

## **INTRODUCTION**

The City of Nanaimo is initiating a comprehensive update of a number of key strategic planning policy documents in 2020-2021. Central to this undertaking is an update of Nanaimo's 2008 Official Community Plan (OCP), the 2005 Parks, Recreation and Culture Plan (PRCP) and the Active and Sustainable Transportation Plan (ASTP).

Planning and engagement on these plans will be done as part of a broader process that involves coordinating engagement to inform the review of other strategic plans including:

- Economic Development Strategy (EDS);
- Water Supply Strategic Plan Update (WSSP); and
- Sustainability (GHG and Adaptation) Plan (SP).

Coordinating community engagement on these interrelated policy documents is intended to maximize community participation, ensure consistency between the plans, ensure efficient resource use, and avoid public confusion and potential engagement fatigue from multiple overlapping planning processes.

## **PURPOSE AND GOALS**

The goals of this project are to:

1. Design and implement a coordinated planning and engagement process that informs the review and development of the OCP, PRCP, ASTP, EDS, WSSP and SP.
2. Develop an updated OCP, PRCP, and ASTP for Council consideration by Fall, 2021.

Purpose and objectives of this project are to:

1. Update the OCP to include the significant policy documents created since 2008 (e.g. Transportation Master Plan and Affordable Housing Strategy);
2. Identify future Parks, Recreation, and Culture service delivery and development priorities for the next 10 years, including directives for facility development; service delivery; and parks and open space management;
3. Fill information gaps with data generated through updated population models, land capacity analysis, and needs assessments;
4. Evaluate existing policies and practices (e.g. land use designations for nodes, corridors, and neighbourhoods, steep-slope development permit area guidelines, park acquisition framework, park classification system);
5. Consider combining several plans into one comprehensive document;
6. Include new priorities into the City's strategic policy fabric (e.g. Council's 2019-2022 Strategic Plan, Truth and Reconciliation, diversity and inclusion, climate change, and asset management); and
7. Develop an implementation and measurement framework towards the new and updated policy objectives.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The project will be guided by the following principles endorsed by Council for the strategic policy review process:

- a) Build on successful policies in existing documents;
- b) Incorporate Council’s strategic themes identified in the 2019-2022 Strategic Plan: Environmental Responsibility, Governance Excellence, Livability, and Economic Health;
- c) Acknowledge and address the priorities of climate change, Truth and Reconciliation, and sustainable service delivery;
- d) Include robust community engagement in the creation of plans and strategies;
- e) Incorporate a monitoring process to measure and track progress; and
- f) Provide a clear and coordinated vision to guide community-building for the next 25 years.

Any additional guiding principles for the individual plans (OCP, PRCP, ASTP) will be developed/confirmed in the first phase of the review process.

## PLAN AREA CONTEXT

The City of Nanaimo occupies a land mass of about 90.76 km<sup>2</sup> (Statistics Canada, 2016 Census), including approximately 10 square kilometres of parks and open space. Located on the east coast of Vancouver Island on Snuneymuxw and Snaw-Naw-As traditional territory, Nanaimo’s growth pattern is linear, stretching approximately 20 km from the Nanaimo River estuary in the south to the District of Lantzville in the north.

About 5 km wide, the city is naturally bounded by the Salish Sea (Strait of Georgia) to the east and mountainous terrain to the west. BC Statistics’ January 2018 Sub-Provincial Population Estimates show Nanaimo’s 2018 population was at 97,619. This is a 13% increase in population since 2011.

According to the 2016 Census, population growth has been steady at a modest average rate of 1.4% per year between 2001 and 2016 with similar trends anticipated to continue over the next 10 to 15 years.

## PROCESS AND TIMELINE

The following is a projected timeline to complete the various components of the plan process. It is anticipated the process will take approximately 18 months to complete.

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Process</b>	<b>Time Period</b>
1	<p><b>Starting (Plan Initiation)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Background research completed or underway (current and projected demographic data, land inventory, market analysis, historical information etc.)</i></li> <li>• <i>Issue Request for Statement of Qualifications for consulting services (engagement and coordination of strategic plans review); negotiation underway with prospective consultants</i></li> <li>• <i>Internal working group formed and meeting schedule established</i></li> <li>• <i>Approval of Terms of Reference by Council</i></li> <li>• <i>Branding of the coordinated strategic plan review process</i></li> </ul>	October 2019 – April 2020

<p>2</p>	<p><b>Exploring (Issues and Opportunities)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Finalize coordinated engagement plan with consultants</i></li> <li>• <i>Public engagement campaign launched</i></li> <li>• <i>Administer statistically valid needs assessment survey</i></li> <li>• <i>Update to Council summarizing 'What We've Learned'</i></li> </ul>	<p>May 2020 - August 2020</p>
<p>3</p>	<p><b>Visioning (Options and Strategic Directions)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Preparation of plan options (including three land use scenarios for Council and community consideration)</i></li> <li>• <i>Public engagement (online and live events) about potential concepts for goals and actions within the plans</i></li> <li>• <i>Update to Council on plans progress and options</i></li> </ul>	<p>September 2020 - March 2021</p>
<p>4</p>	<p><b>Drafting (Initial Plans and Strategies)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Open house / forum (as well as online engagement) to discuss proposed policy changes and new directions</i></li> <li>• <i>Update to Council requesting endorsement of draft documents</i></li> </ul>	<p>April 2021 - July 2021</p>
<p>5</p>	<p><b>Reviewing (Final Plans and Strategies)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Completion of revised draft plans and final draft plans submitted to Council for adoption</i></li> </ul>	<p>Fall 2021</p>

### STEERING COMMITTEE

The Strategic Plan review process will be overseen by the Governance and Priorities Committee comprised of all Council members.

### CITY COMMITTEES

The City of Nanaimo currently has four Committees / Task Forces with mandates that overlap with different aspects of the review process: the Health and Housing Task Force, the Economic Development Task Force, the Environment Committee and the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness. These groups will be asked to provide a targeted review on any proposed policy changes relevant to their mandate, as well as provided with regular verbal updates on plan progress.

While not a formal City committee, additional engagement with neighbourhood associations may also be achieved through the regular updates to the Nanaimo Neighbourhood Network, and direct engagement with the various neighbourhood associations on top priority issue identification.

## **PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

Robust public engagement will be a guiding principle for the strategic policy development process. In the initial phase of the process, the project team will develop a coordinated planning and engagement process for the review that achieves the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) 'Consult' and 'Involve' levels of engagement, while respecting Council's decision-making authority. With the aid of the project consultant, engagement is intended to achieve inclusive and meaningful participation of those typically marginalized and with barriers to participation in traditional planning processes, while remaining broadly thoughtful, interesting, and effective for the general public. The consultation process will also involve engagement with key stakeholders, including those identified at the project outset, and those that may come forward at later points in the consultation process.

## **RESOURCES**

The Community Planning Section of Development Services will be responsible for leading the OCP review project, and the Active and Sustainable Transportation Plan (ASTP) will be overseen by the Transportation Department. The Parks, Recreation and Culture Department will oversee the PRCP review. The coordinated strategic policy review project will be overseen by the City's senior leadership team. In addition, an interdepartmental team of project managers will meet regularly and throughout the process to ensure coordination and avoid duplication of effort.