



# CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT

Municipal Hall  
1229 Esquimalt Road  
Esquimalt, B.C. V9A 3P1

## Legislation Text

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### TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT STAFF REPORT

**MEETING DATE:** June 16, 2025

Report No. DEV-25-023

**TO:** Committee of the Whole

**FROM:** Jakub Lisowski, Planner II Policy, Development Services

**SUBJECT:** Official Community Plan Recalibration - 2025

#### RECOMMENDATION:

That the Committee of the Whole recommend that Council endorse the draft Project Sign-off and proceed with the Official Community Plan Recalibration.

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

At their October 21, 2024, meeting, the Committee of the Whole assessed options for the review of the Official Community Plan and subsequently directed staff to proceed with Options 1, 2, and 3 (see staff report DEV-24-052 for details (Appendix "A")). These options included:

- Making amendments necessary to be compliant with recent amendments to the *Local Government Act* related to the most recent Housing Needs Report.
- Making housekeeping amendments as outlined in the staff report.
- Amending the Commercial/Commercial Mixed-use policies to include policies related to height and density.

Based on the comments staff received at this meeting, a Project Sign-off (Appendix "B") has been drafted for Council's review and comment.

#### BACKGROUND:

In response to the Committee of the Whole's recommendations from their October 21, 2024, meeting, staff have prepared a "Project Sign-off Document" (Appendix "B"). This document contains the core aspects of a Project Charter and is provided for review to ensure that expectations for the project are well understood. The Project Sign-off process achieves the following objectives:

- Forms the basis of the Project Charter.
- Provides information about the scope, key proposed milestones, identification of partners,

and plans for engagement with the public.

- Clarifies and aligns expectations about the project's intent and the desired outcomes early in the project.

The Project Sign-off includes provisions related to the recent amendments to the *Local Government Act* that require that local governments update their Official Community Plans by December 31, 2025, to include:

- Statements and map designations to provide for at least the 20-year total number of housing units required to meet anticipated housing needs from the Housing Needs Report (Appendix "C").
- Housing policies respecting each class of housing needs are required to be addressed in the most recent Housing Needs Report.

The current Official Community Plan land use designations can accommodate the overall housing needs, namely:

- 1,359 net new units in the next 5 years and
- 4,213 net new units in the next 20 years,

Amendments are necessary to address each class of housing need required by the Housing Needs Report, namely:

- Extreme Core Housing Need
- Persons Experiencing Homelessness
- Suppressed Household Formation
- Anticipated Growth
- Rental Vacancy Rate Adjustment
- Additional Local Demand

In addition to the statutory requirements outlined above, The Project Sign-off also includes provisions related to additional amendments to the Official Community Plan related to housekeeping updates including adding height (maximum 12-storeys) and density (maximum Floor Area Ratio of 3.0) provisions to the Commercial/Commercial Mixed-Use policy section (Appendix "B").

In addition, since the Committee of the Whole last reviewed staff's list of proposed Official Community Plan amendments, the provincial government has released a document entitled, Inclusionary Zoning and Density Bonusing Comprehensive Guidance (March 7, 2025). Staff will bring forth any required amendments to ensure that the density bonusing provisions in the current Official Community Plan are compliant with the guidance from the province.

### **Chronology:**

- November 30, 2023: Bill 44 Housing Statutes (*Residential Development Act*) received Royal Assent.

- September 23, 2024: As part of the Council Priorities Plan mid-term refresh, Council instructed staff to arrange for further in-depth discussion of the OCP.
- October 21, 2024: The Committee of the Whole recommended that Council direct staff to initiate Options 1, 2, and 3 for the OCP Recalibration.
- October 28, 2024: Council directed staff to initiate Options 1, 2, and 3 for the OCP Recalibration.
- November 25, 2024: Housing Needs Report completed and approved by Council.

## **ANALYSIS:**

Council is aware of the need for amendments but at the same time expressed a desire to avoid a situation where the scope of an OCP Recalibration would extend the project into 2026. Council approved three options for the OCP Recalibration in October 2024 which are summarized in Appendix “B” Project Sign-Off.

A more comprehensive and substantial revision of the OCP is planned to begin in 2026 or 2027 with a mandatory completion date by December 2030.

## **OPTIONS:**

1. That the Committee of the Whole recommend that Council endorse the draft Project Sign-off for the Official Community Plan Recalibration project in 2025.
2. That the Committee of the Whole recommend that Council endorse the draft Project Sign-off for the Official Community Plan Recalibration project in 2025, with amendments.

## **COUNCIL PRIORITY:**

The Official Community Plan Recalibration is identified as a project under the “Housing” priority in the Council Priorities Plan 2023-2026.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

The budget for this project (\$10,000) is for consulting related to stakeholder engagement.

## **COMMUNICATIONS/ENGAGEMENT:**

Stakeholder engagement is planned between June and September. Consultation will consist of circulating the draft OCP to various groups and organizations identified in the draft Project Sign-off (Appendix “B”).

The public will be consulted through an in-person open house, an information booth at a public event, and an online open house.

A communications plan will be developed with a consultant to share information with stakeholders. The proposed amendments will be available for inspection at the Municipal Hall and posted on the Township’s website. Municipal bulletin boards and municipally controlled digital media platforms will be used to provide residents with details about how to access and provide comments related to the proposed amendments. As this is an amendment to the OCP, a public hearing is required.

## **TIMELINES & NEXT STEPS:**

- June - July 2025: Presentation of Project Plan and Timeline to Advisory Planning Commission, Design Review Committee, and Council
- June - September 2025: Stakeholder and public engagement
- October 2025: Council 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Readings of Bylaw
- November 2025: Council Public Hearing
- December 2025: Council Adoption of OCP amendments

## **REPORT REVIEWED BY:**

1. Deb Hopkins, Director of Corporate Services, Reviewed
2. Sarah Holloway, Manager of Corporate Services, Reviewed
3. Ian Irvine, Director of Finance, Reviewed
4. Dan Horan, Chief Administrative Officer, Concurrence

## **LIST OF ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Appendix "A" October 21, 2024, Committee of the Whole meeting Staff Report (DEV-24-052)
2. Appendix "B" Project Sign-off Document
3. Appendix "C" 2024 Housing Needs Report
4. Appendix "D" Staff Presentation