

MINUTES
GOVERNANCE AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE MEETING
SHAW AUDITORIUM, VANCOUVER ISLAND CONFERENCE CENTRE,
80 COMMERCIAL STREET, NANAIMO, BC
MONDAY, 2022-MAR-14, AT 1:00 P.M.

Present: Councillor S. D. Armstrong, Chair
Mayor L. Krog
Councillor D. Bonner (joined electronically)
Councillor T. Brown (joined electronically)
Councillor B. Geselbracht
Councillor E. Hemmens
Councillor Z. Maartman
Councillor I. W. Thorpe
Councillor J. Turley (joined electronically)

Staff: J. Rudolph, Chief Administrative Officer
D. Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services/Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
R. Harding, General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture
B. Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works
J. Le Masurier, Deputy Fire Chief - Administration
L. Bhopalsingh, Director, Community Development
B. Corsan, Director, Corporate and Business Development (joined electronically)
A. Groot, Director, Facilities and Parks Operations
C. Davis, Manager, Parks Operations (joined electronically 1:42 p.m.)
J. McAskill, Manager, Facility Asset Planning
T. Pan, Manager, Sustainability
J. Rose, Manager, Transportation
S. Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services
K. Lundgren, 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) Agenda Item 7(a)(1) Draft City Plan – Green & Connected – replace PowerPoint presentation.

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 following Minutes be adopted as circulated:

- Minutes of the Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting held electronically on Monday, 2022-FEB-14 at 1:00 p.m.
- Minutes of the Special Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting held in the Shaw Auditorium, Vancouver Island Conference Centre, 80 Commercial Street, Nanaimo, BC on 2022-FEB-28 at 2:00 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously.

5. AGENDA PLANNING:

1. Governance and Priorities Committee Agenda Planning

Introduced by Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services.

- REIMAGINE NANAIMO is the focus for the next four Governance and Priorities Committee (GPC) meetings
- The dates for some topics on the Agenda Planning Document are still to be determined

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Housing Affordability topic listed on the GPC Agenda Planning document
- Identifying what can be prioritized differently in the City's Affordable Housing Strategy based on information gathered through REIMAGINE NANAIMO

6. REPORTS:

(a) REIMAGINE NANAIMO

1. Draft City Plan - Green & Connected

Introduced by Dale Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services/Deputy Chief Administrative Officer.

- Today's focus will be on two Draft City Plan (the Plan) goals: "A Green Nanaimo" and "A Connected Nanaimo"
- Anticipate that the action plan will be brought forward to Council for endorsement next year
- Recommendations from GPC meetings will form a package of final recommendations to be considered at the 2022-MAY-09 GPC meeting prior to going to Council
- Online tracking will be available to keep the public informed of recommendations made at the GPC meetings
- Potential for an additional GPC meeting if extra time is needed

- The Plan returning to Council for approval on 2022-MAY-16
- The Plan to be considered for 1st and 2nd reading at the 2022-MAY-30 Regular Council Meeting

Presentation:

1. Ting Pan, Manager, Sustainability, provided a PowerPoint presentation and outlined the recommendations brought forward from the 2022-MAR-09 Environment Committee Meeting in relation to Goal 1 “A Green Nanaimo”.

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Ensuring that the City Doughnut model is tied into all sections of the Plan, not only the “A Green Nanaimo” section
- Concern regarding how some policies integrated into “A Green Nanaimo” may impact housing cost

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council direct Staff to include the following two elements of language in the start of the Green Policies section:

- Tying the green policies to the goal of staying within the ecological limits as outlined in the City doughnut
- Connecting services to the ‘human needs’ inner circle of the doughnut

The motion carried unanimously.

Ting Pan, Manager, Sustainability, continued the presentation and presented the recommendation from the Environment Committee in relation to Section C.1.1. Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction.

Committee and Staff discussion took place. Highlights included:

- The Draft Action Plan is anticipated to be provided to Council in the fall of 2022 due to the amount of time required to go through the draft policies
- Discussions with the development community in respect to policy C1.1.4 “Accelerate zero-carbon and energy efficient building design and practices for all new construction before 2030 and require this for all new construction after 2030”.
- Policy C1.1.4 in the Plan is consistent with Provincial Government requirements

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council direct Staff to include in the City Plan a policy statement about advocating to the Provincial government for additional power and policy tools to meet cities’ climate goals. The motion carried.

Opposed: Councillors Thorpe and Turley

Ting Pan, Manager, Sustainability, continued the presentation and presented the recommendation from the Environment Committee in relation to Section C.1.2. Climate Adaptation and Hazard Management.

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Using the word “support” within the policies could be interpreted as monetary support
- There are many words within the policies that may be interpreted in different ways
- Room for interpretation provides flexibility; however, may also weaken the policy
- The word “support” is broad enough that it can allow flexibility for the elected Council at the time
- Support can be provided through many different methods, and not only monetary
- Prefer to keep wording general for policy C1.2.4. in the Plan as each case should be looked at individually

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council direct Staff to make the following changes to the Draft City Plan:

- Retitle section C1.2 from “Climate Adaptation and Hazard Management” to “Climate Adaptation and Hazard Mitigation”
- Strengthen language for the policy C1.2.2 to communicate “support community and neighbourhood-level organizations that improve capacity and resilience of the community”
- Streamline and clarify policies C1.2.6 to C1.2.8 under Planning and Strategy (page 57-58)

The motion carried.

Opposed: Councillor Turley

Ting Pan, Manager, Sustainability, continued the presentation and presented the recommendation from the Environment Committee regarding Section C.1.3. Urban Tree Canopy, Natural Areas and Greenways.

Committee and Staff discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Taking into consideration that fallen fruit from fruit trees may attract wildlife and wasps
- Identifying policy changes made through engagement would be useful to have as indication of what has been updated in the Plan
- The policies have not yet been prioritized, and there will be opportunity for Council to provide direction of prioritization

- Softening the language in the Environment Committee recommendation by included the words “endeavour to”
- Appreciating the importance of food security, and it would be wise to embed into the City policy
- Considering staffing costs when making decisions
- Possibility of simply increasing the tree canopy each year
- Challenges associated with increasing tree canopy and the balance between development and tree canopy coverage
- Developers’ responsibility for replacing removed trees
- In cases where it is not possible to replace removed trees during development, the developers provide a cash in lieu contribution

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council direct Staff to make the following changes to the Draft City Plan:

- Replace “rainwater attenuation” with “surface runoff management” under section C1.3 – Urban Tree Canopy, Natural Areas and Greenways
- Clarify the goal of policy C1.3.1 (page 59) under Urban Tree Canopy, Natural Areas and Greenways
- Add tree planting to existing neighborhoods, not just new and redevelopment sites in policy C1.3.2 (page 59)
- Add consideration of food security in policy C1.3.4, to include food security with ecosystem biodiversity and resiliency when replacing or planting new trees in public spaces
- Include a policy in section C1.3 that states that the City will endeavour to increase, prioritize and include the planting of fruit and nut trees in public spaces where hard infrastructure and safe transportation will not be impacted by falling fruit
- Consider stronger and simpler language to the extent possible on Page 60 under section C1.3

The motion carried unanimously.

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Research behind tree canopies and their impact on various factors including climate change and mental health
- Consideration that policy goals, regarding tree canopy coverage, will have an impact on the policy goal of city densification
- Challenges associated with replanting trees that were removed for development
- Providing more clarity to policy C.1.3.1. “Endevor to maintain and expand the city’s tree canopy in balance with other desired land use outcomes”

- Addressing areas of action when considering the action plan as opposed to right now
- Clarifying the intention of the Environment Committee's recommendation regarding tree canopies

Dale Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services/Deputy CAO, reminded the Committee that recommendations made at today's meeting will return to the GPC meeting on 2022-MAY-09.

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council consider the following policy statement to clarify the goal of policy C1.3.1:

"Maintain and enhance the City's tree canopy at a neighborhood scale to optimize benefits for climate adaptation, ecological function, biodiversity, food security, and human health and wellbeing."

The motion was defeated.

Opposed: Mayor Krog and Councillors Armstrong, Maartman, Thorpe and Turley.

Ting Pan, Manager, Sustainability, continued the presentation and presented the recommendation from the Environment Committee in relation to Section C.1.4 Healthy Watersheds.

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council direct Staff to remove 'continue to' in C1.4.3 and C1.4.4 (page 63) of the Draft City Plan. The motion carried unanimously.

Ting Pan, Manager, Sustainability, continued the presentation and presented the recommendation from the Environment Committee in relation to Section C.1.5 Water, Sewer and Stormwater Services.

- Recommendation is proposing to move items from the "A Green Nanaimo" section to another section of the Plan

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Storm Water utility levy and how the levy is to be determined for different types of properties
- Organization of the policies in the Plan in respect to the structure of the Doughnut Economic Model, and creating a cross-silo approach to meeting objectives

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council direct Staff to make the following changes to the Draft City Plan:

- Move policy C1.5.3 on Page 65 that states “Coordinate utility infrastructure upgrades with transportation and/or parks improvements to minimize disruption and optimize community investments” to Goal 5 – Prosperous
- Move the section Servicing Costs (page 66) in Green Policies to Goal 5 - Prosperous

The motion carried unanimously.

Ting Pan, Manager, Sustainability, continued the presentation and presented the recommendation from the Environment Committee in relation to Section C.1.6. Solid Waste Management.

- Currently policy C1.6.5. “Support eliminating organic matter sent to the Regional Landfill” does not include a timeline, and the Environment Committee recommended including year 2030 to the goal

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Setting goals that are attainable
- Having a clear goal in order to put the necessary resources in place to achieve it
- The Regional District of Nanaimo’s Solid Waste Management Plan regarding diverting organic materials from landfill
- City’s role in education for citizens to achieve this goal

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council direct Staff to update policy C1.6.5 (page 67) of the Draft City Plan to support eliminating organic matter sent to the regional landfill by 2030. The motion carried unanimously.

Ting Pan, Manager, Sustainability, continued the presentation and presented the recommendation from the Environment Committee in relation to Section C.1.7 Brownfield Sites.

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Municipalities’ control in regards to brownfield sites
- Not necessarily a need for increased community awareness
- Intent of the Environment Committee’s motion is to add more specifics to policy C1.7.2 “Increase community awareness of the economic, environmental, and social benefits of brownfield redevelopment”
- Potentially more appropriate as an action item than a policy

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council direct Staff to edit policy C1.7.2, of the Draft City Plan, to increase community awareness of the potential economic, environmental and social benefits of remediated brownfield sites throughout the City. The motion was defeated.
Opposed: *Councillors Armstrong, Bonner, Brown, Hemmens, and Turley*

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council direct Staff to remove Policy C1.7.2 from the Draft City Plan to be considered in the action plan. The motion carried unanimously.

Ting Pan, Manager, Sustainability, continued the presentation and presented the recommendation from the Environment Committee in relation to Section C.1.8. Artificial Lighting and Dark Skies.

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Lighting and dark skies is an important policy
- Limiting intrusion of light during design consideration of new development sites
- Concerns regarding not knowing the specific actions in respect to how the policies will be implemented
- Having the presence of artificial light where appropriate for need and safety, and balancing safety and energy preservation
- Creating clear policies on the intentional application of lights
- Studies on LED lights and their impact on wildlife and insects
- Too many different styles of lights throughout the City

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council direct Staff to make the following change to the Draft City Plan:

- Edit policies C1.8.2, C1.8.3 and C1.8.4, within section C1.8 – Artificial Lighting and Dark Skies, to express the City of Nanaimo's intention to optimize dark sky preservation in the design of street lighting, redevelopment of sites and redevelopment of public buildings

The motion carried.

Opposed: *Councillors Thorpe and Turley*

Governance and Priorities Committee meeting recessed at 3:05 p.m.

Governance and Priorities Committee meeting reconvened at 3:23 p.m.

Jamie Rose, Manager, Transportation, continued the presentation and presented the policies related to Goal 2 "A Connected Nanaimo". Highlights included:

- Provided an overview of the topics within the "A Connected Nanaimo" section of REIMAGINE NANAIMO:
 - C2.1 Complete Communities
 - C2.2 Integrated Walk, Roll, Cycle, & Transit Network
 - C2.3 Recreational Trails

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Consultation with wildfire experts regarding site design for recreational trails
- The increasing number of scooters as a means of transportation

Jamie Rose, Manager, Transportation, spoke regarding changing market conditions and societal trends emerging from both the pandemic and technology, which have potential impact on transportation systems.

Jamie Rose, Manager, Transportation, continued the presentation. Highlights included:

- Overview of C2.4 Safe Mobility (Vision Zero)
- Overview of C2.5 Complete Streets

Committee and Staff discussion took place regarding a strong trend in the community for support of road safety issues.

Committee discussion took place regarding policy C.2.5.3. “Encouraging future development to implement street-oriented design formats that support vibrant and accessible streetscapes”. Highlights included:

- Removing the word “Encouraging” to strengthen the policy statement, aspire to that goal, and provide clearer language
- Do not see the need to take wording out as it will be up to the Council of the day to make the decision
- Determining the strength of the language

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council direct Staff to remove the word “Encouraging” from Policy C.2.5.3. of the Draft City Plan. The motion carried.

Opposed: Councillors Thorpe and Turley

Committee and Staff discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Applying similar type of language that is in policy C1.5.1. to developments with transportation challenges
- Increasing density adds the challenge of increased vehicle traffic in the area roads
- Development applications required to provide a traffic impact assessment

Jamie Rose, Manager, Transportation, continued the presentation. Highlights included:

- Presented a connected Nanaimo Active Mobility and Primary Transit Network Map

- Focus of transit exchanges and their association with urban centres

Committee discussion took place regarding protecting informal trails to maintain pedestrian connection through green spaces.

Jamie Rose, Manager, Transportation, continued the presentation and presented a map of the major road network.

Committee discussion took place regarding discouraging new natural gas connections. Highlights included:

- Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions released from natural gas
- Need additional authority from the Province to prohibit new natural gas connections
- Would like to see a staff report and more discussion as this would represent a significant change for the citizens of Nanaimo
- The need to first identify viable alternatives to natural gas
- Market conditions respond to the goals set by municipalities
- Information received from the Environment Committee on the role of natural gas on GHG emissions
- City of Vancouver also going this direction and this is a major issue to be addressed
- Consideration for the expensive cost of electric heating
- Consideration for potential blackouts and their impact for people heating homes

It was moved and seconded that natural gas be discouraged while the City actively lobby through The Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) and directly with the provincial government to limit natural gas connections. The motion was defeated.
Opposed: Mayor Krog and Councillors Armstrong, Maartman, Thorpe and Turley

Lisa Bhopalsingh, Director, Community Development, continued the presentation. Highlights included:

- The action plan document is a list of actions that help achieve the goals of the Plan
- Actions will be organized by those that are immediate (0-5 years), ongoing (regular repeated activities) and future (beyond 5 years)

Committee discussion took place regarding visually identifying which actions are new and which are remaining from the previous plan.

Lisa Bhopalsingh, Director, Community Development, spoke regarding:

- Language of a good policy statement, finding balance in making sure that a policy is adaptive and identifying actions that are specific and measurable

- 2022-MAR-28 GPC meeting will include three Plan goals
- 2022-MAR-23 Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness will be to review key universal policies
- Recommendations from the GPC meetings can be tracked online for public information

Committee and Staff discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Potential date change for the 2022-JUN-23 Public Hearing to avoid conflict with the Nanaimo Night Market
- Layout of the action plan will provide a very clear focus and direction to Council

7. QUESTION PERIOD:

There were no members of the public in attendance to ask questions.

8. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 4:47 p.m. that the meeting terminate. The motion carried unanimously.

CHAIR

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

CORPORATE OFFICER