

MINUTES
PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Committee Room No. 2
November 12, 2015 at 4:30 p.m.

Present: Councillor Fred Haynes (Chair), Suzanne Bartel, Bill Mumford, Blair Echlin, John Schmuck, Scott Hindle

Staff: Elizabeth van Den Hengel, Committee Clerk

Regrets: Travis Lee, Andrea Mercer

Guests: Vic Derman, Councillor; Dan Dagg, President of Hot House Marketing; Dallas Gislason, Economic Development Officer, Greater Victoria Development Agency; James Wadsworth, Planning Work Lead, BC Transit; Lauren English, Senior Project Officer, Development and Asset Strategies, BC Housing; Joe Carreira, Director, Regional Development, BC Housing

MINUTES

MOVED by J. Schmuck and Seconded by S. Hindle: “That the Minutes of the Planning, Transportation and Economic Development Advisory Committee meeting held October 8, 2015, be adopted as amended.”

CARRIED

NIGEL VALLEY

Lauren English, Senior Project Officer, Development and Asset Strategies, BC Housing and Joe Carreira, Director, Regional Development, BC Housing were present to provide information about the Nigel Valley Project. The following comments and responses to questions were noted:

- The Nigel Valley Planning study was funded by BC Housing.
- A steering committee of stakeholders was commissioned.
- Steering Committee for the Nigel Valley Project was comprised of BC Housing, Garth Homer Society, Greater Victoria Housing Society, Broadmead Care and Island Community Mental Health.
- Currently the subject area contains 185 units of housing, 5 land owners and spans 9 acres.
- The current landowners have unanimously expressed the desire to double the housing density in this area.
- Current zoning is RP-3, P-1, RS-6, RT-2, RA-3, RM-5 and P-3 with current land use a mix of non-market residential, programming/institutional, residential care, market/single family and a small amount of informal open space.
- Vernon Avenue needs a redesign as it is currently not safe for residents who cross to the plaza. Ministry of Highways is open to dialogue regarding safety improvements for this area.
- South Darwin acquisitions are being considered by BC Housing as property becomes available.

- The proposed redesign of Nigel Valley will include internal green space to enhance the community feel to the area. A green belt through the entire project with a potential plaza being added at the Lochside Trail border.

MOTION MOVED by J. Schmuck and Seconded by B. Mumford: “That the Planning, Transportation and Economic Development Advisory Committee receive the report, Nigel Valley Planning Study, November 12, 2015 from BC Housing.”

CARRIED

STRATEGY AND MODEL FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH VANCOUVER ISLAND

Dan Dagg, President of Hot House Marketing and Dallas Gislason, Economic Development Officer, Greater Victoria Development Agency were present to provide information about the proposed new strategy and model for economic development in South Vancouver Island and the following was noted:

- A regional economic development program is needed as the economy is global and does not adhere to municipal boundaries.
- The Rapid Transit Study of 2009, identified that 35% of employment in the region is between UpTown and Victoria (Fort & Douglas), and within 800 meters of Douglas Street.
- Southern Vancouver Island is not a major centre, therefore there a need to collaborate and advocate to attract investors, new business and trade.
- In five years the region has dropped from 4th to 27th in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth compared to other large Canadian city regions.
- Nanaimo and Vancouver are our nearest “competitors” and those regions invest over \$4.00 per capita while Southern Vancouver Island invests less than \$1.00 per capita.
- There is a proven return on investment with regional economic development programs, with the city of Halifax being a good case study:
 - Since the creation of the Halifax Partnership they have risen in GDP growth from 15th in 2008, 10th in 2008, 8th in 2014 and are projected to be first out of the 28 cities in 2015.
 - The Halifax partnership has helped reduce unemployment from 11% to 5.9%.
- The region is losing “general well-being”. Living cost are increasing at a greater rate than household incomes, which makes it challenging to attract young works with families.
- One in 5 children within our region live on or below the poverty line.
- Vital Signs 2015 reports that the top 3 economic concerns of citizens within our region as:
 - Diversifying the economy
 - Increasing job opportunities for new graduates
 - Improving supports for entrepreneurs and small business
- By working collaboratively the entire region can improve access to better available funding:
 - Western Diversification forecasts 140 million per year in program funding available for economic development in Western Canada.
 - Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC
 - BC Knowledge Development Fund
 - Canada Foundation for Innovation
 - Sustainable Development Technology Canada

- Invest Canada Community Initiatives
- Currently the Greater Victoria Development Agency (GVDA) has been leading regional economic development efforts for the last eight years.
- The GVDA has annual operation budget of \$140,000 (\$80,000 from municipal governments)
- Direct benefits to the region include:
 - 153 in-bound investment groups in 2014
 - \$10 million direct in-bound investment
 - 58 direct jobs created
 - 120 export companies engaged in research and service delivery
 - 36 foreign owned corporations engaged in retention efforts
 - Launched a three year \$1.6 million Trade and Investment Program in partnership with the Federal Government and local stakeholder investment.
- A new organization is proposed to assist the region in moving forward to a prosperous future:
 - Create a new, non-profit society funded by public and private participants.
 - The mandate is to diversify and strengthen the economy in our region.
 - The scope encompasses all businesses, employees and municipalities south of the Malahat on Vancouver Island.
 - The initial timeframe spans five years from 2016-17 through 2020-21.
- Principles for a new regional model will be designed in accordance with the following principles:
 - Collaborative
 - Industry led (Board of Directors)
 - Not for profit
 - Effective, inclusive, sustainable and affordable
 - Equitable funding model
 - Aligned with municipal economic development initiatives and OCPs
 - Accountable to the funding partners
- Metrics to measure success include; number of new jobs in targeted sectors, median household income and amount of project funding raised.
- Exploration of the economic opportunities for job creation in sectors such as; value-added agriculture, aquaculture, ocean sciences, life sciences, manufacturing and construction.
- Governance-Funding Partners' Council will be as follows:
 - Participating core funders: municipalities, businesses, industry associates and post-secondary institutions.
 - One representative per municipality at the agreed upon formula-based funding levels.
 - One representative from each private sector funder with a minimum contribution of \$20,000 per year.
 - The target is for 20-30 members/funders.
 - Decisions will be made by majority vote.
 - Members will elect the Chair to a two year term.
- Total 5 year municipal funding is \$3 million, broken down as follows:
 - \$100,000 for start-up (2015-16)
 - \$300,000 in Year One (2016-17)
 - \$650,000 per year for year's 2-5 contingent on funding from other parties.
- Private sector funding targets are as follows:
 - \$100,000 (2015-16)
 - \$200,000 for Year One (2016-17)
 - \$200,000 per year for years 2-5, contingent on funding from other parties.
- Currently \$100,000 plus in Private Sector Start-Up Funds have been pledged.

- \$200,000 in Private Sector Year One Funding will be secured by December 31, 2015.
- Total funding target 2015-2020 from all funders is \$9 million.
- The proposed municipal funding formula is a fair and equitable model that is affordable and weighted towards those with the greatest potential to benefit.
- A 50/50 blend using \$1.00 per capita plus 0.07 percent of total tax collected is recommended as the most equitable approach given the diverse range of populations and tax bases in the region.
- The next steps are to determine municipal participation followed by the creation of the new society and then the creation of the Five Year Regional Economic Development Strategy.

Comments/questions from committee and responses were noted as follows:

- Many different funding models were considered. The proposed public-private partnership model is very lean and is felt to be the best model.
- The CRD has regional economic growth in their strategic plan, but it is not scheduled to begin looking at regional economic development until 2018.
- The CRD does not have the skill-set to create a comprehensive regional economic development plan.
- An annual metrics review would be undertaken to evaluate the progress/success of the program.
- Some of the funding which would be applied for is only available if the region applies as a group.

- MOTION MOVED by J. Schmuck and Seconded by S. Hindle: “That the Planning, Transportation and Economic Development Advisory Committee recommends Council;**
- a) **Support in principle the proposed Regional Strategy and Model for Economic Development in South Vancouver Island provided that a majority of municipalities (7/13 at a minimum) participate in the new Regional Strategy and Model for Economic Development in South Vancouver Island; and**
 - b) **Support the start-up funding request of \$27, 289 and the first year funding of \$81, 868 be allocated in the 2015 fiscal year; and cancel the 2016 fiscal year \$30,000 grant to the Greater Victoria Development Agency contingent on the proposed Regional Strategy and Model for Economic Development being funded; and**
 - c) **Appoint a member of Council to the Funding Partner’s Council to represent the Municipality of Saanich**

CARRIED

UPDATE FROM BC TRANSIT

James Wadsworth, Planning Work Lead, BC Transit was present to provide information of transit ridership in Saanich. The following comments and responses to questions were noted:

- Seniors will comprise 45% of the population in Saanich by 2038.
- Only minimal growth in ridership is forecasted until infrastructure improvements are made.
- Concerns regarding the proposed lane reductions along Shelbourne Street and the significant impacts these lane reductions may have on transit service.

Committee thanked the Planning Work Lead, BC Transit for the information and invited him to return to a future meeting.

CHAIR'S UPDATE

Postponed

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m. and the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 14, 2016

Councillor Haynes, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Committee Secretary