

MINUTES
PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Council Chambers
Thursday, November 12, 2020 at 5:30 pm

Present: Councillor Zac de Vries (Chair), Ericka Amador (via telephone), Sophia Baker-French (via telephone), Sonja Cunningham (via telephone), Lois-Leah Goodwin (via telephone), Richard Michaels, Shawn Steele (via telephone)

Staff: Tania Douglas, Senior Committee Clerk

Regrets: Taylor Alexander, William Bedford, Brittany Higginson, Peter Rantucci

Minutes

MOVED by E. Amador and Seconded by R. Michaels: "That the Minutes of the Planning, Transportation and Economic Development Advisory Committee meeting held October 7, 2020, be adopted as circulated."

CARRIED

CHAIR'S REMARKS

The Chair stated that there are no updates from staff for this meeting and the main purpose of the meeting was to adopt the minutes in order to forward some recommendations to Council and to share ideas for future discussion.

ROUNDTABLE

The Chair noted this is an opportunity for members to discuss ideas for the future. The following comments were noted:

- With the University Heights Development, is there opportunity to discuss alternative approaches/strategies if this project does not proceed as planned.
- An update on the Shelbourne Valley project would be welcome.
- Interest was expressed for an update on garden suites in the next 6-8 months.
- Request for more presentations from South Island Prosperity Partnership (SIPP).
- What does the work plan look like for reviewing Local Area Plans. How have things changed since the pandemic and is feedback needed from advisory committees.
- Economic development:
 - Investigating any opportunity to hire an Economic Development Officer and how it could benefit Saanich. It is important we understand the impact that an Economic Development Officer would have.
 - Victoria created an Economic Development Officer position this year; a request for a presentation could be made.
 - It may be of benefit to have SIPP provide background information as they assisted Colwood and Esquimalt in the setup of their own Economic Development Plans.
 - Economic development is critical and while some local governments have officers, there are ways, with Council support, to make sure that strategies are in place and planning happens. People in numerous departments within the organization could work on this.
 - It is important to have a strategy as there have been a few opportunities (cycling rink, movie studio, theatres) that Saanich has not known how to react to because there is no policy. Policy documents are important to have.

- There are fiscal constraints attached to an FTE job but designated resources should be explored as work could suffer if economic development items are a side job off somebody's desk.
- The Strategic Plan notes the initiative of having an economic development plan but it is hard to move forward until funding is in place to develop a basic strategy.
- A traffic management strategy is needed with a traffic calming policy. Currently traffic calming seems to be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. A calming policy would help direct how different types of traffic calming can be implemented on different types of streets.
- An Active Transportation traffic calming presentation on priorities for sidewalks and bike lanes would be welcome.
- A presentation regarding signals phasing and what that looks like would be good along with information on what has been done and where we are headed. The speed reduction pilot project is good but signals on roadways will need to be adjusted.

The Chair stated:

- With regards to Local Area Plans, Council paused the LAP review to allow for the Housing Strategy and other initiatives.
- Next January/February, recommendations will be made by the Housing Strategy Task Force and then Council can look at Local Area Planning to see if corridor plans or district-wide plans are best to move forward. Public input will be needed.
- The Royal Oak and/or Broadmead Business Improvement Associations could be asked to make a presentation to committee.
- Regarding economic development; COVID-19 has affected the proposed budget items that were slated for 2020. A future Terms of Reference or discussion on next steps would be good.

Motion: MOVED by R. Michaels and Seconded by S. Baker-French, “That the Planning, Transportation and Economic Development Advisory Committee recommends that Council give consideration to a request for staff to investigate and present options for the initiation of the creation of an economic development strategy as part of the 2021 Financial Plan process.”

CARRIED

Committee members made further suggestions to have presentations from the Victoria Chamber of Commerce as well as the Urban Development Institute.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Councillor de Vries, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Committee Secretary