

## **DISTRICT OF NORTH VANCOUVER COUNCIL WORKSHOP**

Minutes of the Council Workshop for the District of North Vancouver held at 7:03 p.m. on Tuesday, March 8, 2022 in the Council Chamber of the District Hall, 355 West Queens Road, North Vancouver, British Columbia.

**Present:** Mayor M. Little  
Councillor J. Back (via Zoom) (7:03 p.m.)  
Councillor M. Bond (via Zoom)  
Councillor M. Curren (via Zoom)  
Councillor J. Hanson  
Councillor L. Muri (via Zoom)

**Absent:** Councillor B. Forbes

**Staff:** Mr. D. Stuart, Chief Administrative Officer  
Mr. G. Joyce, General Manager – Engineering, Parks and Facilities  
Mr. D. Milburn, General Manager – Planning, Properties and Permits  
Mr. R. Danyluk, Deputy General Manager – Finance and Deputy CFO  
Ms. C. Jackson, Manager – Climate Action, Natural Systems and Biodiversity  
Ms. V. Grant-Smith, Section Manager – Infrastructure Planning  
Ms. G. Lanz, Deputy Municipal Clerk  
Ms. S. Young, Section Manager – Financial Planning  
Ms. A. Reiher, Council Liaison / Support Officer  
Ms. C. Archer, Confidential Council Clerk  
Ms. E. Allen, Committee Clerk

### **1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

#### **1.1. March 8, 2022 Council Workshop Agenda**

**MOVED by Councillor HANSON**

**SECONDED by Councillor CURREN**

THAT the agenda for the March 8, 2022 Council Workshop is adopted as circulated, including the addition of any items listed in the agenda addendum.

**CARRIED**

Absent for Vote: Councillor BACK

Councillor BACK arrived at this point in the proceedings.

### **2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

Nil

### **3. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL OR STAFF**

#### **3.1. Financial Plan Deliberations**

File No. 05.1780

Mr. Rick Danyluk, Deputy General Manager – Finance and Deputy Chief Financial Officer, advised that the Council Workshop is the final last step in the planning and consultation process before the Financial Plan Bylaw is presented for consideration of three readings at the Regular Meeting of Council on March 21, 2022.

Mr. Danyluk reviewed highlights of the proposed 2022 to 2026 Financial Plan, noting that they include new investments and replacement and upgrades to existing infrastructure:

- Active transportation projects to improve transportation choices;
- Acceleration of climate adaptation and mitigation actions;
- Fire and Rescue Services facilities to improve emergency response times;
- Parks, recreation and culture improvements to support community health; and,
- Social and supportive housing provisions and land dedication to continue to address affordability, adding approximately six hundred new non-market housing units over the next five years.

Mr. Danyluk reviewed public input received regarding the 2022 to 2026 Financial Plan, noting that there were two hundred seventy-six unique visits to the new public input forum and twenty-seven questions submitted through this platform. The following themes were noted from public input received through various methods, including the online public forum, in-person presentations to Council, and email:

- Active transportation;
- Affordable housing;
- Climate action and biodiversity;
- Financial planning;
- Indigenous relations;
- Recreation; and,
- North Shore Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Mr. Danyluk advised that staff have made changes to the proposed Financial Plan at the request of Council. In response to Council's request to review funding levels for community grants, staff are recommending a one-time ten percent increase in grant funding to address increased demand for community services due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and have identified funding opportunities for seniors and youth through a Vancouver Coastal Health grant. Mr. Danyluk added that staff will provide an update on the community's social service needs and report back to Council on future funding levels later in 2022. In response to Council's expression of support for increasing investment in electric vehicle (EV) public charging infrastructure, staff have secured grants totalling one hundred ninety thousand dollars to increase the District's investment in EV charging stations to seven hundred ninety thousand dollars over the next three years.

Mr. Danyluk advised that despite high levels of uncertainty the proposed property tax increase remains at three percent and is among the lowest in the Greater Vancouver region. He further advised that inflation rates are currently higher than two percent and while they are expected to return to normal levels over the next two years, staff will continue to monitor impacts and may recommend an amendment to the Capital Plan later in the year. Mr. Danyluk noted that some obligations are stabilized through the use of surplus, including impacts from the RCMP contract.

Mr. Danyluk advised that the Provincial Budget is aligned with many of Council's priorities and that the Provincial Budget includes provisions for housing, homelessness, care facilities, climate adaptation and mitigation, public safety, and indigenous relations. Mr. Danyluk further advised that staff are engaged in discussions regarding municipal finance reform, including fairness in property assessment and appeals, ensuring development pays for development, and more clearly defining local government's role in emerging services such as housing, regional transportation and climate action.

Mr. Danyluk review the next steps in the financial planning process, highlighting the following dates:

- Consideration of First, Second and Third Reading of the Financial Plan Bylaw on March 21, 2022;
- Consideration of Adoption of the Financial Plan Bylaw on April 4, 2022;
- A Council Workshop on tax distribution in April 2022;
- An update to the Long-term Financial Plan in May 2022;
- An update to fees and charges related to development in May or June 2022; and,
- Publication of the District's Annual Report in June 2022.

Councillor CURREN left the meeting at 7:19 p.m. and returned at 7:20 p.m.

In response to a question from Council, staff clarified that a one-time ten percent increase in grant funding is proposed for Community Grants and Child Care Grants for 2022 and that the Vancouver Coastal Health grant provides funding for seniors and youth programs. Mr. Danyluk advised that staff will assess community needs and have the information necessary to make a recommendation on future funding levels at that time.

Council discussion ensued and the following comments and concerns were noted:

- Commented on the increased demand for social services during pandemic;
- Recommended a larger increase to social service grants and commented on the value of social services to the community;
- Thanked staff for their careful work preparing the budget;
- Recommended simplification of the budget process to improve clarity for the public;
- Commented on the public input process for the budget;
- Acknowledged that financial planning requires difficult decisions;
- Commented on unfunded priorities and projects in various District Plans and requested information on which of these projects have been delivered or remain outstanding; and,
- Commended staff for their work on a Long-Term Financial Plan that will assist Council with planning for the future and the achievement of priority goals;

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that the Finance Department has been working on a Long-Term Financial Plan that will show progress on projects and priorities as well as the outlook for the next ten years.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that EV charging has been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and work will begin on this project in 2022.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that the budget reflects an ongoing increase in active transportation and safety measures with an annual lift in funding for this priority area. Staff further advised that projects included in this category include:

- Urban trail development;
- Cycling infrastructure;
- Safety and connectivity; and,
- Sidewalks near schools.

Council discussion continued and the following comments and concerns were noted:

- Commented on the Census data being released in 2022 and how it could be used to measure progress on OCP goals;
- Commented on requests from Deep Cove residents for Resident Parking Only (RPO) Zones and the backlog of applications;
- Recommended funding existing infrastructure and projects before considering any new projects and priorities;
- Commented on Cates Park, noting that new parks are being approved and constructed while existing parks are in need of improvements;
- Acknowledged new parks are needed to make Town Centres more liveable;
- Commented on the difference between green infrastructure and grey infrastructure; and,
- Recommended taking more actions to address climate change.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that Census data is released in tranches throughout the year and that staff will provide summaries to Council as more information becomes available, including data from the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and provincial statistics.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that climate action work is embedded in other line items in the budget including parks and open spaces, and affordable housing, and that staff can report back to Council on this topic in more detail.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that green infrastructure is not always possible to use at this time and that a strategy to address green infrastructure and sustainability could be developed for the whole North Shore.

Council discussion continued and the following comments and concerns were noted:

- Expressed concern that social service organizations could be funded at a lower level in 2023 following the proposed ten percent one-time funding increase for 2022;
- Commented on improved safety for all road users as part of active transportation projects;
- Reported that inflation rates are expected to rise in response to a number of factors including global instability and will likely not stay higher than normal;
- Commented on the impact of inflation on construction, including lumber and steel prices;
- Commented on climate impacts such as the Lytton wildfire, noting that extreme weather events are occurring more frequently.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that longer-term increases to social services funding require additional assessment and further discussion before moving forward and that the proposed one-time funding increase is to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that construction costs have been escalating for some time and that the current inflation rate will drive costs higher. In response, the District will manage project timelines and may carry projects forward to subsequent years when they are not completed on the originally planned schedule.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that allocations to reserves have been increased for the past ten years to protect against uncertainty. Funds have been used to mitigate risk and reduce future expenditures by undertaking projects such as wildfire mitigation and protection against flooding.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that the District is prepared to move forward with social and affordable housing, however, funding from senior levels of government has not been at the levels that were projected.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that the Pace of Development report coming later in 2022 will contain additional detail on progress toward affordable housing goals. The District is able to contribute land and waive fees to encourage investment in affordable housing, but a partner organization is required to build housing units.

Council discussion continued and the following comments and concerns were noted:

- Commented on leveraging funding from senior levels of government for active transportation projects;
- Advised that Translink is willing to partner on projects to increase safety and connectivity, including improving crossings near bus routes, pedestrian bump-outs and pedestrian and cycling connections;
- Commented on reconciliation and queried if resources are allocated for implementation;
- Recommended improving comfort and safety to make transit a more viable option;
- Noted that all Metro Vancouver member municipalities pay for transit police and opined they do not appear to focus efforts in the District;
- Commented on the increasing number of requests for RPO Zones and traffic issues in Deep Cove;
- Commented on the impact of traffic on liveability;
- Noted that members of the public have expressed confusion regarding their tax notices and the inclusion of taxes collected on behalf of other jurisdictions;
- Advised that the Metro Vancouver levy will increase at a higher rate than the District's proposed property tax increase and queried how this would impact the share of taxes shown on the property tax notice;
- Commented on significant increases in property insurance rates over the past two years; and,
- Expressed concern regarding future insurance increases and the prospect of buildings becoming uninsurable.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that costs associated with First Nations relations activities are embedded in other operating budgets and do not appear as a separate line item. Staff commented on the relationship with the Tsleil-Waututh Nation, noting many discussions have taken place and agreements reached. The District is involved in discussions regarding the creation of a North Shore steering committee consisting of the Tsleil-Waututh and Squamish First Nations as well as the three North Shore municipalities. The District is expected to make significant progress in this area in the coming year.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that a Council Workshop is scheduled to discuss Deep Cove traffic, noting that staff have worked with Simon Fraser University and stakeholders for a year regarding Deep Cove parking and traffic. It was further noted that there is nowhere in Deep Cove to add more parking.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that an update on the Child Care Action Plan will be provided to Council before the end of July 2022.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that the school tax portion of the property tax notice is just over thirty percent. The District's portion of the assessment is approximately fifty-seven percent and the rest is other jurisdictions. It was noted that Metro Vancouver charges affect District utility rates.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that property insurance rates have increased significantly and the District's Supplies and Risk Management Department has forecast that this trend will continue.

**4. PUBLIC INPUT**

Nil

**5. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOVED by Councillor HANSON**

**SECONDED by Mayor LITTLE**

THAT the March 8, 2022 Council Workshop is adjourned.

**CARRIED**  
(8:33 p.m.)

  
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Mayor  
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Municipal Clerk