

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

Why plan?

Planning helps us to forecast and address future community needs, it provides us with knowledge so that we may predict and prepare for challenging times and it establishes goals and policies to direct and manage change.

One of the most effective planning tools we have is the Official Community Plan, which is, in effect, the charter for the future.

The Province of BC's LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT enables municipalities to have Official Community Plans. It defines an OCP as a general statement of objectives and policies to guide planning and land use. The act also states that the OCP must include a Regional Strategy (i.e. we must coordinate local objectives and values with regional goals and directions.)

TO DEFINE COMMUNITY DIRECTIONS

This Community Plan is about defining directions. These directions take the form of policies that have been developed with the community and that reflect those local needs, aspirations and values. The policies guide Council decisions on a wide range of issues and are based on a set of planning principles intended to support the quality of life demanded by community residents. Securing West Vancouver's vision for the future requires a collective appreciation of community

values and assets and a desire to protect and enhance them for future generations.

The Community Plan outlines where we are, where we want to be and how to get there. Its policies will be linked to various courses of action to ensure that West Vancouver will continue to be a great place to live, work and play.

TO INFORM THE COMMUNITY

The Community Plan includes an overview of the history of planning in West Vancouver. This context enables residents to recognize how and why the community has come to be what it is today and how planning initiatives have differed from other parts of the Lower Mainland. This legacy of natural assets and the foresight of past decision-makers produced a community within a park-like setting and with a neighbourhood-oriented character.

This Community Plan also provides residents with a statement of common goals and objectives for West Vancouver. The policies included in the Community Plan guide planning and land use decisions and provide stability and predictability. Specific neighbourhood or local area plans will be added in the future to supplement the OCP policies. The maps, goals and policies also help to integrate decisions on land use, transportation, the environment, heritage, community facilities and services, and social and economic planning into a broad municipal strategy.

TO GUIDE COUNCIL

This document and the policies contained within it are a statement of Council's general intent with respect to matters directly under local jurisdiction, and both principles and objectives are included. The principles of the Community Plan provide the framework, and the policies are the strategies to achieve the goals of the Community Plan and ultimately the community's vision.

This Community Plan is deliberately designed to be a statement of broad community objectives, rather than a detailed tool of implementation such as a zoning bylaw or a site-specific land use plan. The plan does provide Council with tools to review and judge development applications and serves as a basis for municipal bylaws that regulate developments. It is also

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Charting our Course for the Future

An Official Community Plan (OCP):

- is a plan for the future
- establishes broad policies, goals and objectives
- addresses land use, housing needs, parks, environmental and social issues

...expressing our values, exploring our visions

What is an Official Community Plan?

An OCP will:

- guide Council's decision making
- coordinate actions and work plans
- allow citizens to anticipate change
- provide a forum for debating policy change

...expressing our values, exploring our visions

Charting our Course for the Future

An OCP is not:

- a regulation
- a detailed implementation program
- a static, unchanging document

...expressing our values, exploring our visions

Above are a selection of power point slides presented at community information meetings in April 2002.

intended to be a dynamic document. Amendments can and should be made periodically to reflect changing attitudes, new information and evolving community aspirations.

This Community Plan describes and anticipates change and provides specific guidance for future legislative and administrative actions. It reflects the results of citizen involvement, technical analysis and the judgement of decision-makers.

TO MEET LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Municipalities in British Columbia are given the authority to adopt an Official Community Plan (OCP) through the Local Government Act, R.S.B.C. 1996, Chapter 323, Section 26. The Act stipulates what must or may be included in an OCP and how a plan can be adopted. This Community Plan has been prepared in compliance with that legislation and applies to the entire area of the Municipality. The OCP is concerned not only with the use of land, including residential, commercial, institutional, recreation and utility uses, but it also provides policies related to housing, social needs, and other influences that are important to the planning of the community. The result is a broad strategy to direct West Vancouver's development. The objectives and policies that will guide planning decisions within the Municipality should be reviewed approximately every five years so that they remain current.

During the development of an Official Community Plan, the local government must provide one or more opportunities for consultation with members of the community, as well as with representatives of the regional district, adjacent municipalities, First Nations, school district boards and the provincial and federal governments.

An OCP must be adopted by bylaw and receive an affirmative vote of a majority of all Council members. After first reading of the bylaw, Council must consider the OCP in conjunction with its financial plan, waste management plan and plan for agricultural land reserves, if applicable. Council must hold a public hearing on the proposed OCP prior to final adoption of the Bylaw.

An Official Community Plan does not commit a Municipality to proceed with any project that is specified in the plan. A Municipality's decision, however, cannot be inconsistent or in conflict with OCP policies.