

**DISTRICT OF NORTH VANCOUVER  
COUNCIL WORKSHOP**

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Minutes of the Council Workshop of the Council for the District of North Vancouver held at 5:04 p.m. on Tuesday, April 17, 2012 in the Committee Room of the District Hall, 355 West Queens Road, North Vancouver, British Columbia.

**Present:** Mayor R. Walton  
Councillor R. Bassam  
Councillor R. Hicks  
Councillor M. Little (5:28 pm)  
Councillor D. MacKay-Dunn (5:09 pm)  
Councillor L. Muri  
Councillor A. Nixon

**Staff:** Mr. D. Stuart, Chief Administrative Officer  
Mr. B. Bydwell, General Manager – Planning, Properties & Permits  
Ms. N. Deveaux, General Manager – Finance & Technology  
Mr. G. Joyce, General Manager – Engineering, Parks & Facilities  
Mr. R. Boulton, Manager – Parks  
Mr. R. Danyluk, Manager – Financial Planning  
Ms. S. Haid, Manager – Sustainable Community Development  
Mr. A. Wardell, Manager – Financial Services  
Mr. E. Iorio, Revenue & Taxation Manager  
Ms. N. Letchford, Deputy Municipal Clerk  
Ms. S. Rogers, Section Manager – Parks Planning  
Ms. L. Brick, Confidential Council Clerk  
Ms. C. Girard, Parks Planner

**Also in**

**Attendance:** Mr. Ken Stubbs, Parks and Natural Environment Committee  
Mr. Gabriel Mazoret, Parks and Natural Environment Committee

**1. Opening by the Mayor**

Mayor Walton welcomed members of the public and staff to the meeting.

**2. Tax Distribution**

File No. 05.1705.20/000.000

Presentation: Nicole Deveaux, General Manager – Finance & Technology

Mr. Andy Wardell, Manager – Financial Services, advised that the District of North Vancouver 2012 revised assessment roll is valued at \$25.3 billion and staff anticipate a tax levy increase of 2%. Staff are continuing with the District tax strategy objective to harmonize tax rates with regional averages, or the capped rate, and are currently in year four of the strategy. For 2012 this strategy will result in a shift of \$120,000 from light industrial to residential resulting in a further 0.22% increase to the residential class; the heavy industry class will continue to benefit from their investments.

Councillor MACKAY-DUNN arrived at this point in the proceedings.

Mr. Wardell advised that staff will review the impact of the Provincial RCMP contract negotiations but do not recommend changing the recommended tax levy rate at this time; if the impact is greater than anticipated staff can bring forward a financial plan bylaw amendment at a future date.

Mr. Wardell reported that the anticipated Seaspan improvements are estimated at \$100,000 million and history has shown that approximately 10% of assessed value of improvements may be taxable.

Mr. Wardell presented the tax strategy scenarios for 2012 providing the final distribution amounts across the classes. It was noted that the Province must confirm capped port property valuations and have not yet confirmed the valuations provided by BC Assessment.

Discussion ensued regarding the Provincial Expert Panel on Tax Competitiveness; six municipalities have written directly to the Premiers Office and are actively lobbying regarding business taxes and port competitiveness. It was noted that no municipal governments are on the panel. Concern was expressed that that there may be a bias on the panel in favour of business.

It was noted that municipalities will continue to receive grants in lieu of taxes on capped properties until 2018; the rates are frozen at 2003 rates and are only subject to inflation so the District does not recover 100% of the revenue lost as a result of the cap.

Councillor LITTLE arrived at this point in the proceedings.

Council advised that they endorse the continuation of the tax strategy policy and requested that staff prepare the tax bylaws on that basis.

The meeting recessed at 5:40 pm and reconvened at 5:42 pm.

### **3. Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan**

File No. 13.6660.01/000.000

Joint Presentation:

- Gavin Joyce, General Manager – Engineering, Parks & Facilities
- Richard Boulton, Manager – Parks
- Rick Danyluk, Manager – Financial Planning
- Susan Haid, Manager – Sustainable Community Development
- Susan Rogers, Section Manager – Parks Planning

Memo: Susan Rogers, Section Manager – Parks Planning and Park Development

Councillor NIXON returned to the meeting at 5:43 pm.

Mr. Richard Boulton, Manager – Parks, reviewed the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan (POSSP) and identified how the Official Community Plan's policies and goals will be integrated within the POSSP.

Ms. Susan Haid, Manager – Sustainable Community Development, advised that the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan supports and aligns with the Official Community Plan and maintains diverse, high quality parks and open space systems that serve a range of community needs and protects the natural environment. The targets and policies from the POSSP are nested within the OCP; the POSSP is one of a series of plans within the OCP including social strategy, housing, and environmental plans.

The key policies in the OCP include an increase in community parks in the four growth centres, establishment of urban park land, and a trail network and green way network map as a foundational policy for the POSSP.

Ms. Haid noted that the key themes which emerged from the OCP process include:

- Maintenance and investment of parks;
- Increase, update, and adapt park facilities to meet changing needs (school fields/play areas);
- Eco-system forest management;
- Develop and maintain a network of trails;
- Waterfront access and recreation use;
- Volunteer engagement and stewardship; and,
- Inter jurisdictional partnerships.

The Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan goals include:

- Address changing trends and demands;
- Assess park user satisfaction;
- Manage, revitalize assets and infrastructure;
- Environmental integrity and stewardship;
- Celebrate and expand trails and greenways;
- Community partnerships and education; and,
- Creative funding mechanisms.

Ms. Susan Rogers, Section Manager – Parks Planning, reviewed the focus of the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan, and advised that targets will be achieved through detailed concept design of the centres which will identify the demographics, programming, and amenity needs for each community.

#### Focus #1 - Parks and Greenways in Centres

- Lynn Valley Centre priorities include a new park north of Kirkstone/south of 27<sup>th</sup> Street, including trails and network links in the Hastings Creek corridor, and playground areas.
- Lower Capilano Centre priorities include expanding Belle Isle Park, improved river trail and greenways, an open plaza area, and working with West Vancouver to identify opportunities to expand Klahanie Park.
- Maplewood Centre priorities include a Seymour River and Spirit Trail greenway, new neighbourhood park/school playground, Maplewood farm revitalization and expansion in urban farming initiatives.
- Lower Lynn Centre priorities include a revitalization of Seylynn Park, expansion of Marie Place Park, completing a river trail and new east-west connectors at the Crown Street Bridge, and a possible new parkette east of Mt. Highway and south of Crown Street.

#### Focus #2 Park Revitalization District of North Vancouver Parks

The District has more than 150 parks, 70 hectares of grassed areas, 40 sports fields, and 39 ball diamonds; the Finance Department has developed an asset management inventory and is applying a lifecycle system and cost to the infrastructure of the assets. Staff advised that some parks may be repurposed as part of the reinvention process.

Staff reported that the POSSP reviewed District-wide needs and North Shore needs; some identified areas for improvement include a field house at Inter River Park, revitalized facilities at Norgate Park, and Cates Park was identified as needing concession and washroom revitalization. Staff further noted that the POSSP identified a series of gaps interlinking trails and greenways which have a great value in terms of transportation.

#### Focus #3 Natural Parkland - Align Sustainability & Stewardship with OCP Goals

Staff noted that one of the growing priorities is the need to manage and address Natural Parkland, and align the sustainability and stewardship initiatives with the OCP Goals. The Parks Department undertook a Forest Eco-Inventory of the forests to identify the eco system sensitivities, and to manage our forest trees. The parks group have been expanding their programs to include invasive plant management, dog management, and forest restitution. Public stewardship of these natural systems is a key element in the parks plan.

#### Focus #4 Implementing Park Acquisition & New Capital Projects

Staff are seeking funding through grants, user fees, partnerships, sponsorship, taxation, and development. Proposals for implementation include partnering opportunities, intensity of use, cost efficiencies and focus on the four growth areas.

Mr. Rick Danyluk, Manager – Financial Planning, noted that park improvements in the four growth centres will be primarily funded through development, grants, partnership/ sponsorship, user fees (sports fields, special events, pay parking, boat launch etc), and taxation. Staff reported that the cost estimates under development are in the \$20 – \$30 million range; however, the services vision is constrained by the financial plan. Staff recommend keeping plans current to monitor what can be accomplished within the District's means.

Staff reported that the next steps include council endorsement, focus on growth areas, focus on asset management, and focus on natural parkland.

#### Council Discussion:

In response to a Council query, staff advised that 72% of the District land base is parks; this ranks the District near the top, percentage wise, compared to other municipalities.

Council inquired regarding artificial turf fields; staff advised that Seylynn and Myrtle Park have been identified as areas that may be able to be converted into artificial turf fields.

Council commented on the Spirit Trail section on Mount Seymour Parkway, requesting that staff continue to work with the Tsleil-Waututh Nation and identify options to locate the trail on Dollarton Road.

Staff commented that the focus will be on ensuring that the District parks are in order and the emphasis will be on current parks and trails. Staff are not looking at adding to the inventory, but identifying areas where partnerships can occur. Staff may bring forward decommissioning of some parks in areas that are no longer used.

Council commented they support the Crown Street crossing of the Spirit Trail and would like further discussion before planning proceeds.

Council noted that there is a need for more space for casual soccer and hockey users.

Staff confirmed that new park development will occur as opportunities arise in conjunction with development consistent with the OCP. New parks will come as opportunities for partnership are Council requested that staff emphasize maintenance of current parks before developing new parks.

In response to Council comments, staff advised that litter control is currently being reviewed to identify better separation options.

## 4. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.

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Confidential Council Clerk