



CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT

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

Legislation Text

File #: 21-132, Version: 1

REQUEST FOR DECISION

DATE: February 24, 2021

Report No. DEV-21-014

TO: Laurie Hurst, Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: Bill Brown, Director of Development Services

SUBJECT:

Proposed Amendment to the Regional Context Statement in the Official Community Plan

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council authorize the Corporate Officer to forward the proposed amendment to the Regional Context Statement in the Official Community Plan as outlined in Staff Report No. DEV-21-014, to the Capital Regional District's Corporate Officer and furthermore, indicate that Council will discharge its conditional approval, accepting the Regional Growth Strategy Amendment Bylaw No. 4328 per the requirements of Section 438 of the *Local Government Act*, upon CRD Board acceptance of Esquimalt's revised Regional Context Statement.

RELEVANT POLICY:

Local Government Act

Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2018, No. 2922

Regional Growth Strategy

STRATEGIC RELEVANCE:

Although the population, dwelling unit, and employment projections are not related to any specific strategic priority, goal, or operational strategy, an accurate understanding of demographic trends in Esquimalt informs the Township's response to many of the items in the Strategic Plan.

BACKGROUND:

Chronology:

June 22, 2020 Council passed a resolution to consider acceptance of the Regional Context Statement.

Section 429 (2) (b) of the *Local Government Act* states that, "A regional growth strategy must cover a period of at least 20 years from the time of its initiation and must include population, and employment projections for the period covered by the regional growth strategy". The CRD produced these projections along with a bylaw that would amend the Regional Growth Strategy to replace the old

projections with the new projections. However, Council did not believe that the projections accurately reflected Esquimalt's growth pattern and thereby did not accept the amendment. Through a series of subsequent staff level negotiations, Council agreed that the Township would consider acceptance of the proposed amendment subject to the following conditions:

- 1) That the Capital Regional District Board first approve an amendment to Section 3.9 (Regional Context Statement - Population Projections) of the Township of Esquimalt's Official Community Plan.
- 2) That the Capital Regional District commit in writing to paying the legal fees incurred by the Township of Esquimalt to have the proposed amendment to the Regional Context Statement drafted by its legal counsel.
- 3) That the Capital Regional District send a letter to all member municipalities stating that the Capital Regional District only recognizes that population projections at the sub-regional level as per the proposed amendment to the Regional Growth Strategy and does not recognize the population projections for individual members.

Emily Sinclair, Senior Manager, Regional and Strategic Planning for the Capital Regional District has sent a letter to staff outlining the CRD's response to the above points and respectfully requesting that Council discharge its conditional acceptance subject to the Board approving the amendment to the Township's Regional Context Statement (Appendix "A").

The proposed amendment to the Regional Context Statement in the Township's Official Community Plan would delete the existing Section 3.9 and replace it with the following:

Section 3.9 Population Projections

The provincially mandated population projections over a 20-year time frame for a small population such as Esquimalt's are very difficult to make with any method due to the significant impact that economic, social, and demographic variables have on the outcome over time. For this reason, the Capital Regional District has chosen to base its population projections on a sub-regional scale using a cohort methodology. The Township of Esquimalt is in the Core sub-region with the District of Oak Bay, District of Saanich, City of Victoria, and Town of View Royal. Cognizant of the individual characteristics of each of these municipalities, the Capital Regional District, and the Township of Esquimalt, agree that the sub-regional population projections will not constrain the Township's future growth and the Township's Official Community Plan is consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy population projections. The Township is working well to achieve regional interests of densification and being a complete compact community and intends to continue doing so.

By law, the CRD Board must approve all Regional Context Statements and amendments thereto. If the Board approves the proposed amendment, staff will then initiate an amendment to the Official Community Plan. It is likely that this amendment will include a series of other minor amendments to update the Plan.

ISSUES:

1. Rationale for Selected Option

The proposed amendment to the Regional Context Statement provides assurances that

Esquimalt's growth can continue without concerns related to consistency with the Regional Growth Strategy's population projections.

2. Organizational Implications

There are no significant organizational implications.

3. Financial Implications

There are no significant financial implications.

4. Sustainability & Environmental Implications

There are no significant sustainability or environmental implications.

5. Communication & Engagement

Once the CRD Board has approved the amendment to the Regional Context Statement, staff will initiate an amendment to the Official Community Plan that will trigger the statutory public consultation process.

ALTERNATIVES:

- 1) That Council authorize the Corporate Officer to forward the proposed amendment to the Regional Context Statement in the Official Community Plan as outlined in staff Report No. DEV-21-014, to the Capital Regional District's Corporate Officer and furthermore, indicate that Council will discharge its conditional approval, accepting the Regional Growth Strategy Amendment Bylaw 4328 per the requirements of Section 438 of the *Local Government Act*, upon CRD Board acceptance of Esquimalt's revised Regional Context Statement.
- 2) That Council authorize the Corporate Officer to inform the CRD's Corporate Officer that Council will not discharge its conditional approval at this time.