



MINUTES

GOVERNANCE AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, January 22, 2024, 1:00 P.M.
SHAW AUDITORIUM, VANCOUVER ISLAND CONFERENCE CENTRE
80 COMMERCIAL STREET, NANAIMO, BC

Members: Councillor S. Armstrong, Chair
Mayor L. Krog
Councillor H. Eastmure
Councillor B. Geselbracht * (joined 1:01 p.m.)
Councillor E. Hemmens
Councillor P. Manly
Councillor J. Perrino
Councillor I. Thorpe

Absent: Councillor T. Brown

Staff: R. Harding, General Manager, Community Services/Deputy CAO
B. Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works
S. Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services
L. Brinkman, Manager, Community Planning
D. Thompson, Manager, Roads and Traffic Services
M. Pearson, Legislative Communications Clerk
A. Chanakos, Recording Secretary

1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER:

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

Councillor Geselbracht joined the meeting electronically at 1:01 p.m.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS:

- (a) Agenda Item 7(a) Roadway Asphalt Asset Management and Maintenance Plan - Add report titled "Roadway Asphalt Asset Management and Maintenance Plan".

* Denotes electronic meeting participation as authorized by "Council Procedure Bylaw 2018 No. 7272"

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 in the Shaw Auditorium, Vancouver Island Conference Centre, 80 Commercial Street, Nanaimo, BC, on Monday, 2023-NOV-27, at 1:00 p.m.
- 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-DEC-11, at 12:59 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously.

5. AGENDA PLANNING:

a. Upcoming Topics and Initiatives

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

6. PRESENTATIONS:

a. Provincial Housing Legislation Overview

Introduced by Lisa Brinkman, Manager, Community Planning.

- Four housing-related bills were enacted in October and November 2023, and are key components of the Provincial Homes for People action plan
- Bill 35 – Short Term Rental Accommodations was developed to return short-term rentals to the long-term housing market, and provide tools for local governments to help enforce short-term rental bylaws
- Bill 44 – Housing Statutes (Residential Development) Amendment Act requires the City Plan to accommodate 20 years of housing supply, and be updated with the Housing Needs Report every five years
- Bill 44 prohibits Public Hearings for rezoning applications proposing residential development that is consistent with the City Plan

- “Zoning Bylaw No. 4500” will be required to be updated by June 2024 to allow three to four units on single-family or duplex lots, and six units on larger lots near frequently serviced transit stops
- Bill 46 – Development Financing was developed to create an improved financing tool framework for the City to fund infrastructure and community amenities
- Bill 46 permits local governments to create an Amenity Cost Charge (ACC) Bylaw which would allow the City to impose charges at the time of subdivision or building permit to pay for capital costs of community amenities
- The *Local Government Act* has also been amended to allow Development Cost Charges to be collected for fire protection facilities, police facilities and solid waste facilities
- Bill 47 – Transit Oriented Areas was developed to help concentrate higher density and different land uses around transit hubs to make better use of public investment in transit infrastructure
- Bill 47 prescribes three 50 hectare catchment areas consisting of a perfect circumference with a 400m radius where the City must allow certain building heights and densities
- Three Transit Oriented Areas (TOA) have been identified in the City: Woodgrove Exchange, Country Club Exchange and Vancouver Island University Exchange

Committee and Staff discussion took place. Highlights included:

- On 2023-DEC-24 the City received \$600,000 from the Province to aid in the implementation of the four new Bills
- Staff anticipate requesting some the funds go towards a consultant for the ACC bylaw project

b. Dave Witty to present report titled: "Developing a Homelessness Action Plan for Nanaimo: Finding a Way Home"

Dave Witty presented the report titled “Developing a Homelessness Action Plan for Nanaimo: Finding a Way Home”. Highlights included:

- Systemic homelessness has become a challenge for many municipalities in Canada
- In July 2023, Ipsos Market Research reported that more than half of Canadians are \$200 away, or less, from not being able to meet all of their financial obligations

- The 2020 Nanaimo Point-in-Time Homeless Count found that most unsheltered people in the city are from Nanaimo, and 91 percent of those without shelter want permanent housing but can't afford the cost of rent
- Current numbers suggest there are close to 1,000 unsheltered people in Nanaimo, and with the average increase of 20% each year, by 2030 there could be upwards of 2,500
- The estimated cost to society to keep people on the street in Nanaimo is approximately \$21 million per year, not including costs of long-term care for those who've overdosed, those with chronic illnesses, or those who have become dependent on substances
- Evidence from Finland shows that it is less expensive to invest in housing than to leave people living on the street
- Finland and Switzerland's approach to homelessness shows that the Housing First model has proven to be successful at addressing homelessness
- Research from the National Alliance to End Homelessness notes the average cost savings of a Housing First program can range from \$23,000 - \$31,000 per program participant

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Housing First, when paired with wraparound supports, has proven to be a successful long-term solution to homelessness
- The City has a lack of housing available to be able to provide a Housing First model
- If homelessness is not addressed, firefighters and medical staff will continue to be over worked and over burdened
- Housing First may not work in BC as the Province does not share the same philosophies as Switzerland's Four Pillar Approach that helps make Housing First so successful

7. REPORTS:

a. Connected Nanaimo:

7.a.1 Roadway Asphalt Asset Management and Maintenance Plan

Introduced by Bill Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works.

- In 2020, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities provided grant funding to undertake a Customer Level of Service approach for asphalt work in the city
- A level of service is the degree to which the City provides each service
- The City's Asset Management Plan notes two levels of service: Technical Level of Service and Customer Level of Service

Presentation:

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

- Staff engaged a consultant and undertook a series of focus groups in 2022 to gain feedback on the City's Customer Level of Service
- Results showed that the City's roads are in fair to good shape
- Focus group participants noted that they did not want roads to deteriorate from the condition they are in; however, there was a lack of willingness to pay for minor road improvements
- The Technical Level of Service model suggests that \$13.6 million is required annually to keep asphalt at its current conditions
- Focus group participants identified a maximum value of \$40 per property to contribute towards roadwork, working out to about \$1.5 million per year
- This value does not include capital funding, which sits at \$13 million for the 5 Year Capital Plan

Committee and Staff discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Roadwork plans are altered each year based on what work needs to be done due to weather conditions and other factors
- Based on today's technology, asphalt remains the most economical, easy to repair and cost-effective roadway material

- Nanaimo has a city-wide Pavement Quality Index (PQI) average of 79, with a minimum PQI of 50 for arterial roads; however, it is rare to reach that minimum level
- Main roads should have a higher PQI than residential roads with lower speed limits

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council consider increasing the annual road maintenance budget by \$775,000 per year as part of the 2025 – 2029 Draft Financial Plan and adjusting the maintenance plan as proposed in the 2022 Pavement Condition Assessment Report, Table D-4.

The motion was defeated.

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

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council consider increasing the annual road maintenance budget by \$1.5 million per year as part of the 2025 – 2029 Draft Financial Plan and adjusting the maintenance plan as proposed in the 2024-JAN-22 report titled "Roadway Asphalt Asset Management and Maintenance Plan", "Attachment D - 2022 Pavement Condition Assessment Report", Table D-5. The motion carried.

Opposed: Councillor Geselbracht

b. Empowered Nanaimo:

7.b.1 2024 AVICC Resolutions

Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services, reviewed the process to submit resolutions to the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) 2024 Annual General Meeting.

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council direct Staff to submit the following resolutions to the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities for consideration at their 2024 Annual General Meeting:

1. Investment in Complex Care Beds

“WHEREAS in 2022, the BC Emergency Health Services reported a 75% total increase in annual overdose/poisoning events since the toxic drug crisis was declared a public health emergency in 2016 and the BC Provincial Overdose Cohort reports that brain injury is 15 times more likely

among people who had experienced drug poisoning than those who had not;

AND WHEREAS the number of supports available for individuals requiring complex care due to health challenges related to substance use disorder has proven grossly inadequate for the ever-increasing demand in communities all across British Columbia;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the Province to increase investment in complex care beds to address the growing demand from those who have suffered serious health impacts from substance use disorder.”

2. Mental Health Liaison Officers

“WHEREAS RCMP members continue to respond to a significant number of calls for service for individuals dealing with mental health challenges and Mental Health Liaison Officers have proven to be an effective resource for assisting vulnerable citizens requiring support;

AND WHEREAS local governments are not provided funding to pay for healthcare and social services and there has been no increase in the Provincial funding model to support these officers responding to chronic/crisis mental health calls;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM advocate for the Province to fund RCMP Mental Health Liaison Officers within local detachments.”

3. Provincial Housing Coordinator

“WHEREAS the number of people experiencing homelessness or housing instability across the Province has been increasing at an unprecedented rate;

AND WHEREAS the Province has invested considerable funds in supportive housing, the majority of which operate as low barrier facilities making it challenging for individuals in recovery to secure housing options that support an addiction-free lifestyle;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the Province to establish a Provincial Housing Coordinator to work directly with those persons who are experiencing homelessness and who are not in need of supports, to find suitable housing.”

4. Provincial Core Funding for Evolving Public Libraries

“WHEREAS core funding for public libraries in British Columbia has remained unchanged since 2009, limiting their ability to expand and evolve their programming as demand for their services increases;

AND WHEREAS the operational requirements of public libraries increasingly require significant and diverse resources to provide front-line community services, including supporting patrons with mental health and addiction issues as well as barriers to housing, providing critical locations of refuge during extreme weather events, providing services to new Canadians, and supporting the process of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that AVICC call on the provincial government to recognize the evolving and challenging situation for public libraries as well as their unique role as community spaces, and increase annual core funding for libraries to \$30 million in keeping with the request made by the BC Public Library Partners and the recommendation of the province’s Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this increase in core funding be increased on a yearly basis in keeping with cost of living and inflationary pressures.”

The motion carried unanimously.

Councillor Manly vacated the Shaw Auditorium at 3:05 p.m. declaring a conflict of interest as he works for the Unitarian Shelter.

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council direct Staff to submit the following resolution to the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities for consideration at their 2024 Annual General Meeting:

5. Emergency Shelters & Compliance with BC Building Code & BC Fire Code

"WHEREAS many communities are experiencing a crisis-level influx of homeless individuals and the existence of emergency shelters is critical to addressing the safety of people experiencing homelessness;

AND WHEREAS, due to the urgent nature of the need and the lack of suitable building stock in many communities, emergency shelters are frequently operating from buildings that do not meet the major occupancy classification requirements of the BC Building Code, nor the requirements

of the BC Fire Code, placing local governments at risk of incurring liability if they do not enforce the codes and risking shutting down emergency shelters if they do enforce the codes:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the Province work with the Building Safety Standards Branch to establish some reasonable variances to the BC Building Code and BC Fire Code to enable emergency shelters to remain open."

The motion carried unanimously.

Councillor Manly returned to the Shaw Auditorium at 3:06 p.m.

8. QUESTION PERIOD:

The Committee received no questions from the public regarding agenda items.

9. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 3:06 p.m. that the meeting adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

CHAIR

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

CORPORATE OFFICER