

# OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN

## PLAN PARKSVILLE: A VISION FOR OUR FUTURE



Official Community Plan



DEPARTMENT OF  
COMMUNITY PLANNING  
AND BUILDING

## OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN BASICS

An Official Community Plan, also known as an OCP, is among the most important documents to a local government. An OCP contains objectives and policies to guide municipal decisions related to community planning and land use management. Many hours of community input and collaboration identify the broad vision with supporting goals and objectives to guide Council in its decisions.

An OCP is intended to:

- express fundamental community values, goals and vision for the future;
- guide Council and staff in their decision-making by offering a long-range outlook on development according to the expressed vision; and,
- provide residents and developers with a reasonable degree of certainty in the way the community will develop.

*Plan Parksville*, the City's current OCP, was adopted in July 2013.

OCPs must contain the following information: location, type and density of various land uses; location and area of sand and gravel deposits for development; limitations on the uses of hazardous or environmentally-sensitive lands; location and type of public facilities; and, targets to reduce emissions and the methods to achieve those targets.

## OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLANS VS. ZONING BYLAWS

*Plan Parksville* provides the 'big picture' planning vision for the City. In contrast, a zoning bylaw defines the specific uses of a property and the characteristics of those uses (i.e. maximum building height, number of required parking spaces, etc.).

Over time, the zoning bylaw regulations become consistent with the OCP vision, but a transition period usually exists. For example, *Plan Parksville's* vision for a property next to the downtown core may be for future commercial use, yet the present day use and zoning are residential. In this scenario, the proponent would require a successful rezoning application to alter the permitted uses to be consistent with the OCP. A new zone cannot be adopted if it directly conflicts with the *Plan Parksville* land use designation. If someone proposes a use that does not meet the plan's policies, Council would also have to adopt an OCP amendment.

## **DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREAS**

Development permit areas allow Council to manage development on lands that are deemed to have special significance. Areas with significance may be designated as such for a variety of reasons from guiding the architectural form and character of development to the protection of the local environment.

*Plan Parksville* contains 17 development permit areas. If a property falls into one or more development permit areas, land alteration or redevelopment will likely require a development permit to be approved by Council before work can begin. A development proposal must be submitted to the planning department that outlines how the development aligns with the guidelines contained in the development permit area or areas.

## **OCP AMENDMENTS**

An OCP provides a broad foundation for the future planning of the community and, where a proposed use does not comply with the policies and designation of the OCP, an amendment may be requested to facilitate a specific development or alter the general guidance for a particular topic area. Council has absolute discretion to refuse an OCP amendment.

In order to amend the OCP, there is a public process where interested parties, including regional neighbours, have an opportunity to provide input on the proposal.

### **Photo Captions**

Cover photo: City of Parksville., *Plan Parksville: A Vision for Our Future, Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2013, No. 1492.*

*Information is for convenience only. Contact department staff to discuss current and applicable bylaws*



## **DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY PLANNING AND BUILDING**

100 JENSEN AVENUE EAST  
PO BOX 1390  
PARKSVILLE, BC V9P 2H3

250 954-3061