

TO: PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (PDC)

FROM: GENERAL MANAGER PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT: **OCP POLICY DEVELOPMENT APPROACH – POLICY REVIEWS AND GROWTH MODELLING**

PURPOSE: To provide an overview of the OCP policy development work that will take place between Q3 of 2023 and Q2 of 2024 and which will inform the policies proposed for Burnaby 2050.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the report titled “OCP Policy Development Approach – Policy Reviews and Growth Modelling,” dated November 8, 2023 be received for information.

1.0 POLICY SECTION

In accordance with the *Local Government Act (LGA)*, a local government may establish an official community plan (OCP) as a statement of objectives and policies to guide decisions on planning and land use management. The *LGA* specifies that the content of an OCP must include statements and maps related to residential development, land uses, restrictions on the use of land that is subject to hazardous conditions or that is environmentally sensitive, phasing of major infrastructure investments, public facilities, housing policies, and greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction targets and policies. An OCP may further include policies related to social issues, agriculture, the protection of the environment, as well as designate development permit areas (DPAs) for specific purposes. An OCP for Burnaby must also include a Regional Context Statement demonstrating consistency with the Regional Growth Strategy – Metro 2050. The strategic policies in an OCP are important because they guide and set the direction for a municipality’s more specific policies and plans, including the zoning bylaw and local neighbourhood plans.

2.0 BACKGROUND

On June 1, 2022, the Planning and Development Committee (PDC) received a report titled “Official Community Plan (OCP) – Project Initiation, Process, and Upcoming Next Steps” which described the scope of the OCP update to create *Burnaby 2050*, as well as the timeline and engagement objectives. Since that time, staff have been conducting background research, identifying information needs and gaps, and scoping out the technical policy development process that would enable staff to prepare the OCP’s policy language and maps. The early background research has been published in a series of Insights Reports on the Burnaby 2050 website. The Insights Reports highlight recent City trends on a variety of topics, including demographics, housing, climate impacts, and more.

3.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

3.1 Burnaby 2050 Policy Reviews

Burnaby 2050 Policy Reviews are policy analysis projects that will involve reviewing existing policy on a given topic, identifying policy gaps, conducting research, and recommending policy directions for the new OCP. Staff have identified 13 Policy Review projects, each covering a different policy topic area with key deliverables (see Attachment 1). Each Policy Review will result in a series of concept-level “policy directions” to consult on during the third phase of public engagement (spring 2024). These policy directions will be refined based on public input and then brought forward to PDC and Council before staff begin the work of developing the specific policy language for a draft OCP.

While each Policy Review is different, most will include a review of Burnaby’s current OCP and other City policies to identify what is working and what could be improved. Many Policy Reviews will also include a scan of peer municipalities to identify effective policies that could be considered in Burnaby. Other approaches include reviewing recent performance data and engaging with key stakeholders and local experts.

Policy Review work is being done by cross-disciplinary staff teams from across the organization. These projects are anticipated to require a great deal of staff time and attention over the next six months. Interim progress and updates will be reported to PDC on a regular basis.

3.2 Consultant Research Associated with Policy Reviews

While many of the Policy Reviews will be able to leverage recent policy development efforts (e.g. Connecting Burnaby: Burnaby’s Transportation Plan and HOME: Burnaby’s Housing and Homelessness Strategy, both adopted in 2021), others require more extensive research and expert support before effective policy can be developed for the OCP. For this reason, staff are proposing the following research projects to be initiated with consultant support:

- Employment Lands Needs Assessment;
- Climate Change and Natural Hazards Assessment; and
- Community and Social Infrastructure Needs Assessment.

The Employment Lands Needs Assessment will involve quantifying existing employment space in the City and breaking it out by category (e.g. office, warehouse, retail, etc.). The consultant will then estimate the impact that projected economic trends will have on demand for employment space and help to estimate the amount, and types, of employment space the City will require by 2050. This information will inform the OCP, particularly the land use designation map.

The Climate Change and Natural Hazards Assessment will involve gathering existing information about the types of natural and climate-related hazards that Burnaby is exposed to as well as their general locations. This information will inform the maps and policies in the OCP and may also inform the development of a future Development Permit Area and associated guidelines (to be explored post-adoption of Burnaby 2050).

The Community and Social Infrastructure Needs Assessment will involve creating an inventory of the existing community and social infrastructure across the City (by type,

location, catchment, etc.), identifying the long-term needs for different types of community and social infrastructure, and recommending generally how those needs could be met over the long term. This data will help inform both the OCP as well as a future Social Infrastructure Strategy. The City received a UBCM Complete Communities Grant in the amount of \$150,000 to support this work.

3.3 Development Permit Areas

The Local Government Act enables municipalities to designate areas as “Development Permit Areas” (DPAs), which are identified locations that need special treatment for certain purposes, including the protection of development from hazards, establishing objectives for form and character in specified circumstances, or revitalization of a commercial use area. In conjunction with DPAs, the local government must also specify guidelines for how proposed development in that area can address the special conditions or objectives. These guidelines may be specified by zoning bylaw. Within a DPA, a property owner must get a development permit before subdividing land or constructing, adding to, or altering a building.

Burnaby does not currently use a DPA system, using instead a “Preliminary Plan Approval” (PPA) system. PPAs are granted by the Director, Planning and Development when a proposed development meets all the applicable zoning bylaw requirements or rezoning amendment bylaw.

Transitioning the PPA system to a DPA system will enable Burnaby to achieve a more consistent standard of design in new and renovated buildings, improve environmental protection, and enhance the City’s resilience to hazards. It gives greater clarity to applicants and residents and brings the City in-line with its peers across the Province. In conjunction with an updated Zoning Bylaw and other supporting regulations, a DPA system can support a more expedient and efficient approval process.

Because this is a significant adjustment to the City’s development approvals process, staff are proposing a phased approach, beginning with the development of two DPAs, with associated guidelines, to be included in Burnaby 2050 - a Form and Character DPA and a Streamside Protection DPA. The intention is that additional identified DPAs would be developed post-OCP adoption and be appended to the OCP subsequently through an OCP amendment. Concurrent to the policy development for the OCP, City staff will initiate process change planning to support applicants and land owners through the transition to DPAs.

Staff are proposing to hire consultants to develop the content for the following:

- Development Permit Area Guidelines for Streamside Protection; and
- Development Permit Area Guidelines for Form and Character.

3.4 Growth Scenario Modeling

According to Metro Vancouver’s projections, Burnaby is forecasted to grow by approximately 100,000 additional people, 55,000 additional occupied housing units, and 50,000 additional jobs by the year 2050. The way to best distribute that growth throughout the City is a key issue for the OCP. Different growth distribution patterns will have different impacts. The Growth Model, which is being designed by Burnaby staff, will help to estimate and evaluate the impacts of different growth distribution patterns (called “Growth

Scenarios”). The evaluation of those Growth Scenarios will be presented as part of the spring 2024 public engagement to help the public weigh the pros and cons of each Growth Scenario. The feedback received on that engagement will help shape the final land use map in the OCP.

4.0 COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The City has a 4-phase engagement plan to invite members of the community to participate in the development of Burnaby 2050. A report on the results of Phase 2 “Visioning” will be presented to PDC on November 8, 2023. The data from both Phases 1 and 2 of the engagement program have been reviewed by staff and is being used as an input into the Policy Review process. In spring 2024, Phase 3 of engagement will commence with the proposed policy directions from each Policy Review, as well as the Growth Scenarios and associated evaluation outcomes, presented to the public for feedback. This public feedback will allow staff to further refine the work before presenting it to Council and proceeding to the OCP drafting phase.

5.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Approximately \$400,000 was approved by Council in 2023 to support OCP technical research and engagement. Funds to support the project in 2024 and 2025 will be requested through the annual budget process. These funds will pay for the cost of the Employment Lands Needs Assessment, the two DPA Guidelines, and a portion of the Climate Change and Natural Hazards Assessment (the Climate Action budget will also support that study), as well as future phases of engagement. In addition, the City has been awarded a \$150,000 UBCM Complete Communities Grant to support the Community and Social Infrastructure Needs Assessment.

Respectfully submitted,

E.W. Kozak, General Manager Planning and Development

ATTACHMENT

Attachment 1 – Burnaby 2050 Policy Review Deliverables Summary

REPORT CONTRIBUTORS

This report was prepared by Erin Rennie, Planner 3, and reviewed by Wendy Tse, Director Community Planning and Lee-Ann Garnett, Deputy General Manager Planning and Development.