

## MINUTES

### PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Committee Room No. 2

May 11, 2017 at 4:30 p.m.

Present: Councillor Judy Brownoff (Chair), Bill Mumford, Andrea Mercer, Peter Pokorny, Sofia Baker-French, Suzanne Bartel, Travis Lee, Peter Rantucci

Staff: Paul Thorkelsson, CAO; Valla Tinney, Director of Finance; Jarret Mantanowitsch, Manager of Current Planning; Elizabeth van den Hengel, Committee Clerk

Regrets: Stuart Chalmers

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## MINUTES

**MOVED by S. Bartel and Seconded by T. Lee: "That the Minutes of the Planning, Transportation and Economic Development Advisory Committee meeting held April 13, 2017, be adopted as amended."**

**CARRIED**

## FINANCIAL AWARENESS AND BENCHMARKING

The CAO and the Director of Finance addressed the Committees questions regarding financial awareness and benchmarking. Committee discussion occurred and the following comments were noted:

- A suggestion that the Strategic Plan could contain performance measures as well as strategic priorities.
- Difficult to compare Saanich financials with other municipalities as the financial budgets are very different.
- Total expenses per capita not a reliable comparison as the level of service varies greatly between municipalities.
- Debt ratios are not good or bad as each municipality has debit ratio that is specific to the region.
- A process to attempt to have a financial comparable document was discussed at Council but consensus could not be reached, and the window on this has now closed. Resources for this project are not currently available.
- Comparisons are somewhat possible as a "big picture" view but are not accurate when specifics are looked at.
- One of the challenges with amalgamation are the variances in service levels across municipalities.
- Strategic Plan measures were established by Council. Some measures are short term others longer term measures.
- Performance measures have to have data that is strong and easy to access.
- Suggestion was made to consider creating a benchmarking system with support from Chamber of Commerce and UBCM.
- A group is currently working with the LGA on an initiative to develop an on-line benchmarking system for local governments.

The CAO and the Director of Finance were thanked for their presentation.

## **DEVELOPMENT PERMITS TIMING**

The Manager of Current Planning gave a presentation of development permit timing, and the following was noted:

- Council can revoke the development permit (DP) if substantial construction has not started.
- Currently Saanich does not have an expiry date on DPs.
- If the development permit expired council would be required to re-approve.
- Majority of projects are started within 24 months of the DP being issued.
- Substantially started is at the discretion of Saanich.
- Neighbouring municipalities have an expiry date on their DPs.
- Provincial legislation specifies an expiry date for DPs.
- Discussions on how to deal with DP extensions should be had if Saanich implements an expiry date for DPs.

**MOTION: Moved by T. Lee and Seconded by S. Baker-French “That the Planning, Transportation and Economic Development Advisory Committee recommends that Council consider Development Permits having an expiry date of two years, in line with provincial legislation and neighbouring municipalities.”**

**CARRIED**

## **INFILL IN RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBOURHOODS**

The Manager of Current Planning updated the Committee on the topic of infill in residential neighbourhoods. The following comments were noted:

- Small lot infill is attractive to retirees and the first time home buyer.
- Infill in residential neighbourhoods allows more market affordable housing options.
- Infill housing should be close to transportation and services.
- Saanich is revitalizing centres but maybe missing some if the “tools” in the Saanich toolbox.
- Infill creates housing opportunity.
- Community Associations are often concerned with the prospect of infill housing within their community/neighbourhood.
- Consideration of the impact of densification/infill on infrastructure should be given when these requests come forward.

## **USEABLE PARK SPACE AND/OR SOCIAL SPACES FOR HIGH DENSITY CENTRES**

The Manager of Current Planning updated the Committee on useable park space in high density centres. The following comments were noted:

- A challenge to ensure that high density centres provide adequate park and social spaces is ongoing.
- Many LAPs focus on natural park acquisitions but consideration of urban park space and social gathering areas should be on the radar also.
- With Saanich actively densifying centres a policy/strategy to support useable park space and social gathering areas should be developed.
- Costs associated with maintaining these public spaces needs to be considered in the process.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 pm.

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Councillor Brownoff, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

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Committee Secretary

DRAFT