

TO: MAYOR & COUNCILLORS

FROM: GENERAL MANAGER PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT: **OCP BURNABY 2050 PHASE 3B ENGAGEMENT REPORT – WHAT WE LEARNED**

PURPOSE: To convey the attached “Burnaby 2050 What We Learned Report – Phase 3b: Draft Land Use Framework”, and to summarize the key findings from the Phase 3b OCP draft Land Use Framework Engagement.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the report titled “OCP Burnaby 2050 Phase 3b Engagement Report – What We Learned”, dated January 28, 2025, be received for information.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Burnaby Official Community Plan (OCP) Phase 3 engagement campaign began in Spring 2024. Phase 3a asked the public about the proposed vision, policy directions, and growth scenarios and included a series of Open Houses for public input, along with tailored engagement sessions with community partners and Indigenous People living in Burnaby. A second round of engagement (Phase 3b) was conducted in September to raise awareness and receive feedback on the draft Land Use Framework. The Phase 3b engagement findings will help refine the OCP Land Use Framework and designations within the Land Use Map.

1.0 POLICY SECTION

In accordance with the *Local Government Act* (LGA), a local government may establish an OCP to guide decisions on planning and land use management. During the development of an OCP, opportunities must be provided for consultation with people and organizations who may be affected by it.

LGA S. 473 (1) states that an OCP must include map designations for the area covered by the plan respecting, but not limited to, the following:

- The approximate location, amount, type and density of residential development required to meet anticipated housing need;
- The approximate location, amount and type of present and proposed commercial, industrial, institutional, agricultural, recreational, and public utility land uses;
- Restrictions on the use of land that is subject to hazardous conditions or that is environmentally sensitive to development; and

- The approximate location and type of present and proposed public facilities, including schools, parks and waste treatment.

As a member of the Metro Vancouver Regional District, the City of Burnaby’s Official Community Plan should include a Regional Context Statement that demonstrates consistency between Metro 2050, the Regional Growth Strategy, and the City’s OCP. This means that the land use map in Burnaby 2050 must also be generally consistent with the regional land use designation map in Metro 2050.

2.0 BACKGROUND

On June 20, 2022, Council received for information a report titled “Official Community Plan (OCP) – Project Initiation, Process and Upcoming Next Steps”. This outlined the scope of the OCP update, as well as the timeline and engagement objectives. The report outlined a four-phase engagement strategy:

- Phase 1 “Surfacing” engagement was held in the summer of 2022, with a “What We Heard Report” received by Council on February 27, 2023.
- Phase 2 “Visioning” engagement was held in the spring of 2023, with a ‘What We Learned Report’ received by Council on November 8, 2023.
- Phase 3 “Drafting” engagement was divided into two parts. In Phase 3a, the City asked for feedback on the policy directions, growth scenarios and the draft vision. A ‘What we Learned’ report was received by Council on October 7, 2024. In Phase 3b, (this phase) a draft Land Use Framework was presented to Council on July 22. Public engagement on this framework took place from August 21 to October 6, 2024.
- Phase 4 “Confirming” engagement on the draft OCP will be held in the spring of 2025. In this phase, the public will have a final opportunity to comment on the draft OCP, before the OCP bylaw adoption process begins.

3.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

The **Burnaby 2050 What We Learned Report – Phase 3b: Draft Land Use Framework**, included as Attachment 1 to this report, documents the engagement activities and findings from the Phase 3b engagement. The findings of the engagement process will be used in the development of the final draft Burnaby 2050. Below is a high-level summary of the contents of the Phase 3b What We Learned report.

4.0 COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

4.1 Phase 3b Engagement Goals

The focus of the Phase 3b engagement was to reflect on what we had heard from the community as their top values and policy priorities, and to communicate those values and priorities into a draft Land Use Framework. Public engagement also allowed staff to provide clarity on the relationship between the draft Land Use Framework and other tools such as the Zoning Bylaw, Development Permit Area (DPA) guidelines, and community plan areas.

The engagement goals were to:

- Raise awareness and receive feedback on the draft Land Use Framework.
- Communicate the benefits of the draft Land Use Framework and demonstrate how it has responded to the input provided in earlier phases of the OCP project.

- Communicate the relationship between the draft Land Use Framework and the Zoning Bylaw updates, the Streamside Development Permit Area guidelines and Form and Character Development Permit Area guidelines.

4.2 Communication Outreach

In this round of engagement, Staff utilized a range of different approaches to raise awareness about opportunities to engage on the OCP. These included a dedicated project webpage and a branded mail out postcard which was distributed to every residential address in Burnaby, notifying and inviting them to participate in the engagement.

In addition to public promotions, the City continued to adopt a targeted approach to engage with community partners for their feedback. Host First Nations were notified of the opportunity to engage directly with the City through a series of referral letters.

4.3 Engagement Audiences

As a part of the Phase 3 engagement, City staff identified five key engagement audiences, with a suite of tailored engagement tactics designed to connect to each audience group and receive relevant and timely input. These audiences include:

- **General Public:** All who live, work, attend school or have a vested interest in Burnaby;
- **Community Partners:** Partners such as neighboring governments and other government agencies, organizations representing businesses, interest and advocacy groups and non-profit organizations that serve diverse communities and their needs;
- **Host First Nations:** Including Squamish Nation, Kwikwetlem First Nation, Tsleil-Waututh Nation, and Musqueam;
- **Burnaby City Council and Advisory Bodies;** and
- **Burnaby Staff and Agencies:** All City staff and staff working for Burnaby Library, Burnaby School District, Burnaby RCMP and Fire Services.

4.4 Engagement Tactics – How We Engaged

The Phase 3b Draft Land Use Framework engagement campaign provided multiple opportunities for input. These opportunities included:

- **Draft Land Use Map Online Survey:** An online survey was available from **August 21 to October 6** seeking input on the draft Land Use Map. Surveys were translated into several languages through the City's website.
- **Open Houses:** 7 full-day, in-person events were held throughout September to showcase the draft Land Use Map, initial work on the DPA guidelines and the Zoning Bylaw, providing an opportunity for the community to ask questions. Two virtual Open houses were also held on weekday evenings to provide an alternative opportunity for participation.
- **Host Nation Referral Letters:** Letters were sent to the host Nations with opportunities for funding to provide written feedback on the proposed draft Land Use Map.
- **Community Partner Feedback:** Community partners were given the opportunity to provide written input on draft Land Use Map. Community partners included non-profit organization, advocacy groups, and key agencies such as Fraser Health and neighboring municipalities.

4.5 Engagement Findings – What We Learned

The Phase 3b What We Learned report (Attachment 1) summarizes the engagement findings in detail. Key themes of what we heard from the public is highlighted in the following sections.

4.5.1 General Feedback

Over the engagement period from August 21st to October 6, staff received a total of 2,611 comments across all four quadrants. The majority of comments were received from the northeast quadrant.

Out of the general feedback received through this round of engagement, four key themes emerged from the public engagement feedback: support for higher buildings near public transit and a greater variety of housing options; a desire for investment in transportation infrastructure to align with changes in land use and population growth; appreciation for the protection of parks and green spaces in areas with taller buildings; and concerns about the loss of detached single-family homes.

Community participants identified the following top priorities for the Land Use Framework:

Quality of Life and Community Character: Community participants were generally supportive of the policy objectives used to create the draft Land Use Map. However, some concerns were raised that proposed building height increases may affect quality of life, put a strain on community services, negatively impact the environment, and change community character.

Infrastructure and Traffic: Community participants were also concerned with the ability of Burnaby’s current hard and soft infrastructure, such as schools, transportation and water infrastructure to support future residential growth as proposed on the draft Land Use Map. There were calls to ensure that infrastructure upgrades are timely in areas where significant growth is expected.

Housing Options: Community participants were supportive of enabling more housing options to help address affordability, especially with the addition of ‘missing middle’ housing types such as townhomes and rowhomes. The community was also generally supportive of Transit-Oriented Development and concentrating growth along transit corridors. Feedback urged for careful examination on the impacts of proposed growth on existing community amenities such as schools, parks, etc.

Importance of Green Spaces: There was wide support for increasing access to parks and natural spaces, citing its importance for community and environmental health. However, there were strong concerns over some specific park designations on current residential properties. Such participants did not want new park space being created at the expense of current residents, with concerns that it would affect current and future property values of residents in these areas.

Building Heights: Proposed building heights indicated on the Draft Land Use Map received varied support. Although many community participants agreed with higher land use designations to provide housing supply, there was also opposition to high-rise designations, due to concerns related to overcrowding and a strain on public services.

4.5.2 Key Findings on Policy Objectives

City staff sought feedback on the policy objectives used to create the Framework. Out of the 9 Policy Objectives presented to community participants, the following is what we had heard:

Transit Oriented Development: There was general support for Transit Oriented Development on the Land Use Map, citing benefits of increased housing and alleviating congestion through increased transit use. The community stressed the importance of increasing transit frequency and reliability to make transit a more feasible option for moving throughout the city.

Diverse Housing Forms: Community participants were supportive of the housing opportunities seen on the Land Use Framework and the provision of suitable housing options for the community. However, there were concerns over the higher-density designations, and the lack of a single-family home designation resulting from Provincial legislation changes.

Climate Action: Many comments expressed support for the way the framework addressed climate change through intentional land use designations. However, there were general concerns over the impacts that higher density and the resultant greater energy consumption could have climate change.

Access to Parks and Natural Areas: Feedback showed a high level of support for the proposed increase of park spaces and natural areas throughout Burnaby, expressing the importance of these spaces for community enjoyment. Community participants asked the City to consider creating other types of parks such as pocket parks and linear parks, and to ensure that any changes to residential parcels resulting from park expansions are clearly communicated.

Access to Amenities: There was general support for identified expansions of community amenities throughout Burnaby, especially in areas of higher anticipated population. Main concerns expressed to City staff included the increase of schools in areas of growth, along with more community amenities in the town centers.

Complete Communities: Community participants expressed general support for the proposed neighbourhood commercial hubs across Burnaby, with a preference for smaller, locally owned business to enhance livability and walkability. There was also support for more flexible zoning to allow for small-scale commercial across residential neighbourhoods, and in areas close to transit corridors.

Support a Sustainable Economy and Create Jobs: This objective received strong support. The protection of industrial, economic and agricultural lands in Burnaby was seen as a way to create a sustainable and strong economy. Suggestions included locating industrial uses close to transit to reduce commuting time.

Improved Built Form and Urban Design: The proposed urban design strategy on the Draft Land Use Map generally received support from community participants. However, there were concerns that high-rise designations will result in the loss of sunlight and affect community character. Community participants continued to ask City staff to consider slower, more gradual transition between building heights.

Advancing Reconciliation: Community participant feedback on this policy direction was highly positive, with comments echoing the need to involve First Nations in land stewardship and decision-making process. Participants were supportive of ideas to advance reconciliation, such as designating lands for environmental protection, furthering First Nations land ownership, and raising awareness of traditional indigenous culture and history.

4.5.3 Key Findings on Land Use Designations

Findings from the survey on land use designations were mixed, with support and opposition being roughly equal. Notably, participants’ supported the diversity of housing options, with some opposition to high-rise apartment designations and the perceived impact on community character.

4.5.4 Key findings from Land Use Map Quadrants

City staff received a high number of comments from a few key areas, in addition to general comments within the 4 quadrants. Areas include the Alpha Secondary School area, Rathburn Drive, Stoney Creek area, Halifax Park, Cariboo Heights Forest, Byrne Creek Ravine and Ledingham Park. Participants from these areas were concerned about proposed park expansions, housing supply and affordability, and protection of the environment.

Northwest Quadrant

In general, participants in this quadrant expressed concerns over land use changes that reduce the residential housing stock for single family homes. For areas that have higher residential densities, there is a call to ensure sufficient infrastructure improvement to keep up with the anticipated growth.

Feedback also called upon the need for more green spaces and community amenities in areas of higher density, along with a need for more commercial and mixed-use buildings to provide sufficient services to residents.

Northeast Quadrant

In the Northeast Quadrant, there were also calls for increased housing options, especially for students in Burnaby. Similar concerns on infrastructure to keep up with the planned growth were also expressed. In terms of the diversity of housing types, there were mixed opinions on residential densities in this quadrant.

Southeast Quadrant

Community Participants in the Southeast Quadrant shared concerns on the current lack of transportation infrastructure in the area, and whether it would be worsened by the designated density to the area. Despite this, there is support for higher designations around transit hubs and corridors. Some opposition to high-rise residential designations cited a potential loss of green space and sunlight as a result of building heights. Protection of parks and natural areas was a strong theme in this quadrant, calling for measures to protect the Cariboo Heights Forest and the creeks.

Southwest Quadrant

Community participants who commented on the Southwest Quadrant were most vocal on needing infrastructure upgrades such as active transportation, sanitation services and community amenities to support the proposed growth. There was also support for

higher residential designations near transportation hubs to increase the amount of housing supply. Finally, community participants suggested having more neighbourhood commercial designations in areas where services are harder to access.

4.5.5 Key Findings on Development Permit Areas and Guidelines

Form and Character Guidelines

Participants asked City staff to consider inclusion of guidelines that support the protection of natural ecosystems, are climate-friendly, and include guidelines for multi-unit residential construction.

Streamside Development Permit Program

Participants emphasized the importance of protecting and restoring ecosystems, mitigating the urban "heat island" effect, expanding creek daylighting efforts, and incorporating Indigenous environmental stewardship principles into the program.

4.6 Next Steps

Staff will take the input received from Phase 3b engagement to refine the Land Use Framework and Land Use Map designations. The outcome of this work will form part of the draft OCP that is reflective of that input. It is anticipated that the draft OCP will be presented to Council in early 2025.

5.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Sufficient funding for all OCP-related consultation in 2024 and 2025 has been approved by Council and is included within the annual operating budget of the 2024-2028 Financial Plan.

Respectfully submitted,

E.W. Kozak, General Manager Planning and Development

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Burnaby 2050 What We Learned Report – Phase 3b: Draft Land Use Framework

REPORT CONTRIBUTORS

This report was prepared by Hay Go, Planner 1, and reviewed by Jessica Devlin-Cross Planner 3, Sarah Crawford Planner 3, Johannes Schumann, Director Community Planning and Lee-Ann Garnett, Deputy General Manager Planning and Development.