



COUNCIL POLICY

Subject: Neighbourhood Plans – Initiation and Process	Policy No:	07-221
	Approved by Council:	1998-07-20
	Revised by Council:	2007-10-15
	Revised by Council:	2016-05-30

1. Purpose

- 1.1 Generally, a neighbourhood plan is necessary as a pre-requisite for development and is intended to anticipate and manage growth, allocate Township investment, capitalize on voluntary contributions and provide stability where growth is not contemplated.

2. Background

The principles of neighbourhood planning in the township are as follows:

- 2.1 Maintain a seven-year supply of land:
 - 2.1.1 to accommodate population and employment growth, and
 - 2.1.2 to ensure a competitive supply of land and choice for the market.
- 2.2 Accommodate an average 3% annual population growth rate:
 - 2.2.1 for the Township as a whole (growth in any one community may be greater or less), that complies with the Regional Context Statement and MetroVancouver Regional Growth Strategy.

The average shall be calculated over a seven year period pursuant to paragraph 2.1
- 2.3 Comply with the Official Community Plan and Local Community Plans in place while attempting to:
 - 2.3.1 provide more detailed plans that are in conformity with community plans, that can be used to base decisions on zoning and servicing; and
 - 2.3.2 provide a means for staging growth in the Township.
- 2.4 Ensure that services are adequately provided for new development.
 - 2.4.1 Staff shall ensure that services for the new neighbourhood and the associated community, are adequate;
 - 2.4.2 Neighbourhood plan areas shall be based on storm drainage catchments; and,
 - 2.4.3 The provision of services for the community and the neighbourhood shall serve as the basis for servicing requirements for individual development applications.

2.5 Coordinate approvals and required services of other government agencies, as necessary.

2.5.1 Township staff shall take steps to ensure that staff of other government agencies are involved to ensure that their comments are considered, e.g. Department of Fisheries and Oceans' concerns about watercourse protection and School District requirement for school sites.

2.6 Ensure financial viability of development.

2.6.1 The concept that development should pay for growth is to be followed.

2.6.2 Financially viable neighbourhoods contribute to the development of a sustainable community and reduce the risk to the Township.

3. Related Policy

3.1 07-220 Neighbourhood Plans

4. Policy

4.1 Staff shall create and maintain or oversee the creation and maintenance of "Neighbourhood Plans" which illustrate land uses, subdivision patterns, road hierarchies, amenities and facilities, distinguishing between what exists, what has been approved, and what has been proposed. The Neighbourhood Plans shall be available to Council, other departments and the public during normal working hours and at scheduled meetings, as appropriate.

4.2 A neighbourhood plan may be initiated by Township Council or owners in the area. In both cases, the principles outlined in Section 2 shall be followed and the boundaries of a proposed Neighbourhood Plan shall conform to the boundaries outlined in the applicable Community Plan.

4.3 Where owners in an area initiate a neighbourhood plan, the process is as follows:

Expression of interest from owners for the Township to consider preparing a neighbourhood plan for an area, which should include:

4.3.1 a letter setting out expression of interest;

4.3.2 the name and address of contact person;

4.3.3 a list of properties and owners in the proposed neighbourhood plan area and indication of whether each one is in favour or opposed to the neighbourhood plan, or did not provide an opinion;

NOTE: Support of 75% of the owners or owners of 75% of the land is required, or as otherwise approved by Council based on other factors.

4.3.4 the signatures of owners requesting inclusion in a neighbourhood plan;

4.3.5 a map showing land owners who support or who are not in favour of the neighbourhood plan request;

4.3.6 a letter from the proponent(s) outlining proposals for amenities and up-front planning costs they would be willing to contribute;

4.3.7 evaluation by Township staff based on selection criteria; and

4.3.8 a Report to Council with recommendations on whether and where the neighbourhood plan may proceed.

4.4 Commitment by proponent(s):

4.4.1 Staff and proponent(s) shall meet and agree on a list of requirements to begin the planning process in the neighbourhood. These may include:

a) land use commitments;

- b) servicing and infrastructure commitments;
 - c) financial plan commitments;
 - d) amenity commitments;
 - e) commitments to provide a portion of the cost of the planning process;
 - f) commitment to staging and sharing of growth allocations – both within the neighbourhood and with other neighbourhoods.
- 4.4.2 The proponent(s) must commit to the preparation of an adequately sized neighbourhood plan and the cost and effort associated therewith. The adequate size of a neighbourhood plan will depend on the circumstances present in each case and may vary from plan to plan. There are no specific requirements as to the size of a neighbourhood plan, however as an illustrative example, a neighbourhood plan to support a neighbourhood school or park, or roughly 160 acres, will be viewed favourably.
- 4.4.3 The proponent(s) must commit to the development of a portion of the neighbourhood in a timely manner. Development in a timely manner will vary from application to application. There are no specific requirements as to the minimum size of an initial application, however it must be of a sufficient size to demonstrate a substantial commitment to proceed and the boundaries of the initial application shall conform to Section 4.2.
- 4.4.4 A Planning Agreement which sets out the roles, responsibilities and obligations of the Township and the proponent(s) is drawn up.
- 4.4.5 A Selection Criteria will be used to assess each residential neighbourhood plan proposal and prioritize the various proposals. Each residential neighbourhood plan must be in substantial compliance with the criteria. Neighbourhood plans for commercial, business park or industrial areas may be initiated at Council's discretion. The selection criteria are:
- 4.4.5.1 Supply of land.
 - a) Is additional land required to ensure a 7 year supply of land for development in the Township?
 - b) Does the neighbourhood include land designated for commercial/industrial/institutional uses that will generate employment?
 - c) Does the neighbourhood open a new desirable employment sector?
 - 4.4.5.2 Continuity with existing urban area.
 - a) What is the degree of contiguity with an existing area of equivalent or greater density or similar land use?
 - b) What is the degree of continuity with existing commercial or industrial areas?
 - 4.4.5.3 Potential to develop a complete community.
 - a) What is the potential for community gathering places?
 - b) Does the neighbourhood provide a mix of complementary land uses?
 - c) Does the neighbourhood reduce reliance on regional transportation?
 - d) Does the neighbourhood provide for road and utility connections?
 - e) Are community plan provisions up-to-date?

- 4.4.5.4 Contained neighbourhood.
 - a) Do the boundaries of the proposed neighbourhood plan conform with Section 4.2?
 - b) How cohesive is the neighbourhood? (cohesiveness should not be sacrificed to accommodate ownership patterns)
 - c) Is difficulty anticipated in developing around non-participating pockets?
 - d) Does the plan provide for adequate population to sustain school, park, transit & other facilities? Does the plan provide for effective/efficient use of community investment?

- 4.4.5.5 Financial Benefit and Impacts.
 - a) What amenities, facilities, infrastructure and financing are volunteered amenities?
 - b) What are the potential for heritage or environmental protection/enhancement?

4.4.6 Staff and the proponent(s) prepare a Planning Agreement to outline the responsibilities of each party.

4.5 Pre-Plan

- 4.5.1 In accordance with the terms of the Planning Agreement, the proponent(s), at their cost, shall provide all necessary background material to initiate the Planning process. This may include:
 - a) environmental studies and surveys (top of bank, etc.);
 - b) preliminary servicing studies;
 - c) financial analysis;
 - d) opportunity and constraints mapping;
 - e) heritage studies;
 - f) existing community assets and amenities;
 - g) a planning program including assessment criteria

4.5.2 Neighbourhood Plan Design Criteria

Neighbourhood Plans should be developed based on the following criteria. Plans are to be assessed based on these criteria.

These criteria are used by staff to set priorities for opening new neighbourhoods.

- 4.5.2.1 Mix of housing types.
 - a) The neighbourhood plan should provide a variety of housing types, densities and tenures to meet a wide range of demand and correspond to the current and anticipated demographic needs of the community.

- 4.5.2.2 Public owned streets.
 - a) Publicly owned and publicly accessible streets are encouraged with development oriented to the street to create a pedestrian environment.

- 4.5.2.3 Variety of transportation modes.

- a) Neighbourhoods should be designed to be efficient and convenient for a variety of transportation modes, including walking, bicycles, transit, and private vehicles.
 - b) Neighbourhoods should be designed to encourage walking for pleasure, daily needs and accessing transportation.
- 4.5.2.4 Interface/edge treatment.
- a) The urban/rural boundary should be carefully planned and designed to minimize conflicts.
 - b) The interface treatment between different land uses or densities should minimize conflicts.
- 4.5.2.5 Balance between jobs and residents.
- a) Economically realistic employment opportunities should be provided within or adjacent to the neighbourhood plan.
 - b) Balance between jobs and employment in the Township should be maintained or improved.
- 4.5.2.6 Protection of the environment.
- a) Environmentally sensitive areas should be protected.
 - b) Green spaces should be provided and linked to other green spaces.
- 4.5.2.7 Special places.
- a) Each neighbourhood should be organized around a special place.
 - b) Schools, parks, landmarks, commercial nodes, places of worship, institutions, amenities, heritage sites, or combinations thereof can provide a community gathering place, focus and identity.
- 4.5.2.8 Safety and security
- a) Land use and building design should foster safety and security.
- 4.5.2.9 Phasing
- a) A neighbourhood plan should contain staging details, including annual population and dwelling unit growth in concert with overall Township objectives.
 - b) Thresholds should be proposed to allow the Township to balance growth in a number of neighbourhood plan areas to achieve an overall annual population growth rate of 3%.
- 4.5.2.10 Schools & parks.
- a) Adequate school and park sites shall be provided to accommodate the projected population.
 - b) Completed neighbourhoods will contain sufficient population to sustain an elementary school.
 - c) School sites will be integrated with neighbourhood parks wherever feasible.
 - d) Interim or phased facility development shall be identified.

4.5.2.11 Community programs

- a) The neighbourhood plan should address provision of community and social service needs.

4.5.2.12 Services

- a) Road, water, sanitary sewer and storm sewer systems should be extended in an efficient manner.
- b) Significant contributions to bring services to the neighbourhood plan area should be noted.
- c)

4.5.2.13 Financial considerations

- a) The neighbourhood plan should identify:
 - i) required facilities and services and how they will be provided (by the Township, by the developers or through the rezoning process);
 - ii) the cost of potential DCC projects required for development, and modifications to the DCC program;
 - iii) the extent of financial resources expected from the Township and the proposed cost recovery method.

4.5.2.14 Efficiencies

- a) Initiatives to reduce future operating costs of services, facilities and amenities shall be identified.

4.5.2.15 Innovation

- a) Innovative proposals to meet the needs of the new community in more efficient or more effective ways should be described.

4.5.2.16 Sustainability

- a) Sustainability provisions should be set out in the plan.
- b) Sustainable development is defined as “a process in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments and institutional changes are all made consistent with future as well as present needs”.
- c) Sustainable development has the following underlying premises:
 - i) symbiotic relationships between consumer humanity & producer natural systems;
 - ii) compatibility between ecology & economics.

4.5.3 When complete, requisite payments to engage consultant and specialists for the planning process are required to proceed to the next stage.

4.6 Neighbourhood Plan preparation process.

The steps in the preparation of a plan are as follows:

- 4.6.1 establish the Neighbourhood Plan Consultative Team, review background information;
- 4.6.2 publicly present information on process and obtain input on issues;
- 4.6.3 prepare options;
- 4.6.4 open house to review preferred concept;

- 4.6.5 prepare draft neighbourhood plan;
- 4.6.6 assess impacts;
- 4.6.7 publicly review draft neighbourhood plan and obtain input on proposals;
- 4.6.8 finalize the neighbourhood plan;
- 4.6.9 Council or Planning Committee consideration.

4.7 Post Plan

- 4.7.1 The post plan process or the process following the preparation of a plan will attempt to ensure that:
 - a) conclusions of the planning process are appropriately documented;
 - b) necessary programs are initiated;
 - c) commitments by the Township and the proponent(s) are delivered; and
 - d) community development through subsequent rezonings and subdivision benefit by better certainty through planning and pre-servicing.
- 4.7.2 Staff and proponent(s) examine the plan and review initial commitments.
- 4.7.3 Agreements are obtained to secure:
 - a) services;
 - b) amenities;
 - c) heritage conservation;
 - d) environmental preservation;
 - e) any other matter set out in the plan.

Note: Where appropriate, security for these agreements may only relate to the anticipated initial stage of neighbourhood development.
- 4.7.4 The initial stage of development should be of sufficient scale to warrant opening a neighbourhood.
- 4.7.5 Approximately 25% of a typical quarter section should be included in the secured commitments to “front-end” neighbourhood development.
- 4.7.6 The planning cycle concludes with zoning and development at the initial stage.

4.8 Sub-Neighbourhood Plan

Council may consider a sub-neighbourhood plan within the Willoughby Community Plan area, subject to the following:

- 4.8.1 The principal use must be an institutional, business park or cultural/civic use. Conventional residential development (fee simple and condominium use) may be permitted, but shall be multi-family in form, preferably mid or high rise in a mixed use development, and designed as adult-oriented.
- 4.8.2 The proponent shall demonstrate that the proposal has very minimal impact on schools and parks in the area.
- 4.8.3 The full cost of the sub-neighbourhood plan shall be borne by the proponent(s), with no provision for reimbursement of any costs by the Township. In addition, the proponent shall pay the Township \$1,000 per gross acre of land within the sub-neighbourhood plan area to offset staff administration costs such as providing information, liaison, reviewing proposal and public consultation.
- 4.8.4 The proponent shall prepare a terms of reference document in consultation with Township staff and receive the approval of Township Council before initiating work on the plan. The terms of reference shall specify:

- 4.8.4.1 A process for undertaking the sub-neighbourhood plan that addresses the requirements of this section;
 - 4.8.4.2 A public consultation process; and
 - 4.8.4.3 A timeline for the process.
- 4.8.5 The sub-neighbourhood plan shall be completed to the acceptance of the Township of Langley and shall address:
- 4.8.5.1 land use, density and building form;
 - 4.8.5.2 appropriate development permit and design guidelines;
 - 4.8.5.3 protection of environmentally sensitive areas, including a review of stream classification and wildlife habitat, and compliance with the provisions of the Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw 2011 No. 4861, as amended, including Tree Protection;
 - 4.8.5.4 planning issues on surrounding lands and potential changes to plan designations and policies, including a plan showing how this area potentially integrates with the adjacent neighbourhoods, including road, greenway and trail connections, schools and park sites, and land use designations;
 - 4.8.5.5 provision of water, sanitary sewer and stormwater management plans, a traffic impact analysis and a geotechnical study to support both the land use and works and services;
 - 4.8.5.6 location of greenway and trails;
 - 4.8.5.7 impacts on elementary and secondary schools and neighbourhood and community parks, policing and fire protection, and
 - 4.8.5.8 other issues that the Township determines are important to address.
- 4.8.6 All the engineering services identified in the engineering servicing plans and studies described in 4.8.5 above, shall be provided to the ultimate standard at the cost of the proponent(s).
- 4.8.7 The proponent will be responsible for obtaining comments and approvals from relevant agencies, including a letter of authorization or equivalent from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, where required.
- 4.8.8 The sub-neighbourhood plan and engineering reports shall be provided in formats acceptable to the Township.