



## **MINUTES**

### **MAYOR'S LEADERS' TABLE MEETING**

Friday, March 8, 2024, 8:31 A.M.  
Boardroom, Service and Resource Centre,  
411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC

**Present:** Mayor L. Krog, Chair  
Donna Hais, Chair of Board of Nanaimo Port Authority  
Richard Horbachewski, Chief Advancement Officer and AVP  
External Relations, Vancouver Island University  
Bob Moss, Tectonica Management  
Mark Walsh, Secretary-Treasurer at Nanaimo Ladysmith Public  
School District 68  
Dave Witty, Past Chair Nanaimo Airport Commission

**Absent:** Erralyn Joseph, Councillor, and Assistant Negotiator, for  
Snuneymuxw First Nation

**Staff:** D. Lindsay, Chief Administrative Officer  
B. Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works  
J. Holm, Director, Planning and Development  
D. LaBerge, Director, Public Safety  
L. Brinkman, Manager, Community Planning  
C. Wood, Manager, Social Planning  
K. Robertson, Deputy Corporate Officer  
N. Sponaule, Communications Advisor  
J. Vanderhoef, Recording Secretary

#### **1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER:**

The Mayor's Leaders' Table Meeting was called to order at 8:31 a.m.

#### **2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS:**

- (a) Agenda Item 5(d) City of Nanaimo's Response to Homelessness and Community Impacts - Add document titled "City of Nanaimo's Response to Homelessness and Community Impacts".

**3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA:**

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

**4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES:**

It was moved and seconded that the Minutes of the Mayor's Leaders' Table Meeting held in the Boardroom, Service and Resource Centre, 411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC, on Friday, December 15, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

**5. AGENDA ITEMS:**

a. Update re: Healthcare Ecosystem Advocacy Group

Donna Hais provided a PowerPoint presentation. Highlights included:

- The community advocacy group is calling themselves Fair Care Alliance
- Raising \$75,000 to fund their advocacy campaign targeting the upcoming provincial election
- Hired a media consultant and plan for billboards and a televised video
- Mission to ensure that all people north of the Malahat have access to culturally appropriate and comprehensive, tertiary healthcare in Nanaimo on the traditional territory of the Snuneymuxw First Nation (SFN)
- Vision is to expand Nanaimo Regional General Hospital (NRGH) to become a comprehensive, tertiary hospital with an integrated approach to care and wellness that benefits all people north of the Malahat
- Provided statistics regarding the growth rates in the central and north island region
- Nanaimo is anticipated to grow by 55-60% over the next 20 years and NRGH is not ready for that growth
- NRGH is not currently meeting the Canadian care standards, there is no catheterization laboratory, there are not enough beds, and the over 60-year-old building is not up to seismic testing
- An Island Health report issued in 2010 noted at that time that NRGH was failing
- Provided statistics for services provided at NRGH compared to other municipalities

- NRGH needs a full-service hospital tower with necessary programs serving as both a diagnostic and treatment center, and it needs a catheterization laboratory
- The catheterization laboratory would serve over half the islands population. Victoria is only able to address 45% of the current cases and having a catheterization laboratory in NRGH would increase that number to 95%
- The advocacy group is demanding a standard of care change for people residing north of the Malahat, campaigning through news, radio, rallies and social media
- Noted the ways that people can support the campaign and help make healthcare fair for all with the primary method being to share the message and participate in the next provincial election

Table discussion took place. Highlights included:

- NRGH is a tertiary hospital and should be providing the programs noted
- Island Health cannot lend their voice to this campaign, but are working hard towards the same goals
- Potentially bringing in doctors from Vancouver instead of Victoria
- Potentially advocating for a central island health region

It was moved and seconded that the Mayor's Leaders' Table recommend that Council invite Donna Hais to present to Council regarding the Healthcare Ecosystem Advocacy Group. The motion carried unanimously.

b. Overview of Mayor's Leaders' Table Work to Date

Bill Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works, provided a PowerPoint presentation and summarized the work done thus far by the Mayor's Leaders' Table:

- Inaugural meeting 2023-JUN-08. Central theme was partnerships, collaboration and community advocacy
- Presentations from Donna Hais regarding NRGH public relations campaign
- Some of the topics reviewed: community fiber optic network, south end community centre, and advocacy strategy development
- Equitable Housing presentation from Dave Witty and Staff presentation regarding housing
- Staff presentation regarding coordinating health and housing and the implications of provincial housing bills

c. Provincial Housing Legislation Overview

Introduced by Jeremy Holm, Director, Planning and Development.

Presentation:

1. Lisa Brinkman, Manager, Community Planning, provided a PowerPoint presentation. Highlights included:
  - Four housing related bills were passed by the Province in November 2023
  - Bill 35 *Short-Term Rental Accommodation Act* is intended to return short-term rentals to the long-term housing market
  - 2024-MAR-11 Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting (GPC) will include a report reviewing the City's short-term rentals regulations within the Zoning Bylaw. There will be recommendations to increase fines and revise wording to assist bylaw enforcement. There will also be a report regarding changes to the Public Hearing process
  - Bill 44 *Residential Development*:
    - Requires Official Community Plans (OCPs) to plan for 20 years of housing supply rather than 10 years
    - Prohibits holding a public hearing for zoning amendment bylaws for housing that are consistent with the OCP
    - Requires local governments to permit dwelling units on land zoned for single-families or duplex
  - Staff will need to complete a new housing needs report by the end of 2024 and update the OCP by the end of 2025
  - Bill 44 also requires permitting six units on larger lots in proximity to transit stops with frequent services; however, currently the City's bus services do not meet the frequency thresholds
  - Bill 46 *Development Financing*:
    - Provides an improved structure to pay for infrastructure and community amenities
    - Amenity Cost Charges (ACC) introduced to pay for capital costs
    - Development Cost Charges (DCC) were expanded to include fire protection facilities, police facilities and solid waste facilities

- Bill 47 *Transit Oriented Areas* requires municipalities to designate transit oriented areas (TOAs) and establish minimum allowable height and density within those TOAs
- There are three TOAs within Nanaimo: Woodgrove Exchange, Country Club Exchange, and Vancouver Island University Exchange. There are some conflicts with the circumference of these TOAs and the current City Plan; therefore, some adjustments to the City Plan will be required
- A TOA designation bylaw and an updated City parking bylaw will need to be adopted by 2024-JUN-30

Table discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Implications related to school district catchment areas
- The development community appears to be waiting to see what the implications of these changes will be, and Staff anticipate that the market will change, but they do not anticipate an immediate change in where development is expected to occur based on the City Plan
- SFN have expressed concerns regarding the lack of consultation on the legislative changes and land use approvals
- Concerns regarding additional costs for developers with more building code changes anticipated in the near future which will reduce the feasibility of affordable housing
- Increasing demands on aging capital infrastructure, such as water and power, cannot keep up with growth and new building requirements

d. City of Nanaimo's Response to Homelessness and Community Impacts

Introduced by Christy Wood, Manager, Social Planning.

- Midstream initiatives:
  - Risk intervention strategies aimed at mitigating harm typically targeted towards specific segments of the population such as: Health and Housing Action Plan, Nanaimo Systems Planning Organization, Community Policing Program, and the Nanaimo Acute Response Table
- Downstream initiatives:
  - Focus on the City's ability to respond to emergencies
  - Examples include: Heart and Hearth Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Ministry of Housing, Downtown Nanaimo Community Safety Action Plan, Warming

Centres, Shower Program, Police Services, Nanaimo Fire Rescue, and the Breakfast Meal Program

- BC Housing took over social housing administration in the early 90's and has focused on a centralized model for social housing
- A national study was done in 2014 regarding housing and following that the Province adopted a Housing First approach
- The City works with BC housing to facilitate and implement housing initiatives
- Noted sometimes the terminology can become confusing; however, the approach overall is a Housing First approach
- The primary challenge being faced is a lack of available units
- Some of the steps being implemented include: prioritizing the use of City owned land for affordable and supportive housing, working to ensure that regardless of people's background they are able to navigate and access a full spectrum of services, supporting the development of housing and accommodation options to rapidly rehouse, supporting and coordinating the implementation of the health and housing action plan

Lisa Brinkman, Manager, Community Planning, spoke regarding housing. Highlights included:

- The housing needs report notes that of the 1,200 units needed in Nanaimo each year, 40% need to be non-market units
- Four projects for supportive housing were included in the 2019 MOU with BC Housing, and Staff are working towards another MOU with BC Housing for additional sites for supportive housing
- A priority action from Council in 2023 was to pre-zone areas in Nanaimo for supportive housing; however, this was sidelined slightly due to the provincial legislative changes
- As part of the necessary updates related to the provincial changes, Staff will be updating the Zoning Bylaw and aligning it with the City Plan which will address pre-zoning areas

Jeremy Holm, Director, Planning and Development, noted that the provincial changes are targeting the supply side of housing but not necessarily the affordability side. Staff are hoping for more tools to potentially encourage more affordable housing as some of the recent legislative changes interfere with the tools municipalities have used in the past to encourage affordable housing.

Table discussion took place. Highlights included:

- The majority of people on the street in Nanaimo can't afford to stay in their homes and a key piece of the solution is keeping people housed
- Housing without supports does not provide a long-term solution and creates a revolving cycle
- The City is not able to address addiction, medical or mental health issues
- Enhancing prevention work and addressing the correlation between youth in the foster care system and future homelessness
- Medicine Hat, Alberta, has had success reducing homelessness using the Housing Plus model
- Preventative systems to support at risk groups such as a local informal women's group that attempts to help young pregnant women in the community
- Community partners are providing some focused programs but definitely not enough
- The City received funds from Public Safety Canada to deliver programs to at risk youth, many of which are targeted to young females who are at high risk of sex trafficking
- Nanaimo has been identified to receive a Youth Foundry which will help the sustainability of programs being funded and provide social supports
- Focusing on more preventative pieces because the City cannot address provincial issues but can support people earlier in the process

e. Roundtable Discussion and Next Steps

Table discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Affordable housing issue is becoming an economic issue as businesses cannot bring in workers due to a lack of housing
- Coming up with some creative solutions and pushing them forward
- The public is most upset about the crisis that is being seen everywhere in our community and are not thinking about preventative measures
- Scheduling a special meeting to brainstorm solutions prior to the 2024-JUN-14 Mayor's Leaders' Table (MLT) meeting

- Interested in uncovering why there is no interest in building 12 story housing units in Nanaimo and how/why people are losing their homes
- Potential discussions between the School District 68 and the City to establish pilots together such as seniors or workers housing on school facilities
- Inviting topic experts to attend the special meeting
- In Alberta the faith groups are very prominent in supporting the homelessness issues
- Each member of the MLT may invite a topic expert to the special MLT meeting

**6. OTHER BUSINESS:**

a. Next Meeting Date

The next scheduled meeting date for the Mayor's Leaders' Table is Friday, 2024-JUN-14.

**7. ADJOURNMENT:**

It was moved and seconded at 10:25 a.m. that the meeting adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

CHAIR

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CERTIFIED CORRECT:

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DEPUTY CORPORATE OFFICER