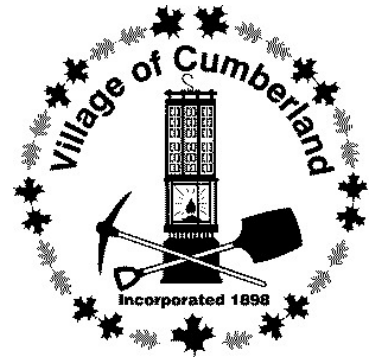


COUNCIL REPORT



REPORT DATE: 7/14/2023

MEETING DATE: 7/24/2023

File No. 6480-01 OCP Project Documents

TO: Mayor and Councillors

FROM: Karin Albert, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: Official Community Plan Review – Phase 1 Public Engagement Report

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council receive the “Official Community Plan Review – Phase 1 Public Engagement Report”, dated July 14, 2023.

PURPOSE

This report presents the Official Community Plan Review - Phase 1 Public Engagement Report. The Engagement Report provides a summary, as well as a complete transcription, of the public input received at the May 24, 2023 Plan our Community Street event and through online tools at connectcumberland.ca

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION

Date	Resolution
April 11, 2023	THAT Council endorse the “Official Community Plan Review Process and Community Engagement Plan 2023-2024”, dated March 30, 2023

BACKGROUND

Official Community Plan Review - Phase 1 Public Engagement

At their [April 11, 2023 meeting](#), Village Council endorsed the Official Community Plan Review Process and Community Engagement Plan 2023-2024. The Engagement Plan identified four public engagement phases.

The goal of the first phase of public engagement was to:

1. Gather public input on a long-term vision for Cumberland, and
2. Identify issues and hot topics for discussion at fall engagement events.

Engagement activities included a Plan your Community Street event, held May 24, 2023, and the launch of online tools at connectcumberland.ca which mirror the engagement activities at the in-person event. The in-person event drew over 175 participants. The connectcumberland.ca site has received 73 contributions.

The first engagement phase is now complete and the public input received is summarized in the Official Community Plan Review - Phase 1 Engagement Report (Attachment 1). A complete transcription of all the input received is provided in the appendices to the report.

A draft engagement report was shared with the Advisory Planning Commission (APC) at their [July 13, 2023 meeting](#). Based on an analysis of the public input received, staff presented proposed elements of a community vision and overarching goals for the new OCP. The APC was asked to reflect on the vision and goals and proposed several edits. The discussions at the APC meeting are reflected in the draft (unadopted) APC meeting minutes of July 13. The vision statements and goals are presented under the Analysis section below.

The public engagement activities this spring also solicited residents' concerns, ideas and suggestions for each of the existing OCP policy areas – Built Environment, Natural Environment, Economy and Community Well-Being. This input will be used to identify needed background information and to formulate discussion topics during phase 2 engagement activities.

Next Steps

Engagement with the K'ómoks

Staff have briefed the K'ómoks on the OCP process and is working to arrange a meeting with K'ómoks Council on the OCP Review to identify their areas of interest and how they wish to be involved in the review.

Preparation for Phase 2 Public Engagement

Further, over the coming weeks, the following activities are planned to gather background information and prepare for the next phase of public engagement:

- a. Engage consultant for the climate action plan
- b. Analyze available data (census, housing need, build-out analysis, GHG emissions inventory, etc);
- c. Discuss OCP topics with the following committees as they relate to their terms of reference: Heritage, Homelessness and Affordable Housing, and Accessibility and Inclusion;
- d. Prepare background information with key data for public engagement;
- e. Prepare several growth scenarios;
- f. Review growth scenarios and content for public engagement with the Advisory Planning Commission
- g. Prepare information materials, key questions for discussions and an online survey for the next phase of public engagement.

An announcement on possible funding from the Complete Communities Fund is expected in late summer/early fall. If grant funding is received, a consulting team will be engaged to compile data and prepare mapping to visualize the four focus areas of the grant – infrastructure (incl. cost of service), transportation/mobility, proximity to daily needs, and housing. The data and mapping will be integrated into OCP review.

ANALYSIS

Twelve vision elements are identified based on the public input received. They were reviewed and further defined with the APC at their July 13, 2023 meeting. Staff will craft a single cohesive vision statement from the 12 statements to be shared with the public as part of phase 2 engagement activities.

Vision Elements

- a. The community values and is reconciled with First Nations.
- b. Residents enjoy Village-feel. Neighbours know each other and feel connected to the larger community regardless of age, gender, social status or income.
- c. Cumberland offers housing options for all income levels.
- d. A thriving arts, culture and music community, public events, festivals and concerts, enriches daily life in Cumberland.
- e. Residents and visitors enjoy a vibrant downtown, rich in character and history, safe for pedestrians, and home to thriving small locally-owned businesses.
- f. The Village has ample parks, greenspaces, and urban trees for residents and visitors to enjoy. Surrounding the Village are healthy wetlands, lakes, streams and forests.
- g. Outdoor recreation is complemented by diverse indoor recreation opportunities.
- h. Community hubs, such as schools, commercial centres, outdoor recreation areas are well-connected with safe cycling and pedestrian pathways that extend all the way to the City of Courtenay boundary.
- i. Food gardens and environmentally-friendly urban agriculture provide habitat for pollinators and urban wildlife while providing healthy local food for residents.
- j. New development is green and complements the feel and character of the rest of the community.
- k. Climate actions have reduced carbon emissions from all sectors and the Village has achieved true net-zero greenhouse gas emissions community.
- l. Municipal infrastructure is resilient to severe weather events and other climate change impacts.

Overarching Goals

In support of the above vision elements, ten overarching goals are identified that will provide focus and guide priorities and policies in the OCP. The goals were reviewed and refined with the APC. Each goal will be further developed and described with a short statement to clarify the intent of the goal.

1. Reconciliation with First Nations
2. A diverse and socially inclusive community
3. A healthy and biodiverse ecosystems
4. A climate-responsible community
5. A diverse parks and greenways system serving all ages and abilities
6. Diverse housing options and attainable housing for all residents
7. A vibrant downtown core
8. A thriving arts and culture community
9. A strong and sustainable local economy
10. A safe and interconnected alternative transportation network that ties into the larger Comox Valley network

Having a list of goals does not mean policy areas not directly related to those goals will be ignored; however, the goals focus effort on what is particularly important for the Village in the upcoming years.

Compared to the vision and goals in the current OCP, the above place greater emphasis on reconciliation with First Nations, social inclusion, and arts and culture.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION AND CONSULTATION

Extensive public engagement is central to development of a new OCP that will guide how the Village grows and adapts to change. The Village has set up an online public engagement platform at connectcumberland.ca. The site includes online engagement tools which are used in parallel with in-person events. All OCP-related reports are posted to the site. Residents can sign up to receive email updates of upcoming public engagement events. Public engagement events are also advertised in local newspapers and bulletin boards, on social media, through posters, on the Village website and Village email news posts.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Council can provide input into the engagement process or provide additional direction.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

- ☒ Diverse and Healthy Community
- ☐ Sustainable Service Delivery and Asset Management
- ☒ Community Planning

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The OCP review project is fully funded in the 2023-2026 Financial Plan. Additional funding up to \$150,000 may be available for data collection and mapping if the Village is successful in obtaining Complete Community grant funding from the Province. Submission of an application was endorsed by Council at their June 12, 2023 meeting.

OPERATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The OCP review process is coordinated by the Senior Planner with the involvement of other Development Services as well as Operations, Legislative Services and Financial Services staff. The communications components of the project are supported by a graphic design consultant. Additional consultants will be brought on board to work on key topics such as climate action planning and data collection and mapping (the latter pending Complete Community grant funding).

The Development Services Department has limited capacity to begin other new policy projects during the OCP Review.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

 Climate action planning is a key topic in the OCP review. The climate section in the OCP will provide specific actions to move the Village away from dependence on fossil fuels and achieve

reductions in greenhouse gas emissions in the building, transportation, energy, and solid waste sectors. Climate action planning will also identify actions to adapt to climate change.

ATTACHMENT

1. Official Community Plan Review - Phase 1 Public Engagement Report

CONCURRENCE

Courtney Simpson, Manager of Development Services **CS**

Respectfully submitted,

K. Albert

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M. Mason

Michelle Mason
Chief Administrative Officer