



Committee of the Whole Report

For the Meeting of May 3, 2018

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** April 27, 2018
From: Jonathan Tinney, Director, Sustainable Planning and Community Development
Subject: Draft Esquimalt Official Community Plan Referral

RECOMMENDATION

That Council consider the draft Esquimalt Official Community Plan and direct staff to provide the following comments to the Township of Esquimalt:

1. Consider additional Development Permit Area guidelines for sensitive transitions and context-sensitive design where more intensive land uses are considered on the Esquimalt side of the shared municipal boundary, for compatibility with adjacent development in Victoria.
2. Correct the proposed land use map (Schedule B of the Township of Esquimalt Draft Official Community Plan) to maintain the Parks and Open Space designation for the part of Victoria's Barnard Park which falls within Esquimalt's municipal boundary.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a summary of the draft Esquimalt Official Community Plan (OCP) and an opportunity to provide comments to the Township of Esquimalt for their consideration. Staff have reviewed the draft Esquimalt OCP and have found it to be largely compatible with Victoria's goals in land use and transportation. Staff have specific comments regarding the strength of the Development Permit Area guidelines for development, in how they support appropriate transition from lower-intensity uses on the Victoria side of the shared municipal boundary, to higher-intensity uses on the Esquimalt side.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a summary of the draft Esquimalt OCP and an opportunity to provide comments to the Township of Esquimalt for their consideration.

BACKGROUND

The draft Esquimalt OCP was presented for first reading on March 26, 2018 and has been referred to the City of Victoria for comment. It is scheduled for second reading at the May 7, 2018 meeting of the Esquimalt Council, at which time comments from interested nations, public corporations and agencies will be presented.

ISSUES & ANALYSIS

The draft Esquimalt OCP includes a number of policies that support affordable housing, multi-modal transportation, diversity of housing choices, planning for accessibility in parks, recreation facilities and housing, and sensitivity to the shoreline ecosystems and urban forest. The draft Esquimalt OCP also includes development permit areas and guidelines.

In particular, the Esquimalt OCP includes objectives that are similar to Victoria's OCP regarding preparing a multi-modal transportation plan, and staff anticipate working with Esquimalt at that time to consider connectivity and integration of bicycle and pedestrian systems and frequent transit route improvements.

The Esquimalt OCP policies regarding protecting waterfront ecosystems and seeking opportunities for public access and pathways are also aligned with City of Victoria policies. The proposed Victoria West Neighbourhood Plan anticipates a process in the coming years to evaluate the desirability of further public access between Banfield Park and Arm Street Park, and staff would encourage the Township of Esquimalt to coordinate with Victoria at that time.

Key areas that may impact Victoria are related to the compatibility of land use and urban design at the shared municipal boundary. These concerns include:

1. Several areas along Arm Street and Dominion Road are designated for multi-unit residential development on the western (Esquimalt) side and lower-scale development on the east (Victoria) side. Transitions to lower-scale areas and design which responds to context are important and have been reinforced by recent consultation with Victoria West. However, Esquimalt development permit area guidelines in this area are much more cursory than either Victoria's general form and character (DPA 16) guidelines or other Esquimalt DPAs such as the West Bay guidelines. Staff recommend enhancing guidelines for transitions, considering the following strategies: architectural design which creates pedestrian interest, with individual entries, porches or patios facing streets encouraged for at-grade units; street trees; landscaped front setbacks; and variations in massing, roof forms or other features.
2. Likewise, several areas along this transition zone allow townhouses on the west (Esquimalt) side, providing important opportunities for "missing middle" housing. Staff have identified context-sensitive design as important for townhouses in Victoria, with pedestrian-friendly design, modulation of individual units, quality materials, street trees, and front-yard landscaping as important considerations, and recommend forwarding the proposed *Design Guidelines for Attached Residential* for Victoria West to the Township of Esquimalt.
3. Other areas along the shared municipal boundary allow for employment uses in Esquimalt, adjacent to residential uses in Victoria. The retention of employment lands is important to the region and consistent with needs within the core cities. Staff recommend ensuring that any future developments minimize impacts on adjacent residential development. Esquimalt's *DPA 5 – Industrial* provides guidance with regard to shading, screening and noise attenuation. Staff recommend forwarding the proposed amendments to Victoria's *Revitalization Guidelines for Corridors, Villages and Town Centres* for light industrial uses in Victoria West to determine if additional guidelines would be valuable.
4. A small parcel within the boundaries of the Township of Esquimalt is part of Victoria's Barnard Park. This parcel is currently designated and zoned for park use. The proposed land use map (Schedule B) would change this designation to Medium Density Residential. This appears to be a mapping error and staff recommend resolving this prior to adoption.

OPTIONS & IMPACTS

Accessibility Impact Statement

The draft Esquimalt OCP includes policies supporting universal access or design for accessibility in parks, public spaces, recreation facilities and housing, compatible with the goals of Victoria's OCP.

2015 – 2018 Strategic Plan

The draft Esquimalt OCP and comments outlined in this report are compatible with and reinforce Victoria's efforts to meet many objectives in the Strategic Plan.

Impacts to Financial Plan

There are no impacts anticipated to Victoria's Financial Plan.

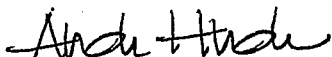
Official Community Plan Consistency Statement

The draft Esquimalt OCP and proposed comments are compatible with and reinforce the goals and objectives of Victoria's OCP.

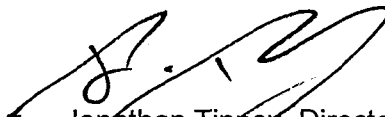
CONCLUSION

Staff have reviewed the draft Esquimalt OCP and finds it largely compatible with Victoria's goals in land use and transportation. Staff have specific concerns regarding the strength of Development Permit Area guidelines for development, which may transition from lower-intensity uses on the Victoria side of the shared municipal boundary to higher-intensity uses on the Esquimalt Side. Council may provide these comments to the Township of Esquimalt in addition to any other comments that Council may have.

Respectfully submitted,


for

Marc Cittone
Senior Planner
Community Planning



Jonathan Tinney, Director
Sustainable Planning and Community
Development Department

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager: 

Date: 

List of Attachments:

Attachment A: Township of Esquimalt Draft Official Community Plan.