

Report to Council



Date: October 21, 2024
To: Council
From: City Manager
Subject: North End Plan – Draft Plan
Department: Long Range Planning

Recommendation:

THAT Council endorse in principle the draft North End Plan as set out in the report from Long Range Policy Planning dated October 21, 2024;

AND THAT staff be directed to bring forward for adoption a final version of the North End Plan with a series of bylaw amendments to implement the plan.

Purpose:

To endorse in principle the draft North End Plan and to direct staff to develop a final plan and a series of bylaw amendments for Council consideration.

Council Priorities:

- Affordable Housing
- Transportation
- Climate and Environment
- Economy

Background:

The North End Plan (NEP) is intended to guide and manage the growth of the North End neighbourhood (Figure 1). The NEP will identify the land use mix, housing approach, transportation network improvements, new parks and public spaces, municipal utilities and other 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 NEP will provide high-level guidance for the redevelopment of the Mill Site, which formally includes both the old Tolko lumber mill and the adjacent BC Tree Fruits site. Detailed guidance for the redevelopment of the Mill Site is being addressed through the Mill Site Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP), which is being led by the landowners.

Figure 1. Plan Area



North End Plan Process

The NEP launched in the summer of 2021, with the first phase concluding in November of that year. The Background Summary Report was the primary outcome from Phase 1 of the NEP and provided a base of knowledge on which to guide the planning process.

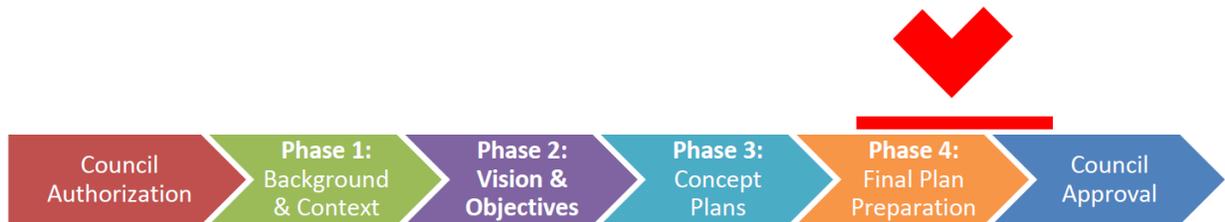
Phase 2 of the NEP focused on establishing a high-level Vision & Objectives to guide the development of the plan through future phases. The Vision and Objectives were prepared using feedback from public

engagement, staff input, and guided by the direction established in existing City plans and policies—such as Imagine Kelowna and the Official Community Plan (OCP). The Vision & Objectives were endorsed by Council in April 2022.

In Phase 3 of the process, staff used the Vision & Objectives to develop a list of prioritized community needs for the neighbourhood. Also in Phase 3, staff launched a series of technical studies to aid in the development of neighbourhood concept plans. Staff then used both the Vision & Objectives and the community needs list in conjunction with the technical analysis to develop a series of three neighbourhood concept plans. Staff introduced these concept plans to Council in July of 2023 and proceeded to conduct public engagement to receive feedback on the concepts. As a final step in Phase 3, staff used the input from engagement to help develop a recommended direction for a preferred concept for the plan that was brought forward to Council for endorsement in December of last year.

The North End Plan is now in its fourth and final phase. In this phase, staff took input from Council on the recommendation for the preferred concept for the plan and applied additional technical analysis to develop a draft plan that incorporates a preferred concept for the neighbourhood (Attachment A).

Figure 2. Plan Process



North End Plan Public Engagement

Public engagement was an important part of the planning process and public input was incorporated at every stage throughout. The engagement culminated for overall support for one of three concepts, which was used to guide the development of the draft plan.

Feedback from public engagement, organized in themes, is summarized below:

| Theme | Public Engagement Summary |
|---|---|
| Housing | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support for adding more housing options in the neighbourhood, including higher density forms at strategic locations• Recognition of the need for a mix of housing types and affordability levels to suit different needs and incomes, citing rapidly rising prices for all housing types across the city• Concern about homelessness alongside calls for permanent housing solutions and supports |
| Parks, Public Space & Community Facilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strong support for more park and green space in the neighbourhood, especially waterfront park space, lake access and green connectivity—including parks on streets• Recognition that more recreation opportunities are needed to serve a growing population• Recognition of a distinct need for a neighbourhood school, especially with the expected increase of new housing and families |
| Shops & Services | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support for the recent influx of new businesses, including the boom in craft breweries and other small-scale industrial businesses as well as local retail and personal service establishments• Recognition that many basic services are still missing— especially food and groceries• Preference for small-scale and local businesses for the neighbourhood |
| Transportation & Traffic | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Concerns over traffic congestion, parking availability, and pedestrian safety due to new neighbourhood growth and development• Calls for improved transit service and better neighbourhood connectivity through added cycling infrastructure, and more sidewalks, crosswalks and multi-use pathways• Requests for traffic calming measures and enhanced parking solutions |
| Art, Culture & Heritage | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognition of the area's rich history, starting with the syilx/Okanagan culture, and a desire to preserve and commemorate the many layers of local history• Desire for art, entertainment, culture and maker spaces to enliven the neighbourhood |
| Mill Site | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enthusiasm for the site's potential as a community hub with various amenities and activities• Strong desire for ample public space, such as a waterfront park and lake access, that would be inclusive and accessible to everyone• Acknowledgment that community amenities are made possible through development, and that with greater neighbourhood growth comes enhanced amenities• Desire for housing and facilities that serve and benefit the broad community, alongside concerns that the site could become exclusive |

Discussion:

The North End is made up of a number of distinct areas, each with its unique geography, land use mix, identity and character. In recognition of this, the North End Plan treats the sub-areas separately. The main sub-areas are: Downtown Urban Centre Expansion; Manhattan Point Neighbourhood; Walrod Park Neighbourhood; and the Mixed Employment District.

Downtown Urban Centre Expansion

Key Features:

- Expansion of Kelowna's Downtown into the North End
- Anchored by the redevelopment of the Mill Site—a future urban mixed-use, transit-oriented neighbourhood with new waterfront park space, community centre, mix of housing types and tenures, employment opportunities and a retail hub
- Attractive public spaces on the Okanagan Lake waterfront alongside other key community amenities—including Recreation Avenue Park
- Mix of housing, commercial and institutional uses

Manhattan Point Neighbourhood

Key Features

- Remains a predominantly residential area
- Modest neighbourhood growth with the addition of ground-oriented infill housing
- New park space—including waterfront park space and beach access—added as opportunities arise

Walrod Park Neighbourhood

Key Features:

- Moderate neighbourhood growth comprised of infill housing up to and including townhousing, with low rise apartments along the edge of the neighbourhood on Ellis and Recreation Avenue
- Walrod Park improved and expanded to the east in connection with a future water filtration facility—with opportunities for new sports field and courts
- Brandt's Creek restored through daylighting, widening and naturalization of the creek north of Recreation Avenue Park at redevelopment—and a new pathway also added
- Underused space on Kingsway and a part of Okanagan Boulevard converted to green and park space, using approaches like widening landscaped boulevards and bulb-outs, introducing pocket parks, increasing tree canopy, and programs to facilitate neighbourhood activities and events

Mixed Employment District

Key Features:

- Employment District to leverage its unique location next to downtown to grow employment opportunities and better respond to market dynamics
- Added services and employment in the Mixed Employment District, including greater support for craft breweries and other small-scale industrial businesses, as well as retail, personal service establishments and office space at strategic locations

Transportation

The North End Plan supports a significant amount of new neighbourhood growth in both new housing and residents as well as new jobs. The new growth is expected to put increasing pressure on the transportation network in the area. As a response to the transportation challenges in the North End, the North End Plan identifies improvements to infrastructure for all forms of transportation—but with an emphasis on active transportation and transit. Ultimately, failure to facilitate the shift toward these forms of transportation will limit the livability and growth potential of the neighbourhood. Key features include:

- New and enhanced active transportation connections connect the neighbourhood to downtown and other nearby neighbourhoods
- Enhanced transit service—including frequent transit service to the Mill Site
- Realignment of Recreation Ave with Weddell Place for better east west connectivity and other road improvements to increase traffic flow and efficiency

Together, the Transportation improvements proposed by the NEP help advance the Council priorities of improved travel choices and greater transit ridership as well as improved mode share and traffic safety.

Funding Strategy

Based on the considerable neighbourhood growth the NEP supports—in both housing and future residents as well as new jobs—the plan identifies core infrastructure improvements that meet both the basic operational needs for the neighbourhood and that deliver a high quality of life for future residents and workers. The cost estimate for proposed infrastructure improvements, broken down by land costs and improvements costs is provided in the figure below.

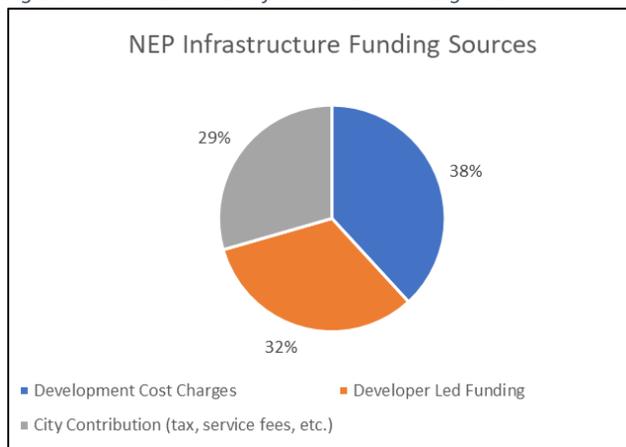
Figure 3. North End Plan Infrastructure Costs

| Project Type | Land Costs | Improvement Costs | Total |
|----------------------|----------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Parks & Public Space | \$43.9M | \$124.4M | \$168.3M |
| Transportation | \$30.3M | \$167.7M | \$198M |
| Utilities | N/A | \$19.1M | \$19.1M |
| Total | \$74.3M | \$311.2M | \$385.4M |

The plan identifies a range of different funding sources to support the development of key infrastructure over the long-term. Specifically, the funding strategy includes a

mix of Development Cost Charges, developer led funding, and City contributions (general taxation, service fees etc.). The breakdown of these contributions is shown in the figure below. The DCC program is scheduled to be updated in 2025 in conjunction with the OCP and growth strategy. The North End funding strategy will be reevaluated as part of this broader growth strategy and DCC program update.

Figure 4. North End Plan Infrastructure Funding Sources



While significant infrastructure investments are needed to service the North End, it remains a cost-effective area to focus future growth. Model City Infrastructure (MCI)—a model that measures the relative life-cycle costs and benefits of new growth—revealed that North End development would perform similar to the Urban Centres and Core Area in terms of balancing long-term infrastructure costs and revenues, and in so doing would help in addressing the City’s infrastructure deficit. In addition, it is recognized that the redevelopment of the Mill Site represents a

major opportunity for a world-class, walkable development that will yield a whole host of benefits to the broader neighbourhood and the community as a whole.

Next Steps

The next step is for staff to make final edits to the document based on Council review. Following this Staff will bring forward a final version of the draft plan and also prepare a list of bylaw amendments meant to implement the direction in the plan and bring these bylaw amendments forward for Council adoption.

Conclusion:

The North End Plan is the result of a three-year planning process that is now nearly complete. A draft plan containing a preferred concept for the neighbourhood has been prepared for Council consideration. Should the plan be adopted, it will be implemented gradually over the next 30 or more years with significant leadership roles for both the city and the development community. The investment to transform the North End into a vibrant, walkable, complete community represents a cost-effective approach to civic investment, simultaneously advancing a range of the City’s long-term goals for smart growth, healthy and affordable communities and climate action.

Internal Circulation:

- Parks & Buildings Planning
- Integrated Transportation
- Utilities Planning
- Real Estate Services
- Partnerships Office
- Capital Planning & Asset Management
- Infrastructure
- Development Engineering
- Development Planning
- Active Living & Culture
- Communications
- Climate Action & Environmental Stewardship
- Cultural Services

Existing Policy:

Official Community Plan: Policy 5.8.3. North End Industrial Lands.

Attachments:

Attachment A: Draft North End Plan

Submitted by: R. Miles, Long Range Planning Manager

Approved for inclusion:



R. Miles, Long Range Planning Manager