



# PLAN NANAIMO

## PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

You are invited to help decide where we live, work and play. The 10-Year Review for the City of Nanaimo Official Community Plan (Plan Nanaimo) is a public process intended to reaffirm and build on strategies for meeting the many growth challenges the City continues to face.

### What Is An Official Community Plan?

The BC *Local Government Act* defines an Official Community Plan (OCP) as “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.”

In broad terms, an OCP sets out the location, type, and density of all types of land use, from residential and commercial to industrial, utilities and parks. An OCP can also include policies relating to social needs, agricultural activities, and preservation, protection, and restoration of the natural environment.

The 10-Year Review is intended to determine:

- How well have we done in meeting the **PLAN NANAIMO** goals for shaping development, land use and other aspects of living in Nanaimo?
- Where are the successes and the shortcomings?
- Are these the right goals to carry forward through the next 25 years?

The City of Nanaimo needs citizen involvement to help answer these questions.

This review is intended to update the City’s Official Community Plan (OCP), which will guide Council in making development decisions for the next 25 years.

Backgrounder No. 2 is intended to highlight policies of the OCP Goal Two, **Protecting The Environment**. Over the next three (3) weeks, watch the newspapers and City website for additional OCP “Backgrounders” on the other goals of the Official Community Plan.

### Environmental Goal

A key goal of **Plan Nanaimo** is to recognize the natural environment as a vital element of the City that plays a key role in the long-term sustainability of our community. To protect our environment means identifying and protecting our significant natural features, developing land in ways that respects ecosystems, and adapting the ways in which we live, work, travel and recreate to be more environmentally responsible.

**Plan Nanaimo** sets out to achieve this by:

- Protecting our basic resources of water, land and air for future generations;
- Protecting the environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs) that represent Nanaimo’s unique natural diversity;
- Requiring environmentally responsible development practices with the incorporation of natural features into the development design;
- Managing development to protect life and property from natural and human-made hazards; and
- Increasing public awareness of the natural environment and encouraging community stewardship.

#### What Is An Ecosystem?

It is a particular type of natural environment, such as a Garry oak meadow or wetland, and includes the relationships among the plants, animals and non-living components within it.



#### What Is An ESA?

An **Environmentally Sensitive Area** is a type of ecosystem that supports rare, unique or special natural features.



### What Is The City Doing To Accomplish The Environmental Goal?

- Protecting our Basic Resources of Water, Land and Air
  - ✓ From 1998 to 2006, Provincial air quality indicators for Nanaimo have identified our air quality as “Good” 99.5% of the time.
  - ✓ At over 589 hectares, parkland area continues to increase through major acquisitions and development applications (for example, Cottle Lake, Joan Point, Westwood Lake areas).
- Protecting Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs)
  - ✓ 32% of all ESAs located within the City (240 hectares) are now located within an environmental development permit area, and an additional 30% of all ESAs (223 hectares) are located within parks and nature reserves.
- Requiring Environmentally Responsible Development Practices With the Incorporation of Natural Features Into the Development Design
  - ✓ A steep slope development permit area has been established that focuses on natural features and provides protection through erosion control and stormwater management.
  - ✓ Council policy now specifies that all City-owned buildings larger than 500 ft<sup>2</sup> shall meet the LEED “Silver” rating, as per the Canadian Green Building Council.
- Increasing Public Awareness of the Natural Environment and Encouraging Community Stewardship
  - ✓ City of Nanaimo Parks, Recreation and Culture continues to work with local volunteers in removing invasive vegetation through its “Volunteers in Parks” program.



#### What Is LEED?

**Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design** is a voluntary, consensus-based rating system for determining the degree to which a building or building site can be seen as sustainable. Overseen by the Canada Green Building Council (CaGBC), it is made up of various professionals from the design and building industry.

#### What Is Sustainability?

A sustainable community can persist over generations, enjoying a healthy environment, prosperous economy and vibrant civic life. It does not undermine its social or physical systems of support. Rather, it develops in harmony with the ecological patterns it thrives in.

### Things to Think About



- Should Nanaimo be doing more to monitor and enforce the health of our air, land and water, and how do we respond to climate change?
- Should Nanaimo consider protecting land for the purposes of conservation and environmental protection?
- Does Nanaimo need to do more to become a sustainable community? If so, what do you see as the City’s role?
- Other than single-family homes, what other housing forms (for example, duplex, townhouse, medium- or high-rise buildings) do you think would be suitable in your neighbourhood?

## Get Involved!

### Attend a Free One-Day Community Conference

Saturday, 2006-NOV-18  
8:30 am – 4:00 pm

Malaspina University-College

The conference will feature guest speakers, focusing on social, environmental, urban design, and smart growth topics.

Workshops will also be held to share your ideas for the community.

Pre-registration is required to confirm availability.

Register early to guarantee a seat.

Online at [www.nanaimo.ca](http://www.nanaimo.ca), or

By phone at (250) 755-4473

#### Need More Information?

Want to express your views but can’t attend the Community Conference?

Contact us to find out about other ways to obtain information or participate in the **PLAN NANAIMO 10-Year Review**.

Email: [plan.nanaimo@nanaimo.ca](mailto:plan.nanaimo@nanaimo.ca)

Web: [www.nanaimo.ca](http://www.nanaimo.ca)

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View **PLAN NANAIMO** on the City website, or at the Vancouver Island Library downtown branch, Malaspina University-College library, or City Hall (copies available for purchase).

