

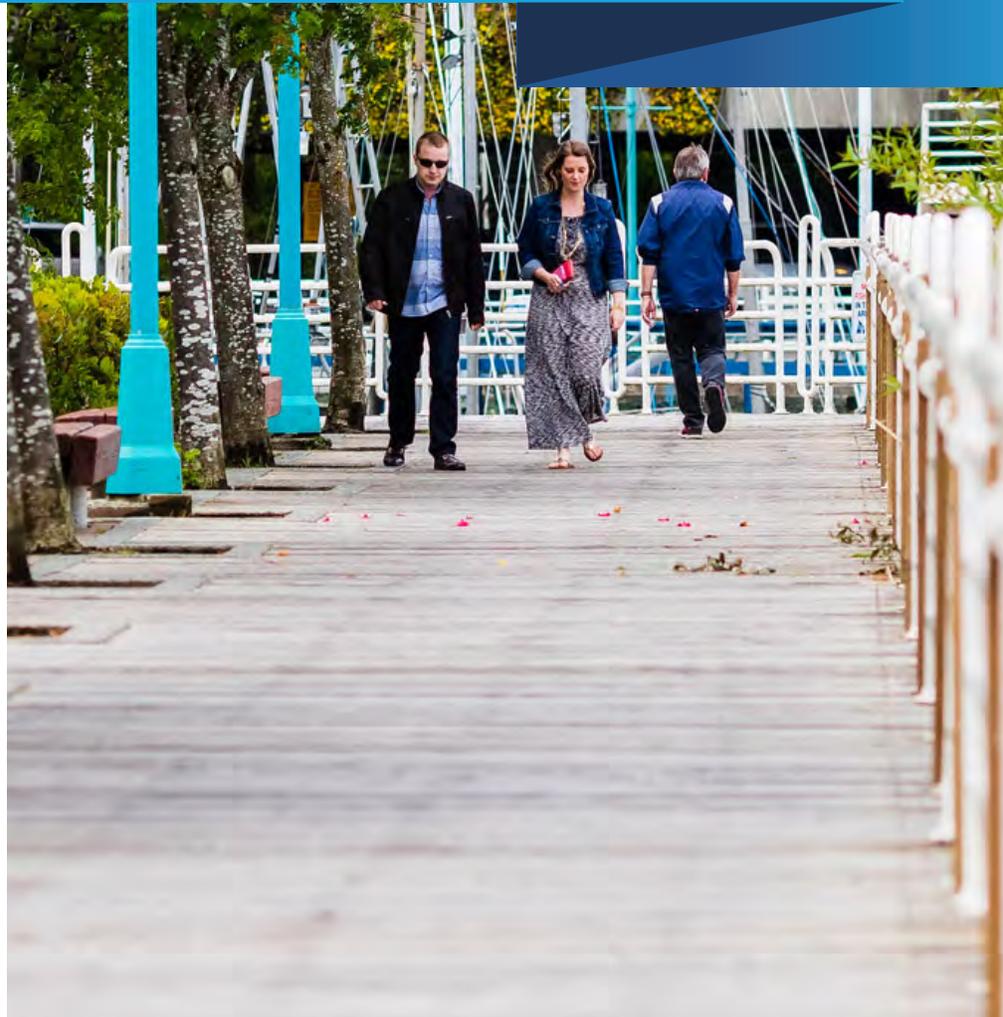


# BUILDING A HEALTHY & CONNECTED COMMUNITY

Mayor's Task Force on  
Recovery and Resilience

*Recommendations to Council*

November 2, 2020



# NANAIMO



## Population

▶ 98,957 (2019 estimate)

## Area

▶ 88.19 square kilometres

*City of Nanaimo boundary*



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## A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

### Mayor Leonard Krog

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have a profound impact on all of us. We all need to continue to pull together to build a stronger and more resilient community as we work through this incredibly challenging period which none of us foresaw.

During the 6 months since we convened the Mayor's Task Force on Recovery and Resilience, the focus of the Task Force has been on City-wide recovery strategies and working in collaboration with other local public bodies, private institutions and community organizations to look at leveraging unique opportunities and showcasing pride of place both during and after the pandemic.

On behalf of Nanaimo City Council, I want to express my gratitude to each Task Force member for volunteering their time and for collaborating on paths forward so that, together, we can continue building a healthy and connected community. The recommendations, put forth by the Task Force, for Nanaimo City Council's consideration, will help Council map out a road to economic recovery and community resiliency.



## A MESSAGE FROM THE COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE

### Councillor Tyler Brown

I am deeply grateful to the Task Force members and everyone else who committed their time, energy and ideas on how our community can build back better.

A resilient Nanaimo is not just about the pandemic, it is about being prepared for an unknown and uncertain future so every single citizen will thrive. This is why, more than ever before, our success is dependent on working together to collectively build a future that can weather many storms.

# BACKGROUND



The Mayor's Task Force on Recovery and Resilience (Task Force) was struck as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the community. Specifically, to address economic impacts, community resiliency and to provide recommendations for recovery to be considered by the Mayor and Council. At a press conference on May 5, 2020, Mayor Leonard Krog and Councillor Tyler Brown announced the five community leaders joining them on the seven-member Task Force:

- James Byrne (Regional Managing Partner, Vancouver Island, MNP)
- Donna Hais (Board Chair, Nanaimo Port Authority)
- Signy Madden (Executive Director, United Way)
- Deb Saucier (President and Vice-Chancellor, Vancouver Island University)
- Ian Simpson (Chief Executive Officer, Petroglyph Development Group, Snuneymuxw First Nation)

Since, the Task Force has met almost bi-weekly and have considered written submissions, engaged both formally and informally with community leaders and reviewed data and pertinent plans supplied by City staff.

## TASK FORCE PURPOSE

The purpose of the Mayor’s Task Force on Recovery and Resilience (the “Task Force”) is to:

- 1** Provide strategic recommendations to Council which will inform the forthcoming five-year fiscal plan and align with the current adopted Strategic Plan;
- 2** Work in collaboration with public bodies, private institutions and community organizations to build local resilience;
- 3** Work in collaboration with the business community and other community organizations to identify immediate economic recovery strategies for residents, businesses and community organizations;
- 4** Develop a plan for the coordination and implementation of recovery and relief efforts to support the community through the COVID-19 pandemic and its recovery process; and
- 5** Identify and support community driven ideas and solutions to assist in the recovery process, including the design and implementation of activities and programs.



# TASK FORCE WORK PLAN PHASES



May and June



June and July



September through October

## INTAKE

1. The Task Force invited input from sector representatives.
2. Staff Presentations Received:
  - Council's Approved City Strategic Plan (see Appendix A)
  - Reimagine Nanaimo Project
  - Health & Housing Task Force
  - Economic Development Task Force
3. Survey Results:
  - COVID-related question preliminary results – Economic Strategy Business Survey

## CONSULT

- Discussions with:
- John McCormick, John Howard Society
  - Deborah Hollins, Nanaimo Family Life
  - Crystal Dennison, Nanaimo Ladysmith Schools Foundation
  - Dr. Mike Flesher, Emergency Physician, NRGH
  - Dave Devana, President and CEO, Nanaimo Airport Commission
  - Ian Marr, President and CEO, Port of Nanaimo
  - Ian Simpson, Chief Executive Officer, Petroglyph Development Group, SFN
  - Dr. Deborah Saucier, President and Vice-Chancellor, VIU
  - Daniel Pearce, GM, Transit and Emergency Services, RDN
  - Larry Gardner, Manager of Solid Waste, RDN
  - Scott Saywell, Superintendent, SD68
  - Jennifer Hufnagel, General Manager, Innovation Island
  - Graham Truax, Executive Director, Innovation Island

## REPORT GENERATION

The Task Force members participated in several half-day workshops to generate key themes and actions for presentation to Council for consideration and potential integration with the City's overall plans and financial planning. Aligned with the City Strategic Plan, the recommendations are intended to inform other task force discussions as well. These task forces include the Health & Housing Task Force and the Economic Development Task Force. Recommendations will also be considered in the preparation of the 2021-2025 Financial Plan.

## A NOTE ON SCOPE

Many of the pandemic impacts have reverberated throughout our most vulnerable populations and our important small business contingent. These impacts need to be addressed collectively by a multitude of agencies and levels of government. For example, the homelessness crisis in Nanaimo is a complex matter affected by many factors. As a municipality, the City of Nanaimo's responsibility is limited by legislation and resources, thus, the City continues to advocate to the provincial and federal government for their commitment and support in the areas that fall under their mandate such as addressing the opioid crisis, addictions, mental health and housing affordability. The City demonstrates a commitment to working with several partners, including all levels of government, to each take a leadership role and address the responsibilities and services that fall under their jurisdiction. Many small and medium sized businesses are in the hoteling, hospitality and tourism industries and have been particularly hard hit. It should be noted that the provincial government announced targeted financial support on September 17 for these industries and for small businesses experiencing persistently steep revenue drops.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Mayor's Task Force on Recovery and Resilience provides a thoughtful list of recommendations that addresses a cross section of issues and opportunities with a view to strengthening the community during and post-pandemic. The Task Force has not generated all of the answers. The following recommendations are key, have the potential for lasting impact on resilience, growth and livability for our City. The charts on the following pages describe the major themes and corresponding actions, as well as, alignment with the City's Strategic Plan.

The themes and recommendations are not listed in priority order and should be considered within the context of overall effort and activities already underway, and the resource capacity and capability to execute in the short-term and longer-term. The Task Force anticipates that each action will resonate with certain stakeholder groups and will be subject to additional due diligence and consideration of merit.

## DEFINITIONS & ASSUMPTIONS

Role of the City: The Task Force has defined the accountability of the City to be that of a curator with responsibilities of coordinating and facilitating, and not being restricted to funding and resourcing of noted items. Broad objectives of the recommendations provided by the Task Force were of three types:

- 1) adding to the scope of the City's responsibility,
- 2) providing context and support for the priorities of existing City mandates, and,
- 3) taking an existing initiative within the City's plan and augmenting the mandate, direction and priority.



## GUIDING PRINCIPLES



- ▶ Together, Mayor and Council have established a working process with local First Nations, particularly Snuneymuxw First Nation, and all underlying recommendations and action items of the Task Force are intended to invite further participation and respectful engagement with Snuneymuxw and Snaw-Naw-As First Nations. The Mayor's Task Force stresses the importance to ***address and prioritize the City's role in implementing the Truth & Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)*** for both First Nations and Urban Indigenous.
- ▶ The 2018-elected Mayor and Council has made significant progress in the interactions and working relations with local First Nations, particularly Snuneymuxw First Nation. The recommendations of the Mayor's Task Force are positioned to model and celebrate the new relations and engagement that the City has taken with regards to Truth & Reconciliation with local Indigenous communities.

# RECOVERY RECOMMENDATIONS

## Nanaimo BUILDS

(Civic enthusiasm for the assets, opportunities and community currently in Nanaimo and a willingness to grow and build on it).

*"Be a Nanaimo builder!"*

- 1. Nanaimo citizen-directed campaign to instill enthusiasm for the natural and built assets, opportunities for education, recreation, culture, businesses and the sense of the existing vibrant community and community support for those most vulnerable.**

Alignment with City's Strategic Plan

- ▶ Livability
- ▶ Economic Health

*"In response to the unprecedented hardships faced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, I believe the recommendations put forward by this task force are a representation of a community that is committed to working together to find solutions. My time on this task force has firmed my belief that Nanaimo is blessed not only with an abundance of natural beauty, but with an abundance of ambitious, entrepreneurial, and vibrant community members who will weather these turbulent times and come through stronger and more resilient."*

**Ian Simpson**  
Chief Executive Officer, Petroglyph Development Group, Snuneymuxw First Nation



## Mayor's Nanaimo Leaders Table

—to provide input on issues and opportunities

### 2. Establish a Mayor's Nanaimo Leaders Table to:

- Immediately:
  - Be informed by findings and recommendations from the various task forces and committees and other entities plans to create an aligned approach and collaborate on a multi-levels of government "ask for capital infrastructure" for Nanaimo.
  - Establish a working group/youth council consisting of representatives from SD68, VIU, venture and technology incubators, youth services, cultural organizations and major employers to develop a plan to address youth (18-34 years) attraction and retention.
- Provide input on major issues and opportunities facing the City.
- Build collaboration among key entities.

NOTE: Identified members to include leadership from the following entities at a minimum:

- |                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| i. SD68                         | vii. Key Social Agencies               |
| ii. SFN                         | viii. Labour Organizations             |
| iii. VIU                        | ix. NRGH                               |
| iv. Nanaimo Port Authority      | x. Tourism & Hospitality Organizations |
| v. Nanaimo Airport Authority    | xi. Others                             |
| vi. Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce |  |

Alignment with City's Strategic Plan

- ▶ Livability
- ▶ Economic Health
- ▶ Environmental Responsibility

*"The health and long-term success of our community will be based on more than just a single report. It will be based on our community leaders coming to the table and aligning goals so that we can collaborate together on a path forward."*

**James Byrne, BAsC, MBA, CPA, CA**  
Regional Managing Partner, Vancouver Island MNP





### Prioritize STRATEGIC Investing

#### 3. Create a process/criterion to prioritize the strategic investment recognizing Nanaimo as the Heart of the island “north of the Malahat” to develop the best means to improve the economic and social position of the City. Specific focus to be given to the following projects:

- a. Sites in downtown node: City to take a proactive role to address sites in the downtown node to enhance the appeal.
- b. Logistics hub for the Port: Promote the Nanaimo Port as a logistical hub for goods and services for the mid-Island.
- c. Tertiary hospital: liaise with community interest groups to advocate for mid-Island public health services and a tertiary hospital.
- d. VIU connectedness (physical and digital): Connect VIU to downtown with transit and fiber connectivity for strategic development.
- e. Waterfront assets: Accelerate investment in waterfront assets to attract tourists and enhance livability, including the Departure Bay walkway.
- f. Build a transportation hub inclusive of a transit exchange now and accelerate the required negotiations of stakeholders and find the funding required to make this happen. (The increased accessibility of City transit will have direct impact on marginalized citizens.)
- g. Technology readiness: create digital infrastructure necessary to support expansion and attraction of technology-based businesses.

#### Alignment with City's Strategic Plan

- ▶ Livability
- ▶ Economic Health
- ▶ Environmental Responsibility

*“We live in difficult and unique times. These are times that provide opportunities for us as a community to come together and distinguish ourselves as being distinctly Nanaimo. Nanaimo is the Heart of Vancouver Island, a place where everything and anything is possible!”*

**Donna Hais**  
**General Manager and CEO, R.W. Wall Ltd.**  
**Board Chair, Port of Nanaimo**



# HEART OF THE ISLAND

*North of the Malahat*





# RESILIENCE RECOMMENDATIONS

## Reconciliation & Anti-racism

### 4. Publicly launch an anti-racism awareness program that promotes diversity and inclusivity.

For details, please see Guiding Principles.

Alignment with City's Strategic Plan

- ▶ Livability
- ▶ Economic Health
- ▶ Governance Excellence

*"Our community's resiliency depends on our many strong and caring organizations agreeing on and driving together a recovery strategy. The Task Force Plan identifies key projects to work on as well as the need for a process for our government, for-profit, non-profit and Indigenous leaders to collaborate on. Thanks to the City for including the voice of the charitable sector in creating the plan."*

**Signy Madden**

**Executive Director, United Way Central & Northern Vancouver Island**



## Preparing for Future "Events"

### 5. Prioritize the emergency preparedness and resiliency measures with the appropriate actions and access to funding necessary to address possible future events that trigger a state of state of emergency. Key focus to be given to:

- Establishing personal protective equipment (PP&E) stores for City employees and Social Agencies.
- Wastewater monitoring and surveillance technology implementation.
- Ensure community emergency reception centre is appropriately equipped in the case of an emergency.
- Create a technology-enabled internet platform to connect citizens for mutual aid during emergencies.

Alignment with City's Strategic Plan

- ▶ Governance Excellence

*"I'm pleased to be a member of this important task force, as I believe that only by working together can we come up with a strong, effective recovery strategy. As a regional university, engagement with the community is one of our core commitments, and VIU will be a key player in developing and implementing a plan to support a strong and sustainable future for our region."*

**Dr. Deborah Saucier**

**President, Vancouver Island University**



## Support for Small Business

### 6. Support elimination of Provincial Speculation and Vacancy Tax for Nanaimo.

### 7. Work with the Small Business community to leverage lessons learned through the following:

- Support services that assist small business organizations through educational efforts about economic resiliency strategies.
- Review current taxation methods to determine creative opportunities to address social and homeless concerns.
- Connect with the Federal government through appropriate mechanism or lobbying organization to initiate a review of CERB program and provide guidance and advice to ensure future program responses to unemployment are more effective.

### 8. Develop transportation and digital infrastructure strategy to help sustain small business.

Alignment with City's Strategic Plan

- ▶ Economic Health



# APPENDIX A - CITY'S STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY

## VISION

*To be a community that is livable, environmentally sustainable and full of opportunity for all generations and walks of life.*

## STRATEGIC THEMES

**Environmental responsibility**

**Governance Excellence**

**Livability**

**Economic Health**

## ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

### COUNCIL PRIORITY

*"We will protect and enhance Nanaimo's natural environment by looking after the community's biological diversity and adapt the way we live, work, recreate and move."*

### KEY FOCUS AREAS

1. Take a leadership role and focus on our environmental impact and climate change contributions in our decision making and regional participation
2. Ensure our community and transportation planning are multi-modal designed to encourage active and public transportation

## GOVERNANCE EXCELLENCE

### COUNCIL PRIORITY

*"We will develop a culture of excellence around governance, management and cost-effective service delivery."*

### KEY FOCUS AREAS

3. Ensure we are structured and resourced for innovative, expeditious and high quality decision making and action
4. Focus on targeted advocacy with other levels of government to support our strategic goals and long-term interests as well as the health and safety of those in our community



## LIVABILITY

### COUNCIL PRIORITY

*"We will proactively plan for Nanaimo's growth and focus on community infrastructure to support an inclusive, healthy, safe and desirable place to live."*

### KEY FOCUS AREAS

5. Support the provision of affordable and accessible housing for all our community needs
6. Proactively address social disorder issues, enhance public safety and advocate for support to ensure our community is a safe place for all people to live, work, play, create and learn
7. Improve opportunities for active transportation in order to encourage a healthy, connected and environmentally responsible community

## ECONOMIC HEALTH

### COUNCIL PRIORITY

*"We create a vibrant culture of innovation, stewardship and partnership to encourage a diverse and healthy economy now and into the future."*

### KEY FOCUS AREAS

8. Have Downtown recognized as a livable and desirable heart of our community
9. Focus on business retention and expansion; and, position Nanaimo as the best place to grow a business with a focus on businesses that align with our strategic direction
10. Continue to increase opportunities for residents to access our waterfront and natural environment



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