

TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: July 7, 2025

Report No. DEV-25-031

TO: Council

FROM: Jakub Lisowski, Planner II Policy, Development Services

SUBJECT: Official Community Plan (OCP) Recalibration - 2025

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council, having considered Sections 475 and 476 of the *Local Government Act*, authorize staff to circulate the Project Sign-off for the Official Community Plan recalibration to those agencies and organizations identified in staff report DEV-25-031.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Staff are requesting Council authorization to circulate the Project Sign-off for the Official Community Plan recalibration to the list of recipients identified in Appendix "C". At their June 16, 2025, meeting (Appendix "A"), the Committee of the Whole endorsed the Project Sign-off of the Official Community Plan and directed staff to proceed with the Official Community Plan Recalibration. The Recalibration includes the elements identified in the Project Sign-off Document (Appendix "B").

BACKGROUND:

The Committee of the Whole recommended at their June 16, 2025, meeting (Appendix "A"), that Council endorses the Project Sign-off Document (Appendix "B"). The following key amendments are being made to the OCP:

- 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.

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.
- June 16, 2025: The Committee of the Whole recommended that Council direct staff to endorse the draft Project Sign-off and proceed with the OCP Recalibration.
- June 17, 2025: The Advisory Planning Commission recommended that Council proceed with the OCP Recalibration.

Advisory Body Recommendations:

The Advisory Planning Commission recommended that Council proceed with the Official Community Plan Recalibration, as presented in Appendix A of Staff Report No. APC-25-012 in order to conduct a recalibration prior to the 2026 OCP review and to remain compliant with Provincial legislation.

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 Council, having considered Sections 475 and 476 of the *Local Government Act*, authorize staff to circulate the Project Sign-off for the Official Community Plan recalibration to those organizations and agencies identified on the list in Appendix “C”.
2. That Council add or remove organizations and agencies identified on the list in Appendix “C”.

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 May and September. Consultation will consist of circulating the draft OCP to various groups and organizations identified in the Consultation List (Appendix “C”).

The public will be consulted through an in-person open house, an information booth at a public event (Esquimalt Farmers Market), 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:

- July 2025: Presentation of Project Plan, timeline, and draft Development Permit Area guidelines to Design Review Committee
- May – September 2025: Stakeholder and public engagement
- September 2025: Presentation of OCP policies and guidelines to Advisory Planning Commission
- September 2025: Council Workshop on OCP policies and guidelines
- October 2025: Council 1st and 2nd 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. Ian Irvine, Director of Finance, Reviewed
3. Dan Horan, Chief Administrative Officer, Concurrence

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS:

1. Appendix “A” June 16, 2025, Committee of the Whole Meeting Report (DEV-25-023)
2. Appendix “B” Project Sign-off Document
3. Appendix “C” Official Community Plan Consultation List