

TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

DATE: April 27, 2023

FROM: GENERAL MANAGER
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

FILE: 71130 20

SUBJECT: ROYAL OAK URBAN VILLAGE COMMUNITY PLAN PHASE 1 PUBLIC
CONSULTATION: PRELIMINARY VISIONING, GOALS, AND PLAN
DIRECTIONS

PURPOSE: To seek endorsement of the preliminary visioning, goals, and plan directions for the Royal Oak Urban Village Community Plan and to initiate the Phase 1 public consultation process.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT** the Committee recommend that Council endorse the preliminary visioning, goals and plan directions for the Royal Oak Urban Village Community Plan, as a basis for receiving community input, as outlined in this report.
2. **THAT** the Committee recommend that Council authorize staff to undertake the Phase 1 public consultation process as outlined in this report.
3. **THAT** this report be advanced to Council's open agenda.

REPORT**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

On December 13, 2022, the Planning and Development Committee (PDC) received an introductory report which outlined the initiation of upcoming community planning processes for the Edmonds Town Centre, Royal Oak Urban Village, and the Cascade Heights Urban Village. This report, specific to the Royal Oak community, outlines the content that will be used as a basis for Phase 1 public consultation. With Committee and Council approval of this report, staff would formally launch the Phase 1 public consultation process in the summer of 2023 to engage the public and solicit input on the preliminary visioning, goals, and plan directions for the new Royal Oak Urban Village Plan. Feedback received from the public during Phase 1 public consultation will guide the development of early draft plan directions as the basis for developing a new comprehensive plan for the Royal Oak Urban Village community.

2.0 POLICY FRAMEWORK

The development of the new Royal Oak Plan is consistent with direction provided by Council adopted plans and policies, including: Corporate Strategic Plan (2022), Regional Context Statement (2013), Official Community Plan (1998), Social Sustainability Strategy (2011), Environmental Sustainability Strategy (2016), Economic Development Strategy (2007), Climate Action Framework (2020), Burnaby Safety Plan (2020), Burnaby Transportation Plan (2021), Home Strategy (2021), and Rental Use Zoning Policy.

The Burnaby Official Community Plan (OCP) identifies 14 Urban Village neighbourhoods within the City, including Royal Oak, that are intended to provide moderate multi-family residential densities near locally-serving commercial uses, employment, recreation, schools and other everyday needs. The recently-adopted Bainbridge and Lochdale Urban Village Community Plans, as well as the Burnaby Urban Village Design Guidelines, serve as guidance for how to plan the mid to long-term future for other Urban Villages under the foundational themes of climate action, sustainable placemaking, and resiliency.

3.0 PLAN AREA CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

The Royal Oak community occupies approximately 224 hectares (554 acres) in between the Metrotown downtown core to the northwest, and Edmonds Town Centre to the southeast (see *Attachment #1*). The community was developed around the Royal Oak Interurban Station and is connected to north and south Burnaby via Royal Oak Avenue and historically to Vancouver, Edmonds, and New Westminster via Kingsway. It is also an area of transition with traditionally industrial and commercial uses north of the SkyTrain guideway/BC Parkway, and residential uses to the south. The community is well served by public transit, with the Royal Oak SkyTrain station offering direct access along the Expo Line to Metrotown, Edmonds, and downtown Vancouver and Surrey.

The original Royal Oak Community Plan was established in 1999, based on the deliberation of the citizen-based Royal Oak Advisory Committee. The Plan was amended in the past to reflect boundary changes along Dufferin Avenue, park area amendments on Grimmer Street and McGregor Avenue, and land use designation changes at Gilley Avenue and Kingsway, most recently. The plan was amended twice in 2022 to accommodate changes in use and form near the Royal Oak SkyTrain Station, and institutional uses at the intersection of Gilley Avenue and Beresford Street. A third amendment is underway for a property on Irmin Street west of Royal Oak Avenue.

4.0 PURPOSE OF THE NEW ROYAL OAK URBAN VILLAGE COMMUNITY PLAN

Partly due to its strategic location between Metrotown and Edmonds, market interest in new development and revitalization in Royal Oak remains strong. Currently, there are over 10 active rezoning applications in Royal Oak, many of them involving proposals for low and mid-rise multi-family residential and mixed-use buildings. Despite this, the Royal Oak Community Plan has also not been comprehensively updated since its original adoption in 1999, and with the recent adoption of the Lochdale and Bainbridge Urban Village Plans (2022), advancing Royal Oak to align more closely with these more contemporary Urban Village concepts is considered appropriate to elevate this strategically located Urban Village within the city.

The purpose of the new Royal Oak Plan is to build off of the original community plan and the ongoing growth and evolution of the Royal Oak community that has occurred since, to provide an updated framework for the strategic and well-managed growth of the Royal Oak Urban Village, in line with recent emerging community and City-wide themes and trends, including the following:

- Climate Action and Community Resiliency
- Official Community Plan Update (ongoing)
- Truth and Reconciliation
- Sustainable Transportation
- Housing Choices
- Employment Options
- Placemaking, Public Space and Urban Design
- Corridor Planning
- Smart Cities Technology

5.0 OVERVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY PLAN PROCESS

The development of the new Royal Oak Plan will involve a multi-phased public consultation process, as outlined below in **Figure 1**. Each phase of the community planning process will involve extensive public consultation with area residents, property owners, Host Nation groups, and a range of community partners. It is noted that citizen-led advisory groups played a significant role in developing the original Royal Oak Plan and as such, each public consultation phase will involve referrals to applicable community-based groups that remain active in the community.



Figure 1. General Community Plan Development Process for the Royal Oak Plan

A brief summary of each public consultation phase is outlined below:

- **Phase 1 – Preliminary Visioning, Goals and Plan Directions (Spring-Summer 2023):** This initial phase focuses on raising awareness about the community planning process and inviting the public to engage and learn more about the project. Initial engagement will invite the public to provide general feedback on the broad-level preliminary visioning, goals and plan directions for the community plan moving forward. Concurrent with Phase 1 public consultation, a more detailed and targeted study of the Mixed-Use nodes in Royal Oak (see **Section 6.3.2**) will be conducted to determine potential future land use designations and building forms, in order to ensure that

investment in housing and commercial revitalization may be advanced within these key areas of the plan as early as possible, should opportunities arise.

- **Phase 2 - Draft Plan Directions (Fall 2023-Winter 2024):** This phase will seek general input on preliminary draft plan directions for the new Royal Oak Plan. The draft plan directions will introduce the general plan structure and introduce policy directions for key topics such as land use, mobility and public realm, housing, and community amenities and services. It will also present any revisions to the plan area boundary in draft form, based on input received during Phase 1.
- **Phase 3 – Detailed Draft Plan (Summer 2024):** The final public consultation phase will seek input on the detailed draft plan, which will have been refined and developed based on feedback received from previous project phases.
- **Plan Adoption (Fall 2024):** Staff will revise and finalize the plan as necessary based on input received on the detailed draft plan during Phase 3, and present it to Committee and Council for adoption.

6.0 PHASE 1 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

As noted, this report seeks Committee and Council approval for staff to proceed with Phase 1 public consultation this spring and summer. This section of the report outlines the Phase 1 content that will be presented to the public as a basis to receive input on the preliminary visioning, goals and plan directions for the new Royal Oak Plan. *Attachment #2* provides a comprehensive overview of this content that will be refined and displayed as a discussion guide when Phase 1 public consultation is launched.

6.1 Preliminary Visioning

Vision statements establish succinct, broad-level goals and aspirations for the community’s future. While a formal vision statement for the Royal Oak Plan will not be established until later phases, Phase 1 public consultation will start seeking input on important aspects and values that the community believes should be part of the vision for the new plan, including the following:

- Maximizing the neighbourhood’s strategic location as a transit-oriented Urban Village between Metrotown and Edmonds;
- Fostering a distinct, unique and resilient Urban Village community;
- Enhancing Kingsway, Royal Oak and Imperial Street as vibrant commercial corridors;
- Expanding the range of housing, commercial and creative employment options; and,
- Improving access to recreation, nature, and cultural amenities.

This preliminary visioning exercise in Phase 1 will help guide the development of a formal vision statement that will ultimately be included in the new Royal Oak Plan.

6.2 Preliminary Goals

Phase 1 public consultation will introduce a set of preliminary goals and sub-goals that will help inform discussion and garner meaningful input on the future of the Royal Oak community:

Goal #1 – Urban Village Housing Options

Provide diverse and unique Urban Village housing options in Royal Oak, along with locally-focused community amenities and services that are distinct from those offered in the adjacent Metrotown Downtown and Edmonds Town Centre Neighbourhoods.

Subgoals:

- Focus higher residential densities and mixed-use forms around the Royal Oak SkyTrain station (Station Area Node) and along the Kingsway corridor leading from Metrotown (Village Centre Node) to create a bi-nodal transit-oriented gateway (see *Section 6.3.2*).
- Provide medium-density, mid-rise mixed-use forms along the Kingsway corridor leading into Edmonds, and Royal Oak Avenue, transitioning down from the high density nodes.
- Residential areas outside of high-density mixed use nodes will provide distinct low to mid-rise apartment forms as well as missing middle forms such as townhomes and row houses.
- Facilitate development of non-profit and supportive housing within the Urban Village through leveraging City-owned sites.
- Apply the City's existing housing policies (e.g. the Rental Use Zoning Policy and the Tenant Assistance Policy) to ensure the provision of rental housing in future developments, and protection for existing residential tenants during redevelopment.
- Concentrate locally-serving, small-scale, community amenities, services, and commercial uses along the Kingsway, Royal Oak Avenue and Imperial Street corridors, providing visual distinction from the adjacent Town Centres, and serving the 15-minute city model throughout the Urban Village.

Goal #2 – Sustainable Mobility and Public Realm

Connect Royal Oak residents to convenient and sustainable mobility options, a high quality public realm, and enhanced connections to parks and green spaces.

Subgoals:

- Apply Streetscape and Urban Village Design Guidelines that were established through the Bainbridge and Lochdale Community Plan processes to ensure that new and existing streetscapes within Royal Oak meet the needs of all users, including provisions for landscaping, trees, lighting, sidewalks, and cycling facilities.
- Expand the network of open and green spaces (i.e. parks, pocket parks, pedestrian plazas, trails) as well as green connections to and from these spaces that provide recreational and social gathering opportunities.
- Integrate urban public spaces that enhance and promote climate resilience, such as greenways, seasonal flooding parks, demonstration gardens, and emergency hubs.
- Enhance north-south and east-west pedestrian and cycling connections from the Highland Park Line and BC Parkway Trail by breaking up larger blocks and making these connections more contiguous.

- Promote public education and stewardship of environmentally-sensitive areas such as Gray Creek Ravine Park and Frogger's Creek Ravine Park. Identify locations and develop policies that support nature-based solutions (i.e. multi-use water quality/natural wetland facilities) for improving rainwater management, water quality, and overall watershed health.

Goal #3 – Local Economy and the Creative Economy

Enhance the local economy to better serve existing and future residents, and to establish Royal Oak as a complete Urban Village with a mix of locally-serving retail, services, social infrastructure, and other commercial and employment uses.

Subgoals:

- Encourage the incremental development of creative employment uses south of Kingsway, between MacPherson Avenue and Gilley Avenue, through the adaptive re-use of existing industrial spaces and integration of accessory commercial uses.
- Encourage ground-level retail, non-profit, and commercial uses in key locations such as near the Royal Oak SkyTrain Station and along Kingsway and Royal Oak Avenue.
- Encourage accessory non-profit social enterprises, community spaces, and child care centres in mixed-use developments to support employees and residents.
- Strengthen the local retail and service commercial base such that basic everyday needs for residents (e.g. groceries, banks, personal services, cafes, pharmacies) can be reached within walking distance.

Goal#4 – Climate Action and Resiliency

Establish the Royal Oak Urban Village as a neighbourhood that advances the City's Climate Action and Community Resiliency goals.

Subgoals:

- Establish climate action strategies that are specific to the Royal Oak Neighbourhood and in line with citywide strategies in areas such as land use, transportation, public realm, and urban design.
- Require green buildings that minimize energy use, water use, waste and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Encourage District Energy Utility (DEU) connections for existing and new multiple family residential, commercial, industrial and other uses within Royal Oak as this option becomes available.
- Build community resilience in Royal Oak such that the community is able to withstand, adapt to, and rebound from changes and events (e.g. floods, heat waves, pandemics) with minimal impact.

Goal #5 – Unique Transit-Oriented Urban Village

Establish Royal Oak as a unique, transit-oriented Urban Village Community and a distinct place to live, work and visit, in between the more intensive Metrotown and Edmonds communities.

Subgoals:

- Recognize historic transportation routes including through interpretive strategies, such as signage and banners.

- Work with Burnaby's Host Nations and members of Burnaby's urban Indigenous communities to establish strategies specific to Royal Oak that will help advance the City's Truth and Reconciliation efforts. These may include strategies related to wayfinding, placemaking and place-naming, public art, housing, social and environmental sustainability, architecture, and urban design.
- Apply policy directions to identify and conserve heritage resources, including updating the inventory of character homes and encouraging retention of significant character homes.
- Preserve and enhance significant heritage assets in the Royal Oak community. Where feasible, incorporate heritage assets (including buildings, natural heritage features, and objects) as part of new developments.
- Through the development process, support a network of integrated "third places" (parks, places of worship, cafes, bookstores) outside of homes and workplaces that intrigue people of diverse cultural backgrounds, income levels, and demographics to explore the urban and natural environment, while developing a distinct identity for Royal Oak.

Input received on these goals and sub-goals in Phase 1 will help to further shape policy directions on different topics during Phases 2 and 3.

6.3 Preliminary Plan Directions

The preliminary plan directions are separated into three categories, as outlined below, and will be used to garner further discussion and input with residents, community partners and other members of the public during Phase 1 public consultation.

6.3.1 Plan Area Boundary

Phase 1 public consultation will present preliminary ideas and options (see *Attachment #2 page 4*) for how the Royal Oak Plan area boundary may be amended through the community plan process, to achieve various objectives including the following:

- Provide additional opportunities for missing middle housing (e.g. townhouses, row houses, multi-plexes), in coordination with the ongoing Housing Choices Program, that are located close to transit (i.e. within 400-800 metres of the Royal Oak SkyTrain Station) and create gradual building form and scale transitions between the Urban Village and surrounding neighbourhoods;
- Provide better continuity between Royal Oak and adjacent neighbourhoods;
- Enable better mobility connections and public realm improvements to a wider area of the community, for the benefit of more residents and visitors;
- Expand opportunities to preserve heritage resources in the neighbourhood, especially in areas west of Nelson Avenue; and,
- Enable consideration for expanding park and public use spaces as the community grows.

While final decisions regarding the plan area boundary for the new Royal Oak Plan will not be made during Phase 1, initial discussions and input will help to shape further discussions during Phases 2 and 3, and will eventually contribute to developing the proposed plan area boundary for the new Royal Oak Plan. To encourage these initial discussions during Phase 1, the public will be asked to comment and

provide feedback on the preliminary ideas and options presented for an amended Royal Oak Plan area boundary.

6.3.2 Land Use Framework

The Preliminary Land Use Framework for the Royal Oak Plan is shown in **Attachment #2 pages 6-12** and presents a starting point for broad-level Phase 1 discussions around potential land uses and building forms that may be considered for the mid to long-term future of Royal Oak. The framework features two Mixed-Use Nodes as follows:

- **Station Area Node:** The Station Area Node is centred around the Royal Oak SkyTrain Station, which provides direct access to the Expo SkyTrain Line and other public transit connections. Current land uses surrounding the station range from single and two-family dwellings to low-rise residential and mixed-use forms, as well as industrial uses to the northeast. Phase 1 will focus on exploring potential land use and building form options, including transit-oriented development forms that will enhance and reinforce this area as the main public transit gateway of the Urban Village.
- **Village Centre Node:** The Village Centre Node is generally located at the intersection of Kingsway and Royal Oak Avenue, where the Royal Oak Urban Village borders the Metrotown Downtown Core to the west. Phase 1 will focus on exploring potential land uses and building forms for this area that will help to establish it as the Village Centre for Royal Oak, potentially with a range of medium to high-density mixed-use forms, with taller forms concentrated along both sides of Kingsway.

Phase 1 public consultation will involve a “deeper dive” into discussions particularly around specific land use designations and building forms that may be proposed in these two Mixed-Use Nodes. The goal of these discussions is to identify suitable land use designations in order to provide more immediate housing and commercial revitalization opportunities for these key areas of the neighbourhood, should these opportunities present themselves in the shorter-term future.

Apart from the Mixed-Use Nodes, Phase 1 will include a broader preliminary discussion of potential land uses in other areas of the Royal Oak neighbourhood. The Preliminary Land Use Framework identifies a Creative Employment Use area east of the Village Centre and north of Beresford Street, which is intended to facilitate a range of creative economy or creative employment uses as these areas evolve from their current industrial uses to be more compatible with surrounding uses as part of a complete urban village. The concept of creative economy or creative employment uses was introduced during the development of the Bainbridge and Lochdale Urban Village Community Plans, and refers to places like arts and craft studios, workshops, galleries, small batch manufacturers, and flex-industrial spaces. Unlike more traditional industrial or manufacturing uses, creative employment uses are expected to be environmentally-friendly and non-disruptive to surrounding land uses in the Urban Village, including residential uses.

The lands identified for Creative Employment uses are designated under the *Metro Vancouver 2050* Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) as Employment Lands, which limits consideration of residential uses to sites within 200 metres of a rapid transit station within a Frequent Transit Development Area (FTDA). However, given that the westernmost portion of these lands are within walking distance to

the Royal Oak SkyTrain Station (approximately 400-800 metres), the Preliminary Land Use Framework identifies this portion as an area where an RGS amendment could be further explored, in consultation with the public and Metro Vancouver, to potentially allow for more flexible consideration of residential uses, with an emphasis on non-market rental housing located above employment uses where feasible.

Other components of the Preliminary Land Use Framework for Royal Oak involve High Street Mixed-use Corridors to accommodate various ground-level retail and commercial uses with residential uses above on key streets like Kingsway, Royal Oak Avenue and Imperial Street.

It is noted that while final decisions regarding the plan area boundary for the new Royal Oak Plan will not be made during Phase 1, the Preliminary Land Use Framework takes into account the amended plan area boundary options identified in Section 6.3.1 of this report. This approach is meant to help initiate early discussions around the benefits and challenges of amending the existing plan area boundary, and to develop ideas for how different land use options for areas currently outside of the plan area may be considered separately (if they are not incorporated as part of the new Plan) or within the wider context of the Urban Village community. During Phase 1 public consultation, staff will ensure that this intent is communicated clearly to avoid the perception that decisions for amending the plan area boundary have been finalized.

6.3.3 Mobility and Public Realm/Green Space Connections

Corresponding with Preliminary Goal #2 above, Phase 1 will present initial ideas for how mobility, public realm and green space connections may be enhanced to provide a more interconnected Royal Oak Urban Village that provides easy, accessible and convenient ways to move around in the community, to access public transit, and to connect with nature. Various maps showing the long-range transportation network plans for pedestrian, cycling, driving and public transit movement as identified in the Council-adopted Burnaby Transportation Plan, as well as the neighbourhood's network of trails and green spaces, will be used as a starting point for Phase 1 discussions on how mobility and the public realm in Royal Oak may be enhanced over the mid to long-term future (See *Attachment #2 pages 13-17*).

7.0 PHASE 1 PUBLIC CONSULTATION METHODOLOGY

Staff are seeking Council approval to proceed with Phase 1 public consultation, which will focus on raising awareness about the community planning process and inviting the public to engage and provide input on the preliminary visioning, goals and sub-goals and plan directions. To notify as many residents, community partners, and members of the public as possible about Phase 1, staff will conduct an advertising campaign consisting of both print, online, and social media advertising, as well as postcard mail-outs to area residents, tenants, businesses, and owners. Various methods will be used to engage with the public and obtain input, including an online survey, an open house, and a range of visual online and print materials. A dedicated phone line and email account will also be available for people to ask questions and have direct communication with staff about the project.

To: Planning and Development Committee
From: General Manager Planning and Development
Re: Royal Oak Urban Village Community Plan
Phase 1 Public Consultation
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8.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report initiates Phase 1 of the Royal Oak Urban Village Planning Process, establishing preliminary visioning, goals and plan directions for the Plan, and outlines the Phase 1 consultation methodology. It is recommended that Council endorse the preliminary visioning, goals and plan directions as a basis for receiving community input for the Royal Oak Plan. It is also recommended that Council authorize staff to undertake Phase 1 of the public consultation process. Results of the first public consultation phase would be the subject of a future report to Council.



E. W. Kozak, General Manager
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

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Attachment 1 – Royal Oak Urban Village

Attachment 2 – Royal Oak Phase 1 Preliminary Visioning, Goals and Plan Directions

P: Community Plans\Urban Villages\Royal Oak\01 COMMUNITY PLAN REVIEW\1.0 PDC Council Presentations and Reports\PHASE 1\PDC Report - Royal Oak Urban Village Community Plan - Phase 1 2023-05-10.docx