



Old City Neighbourhood Concept Plan



City of Nanaimo

OLD CITY NEIGHBOURHOOD CONCEPT PLAN

Consolidated Version

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Table of Contents

1	The Planning Process		1
	1.1 Council's Involvement	1	
	1.2 Why a Concept Plan?	1	
	1.3 The Public Consultation Process		3
2	The Vision		4
	2.1 Residential Development		5
	2.2 Commercial Development		5
3	Planning Goals		7
4	Land Use Objectives and Designations		8
	4.1 Residential Areas		8
	4.1.1 Land Use Objectives		8
	4.1.2 Land Use Designations		8
	4.2 Commercial Areas		9
	4.2.1 Land Use Objectives		9
	4.2.2 Land Use Designations		9
	4.3 Industrial Areas		10
	4.3.1 Land Use Objectives		10
	4.3.2 Land Use Designations		10
	4.4 Open Spaces and Public Buildings		10
	4.5 Urban Design / Images		10
	4.6 Building Height		11
	4.7 Parking		11
	4.8 Land Allocation		11
	4.9 Infrastructure Servicing		11
5	Maximum Build Out Density		12
6	Relation to the Rest of the City	13	
7	Implementation Measures		14
	7.1 OCP Policies	14	
	7.2 Zoning		14
	7.3 Development Permit Areas	14	
	7.4 Parking Policies		14
	7.5 Development Cost Charges	14	
	7.6 Downtown Revitalization		15
	7.7 Infrastructure Servicing		15
8	The Land Use Concept Map		17

1 The Planning Process

In February 1990, the Department of Planning and Development initiated a Neighbourhood Planning Program for the Old City neighbourhood area of Nanaimo. The planning process has followed the stages on the flow chart on the following page. At each stage the public and Council have played an integral role in the plan development. The program has emphasized public consultation, including the establishment of a working committee and hosting a series of public workshops, information sessions and open houses.

1.1 Council's Involvement

Throughout the planning process, Council has played a significant role in decision making, approving and endorsing the original Terms of Reference for the Plan, and revising the Terms of Reference to extend the original boundaries. In appointing a Council representative to the Public Liaison Committee, Council was involved in establishing objectives for the Plan.

In Stage II of the planning process, Council reviewed three alternative concept plans and selected this Concept Plan to guide the future development in the Old City Neighbourhood. At its regular meeting of November 18, 1991, Council endorsed the Land Use Concept Plan and directed staff to begin the process of incorporating the Plan into the Official Community Plan.

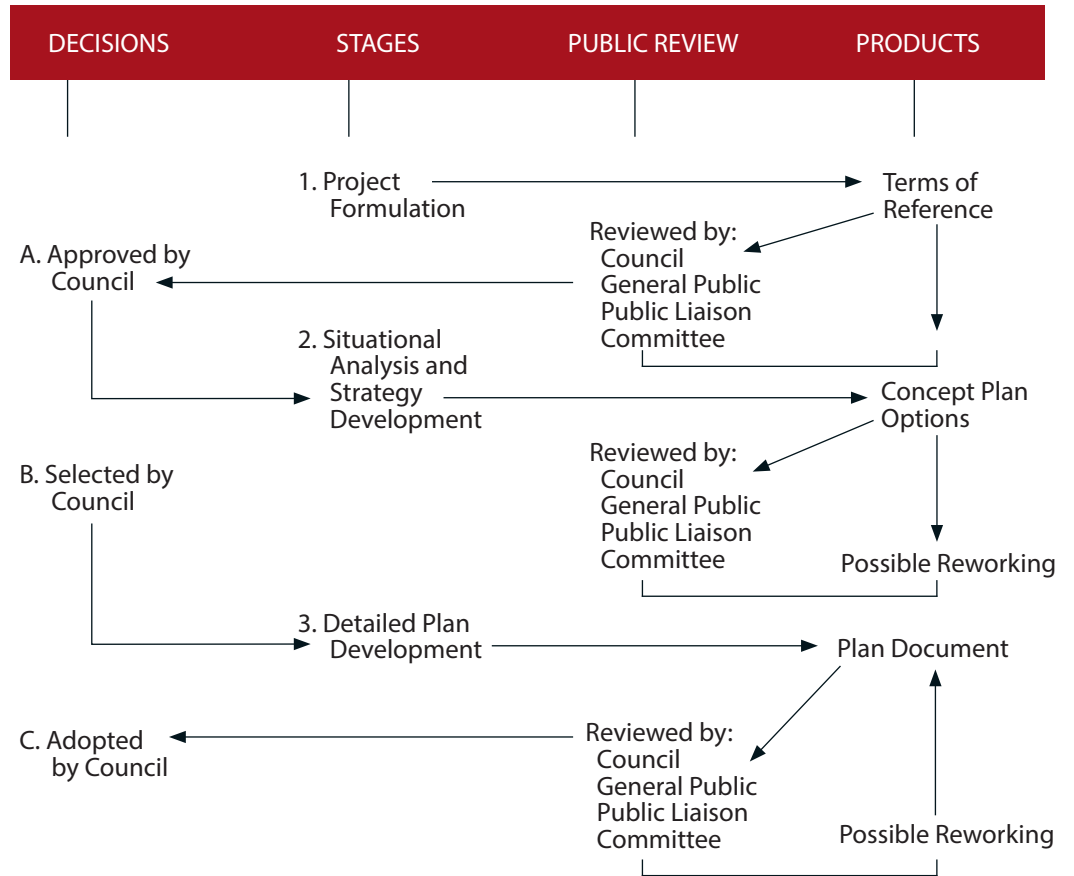
1.2 Why a Concept Plan?

The Old City Neighbourhood was identified as a priority planning area because of both the development pressure and development constraints in the area. The Old City area represents one of Nanaimo's oldest neighbourhoods and is in an enviable geographic position, adjacent to the downtown core and enjoying panoramic ocean views. Servicing constraints in this area constitute a major barrier to development.

A neighbourhood planning process provides an opportunity for an in depth analysis of local issues, residential involvement and translation of general city wide goals, policies, programs and land use recommendations into more specific policies and guidelines.

The Neighbourhood Concept Plan provides a future land vision for the neighbourhood. The Concept Plan outlines land use objectives and provides major land use designations and implementation measures to achieve the recommended land use directions. The Concept Plan provides a framework of how change may be managed and growth accommodated at the neighbourhood level. This is the first step in producing a detailed plan for an area. It provides a framework for developing more detailed policies and implementing changes to land use regulations in an area.





This Concept Plan has been formulated from the responses to the original three alternative Land Use Concepts developed in the planning process and is very much a product of the extended public involvement process Council recommended in April 1991.

This document explains the Land Use Concept under the following major headings:

- The Vision
- Planning Goals
- Land Use Objectives and Designations
- Implementation Measures

The Concept Plan provides a general future land use direction for the area and should not be confused with the Local Area Plan which will be developed based upon the Concept but contain more detailed policy direction and also include regulatory changes.

1.3 The Public Consultation Process

The public involvement program for the Neighbourhood Plan was initiated on March 20, 1990 when a public information meeting was held to define the project and receive input from neighbourhood residents regarding neighbourhood issues. At this meeting, volunteers were solicited to work with Planning Department staff to develop goals and objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan.

The working committee, consisting of neighbourhood residents, business people and Council, Advisory Planning Commission and Planning Department representation, met on a monthly basis over a one and a half year period to assist the Planning and Development Department in determining neighbourhood issues and developing neighbourhood goals and objectives.

Additional public involvement exercises included the following:

May 1990	A walking tour of the neighbourhood
June 1990	A mailout survey to residences in the study area
June 1990	A telephone survey of businesses in the neighbourhood
October 1990	Several open houses and public information sessions

By December 1990, the Department of Planning and Development had developed three alternative Land Use Concepts in response to the planning objectives developed at the Committee level.

This is the third in a series of documents that summarize the planning process to date. The previous publications are:

- 1 Toward an Old City Neighbourhood Plan: Background Information, August, 1990.
- 2 Three Alternative Development Scenarios – the Old City Neighbourhood, December, 1990.



2 The Vision



This Concept Plan provides the framework for the area to maximize its business / commercial potential in a manner that is compatible with the existing residential character of the neighbourhood. The vision includes a balanced mix of uses in the transitional area along the E&N Railway tracks and moderate increased density of portions of the residential neighbourhood in a manner that encourages the maintenance of the character features of older homes.

The Concept aims to enhance the pedestrian orientation and character of the neighbourhood by maintaining streetscape consistency and interest. The viability of the neighbourhood is strengthened by the development of a full range of commercial and business opportunities at the centre of the neighbourhood, complemented by the legal conversion of older character homes in peripheral areas to multiple family residential and / or small scale business and professional offices.

This Concept addresses the main issues that have arisen during the plan preparation and proposes to manage future development by providing opportunities for a mixture of new uses compatible with existing land uses. Guiding principles that have shaped this concept are:

- maintaining and improving the pedestrian orientation of the area;
- providing a full range of housing choice from single family to townhouse and apartment buildings; and
- a sensitivity to the streetscape.



2.1 Residential Development

The importance of providing a full range of housing forms and ensuring that new design is sensitive to the scale and character of the neighbourhood are principles that guide the residential component of the Concept.

Established areas of single family residential development are preserved and the Concept works to preserve architecturally and / or historically significant older homes by encouraging the legal conversion of older homes to a maximum fourplex. Adaptive re-use of some areas of older homes is also encouraged for small scale business and / or professional offices.

Small scale (maximum density: fourplex) multi-family development is proposed in an area of the neighbourhood which already has many suites, a sign the area is under increasing pressure to become a multi-family area.

Higher density multi-family uses are provided for in this Concept in locations which minimize impacts on view corridors, and are located adjacent to major roads.

2.2 Commercial Development

The mixed multi-family / commercial area in the centre of the neighbourhood provides opportunities for a viable commercial centre to develop within the neighbourhood, with a full range of office, retail and service commercial land uses permitted at street level and complemented by second and third storey multiple family development.

This Concept recognizes the difference between full scale industrial land use and the existing service commercial and warehousing land use which is predominant along the E&N Railway line, and provides for the maintenance of a continued service commercial component in the neighbourhood while phasing out industrial uses.

Limiting height to a maximum of three storeys for future development in the commercial core of the neighbourhood will preserve public ocean views in the neighbourhood and design guidelines for multiple family and commercial uses in this area will provide more security for land owners regarding adjacent developments and ensure that new uses are compatible with the pedestrian orientation and scale of the neighbourhood.





The Concept further enhances the viability of existing and proposed commercial land uses through revitalization, beautification and parking proposals. Establishing consistent guidelines for urban design, initiating commercial revitalization and landscaping improvements, and a new specified parking area are all integral to the success of this Concept, which is aimed at enhancing the character of the neighbourhood while maintaining its economic viability.



3 Planning Goals

Within the planning process, the following planning goals were identified and used to establish land use objectives, and land use designations for the study area.

- Preservation of public view corridors.
- Preservation of the heritage character of the neighbourhood.
- Maintenance of the pedestrian orientation – in terms of form, character, and scale of development.
- Provisions of compatible adjacent land uses.
- Provision for new residential and commercial development opportunities.
- Prevention of commercial encroachment in single family residential areas.



4 Land Use Objectives and Land Use Designations



4.1 Residential Areas

4.1.1 Land Use Objectives

- Encourage residential rehabilitation and new small scale multi-family residential redevelopment.
- Preserve architecturally / historically significant older houses.
- Identify and maintain established areas of single family housing.
- Introduce low to medium density multiple housing forms in single family areas where suites are already entrenched and in areas of larger older homes.
- Provide opportunity for larger scale, medium density multiple family development in the Milford Crescent and Catstream areas of the neighbourhood.

4.1.2 Land Use Designations

The following land use designations meet these objectives:

	Land Use Designations	Permitted Uses
Sub Area 1	Single Family Residential	Single family
Sub Area 1a	Single Family / Duplex	Single family and duplex
Sub Area 3	Multi-Family Low Density	Single family to fourplex
Sub Area 4	Multi-Family Medium Density Residential	Multiple family units limited to 3 storeys in height and 0.60 FAR
Sub Area 6	Mixed Multi-Family / Commercial	Mixed use development limited to 3 stories in height and 0.85 FAR

Please refer to the Concept Plan Map for Land Use Designation boundaries.

4.1.2.1 Notwithstanding Section 4.1.2, Sub Area 3, a multiple-family residential development for a maximum of seven residential units is permitted on the property known as 446 Milton Street (Lot 6, Block 24, Section 1, Nanaimo District, Plan 584, Except the Northerly 50 Feet Thereof; PID 000 937 029).

4.1.2.2 Notwithstanding Section 4.1.2, Sub Area 3, a multiple family residential development for a maximum of five residential units is permitted on the property known as 421 Milton Street (Section A of Lot 17, Block H, of Section 1, Nanaimo City, Plan 584; PID 000 051 829).

4.1.2.3 Notwithstanding Section 4.1.2, Sub Area 4, a multiple family residential development of for a maximum of 60 residential units of up to 5 residential storeys in height, plus an additional two storeys of under building parking, is permitted on the property know as 305 Milton Street (STRATA LOTS 1- 60, SECTION 1, NANAIMO DISTRICT, STRATA PLAN 1142, TOGETHER WITH AN INTEREST IN THE COMMON PROPERTY IN PROPORTION TO THE UNIT ENTITLEMENT OF THE STRATA LOT AS SHOWN ON FORM 1)

4.1.2.4 Notwithstanding Section 4.1.2, Sub-Area 6, multi-family, mixed use, or commercial development is permitted to exceed 6 storeys in height and 0.85 FAR for the properties legally described as:

1. THAT PART OF LOT 7, BLOCK 46, SECTION 1, NANAIMO DISTRICT, PLAN 584, LYING TO THE EAST OF ESQUIMALT AND NANAIMO RAILWAY COMPANY'S RIGHT OF WAY AS SHOWN ON PLAN 1064 (685 Comox Road); and
2. LOT 8 AND 9, BLOCK 46, SECTION 1, NANAIMO DISTRICT, PLAN 584 (619 Comox Road); and
3. LOT A, SECTION 1, NANAIMO DISTRICT, PLAN 3421, EXCEPT PART IN PLAN 48003 (605 Comox Road); and
4. PARCEL A (DD 9331N) OF LOT 7, BLOCK 45, SECTION 1, NANAIMO DISTRICT, PLAN 584 EXCEPT PART IN PLAN 47998 FOR ROAD PURPOSES (531 Comox Road); and
5. LOT 8, BLOCK 45, SECTION 1, NANAIMO DISTRICT, PLAN 584 (503 Comox Road); and
6. LOT B - D, SECTION 1, NANAIMO DISTRICT, PLAN 3421 (55 Prideaux Street); and
7. PARCEL B (16159N) OF LOT 7, BLOCK 45, SECTION 1, NANAIMO DISTRICT, PLAN 584 (54 Prideaux Street); and
8. LOT 12, BLOCK 46, SECTION 1, NANAIMO DISTRICT, PLAN 584 (65 Prideaux Street); and
9. LOT 6 AND THE SOUTHERLY 14 FEET 9 INCHES OF LOT 7, BLOCK 45, SECTION 1, NANAIMO DISTRICT, PLAN 584 (66 Prideaux Street); and
10. LOT 13, BLOCK 46, SECTION 1, NANAIMO DISTRICT, PLAN 584 (69 Prideaux Street); and
11. LOT 5, BLOCK 45, SECTION 1, NANAIMO DISTRICT, PLAN 584 (70 Prideaux Street); and
12. LOT 14, BLOCK 46, SECTION 1, NANAIMO DISTRICT, PLAN 584 (73 Prideaux Street).

4.1.2.5 Notwithstanding Section 4.1.2, Sub Area 3, a multiple family residential development for a maximum of seven residential units is permitted on the property known as 456 Milton Street (Southerly ½ of Lot 5, Block 24, Section 1, Nanaimo District, Plan 584, Having a Frontage of 66 feet on Milton Street, PID 000-451-908).



4.2 Commercial Areas

4.2.1 Land Use Objectives

- Limit commercial building height to three storeys.
- Limit central commercial zero lot line development to the area below Wesley Street.
- Encourage mixed use multi-family / commercial developments in the central core of the neighbourhood.
- Encourage small scale business and professional office development in two transition areas along Milton Street.

4.2.2 Land Use Designations

The following land use designations meet these objectives:

	Land Use Designations	Permitted Uses
Sub Area 2	Infill Commercial	Business and professional offices and service commercial uses, limited to 3 storeys in height and maximum lot coverage of 50%.
Sub Area 2a	Residential Infill	Business and professional offices, service commercial uses, and multiple family residential developments.
Sub Area 5	Central Commercial	A full range of downtown uses including retail, personal services, office, etc., limited to 3 storeys in height with no yard requirements.
Sub Area 6	Mixed Multiple Family / Commercial	Multiple family and commercial development limited to commercial development on the ground floor only and limited to 3 storeys maximum height.

Please refer to the Concept Plan Map for Land Use Designation boundaries.



4.3 Industrial Areas

4.3.1 Land Use Objectives

- Phase out industrial uses adjacent to the E & N Railway line and provide mixed multi-family / commercial opportunities in this area.

4.3.2 Land Use Designations

- In order to achieve the Industrial Land Use Objectives, no Industrial Land Use Designations are provided for in the Concept Plan. Existing Industrial uses have new designations including Mixed Multi-Family Commercial and Infill Commercial.

4.4 Open Spaces and Public Buildings

Objectives

- Develop parkways / walkways in coordination with new mixed commercial / multi-family projects and / or parking enclaves adjacent to the E & N Railway corridor.
- Encourage and promote public squares, plazas, mini-parks, and other urban space opportunities in conjunction with new public institutional and commercial developments.
- Ensure that any large multi-family development occurring in the Catstream area provides useable public open space.

4.5 Urban Design / Images

Objectives

- Maintain the pedestrian scale and character of the Old City.
- Enhance the Fitzwilliam Street corridor entrance to the area through the extension of the downtown revitalization concept.
- Encourage high quality urban design that is compatible in form and character with the character features of existing buildings in the area.

4.6 Building Height

Objectives

- Limit new multi-family and commercial building heights to a maximum of three storeys in order to maintain public ocean views and keep new buildings in scale with historic development.

4.7 Parking

Objectives

- Develop a combination of solutions to parking problems including on-site parking, extension of the specified parking area, metering of commercial areas and the development of small parking enclaves, that ensure development does not negatively impact the streetscape and circulation.

4.8 Land Allocation

Objectives

- Provide new commercial and multi-family development opportunities in well identified areas.
- Recognize existing land use trends (i.e., increased multi-family residential and retail and office development) and provide opportunities for low impact densification and / or commercialization.

4.9 Infrastructure Servicing

Objectives

- Provide improvements to the areas of mixed commercial / multi-family development as a first priority.
- Upgrade the infrastructure in areas designated for medium density and low density multi-family use as a second priority.



5 Maximum Build Out Density



The following provides a summary of the maximum number of dwelling units that could be developed under the Concept Plan. The Concept envisions a maximum of approximately 2831 dwelling units and an ultimate population of approximately 6056. The estimated 1991 population of the neighbourhood is approximately 4000.

The amount of commercial floor space that could be developed under the Concept Plan will be limited by the three storey height maximum and by the site coverage and parking requirements of each site.

The Concept Plan
Maximum Population at Build Out Density

Sub Area	Development	# Parcels Available for (Density)	Max Permitted Land Use Units / Parcel	Estimated Total Units	Est. Population (2.14 pers. / household)	
1		362	SFD	1	362	774
1a		139	Duplex	2	278	595
3		182	Fourplex	4	728	1557
4		140	3 Storeys 6.5 (0.60 FAR)	910	1947	
6	Residential Component (2/3 Residential)	93	2 Storeys (0.85 FAR)	6	553	1183
TOTAL					2831	6056

N.B. These are general estimates only and do not affect any specific current or proposed developments. An average multiple dwelling floor area of 900 sq. ft. has been assumed in these projections.

6 Relation to the Rest of the City

The Concept Plan assumes that the area will develop as a viable neighbourhood independent of the downtown core and that the area will play an integral role in the revitalization of the downtown core. The central core of the neighbourhood will provide opportunities for commercial office, retail and service commercial development, in addition to well designed multi-family residential development which enhances the pedestrian scale and character of this historic neighbourhood.

This Plan provides for a balance of residential and commercial development which complements the institutional uses in the neighbourhood without diminishing the predominant single family residential character of the upper slopes of the area.

The Plan envisions the Old City neighbourhood as a desirable inner city neighbourhood and the trend for young families and professionals to move into the neighbourhood to continue.





7 Implementation Measures

7.1 Official Community Plan (OCP) Policies

- Amend the OCP text to restrict future high density residential development to the downtown core.
- Attach this Concept Plan as a Schedule to the OCP in order for the policies and Land Use Designations of the Plan to constitute the Official Community Plan Policies and designations for the Plan Area.

7.2 Zoning

- Develop a new mixed use multi-family / commercial zone for Sub Area 6.
- Develop a new single family / duplex zone for Sub Area 1A.
- Develop new multi-family medium density zones in accordance with the Neighbourhood Concept Plan map.
- Rezone the neighbourhood as indicated on the Neighbourhood Concept Plan map.

7.3 Development Permit Areas

- Implement the Old City Multi-Family Residential Guidelines by establishing a new commercial / multi-family Form and Character Development Permit Area in the neighbourhood to cover all new and existing Multiple Family Residential zoned properties.
- Extend the existing Commercial Form and Character Area to cover the new Central Commercial and Mixed Multi-Family / Commercial areas.

7.4 Parking Policies

- Review the specified parking area boundaries and consider expansion to incorporate the new mixed multiple family / commercial areas, and permit businesses in the area to contribute to the acquisition of land to develop small off street parking enclaves in the neighbourhood.
- Consider expansion of metered on street parking areas.
- Review on site requirements for new development.

7.5 Development Cost Charges

- Implement full development cost charges for development in the neighbourhood.

7.6 Downtown Revitalization

- Initiate a downtown revitalization program to encompass the Fitzwilliam and Albert Street gateways to this area. This program would incorporate capital improvements to these boulevards and help develop stronger connections to the downtown core.

7.7 Infrastructure Servicing

- To develop a five year plan of water and sewer main replacement and upgrading, beginning with the mixed commercial / multi-family area as a first priority.
- To develop a five year phased plan of storm sewer servicing, beginning with the mixed commercial / multi-family area as a first priority.



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8. The Land Use Concept Map

