

MINUTES
GOVERNANCE AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE MEETING
ELECTRONIC MEETING
MONDAY, 2022-JAN-10, AT 1:00 P.M.

Present: Councillor D. Bonner, Chair
Mayor L. Krog, (disconnected 4:22 p.m.)
Councillor T. Brown
Councillor B. Geselbracht
Councillor E. Hemmens (joined electronically 1:02 p.m.)
Councillor Z. Maartman
Councillor I. W. Thorpe
Councillor J. Turley

Absent: Councillor S. D. Armstrong

Staff: J. Rudolph, Chief Administrative Officer
D. Lindsay, Deputy CAO, General Manager, Development Services
R. Harding, General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture
B. Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works
Supt. L. Fletcher, OIC, Nanaimo Detachment RCMP
T. Doyle, Fire Chief
L. Bhopalsingh, Director, Community Development and First Nations Relations
J. Holm, Director, Development Approvals
D. Fournier, Manager, Municipal Infrastructure
J. McAskill, Manager, Facility Asset Planning
T. Pan, Manager, Sustainability
J. Rose, Manager, Transportation
L. Rowett, Manager, Current Planning
D. Thompson, Manager, Roads and Traffic Services
K. MacDonald, Parks and Open Space Planner
C. Sholberg, Community Heritage Planner
D. Stewart, Environmental Planner
K. Biegun, Planning Assistant
A. Chanakos, Steno, Planning
T. Humpherville, Steno, Planning
S. Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services
K. Gerard, Recording Secretary

1. CALL THE GOVERNANCE AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE MEETING TO ORDER:

The Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS:

- (a) Add REIMAGINE Nanaimo – Staff PowerPoint Presentation – “Emerging Directions Review” as Agenda Item 5(a) and reorder Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Resolutions to 5(b).
- (b) Add Scheduled Recess from 3:00 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.

Councillor Hemmens joined the Governance and Priorities Committee meeting electronically at 1:02 p.m.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

It was moved and seconded that the Agenda, as amended, be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES:

It was moved and seconded that the Minutes of the Governance and Priorities Committee held in the Shaw Auditorium, Vancouver Island Conference Centre, 80 Commercial Street, Nanaimo, BC, on Monday, 2021-DEC-13, at 1:00 p.m. be adopted as circulated. The motion carried unanimously.

5. REPORTS:

a. REIMAGINE NANAIMO:

1. REIMAGINE Nanaimo

Introduced by Dale Lindsay, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and General Manager, Development Services.

Lisa Bhopalsingh, Director, Community Development and First Nations Relations, provided the Committee with an overview of today's meetings. Highlights included:

- Staff are requesting the Governance and Priorities Committee's (GPC) feedback on six key topics including:
 1. Land use plan designations
 2. Neighbourhood plans
 3. Building heights
 4. Island Highway character
 5. Large format retail
 6. Stand-alone commercial
- A hybrid model of integrated land use between scenarios 2 and 3 was supported by the community
- Staff have been able to accelerate some of the work that is underway to address the goals of the community and the Committee
- Four key factors identified include:
 1. A thriving downtown
 2. Access to daily needs
 3. Affordable housing options
 4. Integrated mobility options
- The draft consolidated scenario contains specific focuses on limiting residential growth, supporting growth in central hubs, recognizing

- linkage between key corridors and reducing the driving time to businesses and services which will promote walkable neighbourhoods
- The draft scenarios will be refined based on the Committee's feedback and brought forward to the Committee for final review before the launch of Phase 3

Kasia Biegun, Planning Assistant, continued the presentation. Highlights included:

- Five categories were identified in the land use plan including Urban Centres, Corridors, Neighbourhood (5 distinct designations), Industrial and Blue and Green Lands
 1. Urban Centres
 - A new primary urban centre will be located in the downtown core with six secondary centres throughout Nanaimo
 - The Primary Urban Centre will consist of mixed-use commercial, mid and high rise apartments with 12 or more storey buildings in specific locations
 - Uses will include commercial, office, residential, parks, plazas and open spaces
 - The six secondary urban centres will consist of mixed-use ground floor commercial, low to mid-rise apartments and building heights up to 12 storeys in specific, approved locations
 - Large scale centres act as mobility hubs which is reflective of the existing Official Community Plan (OCP)
 - Results of the feedback poll regarding Urban Centres were:
 - 3 out of 8 Councillors agreed with the draft plan
 - 5 out of 8 Councillors stated they had questions
 2. Corridors
 - The current approach in the existing OCP allows for corridors along key transportation routes and in urban nodes
 - Land use inventory showed that Nanaimo has an abundance of commercial spaces and recommended focusing commercial uses to support critical mass
 - The emerging direction is to have further alignment of corridors with planned primary transit routes
 - Draft consolidated plan reduces the amount of corridors by half and divides these into two types of corridors including mixed-use corridor and a primary residential corridor
 - Results of the feedback poll regarding Corridors were:
 - 6 out of 8 Councillors agreed with the draft plan
 - 2 out of 8 stated they had questions
 3. Neighbourhoods
 - There are five designations which include Neighbourhood Centre, Old City Heritage

- Neighbourhood, Core Neighbourhood, Neighbourhood and Low-Density Neighbourhood
- Neighbourhood Centres include typical building forms of mixed-use with commercial ground floor, low to mid-rise apartments, townhomes and two to four storey building heights
- Typical uses will include commercial, residential, limited stand-alone commercial, parks, plazas, open spaces and institutional
- Results of the feedback poll regarding Neighbourhoods Centres were:
 - 5 out of 8 Councillors agreed with the draft plan
 - 3 out of 8 stated they had questions
- Old City Neighbourhood designation will be added to protect and recognize the unique character of the Old City area
- The Old City Neighbourhood will include single-unit dwellings and secondary suites, multi-unit dwellings with building heights up to 3 storeys
- Typical uses will include residential, home based businesses, local servicing commercial and parks, plazas, open spaces and institutional
- Results of the feedback poll regarding Old City Neighbourhoods were:
 - 3 out of 8 Councillors agreed with the draft plan
 - 4 out of 8 had questions
 - 1 out of 8 had concerns with the draft plan
- Existing neighbourhood will be split into two designations including Core Neighbourhood and Neighbourhood
- Core Neighbourhood encourages increased density and infill close to urban centres and transit
- Neighbourhood supports primarily lower density, ground oriented, single family housing with or without secondary suites
- Objective of the designation is to act as a transition from high density to low density
- Both designations would support residential, home-based businesses, parks, plazas, open spaces and institutional
- Results of the feedback poll regarding Core Neighbourhood and Neighbourhood were:
 - 4 out of 8 Councillors agreed with the draft plan
 - 2 out of 8 stated they had questions
 - 1 out of 8 had concerns
- Low Density Neighbourhood is a new designation that will be created to recognize existing development and density, full community servicing would not be guaranteed and the Urban Reserve designation removed

- Low density neighbourhoods will support single-unit dwellings and typical uses will be residential, live/work, agriculture and open spaces
- Staff have identified three areas that require additional consideration due to difficulty in servicing these areas, challenges in road access and sewer servicing and road access limitations
- The three areas identified include Linley Valley, Jinglepot and King/Calder Hill area
- Results of feedback poll regarding Low Density Neighbourhoods were:
 - 7 out of 8 Councillors agreed with the draft plan
 - 1 out of 8 stated they had questions

Kirsty MacDonald, Parks and Open Space Planner, continued the presentation. Highlights included:

- Colliers International provided a land inventory and concluded that Nanaimo has a shortage of industrial designated lands
 - The estimated amount of lands needed by 2041 is 641 to 727 hectares
 - 661 hectares of industrial land could be added through the addition of the Oceanview area (excluding Sandstone)
4. Industrial Lands Expansion and Protection
- Two types of industrial lands would be designated: Industrial and Light Industrial
 - Industrial would include uses for warehousing, distribution, transportation, logistics, manufacturing and processing
 - Light industrial would include warehousing, low-impact manufacturing, auto supplies and repairs, equipment repairs, construction, wholesalers and office and sales type buildings
 - The results of the feedback poll for Industrial were:
 - 5 out of 8 Councillors agreed with the draft plan
 - 1 out of 8 stated they had questions
 - 2 out of 8 had concerns
5. Blue and Green Lands
- Typical building forms would vary by location and uses would include public access, facilities, trails and recreation, water transportation, marine services, ocean-focused industry and residential
 - Currently the Assembly Wharf is designated an Urban Node and the South Nanaimo waterfront is a Neighbourhood
 - Changing these to a Waterfront designation would acknowledge their unique waterfront uses and protect the environment
 - Other blue/green lands include parks and open spaces which will include community service buildings

- Resource Management includes small scale ancillary buildings and includes uses for agriculture, forestry and silviculture and parks
- Results for the feedback poll regarding Blue and Green Lands were:
 - 6 out of 8 Councillors agreed with the draft plan
 - 2 out of 8 stated they had questions

The Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting recessed at 1:43 p.m.

The Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting reconvened at 1:50 p.m.

Lisa Bhopalsingh, Director, Community Development and First Nations Relations, continued the presentation. Highlights included:

- The feedback poll results show the following require further discussion and are based on ranking priority:
 1. Urban centres
 2. Old City Neighbourhood
 3. Neighbourhood Centre/Core Neighbourhood and Industrial Lands

Committee discussion took place regarding urban centres. Highlights included:

- Types and width of sidewalks in both the primary and secondary urban centres
- Real estate projections and estimated population growth
- Potential policies to influence growth through infrastructure planning, corridors and different nodes in specific areas

Lisa Bhopalsingh, Director, Community Development and First Nations Relations, and Janna Zelenski, Landscape Architect, Principle, Lanarc Consultants, advised the Committee that there is no policy for sidewalks but the draft plan includes different types and widths of sidewalks based on neighbourhood needs. Staff continue to research ways to provide developers and investors incentives to develop in certain areas, such as the downtown primary urban centre, to ensure density in high-density areas and low density in designated low-density areas.

Committee discussion took place regarding urban centres. Highlights included:

- Primary urban centre and the building height allowed for this area versus the current development application for Bowers District Master Plan requesting eight to nine storey buildings in the north end
- Ensuring that public feedback is prioritized over the Committee or Council's feedback
- The suggested hybrid model of scenarios two and three in the draft plan
- Achieving a working model for development that reflects current and future challenges with focus on the downtown core

Lisa Bhopalsingh, Director, Community Development and First Nations Relations, advised the Committee that:

- The hybrid model of scenarios two and three does focus on the downtown core but also reflects that the City of Nanaimo (the City) is a long, linear city
- Staff are focusing on the downtown area but need to ensure that businesses, services and amenities are placed strategically throughout Nanaimo
- Once adopted the OCP can be reviewed every 5 to 10 years
- Ensuring public feedback is the priority but also that the Committee and Council know what role they play in the provision of services and development to evolve the downtown core and the City as a whole
- More opportunity for public feedback will occur once scenario two and three are combined

Committee discussion took place regarding the Old City Neighbourhood. Highlights included:

- The Old City Neighbourhood and it's close proximity to the Primary Urban Centre
- Property tax incentives to encourage home owners in the Old City area to seek a heritage designation and preserve the character of the homes in this area in a more permanent way
- Ensuring the public understands the language being presented
- Other areas in Nanaimo that have a unique character or neighbourhood

Lisa Bhopalsingh, Director, Community Development and First Nations Relations, advised the Committee that:

- The policy for heritage designation would encourage home owners to preserve the heritage and character of the area but the Province has a much higher level of protection for heritage homes
- The new designation would encourage sympathetic infill in this area and without the new designation it could change the requirement for such things as maximum buildings heights

Committee discussion took place regarding industrial lands. Highlights included:

- Existing properties outside of potential light industrial areas that are currently being used as light industrial such as car dealerships
- Exploring options to incorporate industrial areas into mixed-use areas

Lisa Bhopalsingh, Director, Community Development and First Nations Relations, advised the Committee that existing businesses would be accommodated into the new OCP.

Dale Lindsay, Deputy CAO and General Manager, Development Services, noted that businesses could be grandfathered or apply for approval through rezoning for a legal non-conforming use.

Janna Zelenski, Landscape Architect, Principle, Lanarc Consultants, advised the Committee that the policies will support mixed-use and encourage other uses to be incorporated into residential areas. There will be flexibility to allow for different uses on a case-by-case basis through rezoning.

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Walkable neighbourhoods and industrial lands
- Linear nodes and major artery areas
- Logical approach to driving and living patterns of the community and ensuring that services and businesses are within walking distance

The Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting recessed at 3:02 p.m.

The Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting reconvened at 3:15 p.m.

Kasia Biegun, Planning Assistant, continued the presentation and spoke regarding building heights. Highlights included:

- The current OCP offers no set guidance on growth of urban centres regarding building heights, and high-rises are supported equally in all urban nodes and commercial centres
- Emerging directions include supporting 12+ storey buildings in the primary urban centre and limited potential for 12 storey buildings in secondary urban centres
- Existing bylaw provides for additional heights for key sites located in the downtown area
- Through these directions Staff hope to encourage growth in key areas, such as downtown, while limiting height in other areas and focusing on transportation in the six secondary centres

Committee discussion took place regarding building heights. Highlights included:

- Development plans in progress requesting additional height variances in locations outside of the downtown core
- Public feedback regarding building heights and ensuring materials provided to the public are as shown at this meeting
- Ability of fire fighting equipment to reach building heights of 12+ storeys
- Ensuring population in each area is enough to support businesses and services that invest in those areas
- Limiting secondary urban centers to 12 storeys with no allowance for a variance to building heights and the implications of a policy to limit building heights

Lisa Bhopalsingh, Director, Community Development and First Nations Relations, advised the Committee that:

- There are two current OCP applications that are pre-approved for building heights of more than six storeys
- The Telus downtown development plan falls within the primary urban centre which is consistent with the proposed changes

Dale Lindsay, Deputy CAO and General Manager, Development Services, advised the Committee that the Bowers District Master Plan application has requested a small portion of the development be over six storeys and variance requests for height can be considered through the rezoning process of a development application.

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee limit the proposed building heights for secondary urban centres, noted in the PowerPoint presentation titled “Emerging Directions Review”, to six storeys.

The motion was defeated.

Opposed: *Mayor Krog, Councillors Bonner, Maartman, Thorpe and Turley*

Lisa Bhopalsingh, Director, Community Development and First Nations Relations, spoke regarding core neighbourhoods and neighbourhood designations. Highlights included:

- Transition areas between neighbourhoods and urban centres
- Neighbourhood designation will continue to support primarily low-density ground oriented housing
- Smaller commercial centres within neighbourhoods will allow for up to four storey buildings, condos and/or townhouses and will encourage non-vehicle transportation

Committee discussion took place regarding the blue and green lands analysis and accessibility to parkland around urban nodes and neighbourhoods.

Lisa Bhopalsingh, Director, Community Development and First Nations Relations, advised the Committee that acquisition for parkland will be a priority in the new OCP and the plan will ensure that green space is available and accessible to surrounding residents.

Kirsty MacDonald, Parks and Open Space Planner, stated that a land acquisition strategy is a primary action that would follow the completion of the REIMAGINE Nanaimo process.

Lisa Bhopalsingh, Director, Community Development and First Nations Relations, spoke regarding the next steps in the REIMAGINE Nanaimo process. Highlights included:

- Large scale format retail and stand alone commercial accommodations will be discussed at the next GPC Meeting on 2022-JAN-24

- February 2022 will be the Phase 3 public engagement launch date following the 2022-FEB-14 GPC meeting
- Phase 3 will wrap up at the end of March 2022
- Updated draft City Plan and action plan documents with the Phase 3 engagement summary will take place in April 2022
- May 2022 – first and second reading and a Public Hearing will take place in June 2022

b. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT EXCELLENCE:

1. Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) Resolutions

Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services, spoke regarding the AVICC resolutions and stated that no resolutions were received from the Committee.

6. AGENDA PLANNING:

1. Governance and Priorities Committee Agenda Planning

Introduced by Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services.

1. Upcoming Topics

Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services, spoke regarding upcoming topics for Governance and Priorities Committee (GPC) meetings. Highlights included:

- 2022-JAN-24 GPC meeting will contain REIMAGINE Nanaimo items but will also include an update on Committees and Committee Operating Guidelines
- The 2022-FEB-14 GPC meeting will include Phase 3 public engagement launch for REIMAGINE Nanaimo and 24-hour Parking
- Documents attached to the Agenda show future agenda item

2. Meeting Topics to be Scheduled

Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services, spoke regarding meeting topics to be scheduled. Highlights included:

- Schedule D – Affordable Housing and Housing Affordability will be combined and brought forward to a future GPC meeting
- Street Entertainers Bylaw will be updated and brought forward before the end of this Council's term
- Request that Committee members bring forward any new matters for discussion or placement on a future GPC Agenda at the following meeting on 2022-JAN-24

3. COVID-19 Update – Effect on Meetings

Jake Rudolph, Chief Administrative Officer, spoke regarding meetings and COVID-19. Highlights included:

- The decision to postpone the 2022-JAN-20 and 2022-JAN-24 Public Hearings was made due to the escalation of COVID-19 cases and the Omicron variant
- Hybrid/electronic meetings have challenges but can work if needed and preferred by the Committee/Council members
- Protocol plans for the Parks, Recreation and Culture department are being implemented due to the latest health guidelines

Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services, requested feedback from the Committee regarding in person meetings or virtual meetings for the remainder of January, which would include the following:

- 2022-JAN-17 Regular Council Meeting
- 2022-JAN-19 Finance and Audit Committee Meeting
- 2022-JAN-24 Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting

By unanimous consent, the Governance and Priorities Committee approved that all remaining Committee and Council Meetings for January 2022, be held virtually.

Mayor Krog disconnected from the Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting at 4:22 p.m.

7. CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER UPDATE:

Introduced by Jake Rudolph, Chief Administrative Officer.

1. Richard Harding, General Manager, re: COVID-19 – Parks, Recreation and Culture

- Directors and managers are currently meeting to review the Provincial Health Order which is in place until 2022-JAN-18
- A more detailed list of changes will be made available to Mayor and Council, Staff and the public by the end of the week
- The large pool at Beban Recreation Centre is now open and some leisure groups will return to this location after being moved to the Nanaimo Aquatic Centre

2. Snow and Ice Response Update

Introduced by Jake Rudolph, Chief Administrative Officer.

1. David Thompson, Manager, Roads and Traffic Services, provided the Committee with a PowerPoint presentation. Highlights included:

- The total snowfall for the previous two weeks was between 109 and 130 centimetres and Staff at Public Works have been working 24/7 since Christmas Eve

- Staffing and scheduling challenges occurred but the response and dedication from Staff is commendable
 - Priority 1 routes were challenging due to the continued snow fall and Staff did not have the capacity to get to Priority 2 and 3 routes until the 27th and 28th of December
 - Additional resources were brought in from contractors
 - There were a number of emergency diversions and emergency responders were supported throughout the snowfall event
2. Supt. Lisa Fletcher, OIC, RCMP, Nanaimo Detachment, continued with a verbal update. Highlights included:
- No fulsome complaints from RCMP Staff regarding snow removal and ability to attend incidents
 - Residents need to be better prepared for winter driving, have proper snow tires and the skills to drive in winter weather
3. Tim Doyle, Fire Chief, continued the verbal update. Highlights included:
- There was an increased incidents; however, responders were able to attend all incidents
 - Public Works Staff provided a priority phone number for urgent matters of snow removal and assisted quickly to ensure responders could travel to incidents as needed
4. Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services, continued the verbal update. Highlights included:
- Communications ensured messaging went out to the public through all social media platforms and the website has been updated as new information was confirmed
 - Emergency Coordination Centre was opened and a Voyent Alert information message was sent out in the morning and evening during the second major snow fall
 - Assisted Parks, Recreation and Culture with programming updates and combined messaging with the Regional District of Nanaimo regarding transit
 - Six news releases were completed, information was featured in the My Nanaimo This Week newsletter, curbside collection information was updated and released to the public and Staff prepared messaging for Mayor and Council
5. Bill Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works, continued the verbal update. Highlights included:
- All snow removal equipment was ready by autumn, walkability of major corridors was completed, transit routes were kept clean and brought in additional resources to deal with cul-de-sacs
 - Challenges included the snow and ice bonding to the road, sanitation vehicles were rescheduled, salt supply is low for the entire west coast and the City exceeded normal salt usage for the season

- Improvements to be looked at include heavy equipment for cul-de-sacs, clearer and earlier messaging, more public education regarding winter driving and doubling the salt storage for future years
- Staff followed existing policies and best practices from other municipalities and will bring options forward to a future meeting for improvements to service levels

Committee discussion took place regarding Staff's dedication and high service levels during this unusual snow event and a future GPC meeting to discuss acquiring more resources to assist Staff and clearing of sidewalks.

8. QUESTION PERIOD:

No members of the public were in attendance to ask questions.

9. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 4:53 p.m. that the meeting terminate. The motion carried unanimously.

CHAIR

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

CORPORATE OFFICER