

THE CORPORATION OF THE
CITY OF WHITE ROCK
CORPORATE REPORT



DATE: February 2, 2015
TO: Mayor and Council
FROM: Karen Cooper, Director of Planning and Development Services
SUBJECT: Official Community Plan Review Work Plan

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council:

1. Receive for information the corporate report dated February 2, 2015 from the Director of Planning and Development Services titled “Official Community Plan Review Work Plan”;
 2. Endorse the proposed “Official Community Plan Review Work Plan” and direct staff to undertake the Review as outlined in the February 2, 2015 corporate report; and
 3. Authorize that the anticipated incremental costs of \$100,000 for consultants be funded from the City’s accumulated surplus fund.
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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to present a community planning process and work program for a comprehensive review of the City of White Rock Official Community Plan.

PAST PRACTICE / POLICY / LEGISLATION

The Local Government Act

The *Local Government Act* (LGA) defines an Official Community Plan as a statement of goals and policies to guide decisions on planning and land use management within the area covered by the plan. A community’s zoning bylaw and capital works are to be in conformity with the Official Community Plan.

Section 877 of the LGA provides that an Official Community Plan must include statements and map designations for the area covered by the plan regarding:

- Approximate location, amount, type and density of residential development required to meet anticipated housing needs over a period of at least five years;
- Approximate location, amount and type of present and proposed commercial, industrial, institutional, agricultural, recreational and public utility land uses;
- Restrictions on the use of land subject to hazardous conditions or that is environmentally sensitive to development;

- Approximate location and phasing of any major road, sewer or water systems;
- Approximate location and type of present and proposed public facilities, including schools, parks and waste treatment and disposal sites;
- Policies respecting affordable, rental and special needs housing;
- Targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and policies and actions proposed with respect to achieving those targets.

Section 878 of the LGA states that an Official Community Plan may include the following:

- Policies relating to social needs, social well-being and social development;
- A regional context statement that is consistent with the Official Community Plan and which describes how matters addressed in the Official Community Plan apply in the regional context;
- Policies regarding maintenance and enhancement of farming;
- Policies relating to preservation, protection, restoration and enhancement of the natural environment, its ecosystems and bio-diversity; and
- Broad policy objectives in those areas that are not under the mandate and jurisdiction of local government.

A local government may address other matters in an Official Community Plan that it considers appropriate. If, however, the regulation of a matter is not within the local government's jurisdiction, the Official Community Plan may only state the local governments' broad objectives with respect to the matter.

Section 866 of the LGA states that if a regional growth strategy applies to all or part of the same area of a municipality as an Official Community Plan, the Official Community Plan must include a regional context statement that is accepted by the board of the regional district for which the regional growth strategy is adopted.

Section 879 of the LGA states that during the development, repeal or amendment of an Official Community Plan, a local government must provide one or more opportunities it considers appropriate for consultation with persons, organizations and authorities it considers will be affected. Local governments must also consider whether the opportunities for consultation with one or more persons, organizations and authorities should be early and ongoing, and specifically consider whether consultation is required with:

The board of the regional district in which the area covered by the plan is located;

- First Nations;
- School district boards, greater boards and improvement district boards; and
- The Provincial and Federal governments and their agencies.

Section 890 of the LGA states that a local government must not adopt an Official Community Plan bylaw without holding a public hearing for the purpose of allowing the public to make representations to the local government respecting matters contained in the proposed bylaw.

ANALYSIS

Why Is The Official Community Plan Important?

The Official Community Plan establishes what the City wants to be over time, and reflects the overall values of the community by establishing the City's vision, goals and objectives for future sustainability, development and servicing, and policies and urban design guidelines to achieve the vision, goals and objectives. Its vision and policies indicate if, how and where land uses may remain or change. The Zoning Bylaw implements the Official Community Plan and establishes the existing regulations (for example, land use, density, building height, setbacks) regarding how a property can be used.

Without an Official Community Plan, individuals pursuing their own interests could make separate and uncoordinated decisions that may generate undesirable consequences. With an Official Community Plan, these situations can be avoided. The Official Community Plan ensures that the many interests such as community character, sustainability, land use and investment in a community are directed towards a common vision and that change is managed and coordinated and encouraged where needed. The Official Community Plan provides a common understanding for residents, landowners and the City about the future.

Who Uses An Official Community Plan?

The Official Community Plan is a tool to help Council and citizens manage change in our community. The Official Community Plan applies to the entire municipality and is the principal policy document that Council uses to make decisions on matters such as land use and growth management. Residents, property owners, community groups, developers and investors use the Official Community Plan to learn about where and how future growth may occur and then make decisions and prepare development proposals that conform to it. Council is guided by the Official Community Plan when making decisions about zoning, development and servicing.

Council's actions, future bylaws and works are to be consistent with the Official Community Plan. The Official Community Plan is supported by other City policies such as the City's 5 Year Financial Plan, Zoning Bylaw, Subdivision Control Bylaw, Development Cost Charges Bylaw and Building Bylaw.

Why is a Review Appropriate Now?

The City of White Rock's current Official Community Plan was adopted by Council on September 15, 2008, and Council has adopted 15 amendments to the original document to date. However, there has been no major revision of the document although the local, regional, provincial and national contexts have changed significantly. The Official Community Plan is not intended to be a static document and is intended to change over time in response to changing circumstances.

Examples of the changing local context include: the recently adopted Strategic Transportation Plan and the Cultural Strategy, the Healthy Communities Strategy being recommended to Council and the work underway on the Urban Forestry Management Plan and the Parks Master Plan. The City's Task Forces on Rail Safety, Cultural Activity, East Beach Waterfront Improvement and Johnston Road Reconstruction and Beautification have also identified change considerations for White Rock. Over the last year staff have collected background research and data to develop a current community profile of the City.

The City has received development applications and enquiries that would require significant Official Community Plan Amendments if approved. Residents at development application meetings and public hearings have questioned the role of the current Official Community Plan in meeting their aspirations. This suggests that the plan may be outdated and not reflect current needs and aspirations.

All of this work and activity supports the need for a comprehensive review of the Official Community Plan. It is best practice to review the Official Community Plan every five years and conduct a major review every ten years.

What is Included in an Official Plan Review?

Best practices would include a review of the following:

- Quality of Life
- Community Character
- Design of the Built Environment
- Growth Management
- Land Use
- Environmental Management
- Housing
- Transportation and Mobility
- Parks and Recreation
- Arts, Culture and Heritage
- Local Economic Development
- Infrastructure
- Special Features i.e. Waterfront
- Neighbourhood Plans

In reviewing the above noted matters, best practices also emphasize meaningfully involving the community in developing the new Official Community Plan.

Objectives for a New Official Community Plan

As part of undertaking the background data collection this past year, staff reviewed the existing document and noted the following preliminary objectives for a new Official Community Plan:

1. The Official Community Plan will be clear on where growth is to be accommodated in the City and how desired community form and character will be achieved. This will include a review of vacant land and City land, the Town Centre, the Waterfront, the Hospital, the North Bluff corridor and the Johnston Road Corridor and adjacent low rise apartment areas and the Everall neighbourhood.
2. The Official Community Plan will be more ‘user-friendly’ by providing clear policy content, by ensuring policy type statements are located in policy sections, by grouping policies to be considered when processing development applications and by adding, deleting or amending land use related policies in response to community needs and priorities.

3. The Official Community Plan Development Permit Guidelines will be revised to ensure the guidelines clearly identify whether a development permit is or is not required by legislation in a given situation, and to include guidelines that address community needs and priorities and best practices.
4. The Official Community Plan will be consistent with Provincial Regulations.
5. The Official Community Plan will include an updated Implementation Strategy with Performance Targets.
6. The Official Community Plan will address additional items that emerge from the public consultation process.

Consultation: An Opportunity to Learn from Residents, Businesses and Others

One of the benefits of undertaking a major Official Community Plan review is that it provides the opportunity to engage citizens and interest groups in planning the City's future, through effective public consultation. Meaningful public consultation is a key feature of our Official Community Plan Review and a proposed public consultation program is set out in the Work Plan. The proposed program includes multiple opportunities for engaging the public in the planning process. The intention is to include different types of consultation means and settings that are appropriate to each stage of the planning process. The proposed consultation program includes:

- Public Visioning Session;
- Public Open Houses;
- Public Forums;
- Focus Group Meetings with stakeholders representing a wide range of issues;
- Community Survey and Web-Based Questionnaires; and
- Public Progress Reports to Council.

These consultation opportunities are in addition to the formal public hearing required prior to the adoption of a new Official Community Plan.

In keeping with Section 879 of the LGA, opportunities will be provided for the following agencies/groups to review the existing Official Community Plan and identify areas where changes are desired or recommended:

- Semiahmoo First Nation
- Fraser Health Authority
- Provincial Ministries
- Metro Vancouver
- City of Surrey
- Surrey School Board
- RCMP White Rock Detachment
- White Rock Fire Department
- White Rock BIA
- Tourism White Rock
- Economic Investment Committee
- Environmental Advisory Committee
- Advisory Design Panel
- Others – Please add

Other groups addressing issues regarding housing and homelessness, seniors and youth also will be contacted and consulted.

Work Plan and Timing

The following work plan is proposed for the Official Community Plan review. It follows a phased approach, with progress reports to Council at each step of the planning process and numerous opportunities for public involvement.

It is anticipated that the Official Community Plan can be completed over approximately eighteen months after resources are in place. The variable affecting timing is the amount of time needed to address issues raised in the public consultation which can only be determined after the draft documents are being reviewed by the public, interest groups and agencies.

Phase 1 - Background Data Collection and Review – 3 months

It is recognized that there is a lot of good content in the existing plan. Staff and consultants will review the current document to assess and bring forward suggestions on what could be kept, updated, enhanced or removed and vet this with community input. Staff have already completed some of the background data collection

In this phase data will be collected and analyzed to identify key issues, trends and priorities, including the preparation of updated population and housing unit forecasts.

This phase will also include the gathering and synthesis of relevant background material and studies, along with the development of a Community Consultation Program. It is anticipated that a community survey and a community Vision Session will be completed early in this phase.

The major achievements and issues arising from this phase will be summarized in a progress report to Council. It is noted there may still be ongoing work components which may feed into the process in ensuing phases.

Phase 2 – Defining the Big Picture – 3 months

This phase will build on the results of the community survey and Vision Session and focus on a set of "big picture" planning issues raised in Phase 1, for which clear alternative approaches are available. In this phase, alternatives will be posed for public and Council discussion and Council direction. These "big picture" choices will shape and define the strategic direction of the Official Community Plan and frame policy proposals in Phase 3. It is anticipated that consultation will consist of open houses and focus group work. This phase will conclude with a progress report to Council.

Phase 3 – Building the Plan – 6 months

The third phase is the "nuts and bolts" phase of building the plan, including policy statements and updated land use and infrastructure plans that will guide the next phases of the City's development. As the plan takes shape, community meetings and topic meetings will be held to gauge public response and to solicit feedback for improving the plan. This phase will conclude with a progress report to Council.

Phase 4 – Recommended Plan and Adoption – 6 months

This phase will include:

- Drafting of the bylaw text and maps;
- Public consultation on the draft bylaw and maps;
- Refining the bylaw text and maps;
- Formal public hearing on the recommended plan;
- Obtaining the requisite approvals at the Regional and Provincial levels; and
- Final adoption by Council.

The public consultation on the draft bylaw text and maps will be extensive to ensure understanding and making sure to “get it right.” This phase will conclude with an adopted Official Community Plan.

Planning Team

It is proposed that the Official Community Plan Review be accomplished using the City's Planning and Development staff with assistance and input from other key City Departments and consultant resources. Staff have the "local knowledge" and the direct and ongoing connection with Council and the community that is necessary for the development of an Official Community Plan that aligns with and reflects the priorities of residents.

Staff support will be needed from Communications to ensure we engage with residents, businesses and interest groups through a variety of means. IT support will be needed to oversee the production of improved mapping for the City. Engineering support is especially critical on parkland, transportation, infrastructure, development cost charges and environmental topics. Leisure Services support is needed to help determine quality of life and community facility needs. Finance Department support is needed to ensure that costs identified to implement the plan are put forward in Financial Plan processes.

Consultants with specialized expertise will be used to:

- Develop and implement a contemporary consultation program for the Official Community Plan;
- Design and produce communication materials for public open houses, newspaper inserts and web-based questionnaires;
- Produce the Official Community Plan document in print and electronic form, along with summary documents and brochures as required;
- Review and confirm projections for residential, commercial and institutional land and floor space over the period 2011-2041;
- Review and advise on housing form over the period 2011-2041
- Develop employment projections;
- Complete environmental and hazard mapping;
- Work with the Advisory Design Panel to propose Development Permit Guideline; and

- Provide best practice policies to address public comments and the following topics:
 - Quality of Life
 - Community Character
 - Design of the Built Environment
 - Growth Management
 - Land Use
 - Environmental Management
 - Housing
 - Transportation and Mobility
 - Parks and Recreation
 - Arts, Culture and Heritage
 - Local Economic Development
 - Infrastructure
 - Special Features i.e. Waterfront
 - Neighbourhood Plans

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Some of the staff time involved with this project will be provided by existing resources. However in some areas, additional resources are required. Additional funding has been requested in the 2015 to 2019 Financial Plan to assist with this work as well as deal with day to day business of Planning and Development Services.

The funding that has been requested in the 2015 Budget submission to support the Official Community Plan Review is indicated in Table 1.

Table 1: Budget Provisions for the Official Community Plan Review

Department	Cost	Purpose
Planning and Development Services	\$100,000	Consulting costs to undertake the Official Community Plan Review
Engineering and Operations	\$25,000	Consulting costs to undertake the Parks Master Plan Review
IT Services	\$18,000	Consulting costs to undertake mapping updates to support the Official Community Plan Review.

It is recognized that this request for additional funding is coming forward prior to Council’s consideration of the 2015 to 2019 Financial Plan. However given the proposed timelines, the Director of Financial Services recommends that an appropriate funding source for the additional consulting costs directly associated with the review of \$100,000 be from the City’s accumulated surplus fund, on the basis that there is expected to be a 2015 annual surplus. Consulting costs for the Parks Master Plan Review and mapping updates will be recommended for approval as part of the financial planning process. It is anticipated that these costs could also be funded from the City’s accumulated surplus fund.

OPTIONS

The following options are available for Council's consideration:

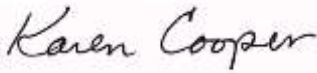
1. That Council direct staff to undertake the Official Community Plan Review as outlined in this corporate report.
2. That Council defer the Official Community Plan Review.

Staff recommend Option 1 which is reflected in the recommendations of this corporate report.

CONCLUSION

It is recommended that Council authorize staff to proceed with a major review of the OCP, based on the proposed planning and public consultation process outlined in this report. An emphasis will be placed on involving the community in developing the new Official Community Plan and its policies that will help White Rock continue to develop as a complete community, with its unique small-town atmosphere and strong sense of pride. Consulting costs of \$100,000 would be funded from accumulated surplus.

Respectfully submitted,



Karen Cooper, MCIP RPP
Director, Planning and Development Services

Comments from the Chief Administrative Officer:

I concur with the recommendations of this corporate report.



Dan Bottrill
Chief Administrative Officer