

REQUEST FOR DECISION

DATE: September 09, 2015

Report No. DEV-15-045

TO: Laurie Hurst, Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: Bill Brown, Director of Development Services

SUBJECT:

West Bay Neighbourhood Design Guidelines

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council authorize staff to circulate the West Bay Neighbourhood Design Guidelines to the West Bay Neighbourhood Stakeholders Committee, the Design Review Committee, and the public for a one-month review and comment period.

RELEVANT POLICY:

Official Community Plan
Economic Development Strategy

STRATEGIC RELEVANCE:

This Request for Decision supports the following strategic priority: "We continue to enhance the health and livability of the community".

BACKGROUND:

On November 20, 2014 the Township issued a request for proposals to develop the "West Bay Neighbourhood Design Guidelines". The successful proponent was Modus Planning, Design & Engagement in partnership with D'Amrosio Architecture and Urbanism and supported by Murdoch de Greeff Landscape Architects.

The inaugural meeting between staff and the consultants was held on February 3, 2015 at which time a detailed planning process was worked out. The first major step was to identify major stakeholders in the West Bay Neighbourhood and create a stakeholders group. This 17 member group consisted of representatives of the following West Bay Neighbourhood constituencies:

- West Bay Residents Association;
- Major Developer;
- Esquimalt First Nation;
- Songhees First Nation;
- Young families;
- Festival organizer;
- Live aboard community;
- Float home community;
- Business owner;
- Department of National Defense;
- Walk on Victoria; and
- Township of Esquimalt staff.

Following the formation of the stakeholder group, the next step in the process was to convene a workshop to help identify issues that were important to the neighbourhood. The workshop took place on March 19, 2015 and included a pre-workshop walking tour of the neighbourhood. The information gathered from the workshop was used to inform the subsequent all-day stakeholders' charrette that was held on June 13, 2015. The information gathered at the workshop was then combined with the professional expertise of the consulting group to produce the West Bay Neighbourhood Design Guidelines. These Guidelines represent the consultants' interpretation, based on their best professional skills and experience, of the stakeholders' vision for the West Bay Neighbourhood. The Guidelines deal with both the public and private realm since the two realms are inextricably linked, especially in a neighbourhood like West Bay. They represent a clear vision for the future development of the neighbourhood.

Staff is now bringing the Guidelines to Council for Council's review and comment along with a request that the Guidelines be circulated back to the stakeholders group for review and comment. In addition, staff is recommending that the Guidelines be made available for a one-month public review and comment period. The Guidelines will be posted on our website and the public will be able to submit comments via the website. Following this review period, staff will consider whether any changes are necessary and then bring the Guidelines back to Council for approval in principle. This will allow the developer of the Triangle Lands to proceed with his rezoning application. The Guidelines will also form part of the Official Community Plan review process and will be incorporated into the new Official Community Plan when it is brought forward to Council at the end of the review process.

In addition to the Guidelines, the Township will receive a 3-D digital model of the West Bay Neighbourhood which can be used to undertake detailed analysis of the potential impacts of future development in the neighbourhood.

ISSUES:

1. Rationale for Selected Option

The West Bay Neighbourhood Design Guidelines are the result of a professional interpretation of input from the West Bay Neighbourhood Stakeholders combined with best practices in urban design based on the professional knowledge and experience of the consulting group. Staff believe that the Guidelines should be circulated to the Stakeholder group, the Design Review Committee, and the community for review and comment prior to being formally sanctioned by Council.

2. Organizational Implications

The majority of the work has been completed. The remaining work can be incorporated into staff schedules.

3. Financial Implications

Council approved a budget of \$32,000.00. The actual cost may be closer to \$37,000.00. The additional \$5,000.00 will come from the Development Services general consulting budget.

4. Sustainability & Environmental Implications

The Guidelines contain many design principles related to sustainability and the environment.

5. Communication & Engagement

The majority of community engagement to date has been through the West Bay Neighbourhood Stakeholders Group. Staff is recommending that the Guidelines be referred back to the Stakeholder Group for review and comment and further that they be made available to the community for a one-month review and comment period.

ALTERNATIVES:

1) That Council authorize staff to circulate the West Bay Design Neighbourhood Guidelines to the West Bay Neighbourhood Stakeholders Committee, the Design Review Committee, and the public for a one-month comment period.

2) That Council adopt the West Bay Neighbourhood Design Guidelines as policy.