighbourhood Association
Brian Rice, Neighbours of Nob Hill
Nancy Mitchell, Newcastle Community Association
Karen Kuwica, Newcastle Community Association

Staff: Kirsty MacDonald, Parks & Open Space Planner
Chris Sholberg, Community Heritage Planner

1. INTRODUCTION

- Chris introduced reference materials
 - 1) Neighbourhood association recognition, capacity and engagement
 - 2) PIC Program overview

2. ROUNDTABLE OF IDEAS/COMMENTS

Westwood Lake:

- We are here to address problem. 3 tiered organizational criteria system.
- Is it legal to add this criteria?
- It's imposing more on volunteers and shouldn't be under city's jurisdiction.
- What are the other options other than what was in the report? Weren't three options being considered prior to the Apr. 26 report?
- How can you not give development referrals to public groups if they have informal status?
- Grant funding—for who, how much, operating? Can you get it anyway even if you are not a group?

- Can non-profit societies have out of town people? And do they need to disclose info to the public. You can form society with small numbers, even to as little as one person.
- City's proposal is opposite of diversity, inclusion and equity – it is exclusionary and prejudicial. Takes away uniqueness and diversity of neighbourhoods. Restricts to only registered non-profits only getting the perks which is only a few groups.
- How will you police it? Will you ask for records?
- Issues is really who is credible and legitimate.
- Newcomers? How would they fit in?
- It's rude to long standing neighbourhood groups. Can existing groups be grandfathered in as an alternative, with new groups being subject to the new criteria?
- Existing group (Westwood) is effective and action oriented.
- From a community engagement perspective, where was Council when condo development proposed in Westwood neighbourhood?
- From Westwood Lake Neighbourhood Association perspective proposed Partners in Community program is a red herring.
- Vancouver accepts ad hoc groups. Why not here?
- What is the win /benefit for this process? What is the grant money and how much is it? For registered groups (tier a)?
- Why fix what's not broke – does the proposal make anything better? This seems to be creating another level of bureaucracy that is not needed.
- Not efficient. Concern we are wasting tax dollars on this effort.
- Where is the value for money
- Town hall meetings – this should be considered by Council as an engagement tool.
- Need to ensure alternatives and options are included in next report.
- What is the reason that City Council is going through this exercise? Why any different than 2006 when the idea of organizational criteria was last discussed with Neighbourhood Network members? Or previously.
- Map of Westwood neighbourhood boundaries are incorrect in package that was sent out. Why using planning area boundaries instead of self-defined neighbourhood association boundaries – look at creating a map that shows both?

The following supplementary information related to the above item was provided after the meeting concluded:

Outlined below is the Stephenson's Point Neighbourhood Associations disagreement with REIMAGINE NANAIMO's Planning District boundaries (determined by consultant) as it relates to Stephenson Point/Stephenson Point Neighbourhood Association:

- Stephenson Point is split in half between Dover/Hammond Bay and Hospital/Departure Bay Planning Districts.
- Does not conform to the Rocky Point/Hammond Bay/Stephenson Point Neighbourhood Plan (RP/HB/SP) boundary set by City/Staff in 1998 (not “self-determined”).
- Does not conform with the boundaries as understood and advocated by the same consultant when hired by the RP/HB/SP Plan Committee in 1999 to assist in the neighbourhood plan process.
- Does not conform with the Stephenson Point Neighbourhood Association boundary that grew out of that City directive (not “self-determined”).
- Does not conform to the major geographical/environmental determinant in Stephenson Point (Cottle Creek/Linley Valley Watershed).
- Does not conform with the major road determinant in Stephenson Point (Hammond Bay Road). The portion of Hammond Bay Road through Stephenson Point Neighbourhood Association is shared by both halves of the neighbourhood as the ONLY means of connection to the remainder of the city.
- Does not conform with the area identified as being outside the recommended EMS response time.
- Does not conform with the transit stop catchment areas.
- Does not conform with the utility network (under and over ground). Along this portion of Hammond Bay Road both halves of Stephenson Point are serviced off the one and same main sewer, storm, gas and electrical lines.
- Does not conform with elementary school catchment boundaries.
- Does not conform with high school catchment boundaries.
- Allocates Stephenson Point’s only employment centre (Pacific Biological Station (PBS), with its attendant overflow parking, traffic, and pedestrian/cycling/transit service issues to Departure Bay/Hospital District.
- Ignores PBS as the key historical element which initiated residential development of Stephenson Point Road.
- Ignores the historical and distinct land division pattern of Stephenson Point.
- Consultant’s boundary appears to have been determined solely because approx.. 90 homes (out of approx. 300) in the Nottingham Hill sub-neighbourhood are oriented towards Departure Bay.
- Consultant did not solicit input or feedback of residents or Stephenson Point Neighbourhood Association as to practical or cognitive determinants.

The Planning Area boundaries will be an elementary building block in data collection and analysis for the setting of policy or determination of department priorities for a considerable length of time. For Stephenson Point and the Stephenson Point Neighbourhood Association, the consultant's district boundary sets another (and unnecessary) obstacle in residents and volunteers trying to achieve both small incremental fixes (eg. Hammond Bay Road pedestrian improvements to parks and schools) and large (eg. Hammond Bay Road improvements overall). Stephenson Point Neighbourhood Association has already identified at least one completely implausible attribution to Stephenson Point based on the data collected and analysed through this flawed system that would inhibit our current efforts to improve pedestrian infrastructure. Other Staff have already questioned their need to reply and respond to SPNA/residents' concerns based on erroneous and incorrect attributions applied to Stephenson Point and Stephenson Point Neighbourhood Association published through the early stages of the REIMAGINE NANAIMO process.

For a process and document that is supposed to be about facilitating and improving resident and neighbourhood association engagement the district boundary is as unsatisfactory as it is incorrect. Stephenson Point Neighbourhood Association encourages all neighbourhood associations to consider the accuracy and implications of the consultant's district boundaries to their neighbourhood efforts. Stephenson Point Neighbourhood Association will be requesting a meeting with the consultant to understand what is not apparent to us. Depending on that meeting we will pursue having the boundary changed through the remainder of the REIMAGINE NANAIMO process.

Tim McGrath:

- 2018 engagement task force recommendations should be respected and implemented.
- Neighborhood plans—how are the existing neighbourhood plans being included and how new plans are being established. Is there a commitment to make additional plans?
- Review how often? How many to be developed? What will guide developments from now on? Be clear in report back to Council. Plans reflect the uniqueness of each neighbourhood.
- Neighborhood plans help to bring groups together for a common purpose.
- Noted that Nanaimo Neighbourhood Network plans on meeting once notes from all four Continuing the Conversation meetings have been

circulated to provide unified position on various issues back to City staff.

Newcastle:

- Not having clear maps can fuel suspicion that City might consider dissolving/changing some planning boundaries (Reimagine Nanaimo scenarios).
- Based on discussion over the past four meeting there are three key issues to be addressed in the report back to Council (organizational criteria how neighbourhoods engage with city council and vice versa, and the partners in community program).
- Report back to Council needs to add in info from the 2018 engagement task force for review and endorsement – this needs to be the focus of the report. The recommendations of the 2018 Engagement Task Force report need to be operationalized.
- What are the objectives of the PIC program? What are the criteria?
- How do existing City of Nanaimo grant programs like “Community Development Grants” and “Community Vitality Grants” fit into the proposed PIC?
- It was noted that the City of Edmonton has a Neighbourhood Engagement Fund and part of the application process is connecting with “your community social worker”. Perhaps we should have that position in Nanaimo!

Nob Hill:

- How does a community come together and make improvements and solutions? How can we move forward with a project idea under the PIC Program? How do you evaluate groups, criteria? Maybe City should evaluate projects rather than groups. Let’s get to solutions – how do we get things done.
- Hard to get community involvement.
- Hard when developers do not follow adopted neighbourhood plans (e.g. small hotel on Selby).

SPNA:

- Why is council putting all this onto the shoulders of the neighbourhood associations?
- Why are Council not looking at their own engagement efforts and the organizational capacity of staff?

- Report back to Council should start with engagement. Organization may or may not fall out of that. And PIC program may or not follow.
- Council needs to engage with neighbourhood associations in a frequent and transparent way. The system would then police itself.
- The proposed structures could be used deliberately or unwittingly by Staff/Council to delay or deny the needs/requests of “unaccredited/non-group A neighbourhood associations, or resident groups which are just forming around an issue.

Clarifications:

- Neighborhood plans that exist will stay in place.
- Need to use a map that includes both planning areas and self-defined neighbourhood association boundaries? Staff will create combined map and share with neighbourhood associations – such a map did exist a few years ago but needs to be updated.
- Need to show the resourcing that will be needed to implement the PIC program.
- Need to clarify more elements and project types in the PIC program. What can you really do? Traffic calming? Like Vancouver, Washington.
- Is there liability taken on by neighbourhood groups? Are responsibilities being downloaded?
- Public safety liability is taken on by the City because it’s overseeing the public safety.
- What is the operational grant program about? Could be a small scale grant program (\$10,000 to \$20,000 budget per year) to help neighbourhood groups pay for operational needs (such as liability insurance, printing, community events, etc.).
- Suspicion is there for city to put blame on neighbourhood associations if community investment projects or private developments go wrong, Staff noted that this is not the City’s intent.
- Some clarifications needed around the complexities of the potential PIC program.