

Township of Esquimalt
Project Charter for the:
Official Community Plan
Review

Submitted to Council – September 28, 2015

Approved By Council - _____

Background:

The current Official Community Plan was adopted by Council on March 19, 2007. Given the evolving nature of communities and their values it is imperative that the Official Community Plan be kept relevant and accurately reflects the dreams and aspirations of the community. In their 2015 Strategic Plan Council identified the review of the Official Community Plan as a strategic priority. This project charter formally begins the review process which over the span of approximately two years will provide Council and their fellow citizens with a variety of opportunities to engage in a deliberative conversation about the future vision for Esquimalt.

Legislative Framework:

The content of the Official Community Plan is governed by Sections 877 and 878 of the Local Government Act which have been summarized as follows:

An official community plan is a statement of objectives and policies to guide decisions on planning and land use management, within the area covered by the plan, respecting the purposes of local government.

- *An official community plan **must** include statements and map designations respecting the following:*
 - *the approximate location, amount, type and density of residential development required to meet anticipated housing needs over a period of at least 5 years;*
 - *the approximate location, amount and type of present and proposed commercial, industrial, institutional, agricultural, recreational and public utility land uses;*
 - *the approximate location and area of sand and gravel deposits that are suitable for future sand and gravel extraction; (**not applicable to Esquimalt**)*
 - *restrictions on the use of land that is subject to hazardous conditions or that is environmentally sensitive to development;*
 - *the approximate location and phasing of any major road, sewer and water systems;*
 - *the approximate location and type of present and proposed public facilities, including schools, parks and waste treatment and disposal sites;*
 - *other matters that may, in respect of any plan, be required or authorized by the minister.*
- *An official community plan **must** include housing policies of the local government respecting affordable housing, rental housing and special needs housing.*
- *An official community plan **must** include targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the area covered by the plan, and policies and actions of the local government proposed with respect to achieving those targets.*

- *An official community plan **may** include the following:*
 - *policies of the local government relating to social needs, social well-being and social development;*
 - *a regional context statement, consistent with the rest of the community plan, of how matters dealt with in the community plan, apply in a regional context;*
 - *policies of the local government respecting the maintenance and enhancement of farming on land in a farming area or in an area designated for agricultural use in the community plan;*
 - *policies of the local government relating to the preservation, protection, restoration and enhancement of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity.*

- *If a local government proposes to include a matter in an official community plan, the regulation of which is not within the jurisdiction of the local government, the plan may only state the broad objective of the local government with respect to that matter (unless the minister has required or authorized the local government to state a policy with respect to that matter).*

Stakeholders and their roles:

Council – Council is the primary stakeholder. Ultimately the purpose of an Official Community Plan is to guide Council’s decision making – especially on issues related to planning and development. Council shall be engaged throughout the review process and ultimately will be responsible for the adoption and subsequent implementation of the Official Community Plan.

First Nations – Because of their historic relationship to the land, water, and resources that are now incorporated within the boundaries of the Township of Esquimalt, particular care will be taken to ensure that both the Esquimalt First Nation and the Songhees First Nation are duly consulted during the review process.

Department of National Defence – Because of the historical relationship between the Department of National Defence and the scale of their operations in Esquimalt, they will be offered a specific opportunity to be consulted during the review process.

Community Organizations – Community groups including the following will be invited to participate in the review process:

- Esquimalt Residents Association,
- West Bay Residents Association,
- Lyall Street Residents Association,
- Esquimalt Chamber of Commerce,
- Vic West Residents Association,

Federal and Provincial Government Agencies – The Local Government Act requires the municipality to inform relevant federal and provincial government agencies that the review of the Official Community Plan has commenced. Letters will be sent to each Federal and Provincial Government Agency that has been identified on the stakeholders list inviting them to participate in the review process. In addition, the Member of Parliament and the Member of the Legislative Assembly will be invited to participate in the review process.

Neighbouring Municipalities – Letters will be sent to the mayors of all municipalities that share borders with the Township to invite their Councils and staff to participate in the review process.

School Districts – Both School Districts No. 61 (Greater Victoria) and No. 93 (Conseil Scolaire Franophone de la Colombie – Britanique) will be consulted to ensure that future school needs in Esquimalt are adequately planned for.

Other Regional Authorities – The Capital Regional District and the Vancouver Island Health Authority will both be invited to participate in the review process.

Other Regional Organizations – The Urban Development Institute, the Greater Victoria Harbour Authority, and the Victoria Esquimalt Harbour Society will all be invited to participate in the review process.

Township of Esquimalt Staff –

Chief Administrative Officer – The Chief Administrative Officer serves as the link between Council and staff. As a result, the Chief Administrative Officer will be ultimately responsible for ensuring that staff deliver the revised Official Community Plan to Council on time and within budget.

Directors (except the Director of Development Services) – All of the Directors will be engaged in the review process. In particular, the Director of Engineering and Public Works and the Director of Parks and Recreation will play a major role in developing and reviewing policies and guidelines related to roads, utilities, and parks and open spaces.

Community Development Coordinator – The Community Development Coordinator will be primarily responsible for the implementation of the “Communications Plan”. In addition, the Community Development Coordinator will assist in policy research and analysis including the development and review of targets and policies for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Senior Planner - The Senior Planner will assist in the development and review of planning policy and development permit guidelines.

Planner - The Planner will assist in the development and review of planning policy and will be the primary author of policy and guidelines related to heritage.

Planning Technician – Official Community Plans rely on maps to help interpret policy and in some cases, the information on a map functions as policy. The Planning Technician will be primarily responsible for the development of these maps.

Administrative Assistant – Will be responsible for carrying out various administrative duties associated with the review process.

Director of Development Services – The Director of Development Services will be the project manager and as such will be primarily responsible for ensuring that the review process is conducted in a manner that is fair and just and allows all those who wish to participate in the process an opportunity to participate. The Director is also responsible for ensuring that all dialogue throughout the process is respectful and thoughtful. As project manager, the Director of Development Services is also responsible for ensuring that the project is completed on time and on budget. Finally, the Director is responsible for ensuring that both the Chief Administrative Officer and Council are given periodic updates as the review process progresses.

Budget:

The 2015 budget contains \$50,000.00 for the review of the Official Community Plan. However, because the process has started later in the year than originally anticipated, staff are recommending that there not be a major kick-off event, and staff will do most of the facilitation rather than hiring facilitators, it is expected that less than \$20,000.00 will be spent this year.

The 2016 budget will be prepared after the results of the initial survey are analyzed. These results will include an indication of the type and frequency of engagement the public would like.

Timeline:

Staff have established the following preliminary timeline:

Phase 1

October 2015 – December 2015

- Staff conduct research and planning activities
- Launch website portal: www.esquimalt.ca/OCPreview
- Conduct community surveying to identify priorities and preferred engagement options

Phase 2

January – June 2016

- In January, staff report to Council on survey findings
- Host 5 – 8 public round tables based on thematic areas (may include online surveying)

Phase 3

July – September 2016

- Staff conducts analysis of results from round tables (and possible surveys)
- In September, staff report to Council on round table findings

Phase 4

October – December 2016

- Staff begin development of policies and guidelines
- In December, staff report to Council with draft policy documents and guidelines

Phase 5

January – March 2017

- Release draft policy documents and guidelines for community review and feedback

Phase 6

April – September 2017

- Based on stakeholder feedback, staff begin drafting OCP Bylaw

Phase 7

September – December 2017

- In September, draft OCP bylaw to Council
- Distribute draft for stakeholder review
- Hold a Public Hearing on new OCP Bylaw
- In December, adoption of OCP Bylaw

The timeline may be revised following the results of the initial community survey.

Conclusion:

The Official Community Plan is the principal guiding document for all municipal activities. It is therefore imperative that it is kept current with the ever evolving values of the community. Council has recognized this need by identifying the review of the Official Community Plan as a strategic priority in its 2015 – 2019 Strategic Plan. This Project Charter outlines the framework of the review process as agreed to by Council and Staff.