Electoral Area ‘A’ Official Community Plan Review Newsletter

Why Should I Participate in the OCP Review?

10 Best reasons for participating in the Official Community Plan review process

1. The time for change is during the Official Community Plan review process, you can have your say.
2. All input is important and will be considered.
3. The Official Community Plan may affect your property including the recommended minimum parcel size, and its current and future use.
4. To have a say in your future.
5. To ensure that your interests are heard.
6. To make a difference in your community.
7. To be a part of decisions that will affect your community.
8. Its self-paced - you decide how you participate, you can attend public events, participate in surveys, read information on the Regional District of Nanaimo website, speak to Regional District of Nanaimo staff, submit written submissions, and/or arrange for onsite meetings with RDN staff.
9. It is an opportunity to become involved in a process which could potentially lead to significant changes in your community.
10. Community input forms the basis for the new Official Community Plan for Electoral Area ‘A’.

Subscribing to the RDN Email Alert System

Throughout the Electoral Area ‘A’ OCP review process, the RDN will send email updates using its email alert system. Information will be sent from time to time on the progress on the OCP review, public events, workshops, and consultation opportunities. To start receiving this information you must subscribe to the email alert system as follows:

i. Go to our website: www.rdn.bc.ca
ii. Click on the Electoral Area ‘A’ OCP Review Page Link, located in the middle of the page. Look for this picture.
iii. On the top of the Electoral Area ‘A’ Official Community Plan page click on submit your email.
iv. Follow the instructions in the confirmation email that will be sent to you shortly after subscribing. You can unsubscribe at any time.

If you have questions?

Any questions on the OCP review process may be directed to:
Greg Keller, MCIP
Senior Planner

Regional District of Nanaimo
Electoral Area ‘A’ Official Community Plan Review Newsletter

Points of Interest:

● Open Houses scheduled for September 15, 16, and 17
● Applications for Official Community Plan Citizens’ Committee are now being accepted.
● Information on the Official Community Plan review is available at www.rdn.bc.ca

Inside this issue:

OCP Resumes 1
Open Houses 1
Community Planning 101 2
Citizens’ committee 3
Review process 3
Why I should participate? 4
Staying Informed 4

Are you interested in helping to guide the future of Cedar, South Wellington, Cassidy, Yellow Point, and other Neighbourhoods in Electoral Area A?

If so, you may be interested in attending one of the three Open Houses on the Electoral Area ‘A’ Official Community Plan Review. The purpose of the open houses is to provide background information on Electoral Area ‘A’ and to discuss the process for the Official Community Plan Review. This is an opportunity to share information about Electoral Area ‘A’ and to become informed about the OCP review process including where to obtain information and how to participate in the process.

The three open houses are scheduled as follows:

September 15, 2008 3pm to 8pm Western Maritime Institute Hall 3519 Hallberg Rd.
September 16, 2008 3pm to 8pm Cranberry Community Hall 1555 Morden Rd.
September 17, 2008 3pm to 8pm Cedar Community Hall 2388 Cedar Rd.

A presentation is scheduled for 7:00 pm for each of the open houses.

This newsletter is printed on paper containing 35% post-consumer content.
What is an Official Community Plan?

An Official Community Plan (OCP) is an important policy document that provides Local Governments and the community with general direction on land use matters such as environmental protection, growth management, parks and recreation, community servicing, land use, and minimum parcel sizes. The policies contained in an OCP are important because they help shape the community and have the potential to affect the way in which we live our daily lives. Once an OCP is adopted, a Local Government cannot approve a bylaw or undertake any works that are not consistent with the OCP.

How could the OCP affect my property?

Policies in an OCP sometimes recommend that changes be made to a zoning bylaw in order to help the community meet the goals and objectives contained in the Plan. The common types of changes that OCPs recommend include changes to the minimum parcel size and use of existing properties, all of which could potentially affect the future value and use of your property.

What is an Official Community Plan land use designation?

Land use designations are included within an OCP and are intended to specify the communities’ desire with respect to future land use in a given area. A land use designation includes policies which assist the Regional District of Nanaimo and the community in working towards the desired future outcome. The policies contained in a land use designation may not accurately reflect the current zoning of a property. However, all changes in zoning must be consistent with the policies contained in the OCP land use designation. Otherwise an amendment to the OCP is required, which is subject to broad public consultation.

What is a Development Permit Area?

The purpose of a Development Permit Area (DPA) is to make sure that the potential impacts of a development are addressed and ensure that development within a specified area is conducted in a responsible manner. This is especially important in areas that are environmentally sensitive and/or subject to hazardous conditions.

Development applications within DPAs are reviewed to ensure that the proposal is consistent with the DPA Guidelines. In some cases, a report from a professional biologist or engineer may be required to assist staff in evaluating an application. The OCP specifies the information required in order to submit a Development Permit application.

A common misconception about DPAs is that they are setbacks or “no-go” buffer zones. This is incorrect. Development may occur within a DPA provided the proposal satisfies the DPA Guidelines.

What is an Official Community Plan Review Process?

It is anticipated that the OCP review process will conclude in the Spring of 2010. Public consultation for the OCP will be initiated on September 15, 16, and 17 with 3 Open Houses (see front cover for details).

The next step in the OCP review process is the formation of a Citizen’s Committee (as above) followed by 3 community mapping sessions scheduled in October. Following the adoption of the OCP in the spring of 2010, the implementation process will be initiated.