

MINUTES
GOVERNANCE AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE MEETING
SHAW AUDITORIUM, VANCOUVER ISLAND CONFERENCE CENTRE,
80 COMMERCIAL STREET, NANAIMO, BC
MONDAY, 2023-MAY-08, AT 1:00 P.M.

Present: Councillor B. Geselbracht, Chair
Mayor L. Krog
Councillor S. Armstrong
Councillor T. Brown (joined electronically at 1:56 p.m.)
Councillor H. Eastmure
Councillor E. Hemmens
Councillor P. Manly
Councillor J. Perrino
Councillor I. Thorpe

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
T. Doyle, Fire Chief
L. Bhopalsingh, Director, Community Development
B. Corsan, Director, Corporate and Business Development
K. Ing, Director, IT
L. Brinkman, Manager, Community Planning
E. Lloyd, Manager, Emergency Management
T. Webb, Manager, Communications
K. Biegun, Planner
S. Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services
J. Vanderhoef, Steno Coordinator, Legislative Services
N. Sponaugle, Communications Advisor
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 6(a)(2) Emergency Management Update – Add PowerPoint presentation titled “2023 Emergency Program Overview” and reorder item to precede Agenda Item 6(a)(1) Draft Integrated Action Plan and Draft Priority Actions - A Prosperous Nanaimo and City Structure.
- (b) Agenda Item 6(a)(1) Draft Integrated Action Plan and Draft Priority Actions - A Prosperous Nanaimo and City Structure – add document titled “GPC motions for Integrated Action Plan”.

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 Meeting held in the Shaw Auditorium, Vancouver Island Conference Centre, 80 Commercial Street, Nanaimo, BC, on Monday, 2023-APR-24 at 1:00 p.m. be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

5. AGENDA PLANNING:

1. Upcoming Topics and Initiatives

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

- 2023-MAY-29 GPC meeting will include the Neighbourhood Association's top priority actions as well as housing initiatives topics;
- 2023-JUN-12 GPC meeting will include an Ethics Commissioner Bylaw workshop, City of Nanaimo Communications Plan, and Public Safety Committee Terms of Reference; and,
- Topics for the 2023-JUN-26 GPC are tentatively scheduled. They included the revised Integrated Action Plan and Priority List for endorsement, a draft monitoring strategy introduction and City Plan monitoring committees.

6. REPORTS:

a. Prosperous Nanaimo:

1. Emergency Management Update

Introduced by Jake Rudolph, Chief Administrative Officer. He noted the following:

- It is important that Council has the tools to understand how the City's Emergency Management system is working;
- The 2023 Emergency Preparedness Week is currently underway; and,
- The City's emergency preparedness function has moved around the organization over the past few years. It was previously housed in Corporate Services and now is in the Fire Department.

Presentation:

1. Evan Lloyd, Manager, Emergency Program, provided a PowerPoint presentation and an overview of the City's emergency management. Highlights included:
 - The *Emergency Program Act* is provincial legislation that requires municipalities to plan for emergencies and identify hazards;
 - The Nanaimo Emergency Organization is comprised of the local authority, an Emergency Planning Committee and an Emergency Program Manager;
 - The Emergency Planning Committee is being re-established with a role to provide strategic direction and oversight to the emergency program;
 - Mayor and Council are notified of incidents directly by the EOC Director; and,
 - EOC roles include EOC Director, Operations, Planning Logistics, and Finance.

Committee and Staff discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Determining how facilities, such as seniors facilities, are prioritized in an emergency;
- The chain of command in the event of an emergency is flexible based on the type of emergency;
- The EOC model roles are defined, and there is a roster in place which dictates who is in those roles based on who is trained and the nature of the incident;
- People on the EOC aren't on the ground at the incident, and there is an incident commander on scene;
- The use of the Incident Command System (ICS) model;
- Coordination with Nanaimo Regional General Hospital, Nanaimo Airport and BC Ferries; and,
- Staff are planning to form a core regional response committee comprised of the City, The Regional District of Nanaimo and Snuneymuxw First Nation (SFN) as well as a larger committee including both private and public sectors.

Evan Lloyd, Manager, Emergency Program, continued the presentation. Highlights included:

- The Province is in the process of updating the *Emergency Program Act* to align with the UN's Sendai Framework and the declaration on the rights of Indigenous people;
- Engagement with SFN is through their Emergency Coordinator, Tina Wesley;
- Currently waiting on grant approval for a Hazard, Risk and Vulnerability Analysis (HRVA). HRVA is a tool used to better understand the hazards and risks in a city. The last HRVA was done in 2014;

- The themes for the 2023 Emergency Preparedness Week include: Know the Hazards, Build a Kit, Make a Plan, and National Earthquake Early Warning System;
- The City's approaches for Emergency Preparedness Week included a News Release, preparedness tips on social media, an emergency preparedness banner on the City's website, a section in the eNews (My Nanaimo This Week) and a Voyent Alert test;
- FireSmart Awareness Workshops will take place in May at the Nanaimo Ice Center and Oliver Woods;
- The Emergency Program is continuously reviewed after every incident, response or exercise; and,
- An extreme heat mapping project is currently underway.

Committee and Staff discussion took place. Highlights included:

- The FireSmart Program and community education play big parts in fire prevention;
- Nanaimo has a relatively low forest fire risk compared to other municipalities; however, an HRVA would help understand the risk in more detail; and,
- Staff are interested in engaging with Mosiac Forest Management regarding land use outside of the City boundary to understand the actions they take.

2. Draft Integrated Action Plan and Draft Priority Actions - A Prosperous Nanaimo and City Structure

Introduced by Dale Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services/Deputy CAO.

Presentation:

1. Lisa Bhopalsingh, Director, Community Development, spoke regarding the process for the draft Integrated Action Plan (IAP) and reminded the Committee of the additional motions brought forward by Councillors Brown and Geselbracht that could be addressed at the end of the session.

Kasia Biegun, Planner, introduced the process for the Zoom polls for the "A Prosperous Nanaimo" section of the IAP priority list.

Zoom polls were launched related to draft priority actions of the "A Prosperous Nanaimo" section related to economic capital.

Committee and Staff discussion took place regarding priority action #175 "Commission a commercial and industrial Transportation and Logistics Strategy with a focus on Duke Point and the Nanaimo Airport."

- This priority action came from the economic development strategy and would be working with Port Authority, Airport and Industrial landowners

Zoom polls were launched related to draft priority actions of the “A Prosperous Nanaimo” section related to human social and business development.

Committee and Staff discussion took place regarding priority action #178 “Work with the Chamber of Commerce and SFN on the developing an Indigenomics Program within the City to support Snuneymuxw and other First Nations as active players in a prosperous economy.” Highlights included:

- Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Chamber of Commerce and SFN; and,
- Preference that this action come through the Protocol Agreement Working Group (PAWG) or the Nanaimo Prosperity Corporation.

Councillor Brown joined the meeting electronically at 1:56 p.m.

- Timeframe for the action to return from a PAWG meeting before the final draft of the IAP;
- The IAP is a living document to be reviewed regularly and referring any item for more information would be an acceptable approach; and,
- Engagement with SFN regarding Council’s identified priorities once the process is complete.

It was moved and seconded that the following priority action be referred to a Protocol Agreement Working Group (PAWG) meeting for further conversation: “Action #178 – Work with the Chamber of Commerce and Snuneymuxw First Nation on the development of an Indigenomics Program within the City to support Snuneymuxw and other First Nations as active players in a prosperous economy”. The motion carried unanimously.

Committee and Staff discussion took place regarding priority action #180 “Exploit the use of alternative datasets to provide new insights and make better decisions.” Highlights included:

- Using large fields of data to better refine policies and investment decisions;
- Staff should inherently use the best information available without it having to be identified as a priority;
- Some data sets are more expensive to access than typical data; and,
- Access to Airbnb data to see its impact on things such as the rental stock.

Zoom polls were launched related to draft priority actions of the “A Prosperous Nanaimo” section related to innovation and technology.

Committee and Staff discussion took place regarding priority action #183 “Promote development of a downtown hub involving the tech sector and complementary sectors and services.” Highlights included:

- A significant amount of resources have been spent in the area and Staff are seeking Council direction on if this is something to continue with;

- It is a broad action that could involve working with the tech community, installing infrastructure to attract the tech community, creating downtown fibre network, and providing business support for start-ups;
- Infrastructure and resources are not there, and this has not been successful in the past.

The Committee removed Action #183 from the IAP priority action list.

Zoom polls were launched related to draft priority actions of the “A Prosperous Nanaimo” section related to placemaking and tourism.

Committee and Staff discussion took place regarding the priority actions identified by Council indicating to Staff what actions to prioritize and direct time and resources toward.

Committee discussion took place regarding including actions in the IAP related to policy C5.5.5 “Support businesses involved in the production, marketing, and/or delivery of artistic or cultural products such as art, music, theatre, festivals, and special events”. Highlights included:

- Support businesses that are creating attractions and the importance of doing this in the next 0-4 years;
- Staff could refine and come back to the Committee with a more specific project to endorse; and,
- Understanding the City’s role and not overstepping the Chamber of Commerce and the Nanaimo Prosperity Corporation.

It was moved and seconded that the following be included as a priority action of “Prosperous Nanaimo” under “Placemaking and Investment Attraction” as an immediate action (0-4 years): “Support businesses involved in the production, marketing, and/or delivery of artistic or cultural products such as art, music, theatre, festivals, and special events.” The motion carried.

Opposed: *Mayor Krog, Councillors Armstrong, Perrino and Thorpe*

Committee and Staff discussion took place regarding elevating City Plan policies C5.2.5 and C5.2.6 into the IAP under the “Prosperous Nanaimo” section. Highlights included:

- Ensuring that policies and actions from one section aren’t duplicated in another.

The Governance and Priorities Committee recessed the meeting at 2:48 p.m.

The Governance and Priorities Committee reconvened the meeting at 3:00 p.m.

Zoom polls were launched related to draft priority actions of the “City Structure” section related to future land use designations.

Zoom polls were launched related to draft priority actions of the “City Structure” section related to area and neighbourhood planning.

Committee and Staff discussion took place regarding priority action #199 “Explore expanding geothermal energy in the Vancouver Island University Secondary Urban Centre”. Highlights included:

- If Nanaimo District Secondary School is redeveloped, there is potential that geothermal energy be used as an alternative to natural gas; and,
- An existing system is currently being used at Vancouver Island University and there is opportunity to build off their experience.

Zoom polls were launched related to draft priority actions of the “City Structure” section related to development permit and heritage conservation areas as well as financial mechanisms and community benefits.

Councillor Brown moved to reconsider the following motion from the 2023-MAY-26 Special Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting:

“That Council direct Staff to prepare an information report on City Plan policy C1.1.8, (including a legal review) outlining whether a development permit area can be established to promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by developing guidelines for machinery, equipment and systems external to buildings and other structures that limit the use of high carbon energy systems, such as natural gas.”

The motion to reconsider was seconded.

The motion to reconsider carried.

Opposed: Mayor Krog, Councillors Armstrong and Perrino

The following motion was now on the floor for reconsideration:

“That Council direct Staff to prepare an information report on City Plan policy C1.1.8, (including a legal review) outlining whether a development permit area can be established to promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by developing guidelines for machinery, equipment and systems external to buildings and other structures that limit the use of high carbon energy systems, such as natural gas.”

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Efforts to reduce GHG have been neutralized by natural gas constructions;
- There are powers under the *Local Government Act* to regulate GHG emissions and requesting a Staff information report to determine the extent of the City’s ability to reduce GHG through Development Permit Areas (DPA);
- Natural gas is better than some of the alternative options;
- More restrictive guidelines would discourage business/construction community;
- Lobbying to the Province would be more effective;
- The amount of Staff time required to prepare this type of report;
- Concerns regarding forcing home owners to use expensive alternatives to natural gas;
- Need to make moves on climate action as we are currently in a climate crisis and the importance of creating safety for future generations;

- The cost of heat pumps is going down and is becoming more comparable to natural gas;
- There are a lot of incentives available for those making the switch to heat pumps; and,
- The City of Vancouver has taken a very similar approach.

The vote was taken on the reconsidered motion.

The motion carried.

Opposed: *Mayor Krog, Councillors Armstrong, Perrino and Thorpe*

It was moved and seconded that Council direct Staff to prepare an information report on City Plan policy C1.1.8, which includes a legal review, on low carbon energy system bylaws and that the report provide information on the appropriate steps for establishing such a bylaw in Nanaimo and the degree to which the City can regulate fossil fuel-based energy systems. The motion carried.

Opposed: *Mayor Krog, Councillors Armstrong, Perrino and Thorpe*

Councillor Manly vacated the Shaw Auditorium at 3:44 p.m. declaring a conflict of interest as he lives near the Wakesiah Corridor.

Committee and Staff discussion took place regarding an information report being prepared on the Wakesiah Corridor Infrastructure Upgrade Plans. Highlights included:

- There is development interest and investments along the Wakesiah Corridor;
- The area has a sports complex, hockey rinks, schools and Downtown Nanaimo all in close proximity;
- Requesting a fulsome report with specific items included;
- Ties in with action #198 “Work with VIU, School District 68, and private developers to explore the potential for major developments along Wakesiah Avenue and Fifth Street”;
- Background on the project is that it was largely driven by asset management considerations, and has been shifted out as the failure of the road in the area has been mitigated;
- Project could be brought back for discussion if Council sees value in proceeding or accelerating;
- Have not received pressure from the community regarding upgrades to the Wakesiah Corridor;
- Concerns regarding the narrowing of the roads and ensuring consultation with emergency services;
- Seeing enormous development on Third Street as well as investment of resources into the Stadium District; and,
- Upgrades to this area will help meet a lot of City Plan objectives.

It was moved and seconded that an information report be prepared on the Wakesiah Corridor infrastructure upgrade plans and timelines, how the corridor fits into the City’s transportation goals and the transit redevelopment strategy, the development plans of major or potential landholders along the corridor, City Plan land use designations along the corridor, the timelines for other connectivity or city recreational projects in the area, and how the project relates to City Plan goals and policies. The motion was defeated on a tie vote.

Opposed: *Mayor Krog, Councillors Armstrong, Perrino and Thorpe*

Councillor Manly returned to the Shaw Auditorium at 3:58 p.m.

Committee and Staff discussion took place regarding accelerating action C.1.1.38, related to developing a program to encourage the adoption of e-bikes, to be implemented in 0-4 years. Highlights included:

- Staff time required to develop such a program;
- The community has not given an indication that incentives are needed for the purchased of e-bikes and shops are already having difficulty meeting the demand;
- Lack of secure places to lock e-bikes when they get to a destination;
- While there are barriers to the access of e-bikes, it is a lower barrier to electric vehicles and there is a portion of the population that would be interested in purchasing an e-bike if there is a program in place;
- Referring this action to the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness; and,
- Seeing a mode shift in transportation and e-bikes should be encouraged.

It was moved and seconded that C.1.1.38, “Develop a program to encourage the adoption of e-bikes with equity considerations.” be added in as Priority Action for implementation in 0 to 4 years. The motion carried.

Opposed: Mayor Krog, Councillors Armstrong, Perrino and Thorpe

Committee and Staff discussion took place regarding the Mayor’s Leaders’ Table (MLT) Doughnut Economics Working Group recommendations. Highlights included:

- Requesting that a Staff report be prepared on how and when the MLT Doughnut Economics Working Group recommendation is being implemented into the City Plan;
- MLT Recommendation #3 “Develop a Doughnut-focused, outcomes-based budgeting philosophy for Council” a is a very big topic that would require further discussion; and,
- The doughnut framework being counter productive to economic growth.

It was moved and seconded that recommendations 1 to 3 of the Mayor’s Leaders’ Table Doughnut Economics Working Group be incorporated into the Priority Action Plan and a report be prepared for Council outlining an implementation schedule for the remaining recommendations. The motion carried.

Opposed: Councillor Armstrong, Perrino and Thorpe

7. QUESTION PERIOD:

Council received no questions from the public regarding agenda items.

8. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 4:29 p.m. that the meeting terminate. The motion carried unanimously.

CHAIR

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

CORPORATE OFFICER