



CHAPTER 1: PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE PLAN

1.1 PURPOSE AND LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The Official Community Plan (OCP) is a municipality's statement of its long-term vision for the future. It is 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. Implementation of the OCP occurs through zoning, development permit guidelines, subdivision requirements and other instruments which are more detailed tools for managing and controlling development in the community.

An OCP is adopted as a bylaw by municipal Council, taking into account residents' and property owners' views about the future, regional trends, and legislative requirements. Once adopted, the OCP has legal status which requires that all development and use of land be consistent with the policies of the plan.

The OCP can only indicate a desired direction. For actual changes in land use to occur, the property owner or their agent must make application to the City to initiate a change in the property's land use designation. Only after a Public Hearing is held and Council has approved the proposed change can the OCP be amended.

1.2 SCOPE AND ORGANIZATION

The Local Government Act is the Provincial legislation which defines the powers of a local government in British Columbia. The Act specifies that an OCP must include certain statements and map designations for the area covered by the Plan, including:

- the approximate location, amount, type and density of residential development required to meet anticipated housing needs over a period of at least 5 years;
- the approximate location, amount and type of present and proposed commercial, industrial, institutional, agricultural, recreational and public utility land uses;

- the approximate location and area of sand and gravel deposits that are suitable for future sand and gravel extraction;
- restrictions on the use of land that is subject to hazardous conditions or that is environmentally sensitive to development;
- the approximate location and phasing of any major road, sewer and water systems;
- the approximate location and type of present and proposed public facilities, including schools, parks and waste treatment and disposal sites;
- other matters that may, in respect of any plan, be required or authorized by the minister.

A community plan must also include policies with respect to affordable housing, rental housing and special needs housing. The OCP must also include targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the area covered by the plan, and policies and actions of the local government proposed with respect to achieving those targets.

In addition to the content required under section 877 of the Local Government Act, section 878 of the Act allows for an OCP to include a number of policy statements including:

- City policies relating to social needs, social well-being and social development; and
- City policies relating to the preservation, protection, restoration and enhancement of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity

The Local Government Act also allows the OCP to designate areas as development permit areas for one or more of the following purposes:

- protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity;

- protection of development from hazardous conditions;
- revitalization of an area in which a commercial use is permitted;
- establishment of objectives for the form and character of commercial, industrial or multi-family residential development.

Development within these designated areas requires a development permit, which the municipality has the power to issue, provided that the proposed development meets specified standards and guidelines.

1.3 OCP TIMELINE

This OCP is intended to reflect a 30 year plan (to 2041).

1.4 EFFECT OF THE OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN

Section 884 of the Local Government Act states that an OCP “does not commit or authorize a municipality, regional district or improvement district to proceed with any project that is specified in the plan” but it does require that “all bylaws enacted or works undertaken...must be consistent with the...plan.” No development may occur unless it is consistent with the OCP and with the other instruments such as zoning and subdivision control bylaws.”

1.5 CONSIDERATION OF THE FINANCIAL PLAN, WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN AND THE REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY

Section 882 of the Local Government Act requires municipal Councils to examine the OCP in conjunction with the municipality’s financial plan and any applicable waste management plan to ensure consistency between them. A local government may also consider a proposed OCP in conjunction with any other land use planning and with any social, economic, environmental or other community planning and policies that the local government considers relevant.

In accordance with Section 866 of the Local Government Act, the Port Moody Official Community Plan must also include a Regional Context Statement which states how the municipality will comply with the goals and objectives of the Metro Vancouver 2040: Shaping Our Future Regional Growth Strategy adopted on July 29, 2011.

1.6 OCP UPDATE CONSULTATION PROCESS

On February 28, 2012 Council directed staff to update the City’s Official Community Plan to reflect the presence of the Evergreen Rapid Transit Line targeted for completion in Summer 2016 and guide development in a manner that is consistent with community goals and objectives.

To achieve this, a number of different consultation processes took place involving individuals throughout the community including:

1.6.1 PUBLIC INPUT SESSION

On May 10, 2012 a Public Input Session was held to launch the OCP update process and gather feedback on the community’s vision for development in Port Moody, particularly around the two proposed rapid transit stations. Transit-oriented development principles were presented and community members were asked to provide input on these with respect to future development around stations on feedback forms available at the session and on-line as well as directly to staff via the OCP email address.

1.6.2 OCP DESIGN CHARRETTE

On June 16, 2012 members of the community, local businesses, property owners, developers and City staff spent the day together brainstorming ideas about what future development around the proposed Evergreen Line stations could look like. In total, 44 participants representing land owners, developers, community groups and residents took part, each group assisted by a staff facilitator and design professional. Groups were asked to develop a vision for the areas within a 400 and 800 metre radius of the two proposed Evergreen Line stations and the future potential station near the western end of Moody Centre. Ideas and concepts for redevelopment were described in terms of overall building heights, densities, different land uses, patterns of movement and sense of place/character themes. In general, the results indicated an acceptance for change in the study areas in the form of increased density, particularly closest to proposed stations. Results stressed that stronger connections to the waterfront are critical and an enhanced pedestrian experience is considered necessary in order to create an inviting and distinct neighbourhood unique to this part of Port Moody.

1.6.3 PUBLIC INPUT SESSIONS – APRIL/MAY 2013

Following revisions to the DRAFT OCP in March 2013, five public input sessions were held to gather community feedback on the visions proposed for each of the Evergreen Line sub-areas. Participants and the wider community were encouraged to submit their feedback on these visions through paper feedback forms provided at the sessions or available at City Hall and the City's website. The feedback results were used to inform potential revisions to the OCP for Council's consideration.

1.6.4 TOWN HALL MEETINGS – JUNE AND NOVEMBER 2013

Two OCP Town Hall Meetings were held on June 8 and 18, as well as on November 27, 2013. These meetings provided an opportunity for the community to provide direct feedback to Council on the changes proposed in the DRAFT OCP. These events also provided a venue for community members to hear the opinions and concerns of other residents, businesses and land owners. Together with all of the feedback received during this OCP update process, the results of these meetings helped to refine proposed policies and land uses under consideration.

1.7 ISSUES REQUIRING FURTHER STUDY

Not all issues raised during the OCP review process have been resolved. Some are complex and require further research, analysis and discussion before appropriate policies can be developed to deal with them. For a complete list of work in progress, see Chapter 17, Implementation and Monitoring.

1.8 CHANGING CONDITIONS REQUIRE THAT THE PLAN EVOLVE

The OCP is not a static document. For the OCP to reflect the needs and aspirations of Port Moody residents, it must evolve as conditions and values change in the community and region. New opportunities will present themselves and new approaches to addressing issues and needs will be developed. Although it is not expected to be revised on a frequent basis, an OCP can be amended to respond to changing conditions and values thereby keeping the plan alive and relevant.

1.9 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IS ONGOING AND NECESSARY

As a statement of objectives and policies to guide decisions on planning and land use management, an OCP is consulted and tested on a daily basis. When individual land development projects are considered by Council and given a Public Hearing, the public may comment on the project, how well it carries out the intent of the OCP, and the appropriateness of the OCP in dealing with the site and neighbourhood concerns. Council will take these views into account when it makes its decision to approve or not approve a project. In addition, as area plans and other planning studies are prepared, the community will be provided the opportunity to share their views with the City with respect to the proposal.