

Report to Council



Date: April 11, 2022
To: Council
From: City Manager
Subject: North End Plan Update
Department: Policy & Planning

Recommendation:

THAT Council receives, for information, the report from the Policy & Planning Department, dated April 11, 2022, regarding the North End Plan;

AND THAT Council endorses in principle the draft Vision & Objectives for the North End Plan included as Attachment A in the report from the Policy & Planning Department, dated April 11, 2022.

Purpose:

To receive an update on the North End Plan process, including a summary of public engagement, the draft Vision and Objectives and next steps for the planning process.

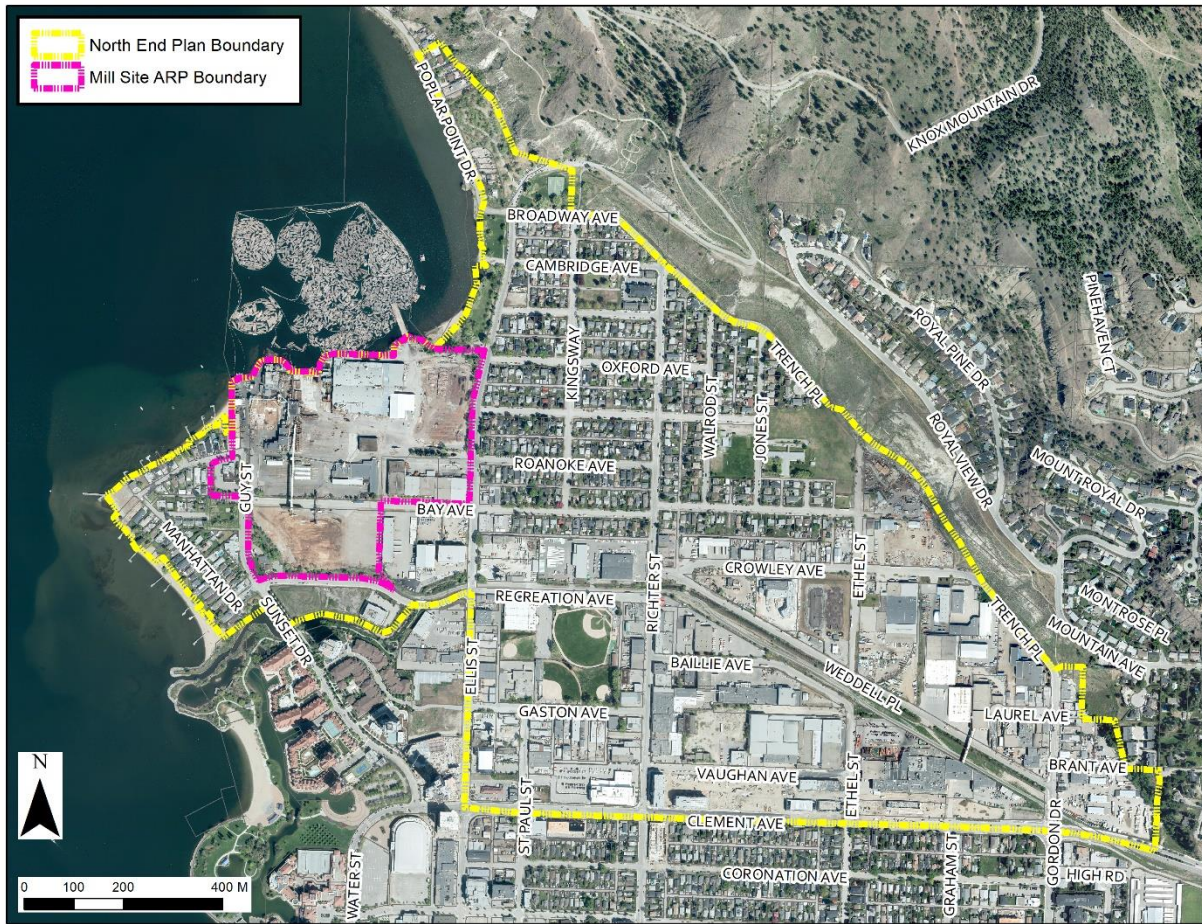
Background:

The North End Plan (NEP) is intended to guide and manage the evolution of the North End Neighbourhood (Figure 1) over the next 20 years or more. The Plan will identify the land use mix, housing approach, transportation network improvements, utilities, parks and public spaces, and community amenities needed to ensure the neighbourhood evolves in a deliberate way that benefits both North End residents and the city as a whole.

The North End Plan (NEP) launched in the Summer of 2021, with the first phase being concluded in November of the same year. The Background Summary Report was the primary outcome from Phase 1 of the NEP and provided a base of information on which to begin the planning process. This Summary Report was included with the report to Council dated November 15, 2021.

Phase 2 of the NEP focuses on establishing a high-level Vision & Objectives that will guide the development of the plan through future phases. The Vision and Objectives were prepared using feedback from public engagement, staff input, and guided by the direction established in existing City plans and policies—such as Imagine Kelowna and the Official Community Plan.

Figure 1. Plan Area Map



*Note: Mill Site included in the North End Plan Area is also to be addressed under a more detailed plan called the Mill Site Area Redevelopment Plan.

**Note: The North End Plan boundary has been adjusted to include the planned future extension of Sutherland Bay Park to the north.

Public engagement for Phase 2 of the NEP took place throughout February and March of 2022 and consisted of the following key forms of outreach.

- Community Liaison Committee (CLC)
- Resident Survey
- Business Survey
- Discussion Guide
- Pop-up Information Sessions
- Online Discussion Forum
- Mark the Map exercise
- Stakeholder meetings
- Social media and print advertising

A summary of the results of public engagement is provided in *Attachment B* and is reviewed in the Discussion section of this report.

Mill Site Planning

The Mill Site is a key site located within the boundary of the NEP (see Figure 1). As such, the NEP will provide high-level guidance for the development of the site. Detailed guidance for the future redevelopment of the site will be addressed through the Mill Site Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP). The Mill Site ARP is underway and is being led by the landowners. It is anticipated that an update on the ARP from the landowner group will be coming in the near future.

Discussion:

Public Engagement Efforts

The most intensive public engagement work to date on the NEP took place during the months of February and March. Engagement was broad and considerable effort was made to reach across the community. The process yielded strong results, including 601 resident surveys and 4,500 engagement site visits. Extra efforts, such as pop-up information sessions and specific stakeholder interviews, were made to reach residents who may experience barriers to participation. A detailed summary of public engagement efforts and results is provided in *Attachment B*. Key themes from the engagement are summarized below.

Local Businesses and Services

Participants were generally pleased with the influx of new businesses that have recently moved into the neighbourhood. At the same time, participants indicated many basic services—especially groceries—are still missing, and that this needs to be addressed with the Plan. In particular, there was strong interest in keeping neighbourhood businesses small-scale and local.

Housing Availability and Affordability

Many participants expressed a need for greater affordability of housing, citing rapidly rising prices for all housing types across the city. In connection with this, participants spoke to the increasing presence of homelessness in the neighbourhood, and the need for more permanent housing solutions and supports for people experiencing homelessness.

Waterfront Access

Participants expressed a strong desire to see more of the waterfront opened up to public access with parks, public spaces and pathway connections. Support for prioritizing active recreation in the lake—including swimming and non-motorized boating—was also heard.

Parks and Recreation

In addition to increasing public access to the lake, there was also support for increasing park and green space in the neighbourhood more generally. In connection with this, many participants noted the need for additional recreation opportunities to serve a growing population. As part of this, many also highlighted the increasing presence of people with dogs and the need to provide more dog parks to accommodate them.

Walkability and Bikeability

Many commenters voiced a need for better pedestrian and biking infrastructure in the neighbourhood, including better sidewalk connections, protected bike lanes, and pathway connections. Participants also asked for more green space, street trees and pedestrian-friendly design to increase overall walkability.

Arts, Culture and Heritage

There was widespread acknowledgment that the area has a rich history—beginning with the syilx/Okanagan culture. Out of this there was a strong sentiment in favor of preserving and commemorating the many layers of local history. In addition, participants expressed the need to incorporate art, entertainment, culture and maker spaces to enliven the neighbourhood.

Indigenous Engagement

Input from Indigenous governments and organizations is essential to creating an inclusive plan in keeping with the City's renewed commitments to Truth and Reconciliation. At the outset of the plan, City staff conducted initial outreach with local Indigenous stakeholders, offering opportunities for engagement. Staff also retained an Indigenous engagement consultant to provide strategic direction to ensure the plan honours and reflects syilx/Okanagan history, culture and traditions.

Input has not been received at the time of this report – however, as we continue along the path of consultation, the plan's Vision & Objectives may need to be reviewed to consider Indigenous perspectives.

Additionally, the City is in the process of hiring a Cultural Advisor. This role will include providing guidance into how the City can further advance engagement with Indigenous groups.

Vision & Objectives

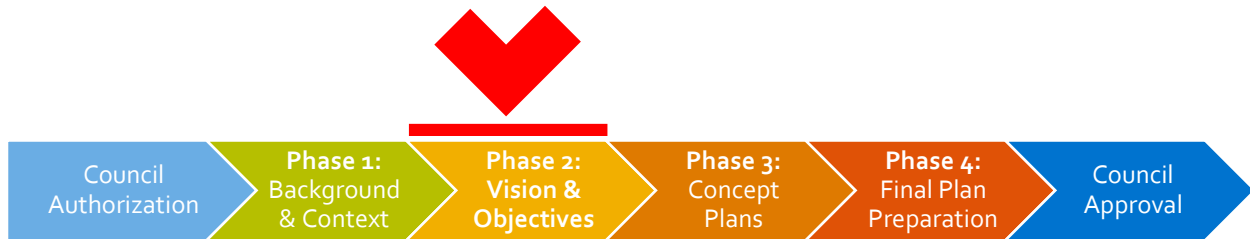
A draft Vision and Objectives, informed through the first two phases of the NEP process, have been developed to guide the next stages of plan development. The draft Vision and Objectives are included as Attachment A.

The Vision and Objectives provides a strong initial framework that will guide the development of the North End Plan through to its conclusion. As the process moves forward, the planning framework will be refined and supplemented with detailed policy direction – the 'how' – for each objective. In short, the Vision and Objectives provide a solid starting point, and will grow and evolve as future phases of engagement occur and detailed policy direction is developed. Input from engagement with Indigenous governments and organizations will also be integrated as it becomes available.

Conclusion & Next Steps:

Over the Winter of 2021/22, Staff learned a great deal from stakeholders and participants throughout the community, both within and beyond the North End neighbourhood. Input from these engagement efforts have been combined with established policy direction and technical input to form a comprehensive and compelling Vision and Objectives for the future of the North End. The Vision and Objectives will be used to guide the North End Plan process moving forward.

Should Council endorse the Vision and Objectives in principle, staff will begin Phase 3 of the North End Plan process. This phase will focus on preparing and engaging the public on alternative development scenarios for the plan area. Following technical analysis, further public and Council input, Phase 3 will conclude with Council consideration of a preferred development concept. Phase 3 is expected to be wrapped up in late Summer of 2022.



Phase 4 of the Plan is anticipated to take place over the course of the Fall and Winter of 2022/23. Final public engagement and Council deliberation on the North End Plan is estimated for early 2023.

Internal Circulation:

- Cultural Services
- Sport & Event Services
- Community & Neighbourhood Services
- Parks & Buildings Services
- Community Planning
- Development Engineering
- Infrastructure Planning
- Infrastructure Engineering
- Utility Planning
- Integrated Transportation
- Social Development
- Strong Neighbourhoods
- Partnerships Office
- Real Estate Services
- Infrastructure Operations
- Communications
- Financial Planning

Considerations applicable to this report:

Existing Policy:

Many existing policy documents, such as Imagine Kelowna, the Official Community Plan, the Transportation Master Plan and other key documents will provide guidance for the North End Plan process. Using their guidance, key areas for consideration will include:

- Housing diversity, supply and affordability;
- Industrial land protection and employment intensification;
- Downtown and Civic Precinct context;
- Parks and public space expansion and improvements;
- Cultural and community facilities;
- Inclusivity, equity and community health;
- Heritage protection;
- Improvements to community connections;
- Transportation diversity, choice and safety;
- Environmental protection and climate resiliency; and
- Incorporation of 10 Year Capital Plan improvements.

Considerations not applicable to this report:

Financial/Budgetary Considerations:

External Agency/Public Comments:

Communications Comments:

Legal/Statutory Authority:

Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:

Submitted by:

A.D. Thibeault, MCIP, RPP, Planner Specialist, Policy & Planning Department

Approved for inclusion:



D. Noble-Brandt, Policy & Planning Department Manager

Attachments:

Attachment A – North End Plan Vision & Objectives - Draft

Attachment B – Public Engagement Summary Report

cc:

R. Smith, Divisional Director, Planning & Development Services

D. Edstrom, Divisional Director, Partnership & Investments

M. Logan, Divisional Director, Infrastructure

J. Gabriel, Divisional Director, Active Living & Culture