

MINUTES
PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Municipal Hall, Council Chambers
Held electronically via Microsoft Teams
June 9, 2022 at 5:32 pm

Present: Councillor Susan Brice (Chair); Douglas Pascoe; Richard Michaels; Peter Spindloe

Staff: Cameron Scott, Manager of Community Planning; David Williams, Engineering Supervisor; Megan Squires, Senior Transportation Planner; Amber Walker, Community Planner; Nancy Chaggar, Senior Committee Clerk

Regrets: Fiann Crane; Kevin Elliot; Robert Finlay; Robert McLeod

Due to a lack of quorum, no motions were passed.

CHAIR'S REMARKS

Staff provided the committee with a written document outlining the Step Code, what it accomplishes and where Saanich is as a municipality. Saanich has made a number of commitments in order to make a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (GHG). Targets include the highest step of the BC Energy Step Code by 2025, 100% renewable energy and/or net zero carbon in new construction, and 50% community wide GHG emission reductions by 2030. Staff have also been directed to accelerate adoption of net zero carbon in new construction/quickly decarbonize new construction and integrate a carbon/GHG emissions cap in Step Code adoption.

The committee requested that the Manager of Sustainability attend the next meeting to give an update on progress towards Saanich's goals.

STRATEGIC OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE

The Community Planner provided an update on the Strategic Official Community Plan and noted the following:

- The intent is to provide a consistent policy to guide growth and change.
- The first area of work is updating the land use framework to incorporate emerging policy priorities.
- Other updates include incorporating recent Council priorities such as the Housing Strategy, the Climate Action Plan, the Active Transportation Plan and Resilient Saanich.
- The demographic data will be updated to align with the recent census.
- The sustainability framework within the document will be refined to include the One Planet Living Principles.
- A more diversity of housing options is necessary including for the "missing middle".
- The Housing Needs Assessments will be used as a guide for future work.
- It is important to protect agricultural land and maintain natural areas and ecosystems.
- Access to transit, walking and biking trails will help residents transition to a low carbon lifestyle.

- There is a need for a balance between the need for more housing and existing neighbourhood character.
- Low to modest increases in density is supportable.
- Higher density should be thoughtful and consider the built environment including proximity to public transit, recreation, parks, schools, and trails.
- Staff are considering what locations and sites would be appropriate for residential infill and what factors should be considered when assessing development applications.
- Parks and open space needs need consideration for rapidly growing areas.
- It is important that residents in higher density housing have walkable access to green space with a range of options for enjoyment.

In response to questions from the Committee, the following was noted:

- Garden suites and secondary suites are an important aspect for providing housing options, but they are not typically considered “missing middle” housing.
- “Missing middle” housing includes duplexes and townhouses.
- Pre-zoning and density bonus zoning could align with the plan.
- It may be appropriate to design flexible zones to get the results that are needed.
- Approximately 110 applications for garden suites have been received in the past year and a half.
- The Housing Needs Assessment outlines that Saanich needs approximately 600 new housing units per year with about 50% being rental units.
- Typically, infill is concentrated on corridors, but this could be expanded to include sites near routes established for cycling.
- If more residents are located in close proximity to a bike way, they are more likely to use their bikes to commute and reduce the reliance on vehicles.
- Parks planning will be embedded in the Official Community Plan.
- It is important to have the right amenities in the right locations.

The committee made the following comments:

- A true definition of the “missing middle” is needed.

SPEED LIMIT ESTABLISHMENT POLICY

The Senior Transportation Planner presented on the Speed Limit Establishment Policy and noted the following:

- The proposed policy will go before Council in early July.
- Municipalities in British Columbia have the authority to regular speed limits but do not have the ability to change the default speed limits.
- Municipalities can only reduce default speed limits through bylaws and signage.
- Saanich was hoping to participate in a three year pilot project that reduces speed limits to 30 km/hr on local roads or roads without a continuous centre line, but the pilot did not proceed.
- Council adopted the Vision Zero approach for road safety in Saanich and directed staff to develop a road safety action plan and a safe systems approach which included

development of a Speed Limit Establishment Policy, to update the Active Transportation Plan and to consider development of a traffic calming policy.

- Reducing speed limits can greatly increase the rates of survival for those involved in collisions.
- The proposed Speed Limit Establishment Policy is based on the National Association of City Transportation Officials guide and provides guidance to staff to determine the appropriate speed limits on all streets, both urban and rural, in Saanich.
- In development of the policy, staff met with representatives of ICBC and BC Transit, City of Victoria and Capital Regional District staff and Saanich Police.
- Type A streets include those without continuous centre lines and/or streets where neighbourhood bikeways exist or is proposed, and policy directs that speed limits on these streets be 30 km/hr.
- Type B streets include those with continuous centre lines and are not included in the Type A category; they are typically major or collector streets and would determine a safe speed study to determine what the speed limit should be.
- A safe speed study is an evaluation of the presence of vulnerable road users, the amount of separation between road users, and the density of potential conflict points over a segment of street.
- In conducting a safe speed study, staff would evaluate conflict density and activity levels.
- Conflict density is a determination of how frequently potential conflicts arise on a given street between motor vehicles and other types of road users including pedestrians and cyclists.
- Activity level is a determination of how active a street currently is or is expected to be.
- If the policy is approved by Council, implementation will begin in the Fall 2022 and staff would begin safe speed studies on nine priority corridors and begin to collect baseline data.
- In 2023, new speed limit signage would be installed, communications with residents would continue and data would be collected and analyzed.
- The nine priority corridors were chosen due to crash data, input from the public through calls for service and feedback from Saanich Police.
- A monitoring and evaluation plan would be developed and would seek to identify the purpose and objectives of the project.
- A communications plan would also be developed to inform residents.

In response to questions from the Committee, the following was noted:

- Activity level includes vehicle, pedestrian, and cyclist activity.
- The intent of the policy is to protect vulnerable users.
- Ash Road, Cordova Bay Road and Arbutus Road are part of the nine priority corridors.
- Staff have provided the draft policy to neighbouring municipalities for their feedback.

The committee made the following comments:

- The policy makes sense although reducing speed limits may not change behaviour.

It was the consensus of the committee to unanimously support the direction of the draft Speed Limit Establishment Policy.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 8, 2022.

Councillor Brice, Chair

I hereby certify these minutes are accurate.

Nancy Chaggar, Senior Committee Clerk