



TO: Committee of the Whole

FROM: Matt Gunn, Planner
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DATE: January 16, 2018

RE: Official Community Plan Bylaw 2500, 2017 – Growth Management Policy Edits


Background

At the December 12, 2017 Special Council Meeting, Council gave first reading to the District of Squamish Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2500, 2017. The Official Community Plan (OCP) includes growth management policies which have been discussed by Council during plan drafting, and most recently at the September 11, 2017 Committee of the Whole. Staff have refined growth management policies to reflect community input and Council's expressed interests and directions.

Proposed OCP Growth Management Policies

The following is a high level summary of the major elements of the growth management policies included in Bylaw No. 2500.

- The plan maintains a strong growth management focus, directing growth to serviced infill locations prior to expanding into peripheral areas. The intention of this policy is to support efficient land use, cost-effective development servicing, and natural areas protection.
- A Growth Management Boundary (GMB) is identified. The GMB excludes lands designated *Future Residential Neighbourhoods*.
- Lands within the GMB represent the intended area for focusing residential development and associated commercial, industrial and institutional until substantial completion (see defined term below) of infill development has occurred.
- The plan recognizes and supports the following land uses outside the GMB: resource lands, significant employment generating activities, industrial uses with minimal servicing, parklands, protected areas and lands supporting recreation tourism, as well as airport development.
- The plan designates large undeveloped lands that have had long-standing OCP requirement for future sub-area planning prior to allowing for future growth as *Future Residential Neighbourhoods*.
- 'Substantial completion' is defined in the OCP as once either of the following has occurred:
 - the District's population reaches 34,000, or

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- construction has been completed for 75% of the development potential established under:
 - the combination of any density targets outlined in all approved sub area plans;
 - the maximum densities enabled under existing zoning regulations for vacant parcels in areas not included in a sub-area plan; and
 - Floor Area Ratios identified in land use designations for vacant, undeveloped parcels in the Downtown area.
 - Limited development may be considered in a **small portion** of Future Residential Neighbourhoods parcels located adjacent to existing developed neighbourhoods **once the District's population has reached 22,500** provided:
 - the development proposal provides **extraordinary community benefits**, and
 - **Council has adopted all identified Policy Precursors**.
 - The plan recognizes lands acquired by First Nations through accommodation agreements to facilitate First Nation's cultural and economic development objectives; future adjustments to the Growth Management Boundary to encompass these lands will be based on collaborative government to government joint planning protocols to be developed between the First Nation and the District of Squamish.
 - 'Extraordinary benefits' must achieve some or all of the following:
 - provide a transformative improvement to the community that takes advantage of either a previously identified or new opportunity;
 - resolve a major community challenge for which no other viable solution exists; and
 - protect core assets critical to the Squamish brand and identity including, but not limited to, adventure recreation amenities related to rock climbing, trail running, mountain biking, wind sports and water sports.
 - 'Policy Precursors' include completion and District endorsement of:
 - brand asset inventory (recreational and connectivity value of all trails and assets);
 - community amenity contribution policy (in progress);
 - affordable housing strategy;
 - missing middle housing policy and associated zoning regulations;
 - community wildfire protection plan; and
 - a steep slope Development Permit Area (DPA).
 - Municipal water and sewer servicing will not be extended to areas located above an elevation of 200 metres unless for public health reasons to limit the need for new servicing infrastructure and to reduce energy and cost demands for water delivery.
 - Major destination resort community development outside the District's Growth Management Boundary or on the periphery of the District of Squamish boundary is not supported.



Public Feedback to OCP Growth Management Policies

Since the public release of the OCP Bylaw No. 2500 on December 1st, 2017, 58 individual comments have been received from community members through the District website OCP feedback form regarding the proposed growth management policies. The following list summarizes comments received, and the number of times specified comments were noted by respondents. Note that many respondents are counted multiple times having mentioned concern with multiple items such as the proposed 22,500 threshold and the policy precursor requirement. Any additional growth management comments received after date of this memo will be distributed to Council at the January 16, 2018 committee meeting; all inputs received will form part of the public record for consideration at a future public hearing(s).

- 50 of the responses indicated that the 22,500 threshold for limited development in Future Residential Neighbourhood should be eliminated.
- 16 responses indicated that the 34,000 threshold for development in Future Residential Neighbourhood should be eliminated.
- 16 responses indicated that specification for “small portions” of limited development in Future Residential Neighbourhood under specific circumstances should be eliminated.
- 34 responses indicated that the requirement for adoption of policy precursors prior to limited development in Future Residential Neighbourhood under specific circumstances should be eliminated and that the precursors should instead be a consideration.
- 2 response indicated that the Future Residential Neighbourhood land should be located within the Growth Management Boundary.
- 1 response indicated that servicing should be considered for development over 200 m elevation.
- 1 response indicated there should be no development in Future Residential Neighbourhood until the 34,000 threshold has been reached.
- 1 response indicated there should be no development in Future Residential Neighbourhood until (a new, increased) 50,000 threshold has been reached.

Policy Clarifications + Direction

In order to update the Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2500, 2017 for consideration of second reading, staff request Council feedback and direction on the following policies within the growth management section:

Policy 1

- Policy: **'Substantial completion'** is defined in the OCP as once either of the following has occurred:
- the District's population reaches 34,000, or
 - construction has been completed for 75% of the established development potential.
- Intent: To define a point before which the District should not consider significant peripheral development expansion, in keeping with strong community input through the OCP process to maximize infill development and existing available capacity, first. A conservative review of remaining growth capacity in existing neighbourhoods indicates the capacity can support a population of up to 34,000. The alternative threshold of 75% of established development potential is intended to mitigate negative consequences from restricting supply.

Policy 2

- Policy: Limited development may be considered in a small portion of Future Residential Neighbourhood parcels under defined conditions.
- Intent: To manage and establish limited scope of development opportunity in *Future Residential Neighbourhood* parcels contiguous to developed areas, provided identified conditions are met, so that extensive peripheral development does not occur before substantial completion of infill development.


Policy 3

- Policy: Limited development in Future Residential Neighbourhood parcels would not be considered until the District's population has reached 22,500.
- Intent: To maintain a strong commitment to infill development in the near term, in keeping with existing OCP policy and strong community support for a focus on infill development through the OCP engagement process.

Policy 4

- Policy: Limited development in Future Residential Neighbourhood parcels would not be considered until Council has adopted all identified Policy Precursors.
- Intent: To ensure that peripheral development does not proceed in an ad hoc fashion in the absence of critical policies necessary to shape development in a manner that reflects community values.

Policy 5

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- Policy: 'Extraordinary benefits' must achieve some or all of the following:
- provide a transformative improvement to the community that takes advantage of either a previously identified or new opportunity;
 - resolve a major community challenge for which no other viable solution exists; and
 - protect core assets critical to the Squamish brand and identity including, but not limited to, adventure recreation amenities related to rock climbing, trail running, mountain biking, wind sports and water sports.
- Intent: To provide a framework for assessing potential benefits that warrant development opportunities in Future Residential Neighbourhood parcels. The intention is to set a very high threshold for these benefits that reflects character of the community

Policy 6

- Policy: Major destination resort community development outside the District's Growth Management Boundary or on the periphery of the District of Squamish boundary is not supported.
- Intent: To direct residential growth within the Growth Management Boundary in keeping with community support for strong growth management.

Policy 7

- Policy: Municipal water and sewer servicing will not be extended to areas located above an elevation of 200 metres except in specified situations.
- Intent: To ensure cost-effective development servicing by minimizing significant servicing extension and to focus growth on infill development, in line with existing OCP policy.