

NEW WESTMINSTER'S OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE



Newsletter Vol. 4 - May 2016



WHAT have we been up to?

The OUR CITY process is an extensive review that will update all policy areas and maps in the current OCP. A large focus of this review has been on identifying the community's housing needs to 2041. The OCP update is meant to achieve two overarching housing goals:

1. accommodate expected growth
2. increase housing choice

Goal 1: Accommodate expected growth.

To be in conformance with Metro Vancouver's Regional Growth Strategy the City must show how and where it can accommodate 102,000 residents, the population projected for 2041. To guide the OCP work toward achieving this goal, staff is using the following principles:

- Locate the most number of residents within mixed-use, pedestrian oriented nodes that are well served by transit.
- Locate the next highest number of residents along pedestrian-oriented transit corridors.

- Locate some additional residents in single detached dwelling areas using form and character that maintain neighbourhood character.

The existing OCP is largely aligned with these principles. The OUR CITY process still needs to explore whether any refinements should be made to the expected growth areas. It is also an appropriate time to explore whether a revised plan for the area around the 22nd SkyTrain Station is needed.

Goal 2: Increase housing choice.

Single detached dwellings and apartment buildings make up more than 95% of the city's housing stock. This means there are limited housing options that are appropriate for people of all abilities, ages and family types, which means that people have to look outside New Westminister to meet their housing needs.

Increasing housing choice will allow families to meet their changing needs, enable empty nesters and seniors to downsize and remain in familiar

surroundings, facilitate settlement and integration by new immigrants and refugees, and retain youth and young professionals who are getting started in the housing market, which will contribute to intergenerational neighbourhoods.

The draft City Building Principles, including the following, will guide work to achieve this goal:

- Provide housing to meet the needs of different ages, incomes, family types and abilities.
- Locate some additional residents in single detached dwelling areas using form and design that maintain neighbourhood character.

Increasing housing choice would be achieved by encouraging more ground oriented housing forms to complement our current single detached dwellings. This has been the focus of staff research and was the focus of the last round of consultation: the Community Conversation on Housing.

We have now wrapped up the OUR CITY Community Conversation on Housing, which included a range of opportunities to provide input between November 2015 and February 2016. The Community Conversation explored two questions:

1) What Housing Fits? What is the level of community support for different ground oriented housing forms, and what do people like and not like about each of the housing forms.

2) Where Housing Goes? Where in the city should (or should not) the different housing forms be located.

This newsletter highlights some of the feedback that we heard during this round of consultation.

WHAT THEMES EMERGED?

Support for Housing Choice:

- Plans for the aging population by increasing senior friendly housing options
- Provides family friendly housing options
- Allows people to stay central
- Increases affordability
- Creates social interaction opportunities
- Contributes to neighbourhood diversity

Concerns About Housing Choice:

- Increases rental units
- Increases strata ownership
- Could have property value implications

- Could cause reduction in single detached dwellings
- Could cause loss of heritage assets

Where Housing Goes:

- Some people want the new land use designations map to keep things similar to what the city is like today. Others want the new map to be ambitious given the Official Community Plan's 25 year time horizon.
- Some people want to clarify that their support for a housing form (e.g. townhouses) should not be interpreted to mean they were in favour of replacing the single detached dwellings in their neighbourhood with these housing forms.

- There was a strong desire for a neighbourhood specific approach that reflects and respects individual neighbourhood character.
- People like where they live and want the character of established neighbourhoods to be respected and to slowly evolve over time. This might still mean allowing some infill but the number and design of projects would need to be appropriate.
- A good implementation strategy will be key.
- Residents in every neighbourhood were concerned about traffic, parking, loss of greenspace, infrastructure capacity, and how they would be impacted by infill and change in their neighbourhood.

Want to know MORE?



All of the materials that we used to facilitate the community conversation on housing are posted on our webpage:

www.newwestcity.ca/ourcity

You can also find a copy of the full Council report (including the 700+ pages of attachments) that summarizes all that we heard.

You can also find all past consultation materials, Council reports, newsletters and Frequently Asked Questions.

Consultation Activities

Thank you to all of the people who took the time to provide feedback during this round of consultation!



We hosted a kick off WORKSHOP where more than 150 people spent the day talking housing with us.



We took the show on the road and held six TRAVELING OPEN HOUSES that were attended by more than 175 community members.



We launched an ONLINE SURVEY that was completed by 1,200 people.



More than 400 people joined us at the three DROP IN WORKSHOPS that offered tasty bites to eat at a food truck.

WHAT HOUSING FITS?

This is a snapshot of what we heard about each of the infill housing forms we have been exploring.

66% support

Laneway and Carriage House

A laneway house is a detached rental unit at the rear of an existing single detached lot with a lane. A carriage house is a detached rental unit at the rear of a single detached dwelling, but is on a lot which does not have a lane.

Some messages we heard: Allow or incentivize keeping the existing home, especially if the home has heritage merit. Design needs to be right. The dwelling should fit within the context of the neighbourhood (building size and design) and not adversely impact the neighbouring back yard (e.g. privacy, shading).

51% support

Small Lot Duplex

A single building which is divided into two units on a smaller lot than is currently permitted (6,000 square feet).

One message we heard: Front/back and up/down options are more favourable than the traditional side by side option.

55% support

Small Lot Single Detached Dwelling

A single building with a secondary suite on a lot that is as small as 4,000 square feet.

One message we heard: People like the fact that this is a free-hold, single detached dwelling.

50% support

Compact Lot Single Detached Dwelling

A single residential unit developed on lots ranging from 2,300 to 3,000 square feet.

One message we heard: Design guidelines should look how to make the two buildings unique.

45% support

Cluster House

A group of four houses which has two homes in front and two homes in behind using a shared driveway. All the houses are on their own freehold lot.

One message we heard: Design of the driveway is important. Could be designed as a flex space rather than have a car centric look.

40% support

Triplex

Three units either in a single building or in two or three separate buildings on a single lot which is likely stratified.

One message we heard: Design guidelines should explore the appropriate building size and height. Keep in line with the neighbourhood character.

41% support

Quadrplex

Four units either in a single building or in separate buildings on a single lot which is likely stratified.

One message we heard: Design guidelines should explore the appropriate building size, open space, and how to blend with the existing streetscape.

57% support

Townhouse

Side by side which share a common wall with a unit on at least one side, include individual exterior entrances and private outdoor space. The building is likely to be stratified to allow multiple owners.

One message we heard: Common space can encourage community building.

56% support

Rowhouse

This is the same form as townhouses except that they can be developed as freehold lots, meaning that each unit is on its own lot.

One message we heard: Small projects, with a small number of units, would be preferable.

What is the OCP update **PROCESS?**

2014

Step One & Two Background Research

We conducted background research, reviewed existing policy, identified issues and opportunities, and did statistical analysis.

Public Launch

The public consultation process kicked off with a Traveling Community Workshop in June 2014. A Photo Contest and Pop-Up Planning events were held over the summer 2014.

WINTER 2015

Step Three Vision and Goals

This step was launched with the OUR CITY Neighbourhood Visioning Process held in February 2015. The community members who attended the workshop and open house explored how the city might grow into the future. The ideas developed were used to create the vision and goals and will inform future steps of the OCP review process.

FALL 2015 - SPRING 2016

Step Four Policies & Land Use Scenarios

Land use scenarios were created and feedback was gathered through the Community Conversion on Housing. During this step, we will also prepare draft policies. This step will conclude with consultation on the OCP framework (draft vision, goals, policies, land use designation map). The framework will be presented to Council, Council's committees, the public, and other agencies for review.

FALL 2016

Step Five OCP Draft Plan

We will incorporate the vision, goals, policies, and land use designation map into a draft OCP. The document will be laid out to be easily understandable and useable by Council, staff, the public and other users. The draft OCP will be presented to Council, to the public, and circulated for review. It is expected that the final OCP will be presented to Council for adoption in the spring of 2017.

OCP ADOPTION

Regular Reporting Back to the Public and Council

What are the **NEXT STEPS?**

Based on the feedback received from the community and direction provided by Council we will create the first draft of the land use designation map.

A series of public events will be held in the fall of 2016 that will present the OCP Framework. The framework includes the draft vision, goals, policies, land use designation map. This will be the next major milestone at which the community can provide feedback on each of these components. Once revisions have been made based on the feedback received we will start to create the draft OCP document. The final consultation milestone will be focused on gathering feedback on the full document, including the land use designation map.

In addition to working on the OCP framework, we are also going to begin to develop an implementation strategy for laneway/carriage houses, townhouses, and rowhouses. This work will include exploring what design guidelines and regulations that need to be in place in order to make these forms successful.

Stay **UP-TO-DATE**

Do you want to stay informed about the OUR CITY 2041 process? Make sure to sign up for the distribution list by sending an email to ourcity@newwestcity.ca. You can also follow us on Twitter and 'like' the City Facebook account. These are great ways to stay connected to hear about upcoming events!



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