



Corporate

 NO: C007

Report

 COUNCIL DATE: July 16, 2001_

COUNCIL-IN-COMMITTEE

TO:	Mayor & Council	DATE:	July 13, 2001
FROM:	General Manager, Planning and Development	FILE:	2302-000
SUBJECT:	Official Community Plan (OCP) Review – Status Report		

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning & Development Department recommends that Council receive this report as information.

INTENT

The intent of this report is to update Council on the progress of this year's major review of the OCP.

BACKGROUND

At its meeting on May 7, 2001 Council approved a Terms of Reference for the Official Community Plan Major Review (2001). The review is focussed on creating the framework for accelerated economic development in the City and will look at broadening opportunities for business investment and expanding the number of jobs for Surrey residents. City staff has undertaken various consultation initiatives and research activities in accordance with the approved work plan which specifies that the OCP review is to be complete by the end of 2001.

DISCUSSION

The following highlights the events and activities that City staff has been involved with during May and June:

1. Open Houses

Three Public Open Houses (north, south and central Surrey) were held in mid-May to inform the public

about the objectives and focus of the OCP review, to advise them about the existing state of the local economy, to provide general information about population, employment and economic trends in the City and to solicit and document opinions of the public about employment, services, business investment and commercial/industrial development.

Approximately 130 people attended the Open Houses. Extensive information was presented at the Open Houses and visitors were asked to complete a public opinion survey to help gauge the views of the visitors regarding economic development in the City.

Based on a survey undertaken of people attending these open houses:

- 90% agree that Surrey needs a strong local economy;
- 92% agree that Surrey should act to increase the number of jobs available to local residents;
- 86% agree that Surrey needs to actively plan for more business and jobs in the City; and
- 76% travel outside of Surrey to purchase goods and services.

A copy of the presentation material available at the Open House is attached to this report as Appendix I. A second series of public meetings will be held in the late summer to present economic policy options and strategies in relation to making amendments to the OCP to achieve an accelerated rate of business development in the City.

2. Mayor's Breakfast and Strategy Forums

The Mayor hosted a breakfast on June 27, 2001 which was attended by about 60 commercial and industrial business people. Entitled "Working Together to Promote Economic Development", the breakfast was followed by an industry strategy session at which participants were asked to provide suggestions as to: "What can be done to accelerate the amount of industrial and commercial development in Surrey?". Preliminary results show that the top three most commonly cited suggestions were:

- (a) the City should be more active in the land development process,
- (b) the City should continue its efforts toward more efficient approval processes, and
- (c) the transportation network should be significantly improved.

Surrey's Development Advisory Committee and Business Development Committee have been, and will continue to be, involved on a monthly basis in the OCP review process. Further, staff will be providing information to and receiving feedback from the Environmental Advisory Committee and the Agriculture Advisory Committee.

A Strategy Forum with Surrey's Ratepayer Groups will be held on July 24, 2001 and follow-up forums and additional industry and committee consultations are planned for the late summer.

Staff have and will be making presentations and seeking input from Surrey's various business associations and groups, including the Chamber of Commerce.

3. Statistics and Projections

Considerable work has been undertaken with respect to projecting land and floor area requirements for commercial and industrial land in Surrey based upon the expressed goals of:

- Achieving a 1:1 job/employable person ratio by within the next 20 years;
- Doubling the commercial and industrial tax base within the next 10 years; and
- Achieving a more balanced residential versus business tax base (60/40% rather than the current 70/30% ratio).

A full report on this analysis will be presented to Council as part of the next OCP status report in September.

4. Interdepartmental Consultation

An Interdepartmental Project Team has been set up and two meetings have been held to discuss strategies for integrating all of the City's planning and budgeting policies to ensure that the economic development focus is fully achieved. A policy strategy session is scheduled for July 31, 2001.

In addition, sessions involving planning and engineering staff have been ongoing to identify and develop strategies for pre-servicing initiatives.

5. Research

Staff is in the process of researching ways by which successful cities around the world promote and manage business development through land use and planning policy. This research will be used to formulate policy options during the month of August.

6. Web Site

An "OCP Review Web Page" has been set up and can be easily accessed through the City's Homepage. The site offers information on the local economy, the status of the OCP review and notices of upcoming events. Information on the feedback received during the Mayor's breakfast, held in late June, is also available on this site. Visitors to the site are invited to provide ideas or ask questions by e-mail.

CONCLUSION

This report provides an overview of the activities of City staff, to date, in connection with this year's major review of the OCP. The progress of the OCP review is on schedule. Most of the activities undertaken during the last two months have been related to business and public input and consultation activities. Background research is ongoing. A preliminary "policy options" report will be transmitted to Council in the late summer prior to seeking community input regarding the various policy options that could form part of the OCP in order to achieve the City's economic objectives.

Murray D. Dinwoodie
General Manager,

Planning and Development

WW:saw

Attachment

Appendix I – Open House Presentation Material

v:\wp-docs\planning\01data\july-sept\07131155.ww.doc

S 7/17/01 9:12 AM