

DATE OF MEETING February 23, 2022

AUTHORED BY KIRSTY MACDONALD, PARKS AND OPEN SPACE PLANNER

SUBJECT DRAFT CITY PLAN ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVENESS POLICIES

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report:

To inform the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness (ACAI) about proposed accessibility and inclusiveness policies included within the draft City Plan and how this aligns with the Accessible British Columbia Act.

BACKGROUND

Since the fall of 2019, the City has been working towards a comprehensive update of a number of key strategic planning policy documents through the REIMAGINE Nanaimo process. This involves the creation of one comprehensive City Plan. The draft City Plan is intended to integrate and serve as the City's Official Community Plan, Parks Recreation and Wellness Plan, Truth and Reconciliation Plan, Transportation Plan, Active Mobility Plan, Climate Action and Resiliency Plan, and as will be discussed in this report, our Accessibility and Inclusion Plan.

The process for developing this draft plan includes elevating, updating, and reinforcing numerous social policies and actions including many raised by this Committee. Staff met with the ACAI several times in 2021 to present and discuss REIMAGINE Nanaimo, including most recently a workshop with members in December 2021.

The REIMAGINE Nanaimo process is now in Phase 3 of the project that involves creating a draft City Plan that reflects community and committee engagement from Phases 1 and 2 as well as technical research. Through this phase, high-level policy has been incorporated into a draft City Plan, which will replace or supersede a number of existing policy documents and provide more coordinated citywide policy direction. Actions related to achieving the different goals and policies will be included within a secondary Integrated Actions Plan document.

In addition to land use policy, the City Plan includes the following five goals:

1. Green Nanaimo—Resilient and Regenerative Ecosystems
2. Connected Nanaimo—Equitable Access and Mobility
3. Healthy Nanaimo—Community Well-being and Livability
4. Empowered Nanaimo--Reconciliation, Representation, and Inclusion
5. Prosperous Nanaimo—Thriving and Resilient Economy

While accessibility and inclusiveness directions are embedded throughout the draft City Plan, specific focus on these areas are included in the 'Empowered Nanaimo' policy section.

DISCUSSION

Sections of the draft Empowered Nanaimo Goal that focus on accessibility and inclusiveness are provided for the ACAI Committee's review and information (Attachment A). This includes the following sections:

2. Equity & Inclusivity
3. Political Voice & Engagement
4. Access for All

Each section includes desired outcomes (objectives) and policies to help the City achieve these outcomes. While some policies are carried forward from existing City documents, others are new and intended to reflect emerging directions including what was heard through community, committee and stakeholder engagement.

ACCESSIBLE BC LEGISLATION

In order to support people with disabilities to meaningfully participate in their communities, the Province of BC passed the Accessible BC Act in the summer of 2021.

In order to meet the act requirements, municipalities now need to:

- Develop an accessibility plan and commitment statement
- Have a Committee with an accessibility focus and feedback mechanism
- Update the plan every 3 years and submit to the Province

Staff have met with the Accessibility Directorate and confirmed that the REIMAGINE Nanaimo process and resulting draft City Plan and associated Integrated Actions Plan will fulfill legislative requirements to serve as our accessibility plan.

NEXT STEPS

Public engagement on the draft City Plan policies is scheduled to launch 2022-FEB-28 with a closing date of 2022-APR-08. The ACAI Committee will receive the full draft City Plan document after Council has received it on 2022-FEB-28. Staff anticipate returning to ACAI as needed to continue discussion on the draft City Plan, and to discuss the proposed Integrated Actions Plan intended to align with and implement the accessibility and inclusion policies in City Plan.

Following the end of Phase 3 public engagement, Staff anticipate returning to Council with an engagement summary prior to presenting a final version of City Plan to Council for their consideration in May 2022 with proposed Bylaw adoption in July 2022. Following the adoption of the City Plan by bylaw, Council will have opportunity to confirm and endorse the associated Integrated Actions Plan to help implement the City Plan policy document.

SUMMARY POINTS

- The REIMAGINE Nanaimo process is now in Phase 3 of the project that involves creating a draft City Plan that reflects community and committee engagement from Phases 1 and 2 as well as technical research.
- While accessibility and inclusion directions are embedded throughout the draft City Plan, specific focus on accessibility, inclusion, and diversity policies are included in the 'Empowered Nanaimo' policy section.
- The City Plan document will integrate accessibility policies and actions and will meet the requirements of the Province's Accessible BC Act legislation for an Accessibility Plan.
- The draft policy sections covering accessibility and inclusion are now available for the ACAI Committee's information and review.

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT A: Draft City Plan Accessibility and Inclusiveness Policies

Submitted by:

Lisa Brinkman
Manager, Community Planning

Concurrence by:

Lisa Bhopalsingh
Director, Community Development

Richard Harding
General Manager, Parks, Recreation and
Culture

Dale Lindsay
General Manager, Development
Services/Deputy CAO

ATTACHMENT A

C. Policies

C.4 AN EMPOWERED NANAIMO: RECONCILIATION, REPRESENTATION, & INCLUSION

ABOUT AN EMPOWERED NANAIMO

An Empowered Nanaimo feels welcoming and safe to all those who choose this city as home. Together, we are actively making progress towards reconciliation. We are relearning the past, acknowledging the truth of past wrongs, and committing to working together respectfully and collaboratively towards a common future. An Empowered Nanaimo honours and celebrates the long and rich history and living culture of the First Peoples whose Traditional Territories our City is situated.

Our differences are what makes our community interesting, innovative, and vital. An Empowered Nanaimo is about being an inclusive and accessible community. One that provides equitable opportunities for all to enjoy and participate in community activities and spaces, including our parks, waterfronts, recreation, cultural and heritage facilities, and programs. Inclusion involves hearing each voice in civic life – through effective engagement and public process – where everyone has an opportunity to contribute and see themselves as part of our city’s story and future. By embracing diversity, we can find what unifies our community spirit.

WHY IS AN EMPOWERED NANAIMO IMPORTANT FOR OUR FUTURE?

Everyone deserves a chance to live their best life and feel like they belong. Nanaimo aspires to be the kind of community that provides these opportunities for all. When citizens feel safe, can meet their basic needs, and have found their place and voice in the community, they can learn, grow, share, and celebrate together. Empowered people, in turn, are reflected in our community pride, character, and identity.

CONTENTS

C4.1 Truth & Reconciliation

C4.2 Equity & Inclusivity

C4.3 Political Voice & Engagement

C4.4 Access for All

C4.5 Culture

C4.6 Archaeological & Heritage

C4.7 Public Art Projects & Programs

C4.8 Community Events, Tournaments, & Gatherings

C4.9 Parkland & Park Amenity Management

C4.10 Waterfront Use & Protection

DRAFT

C.4.1 Equity & Inclusivity

Equity recognizes that each person has different circumstances and allocates resources and opportunities to support more positive outcomes for all regardless of age, ability, gender, sexual orientation, faith practice, ancestry, or background. By identifying inequities and targeting investment in prevention and intervention, the wellbeing and inclusion of the diversity of peoples that make up our entire community can be enhanced, creating a community that puts people first and supports a sense of belonging.

Desired Outcomes

- ▶ **An inclusive Nanaimo** that provides opportunities for active involvement and prosperity for all; welcomes contributions of all members; facilitates participation and social interaction across cultures, orientations, ages, and abilities; and recognizes and fosters respect for diversity.
- ▶ **Environments and spaces across all areas of the city that are diverse and vibrant** for the enjoyment of all residents.
- ▶ **Celebration of diverse cultures** and a community that is welcoming, inclusive, and accepting of all cultures.
- ▶ **Equitable access to services, programs, and facilities** for all residents.
- ▶ **Continued City leadership** by receiving training, sharing resources and knowledge, and applying an equity, diversity, and inclusion lens in City initiatives and decision-making.

Policies

- C.4.1.1 Create a welcoming, inclusive atmosphere in City-owned facilities where all people feel safe, comfortable, and represented.
- C.4.1.2 Incorporate an equity lens into land-use planning decisions and resource allocation across Nanaimo.
- C.4.1.3 Encourage a fair distribution of community services, social services, facilities, and mobility options across the city, to support the diverse needs of Nanaimo residents.
- C.4.1.4 Strive to reduce financial barriers to community spaces, programs, and services for community members with smaller incomes.
- C.4.1.5 Encourage development of accessible and inclusive public spaces and buildings through universal design principles, and the provision of accessible and inclusive amenities and infrastructure for all ages, abilities, and genders.
- C.4.1.6 Create and adapt recreational programming and facilities to support respectful and inclusive services for all people.

- C.4.1.7 Design all new washroom facilities, and retrofit existing facilities where possible, to include universal and gender-neutral spaces.
- C.4.1.8 Encourage diversity awareness to actively build a culture of compassion and inclusion for people of all cultures, orientations, ages, and abilities.
- C.4.1.9 Support and welcome newcomers to settle in Nanaimo and encourage their awareness, understanding, and respect for First Nations governments and mustimuxw (peoples) and other Indigenous peoples.
- C.4.1.10 Encourage programs that create employment opportunities and link diverse and under-represented groups to those opportunities.

C.4.2 Political Voice & Engagement

An informed and aware community who can participate in political processes; share opinions, ideas, and feedback; and exercise rights and responsibilities effectively is indispensable for strengthening the quality of community.

Desired Outcomes

- ▶ **An Informed and aware community** who can meaningfully participate in city processes and shape city decisions.
- ▶ **Opportunities for all people to express their voice** on community matters important to them.
- ▶ **City leadership in active listening** to the diverse voices in the community.
- ▶ **Space for representation that reflects the diverse population of Nanaimo** so that decision-making, planning, policy development, and creation of procedures considers a broad range of perspectives that are representative of community diversity.
- ▶ **Respectful and kind conversations** that allow for differing opinions while demonstrating respect for others.

Policies

- C.4.2.1 Ensure that all people have opportunities to be engaged in City matters and processes by offering a range of accessible engagement tools and methods to encourage participation.
- C.4.2.2 Use engagement tools and methods that encourage representative and diverse feedback from Neighbourhoods, Urban Centres and/or city-wide demographics as appropriate.
- C.4.2.3 Use statistically-valid engagement methods, where representative community opinions are very important.
- C.4.2.4 Incorporate the voices of children, youth, and their families into the development of City initiatives, programs, planning, and policies that serve and affect them.
- C.4.2.5 Continue to work collaboratively with schools, higher education institutions, and others to support and leverage engagement of children, youth, and their families.
- C.4.2.6 Ensure vulnerable, marginalized, and under-represented groups including children and youth; elders; those with physical, sensory, or cognitive disabilities; and their supporters have opportunities to provide input into City services, programs, and policy development.
- C.4.2.7 Engage with a broad range of community members and organizations who offer diverse perspectives, interests, and solutions on emerging issues and opportunities, including residents, businesses, non-profits, major institutions, and other levels of government.
- C.4.2.8 Integrate participant feedback questions into engagement processes to obtain input on the process and tools used and identify improvements for future engagement.

- C.4.2.9 Focus community engagement to allow participants to provide feedback that brings the most value, and that recognizes their experiences and “expertise.”
- C.4.2.10 Clearly identify the scope and purpose of community engagement so participants understand what they are being engaged on, and their level of influence on decisions.
- C.4.2.11 Consider findings of community engagement alongside technical analysis and expert knowledge.

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C.4.3 Access for All

The ability to freely and fully access and experience our community affects individual wellbeing. The City is committed to improving accessibility for all by identifying, removing, and preventing barriers that limit access to services, amenities, and public life. Access is vital for all residents to have an equitable and enjoyable experience of what Nanaimo has to offer.

Desired Outcomes

- ▶ **There are many ways for people of all ages and abilities to move freely** throughout the City and without barriers.
- ▶ **People of all ages, abilities, and income levels have easy access to services and spaces** without barriers.



Policies

Administrative

- C.4.3.1 Continue to provide accessible meeting space for in-person Council and Committee meetings as well as access to online live streamed and recorded options with closed captioning.
- C.4.3.2 Ensure that online communications are adapted to reduce barriers to a range of audio-visual accessibility needs.
- C.4.3.3 As requested, offer access to City services online, via phone, or in person, to support a person's specific accessibility needs using a range of existing and emerging technologies, including use of video relay services to support those with hearing or speech disabilities.
- C.4.3.4 Where applicable, include an 'accessibility lens' to Council reports and consultant reports delivered to staff and council.
- C.4.3.5 Continue to address and remove barriers to employment for new and existing employees of all ages and abilities consistent with Canada's *Human Rights Code*.
- C.4.3.6 Where possible, ensure that all or most owned or leased City facilities meet accessibility requirements in the latest version of the *BC Building Code*.
- C.4.3.7 Ensure that new City facilities and buildings (including major renovations) meet universal accessibility standards.
- C.4.3.8 Include universal design principles in City plans, policies, designs, standards, programs, and

services that consider the needs of all people including those with physical, sensory, and cognitive disabilities.

Parks and Recreation Facilities

SEE SECTIONS C3.6 RECREATION & WELLNESS AND C4.9 PARKLAND & PARK AMENITY MANAGEMENT FOR RELATED POLICIES

- C.4.3.9 Provide opportunities for all people to pursue healthy, active, and social lifestyles through a range of inclusive, accessible, and affordable events, festivals, parks, and recreational / cultural facilities and programs.
- C.4.3.10 Ensure that public spaces are available and accessible to all members of the community where possible.
- C.4.3.11 Continue to increase the provision of accessible play equipment and park amenities.
- C.4.3.12 Where possible, provide safe, clean, and accessible washroom facilities (including change tables for children and adults) throughout the City to enhance public space experiences for all.
- C.4.3.13 Where possible, provide universal access to parks, open spaces, and outdoor recreation opportunities. Where universal access is not possible in natural areas, prioritize meaningful opportunities for people of all abilities to participate in areas where universal accessibility is feasible.

Recreation Programs

SEE SECTION C3.6 RECREATION & WELLNESS FOR RELATED POLICIES

- C.4.3.14 Strive to make all City Parks, Recreation, and Culture programs as inclusive and accessible as possible for all ages and abilities.
- C.4.3.15 Continue to provide a variety of inclusive and barrier-free activities that support different age groups including seniors and youth.
- C.4.3.16 Continue to offer adaptive sport options, working with partners and organizations, wherever possible.
- C.4.3.17 Continue to partner with social clubs to provide meeting space for people with disabilities.
- C.4.3.18 Continue to use Physical Literacy as a method of programming for youth to teach and adapt skills needed to learn sport.
- C.4.3.19 Continue to incorporate accessibility and inclusiveness into summer camps through adaptability and instruction.

Land Use and Development

- C.4.3.20 Encourage private home-owners, landlords, developers, and non-profit housing providers to build new or update existing buildings and spaces to meet adaptable and accessibility standards.
- C.4.3.21 Encourage and consider incentives for private developers and non-profit housing organizations to develop and maintain a percentage of adaptable and accessible housing rental units in new or existing market and affordable developments.
- C.4.3.22 Encourage seniors to 'age in place' through alternative housing options, including making existing housing accessible, installing in-law or secondary suites, sharing housing with students, co-housing, etc.

Mobility and Transportation

- C.4.3.23 Continue to support RDN and BC Transit efforts to maintain and improve accessibility to public transit through bus design.
- C.4.3.24 Ensure that design of new or upgraded public transit infrastructure (transit shelters, exchanges, etc.) consider accessibility for all users.
- C.4.3.25 Work to reduce transportation barriers to City-owned facilities and City-run programs.
- C.4.3.26 Where possible, exceed minimum requirements for universal accessibility for parking access and design standards.
- C.4.3.27 Work with community partners to develop universally accessible trails where appropriate and provide information about trail conditions and barriers at the trailheads and online.



2022-FEB-23

reimagine
NANAIMO

REIMAGINE
Nanaimo Update

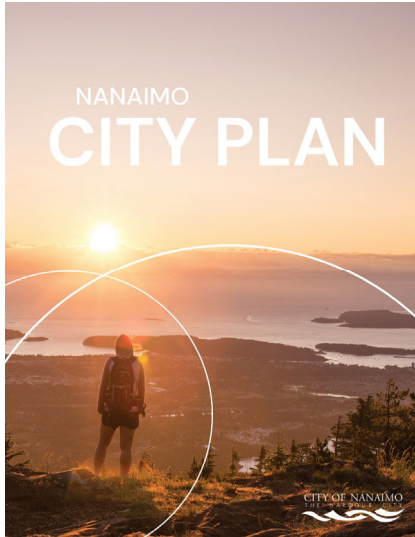
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TOPICS

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| 1 | Accessibility and Inclusivity Policies |
| 2 | BC Accessible Act Update |
| 3 | Phase 3 - Timelines and Review |

Accessibility and Inclusivity Policies



- Received a draft of Empowered Chapter
- Bylaw



AN EMPOWERED NANAIMO:

Empowered Goal contains 10 items:

- Truth & Reconciliation
- **Equity & Inclusivity**
- **Political Voice & Engagement**
- **Access for All**
- Culture
- Archaeological & Heritage
- Public Art Projects & Programs
- Community Events, Tournaments & Gatherings
- Parkland & Park Amenity Management
- Waterfront Use & Protection Management

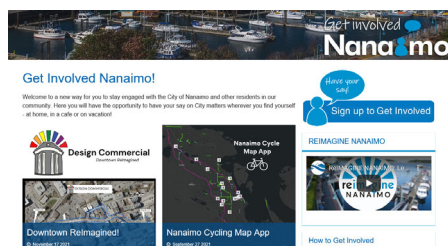
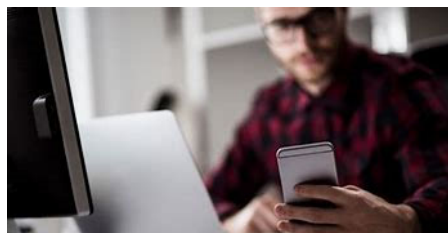
Equity and Inclusivity



CITY PLAN EMERGING DIRECTION: Draft Desired Outcomes

- An inclusive Nanaimo that provides opportunities for active involvement and prosperity for all; welcomes the contributions of all members; facilitates participation and social interaction across all cultures, orientations, ages and abilities; and recognizes and fosters respect for diversity.
- Environments and spaces across all areas of the city that are diverse and vibrant for the enjoyment of all residents.
- Celebration of diverse cultures and a community that is welcoming, inclusive, and accepting of all.
- Equitable access to services, programs, and facilities for all residents.
- Demonstrated City leadership by receiving training, sharing resources and knowledge, and applying an equity, diversity and inclusion lens in city initiatives and decision-making processes.

Political Voice and Engagement



CITY PLAN EMERGING DIRECTION: Draft Desired Outcomes

- An informed and aware community who can meaningfully participate in city processes and shape city decisions.
- Opportunities for all people to express their voice on community matters important to them.
- Demonstrated City leadership in active listening to the diverse voices in the community.
- Space for representation that reflects the diverse population of Nanaimo so that decision-making, planning, policy development, and the creation of procedures considers a broad range of perspectives that are representative of community diversity.
- Respectful conversations that encourage effective participation and ensures that members of the community are seen and heard

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Access for All



CITY PLAN EMERGING DIRECTION: Draft Desired Outcomes

- Many options for people of all ages and abilities to move freely throughout the City, without barriers.
- People of all ages and abilities and income levels have easy access to services and spaces without barriers.

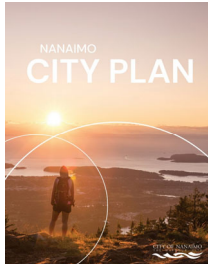
Draft Policies

- Administrative
- Parks and Recreation Facilities
- Recreation Programs
- Land Use and Development
- Mobility and Transportation

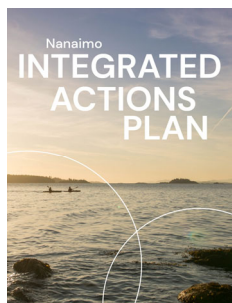


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Accessibility and Inclusivity Policies



- Full Draft Plan and integrated action plan will be shared with ACAI after Council

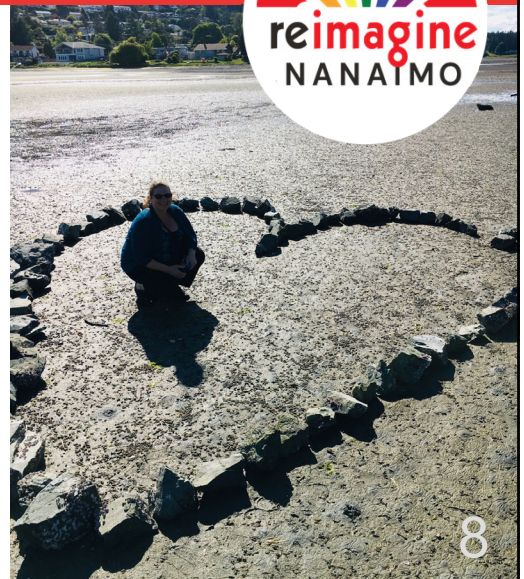


- Projects and Programs
- Immediate, Future, and Ongoing

Next Steps



- Present to Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness - Feb 23
- Share draft City Plan policies and actions for feedback during Phase 3 Engagement
- Test approach through Phase 3





TOPICS

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| 1 | Accessibility and Inclusivity Policies |
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| 3 | Phase 3 - Timelines and Review |

Accessibility Plan Update



Accessible BC Act— Summer 2021

Requirements:

- Develop accessibility plan and commitment statement
- Have a Committee and feedback mechanism
- Update plan every 3 years and submit to Province



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Accessibility Plan Update



REIMAGINE Process and City Plan:

- Met with the Accessibility Directorate
- Confirmed that City Plan and the linked Integrated Actions Plan will fulfill the legislation requirements
- Already meeting requirements such as ACAI and Reimagine Nanaimo Process
- Update action plan ever three years

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TOPICS

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| 1 | Accessibility and Inclusivity Policies |
| 2 | BC Accessible Act Update |
| 3 | Phase 3 - Timelines and Review |

PHASE 3 ENGAGEMENT



We are here

START-UP &
ENGAGEMENT
PLANNING



PHASE 1
GATHERING IDEAS
SUMMER - WINTER 2020



PHASE 2
EXPLORING OPTIONS
WINTER - SUMMER 2021



PHASE 3
DEVELOPING PLANS
FALL - WINTER 2021

PHASE 3 ENGAGEMENT

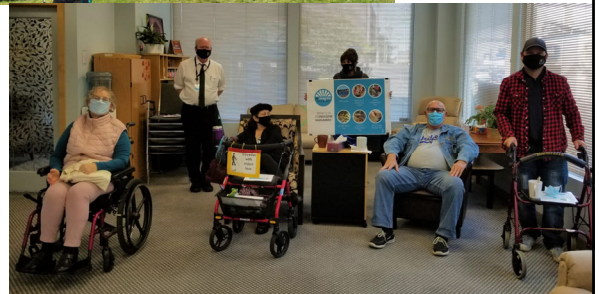


ENGAGEMENT KEY POINTS:

High levels of engagement during phase 1 & 2 reflected back in draft City Plan

Seeking **confirmation that draft City Plan reflects community and Council directions**

Still in COVID times and engagement is adapting to be as accessible as possible



Phase 3 Launch – Feb 28



Access to Nature & Outdoor Recreation
We value our green spaces and love being minutes away from nature and places to play outdoors. Preserving this access for the future is essential.

Central Hub Identity
We're excited about our role as the Central Hub of Vancouver Island and wish to build on this with effective transportation connections, economic development, and identity building.

Neighbourhood Character
We value our existing neighbourhoods and the balance between more urban and more residential areas. Maintaining a mix of urban and residential areas and protecting the character of neighbourhoods is important.

A Waterfront Identity
The waterfront is part of who we are, and we want more opportunities to connect with and celebrate it.

City Living
We are preparing to embrace a shift from more suburban to urban living and are excited about cultural, entertainment, and public living opportunities centrally located closer to home. However, it's important the transition is thoughtful with attention to place-making and character.

Thriving & Vibrant Downtown
We want to see Downtown Nanaimo become the vibrant, engaging centre for arts, culture, entertainment, tourism, business, and employment that has been envisioned over the years.

A Green Approach
We are getting ready to embrace our role as a climate leader, making choices that will reduce our impacts, protect our natural assets, and position us for a greener future. However, we recognize that changing our behaviours will be challenging.

Mobility Choice
We would like to move around our community more easily by foot and bike, and we want our transit to be more frequent, faster, and accessible, but we're also coming to terms with reducing our reliance on automobiles.

Supportive City
We are worried about the increasing social challenges our community is facing and how to help all people to live healthier, happier lives while keeping our city feeling safe and welcoming.

Inclusive & Equitable
We want to respect and respond to the perspectives, values, and needs of all individuals and groups in Nanaimo and create spaces and programs that are for everyone.

Affordable City
We are concerned about the rising costs of living in our city and are seeking ways to make it possible for people of all socio-economic backgrounds to find their home here.

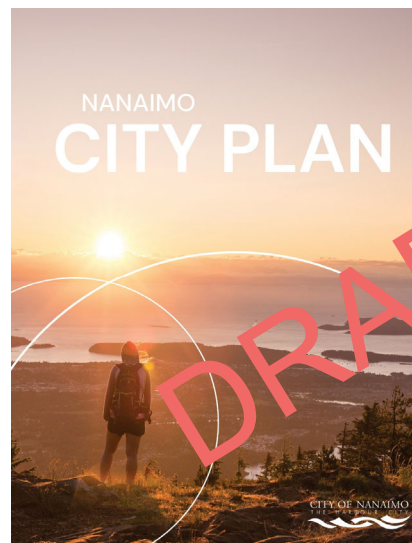
Great Jobs & Businesses
We wish to attract and maintain great businesses and institutions that provide quality jobs so we can work close to home in employment that fulfills us.

12 Engagement themes

Engagement Methods Phase 3



- Draft City Plan
- Story Map (linked to Plan Sections)
- Online/Print Survey Information
- Statistically-valid survey
- 12 themes
- Workshops
- Informal & Formal Referrals
- Video summary



Accessible Phase 3 Materials



Draft Plan Elements:

- **Visuals** to communicate to range of audiences
- **Mapping** to show existing and future Recreation and Wellness amenities
- Many policies supporting **enhanced access to services and amenities** for all ages, incomes, backgrounds, abilities....

Feedback from ACAI throughout Phase 3



- Phase 3 engagement (February 23-April 8)
- Public Surveys/Workshops as Individuals
- Special ACAI Meeting option



Hay cep q'a Siem

