


CITY OF NANAIMO
THE HARBOUR CITY

Finance & Audit Committee

Approval of the Electors

March 29, 2023

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CITY OF NANAIMO
THE HARBOUR CITY

Overview

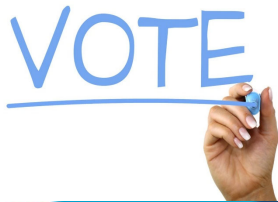
- ▶ When considering whether to proceed with a Referendum (Assent Vote) or AAP (Alternative Approval Process), the history, scale, cost, public expectation, and timing of the proposal needs to be evaluated.
- ▶ Approval of electors is required for issues related to municipal loan authorization bylaws and decisions that have potential long-term future impacts on citizens.
- ▶ Where approval is required, it may be done by Referendum or by AAP.

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Alternative Approval Process (AAP)

- ▶ An AAP is considered the best approach when local governments are dealing with a project that must be completed in order to continue to provide municipal services.
- ▶ An AAP can offer some increased convenience over a Referendum as it provides electors with at least 30 days to express their opinion.
- ▶ Holding an AAP is usually less expensive than holding a Referendum.

VOTE


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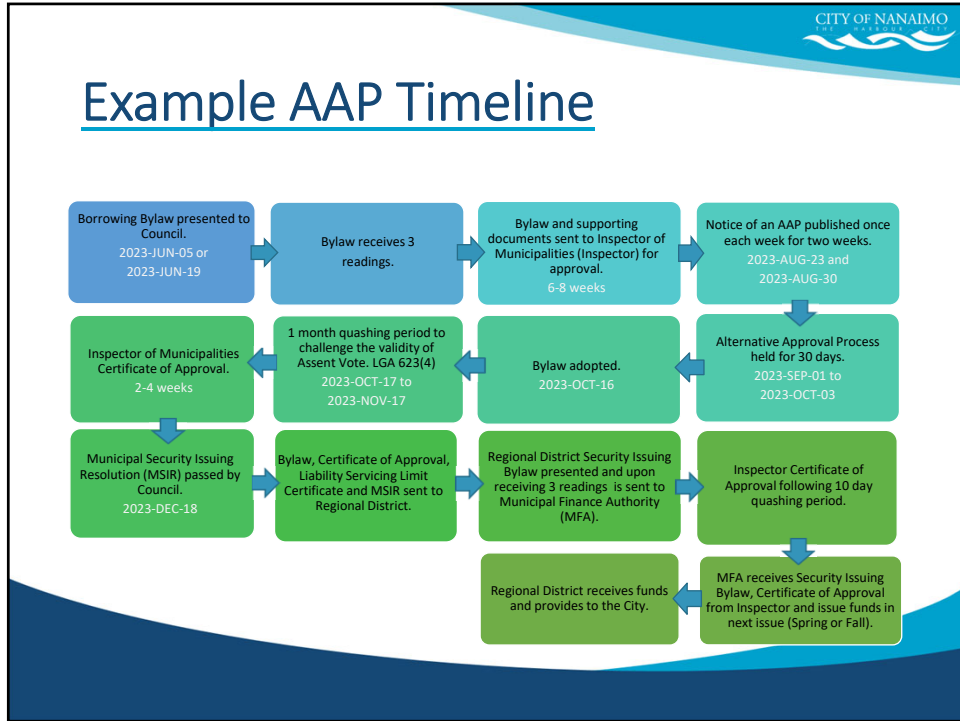
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Referendum

- ▶ A Referendum requires that Council establish a yes or no “question” to ask electors on the ballot.
- ▶ A Referendum can be held at the same time as an election and/or it can list more than one question on the ballot.
- ▶ Before implementing new Major Capital Projects there are normally public expectations regarding elector approval and input. A Referendum is often the process expected by electors for community amenity projects.

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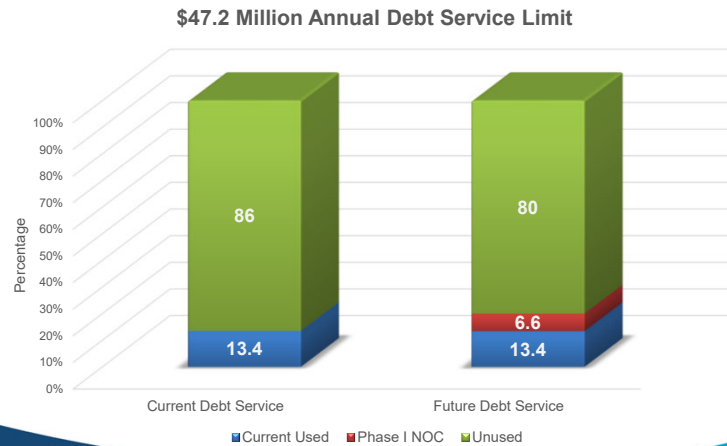
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AAP v. Referendum

	Referendum	Alternative Approval Process
Major Capital Projects to replace failing infrastructure or maintain municipal services.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Major Capital Projects related to new initiatives/community amenities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Method of engagement.	Question on ballot.	Mail/drop-off response form.
Timeframe for electors to submit.	Select voting days (1-3 days).	Minimum 30 days.
Method of determining results.	Elector approval if majority of votes counted are in favour.	Electors do not approve if at least 10% of electors submit response forms.
What if electors do not approve?	Council cannot proceed with the initiative	If Council chooses to continue the initiative must proceed to a Referendum within 80 days.
Costs associated with elector approval process.	\$\$\$	\$

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Sample Financial/Budgetary Considerations



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Public Expectations

- Before implementing new Major Capital Projects considered to be community amenities, electors expect to be consulted in a clear transparent manner. Often, a Referendum is considered for these projects.
- Electors need to have enough information to be able to make an informed decision with opportunities to provide their feedback regardless of method chosen for obtaining approval of the electors.
- Considerations should be made regarding holidays and the time of year when scheduling an AAP or Referendum to ensure electors are available and able to participate.



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Conclusion

During Council’s 2022 – 2026 term – possible methods of obtaining Approval of the Electors include:

1. An AAP for the Nanaimo Operations Centre could be held in early Fall 2023;
2. A Referendum with combined questions for the Waterfront Walkway and South-end Community Centre in the Spring or Fall of 2024; and,
3. further phases of the RCMP buildings could be ready for consideration before the end of this Council term.

