



## Special General Purposes Committee

Date: Wednesday, December 3, 2025

Place: Anderson Room  
Richmond City Hall

Present: Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie, Chair  
Councillor Carol Day  
Councillor Laura Gillanders  
Councillor Kash Heed  
Councillor Andy Hobbs  
Councillor Alexa Loo  
Councillor Bill McNulty  
Councillor Michael Wolfe

Absent: Councillor Chak Au

Call to Order: The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

### PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

**1. OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN 2050 TARGETED UPDATE –  
UPDATE TO LAND USE MAP, HOUSING AFFORDABILITY  
POLICIES, ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS, AND  
REGIONAL CONTEXT STATEMENT**

(File Ref. No. 08-4045-30-02) (REDMS No. 8220791)

With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation (copy on file, City Clerk's Office), staff provided an overview of the Official Community Plan (OCP) 2050 Targeted Update, outlining new replacement sections to align the City's OCP with provincial objectives to accelerate the delivery of housing supply, and delivers the first installment of key changes, including a revised Land Use Map. The new replacement sections of the OCP include (i) Bylaw 10724, which includes a new Land Use Map, new OCP 2050 Section 1 (context), new OCP Section 3 (housing), a revised Regional Context Statement, and a consolidated map for all Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing (SSMUH) neighbourhoods and (ii) Bylaw 10725, which includes updates to the environmentally sensitive areas (ESA) map, and associated updates to

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development permit objectives, exemptions and guidelines for ESAs.

In response to queries from Committee, staff advised that (i) a significant amount of analysis is required to assess the implications of the proposed changes in the Aberdeen–Bridgeport area, including consultation with Vancouver International Airport (YVR) and the Province, and the review must also consider impacts on employment lands in the context of the City’s economic development strategy, with a response outlining the merits of the potential changes and the process involved anticipated by the end of March 2026, (ii) Richmond's Transit-Oriented Areas (TOA) bylaw is imposed by the Province, and the City would need to have discussions with the Province to determine if specific geographic areas can be permitted for residential development properties, (iii) nearly 39% of Richmond’s land base is within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and there are no changes to agricultural lands within the targeted update, (iv) Provincial housing legislation changed terms and conditions for density bonusing, which impacts the City Centre as the City is no longer able to apply its defined, transparent density bonusing framework to secure amenities from new development that is subject to Richmond's TOA bylaw using existing tools, and where the City retains the ability to utilize density bonusing, an incentive-based approach is used to encourage the provision of these uses to continue to secure amenities alongside growth, (v) the OCP Aircraft Noise Sensitive Development Policy was adopted by the City in 2004, (vi) the distances of 200 m, 400 m, and 800 m from a rapid transit station originated from the Province’s Transit-Oriented Areas legislation and cannot be changed as it is Provincial legislation, (vii) high streets are pedestrian-friendly shopping streets and Gilley Street in the Hamilton neighbourhood is developing into a mixed-use village with housing and pedestrian-friendly high streets, (viii) in certain cases, the Development Permit (DP) Objectives and Guidelines in the OCP are superseded by more detailed Objectives and Guidelines in Area or Sub-Area Plans, and in the event of a conflict, the Area or Sub-Area Plan provisions shall apply, (ix) the Arterial Connectors designation replaces the outdated Arterial Road Land Use Policy and the intention is to provide a variety of housing along arterial roads, noting that a form-based approach to development is associated with predictable design outcomes and can allow for a broader range of housing tenures and types, (x) there are no changes associated with the OCP update regarding pre-zoned SSMUH lots, (xi) the second installment of OCP 2050, which will be prepared for Council's consideration in 2026, will include the remaining targeted update areas and following first reading of the OCP bylaw amendment, a revised Regional Context Statement will be considered by the Metro Vancouver Board for acceptance, (xii) agricultural activities on properties in the ALR are subject to the submission of a farm plan for properties not farmed recently (as determined by the City) or not farmed previously, (xiii) a principal residence on a farm home plate on lands that are designated ESA are subject to an ESA

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DP process and further amendments to the ESA DP guidelines have been made to clarify when a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) is required, but in most cases, a QEP would not be required for a residential farm home plate on ALR land, (xiv) greater clarity and new exemption criteria have been added for situations where a DP is not required, including ESA DP exemptions for small-scale invasive species removal, (xv) any redevelopment would require a rezoning application which would come forward to Council for consideration, and through the application process, details such as traffic, transportation, servicing, and utilities would be reviewed, (xvi) the maximum height for principal buildings is 2 ½ storeys and 10.0 m within the RSM zones, (xvii) there are no changes to policies already included in the OCP, such as rental tenure zoning to existing rental buildings, (xviii) there have been no recent changes to the provincial housing legislation (Bill 16, 44, 46, and 47), and (xix) Richmond Official Community Plan Bylaw 9000, Amendment Bylaw 10649 (9040 Francis Road) pertains to a site approved for a 100% rental building with commercial at grade, and Richmond Official Community Plan Bylaw 10655 (9000 No. 3 Road) pertains to a site approved for a 100% rental building with some below-market rental units and commercial space at grade, and both sites would be re-designated as Tier 2 Arterial Connectors.

Alison Kwan, Registered Professional Biologist, Diamond Head Consulting, provided a brief overview of the process for updating the ESA maps, with staff advising that a memorandum providing the rationale why certain areas were or were not included in the ESA maps will be provided before the December 8, 2025 Council meeting.

Discussion ensued regarding (i) the Aircraft Noise Sensitive Development map, (ii) parking requirements and demands in the downtown core, (iii) sections of the main city-wide OCP, (iv) the entitlement of proven farmers to farm lands regulated by the ALC and zoned Agricultural under the City's Zoning Bylaw, in accordance with the Provincial Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act, noting that buildings or structures for farming activities are exempt from the ESA DP process and requirements, (v) concerns related to the Local Villages and Arterial Connectors designation, specifically regarding the impact of 3-storey townhouses and 4-to 5-storey rental apartments, (vi) Urban Systems' financial analysis that indicated a shortage of opportunities for families and the demand for more townhouses, (vii) encouraging the construction of rental buildings by permitting additional height and variable density that increases with affordability, (viii) creating more opportunities to build in less costly wood frame construction, (ix) the Province's role of overseeing growth targets for the City and Richmond being subject to a ministerial order that specifies the

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City needs to provide at least 6,753 net-new homes over a 5-year period, (x) Provincial housing legislation that amends density bonusing and the forthcoming amended framework to secure rental housing that uses the new inclusionary zoning tool and an amended density bonusing framework, (xi) typical floor area ratios (FAR) and the impact of SSMUH on the City's Lot Size Policy, (xii) areas that were historically used for agriculture which have been left fallow, (xiii) identifying high streets, which include pedestrian-oriented commercial and street-activating uses at grade along designated streets, (xiv) nightlife and entertainment areas, with staff noting that the OCP does not identify specific locations for nightclubs/pubs outside the City Centre, where such areas are already defined (e.g., Bridgeport-Aberdeen), (xv) density bonusing to incentivize greater housing affordability, diversity, and higher achievable density, (xvi) the differences between Tier 1 and Tier 2 within Local Villages, including the typical uses, heights, FAR, housing options, and built form features such as setbacks, (xvii) encouraging secured market and below-market rental dwellings and essential housing (i.e., workforce and student housing) supporting downtown residents, jobs, access to employment and education, (xviii) applying for funding and looking at City-owned lands to build more non-market housing as identified in the Interim Housing Needs Report, (xix) the ongoing process of developing an Indigenous Relations Strategy that will be brought forward for Council's consideration, (xx) the OCP 2050 bylaw consideration and adoption process, (xxi) the OCP Consultation Policy and summary of public engagement including open houses and Let's Talk Richmond, (xxii) possible opportunities for densification near schools, and (xxiii) YVR's input on maximum building height for developments within the Aircraft Noise Sensitive Development map and future consultation for The Oaks neighbourhood.

*Cllr. Loo left the meeting (5:30 p.m.) and returned (5:32 p.m.).*

It was moved and seconded

- (1) ***That Richmond Official Community Plan Bylaw 9000, Amendment Bylaw 10724, to update the Official Community Plan Land Use Map, Housing Policies, Regional Context Statement and associated housekeeping and in-stream provisions, be introduced and given first reading;***
- (2) ***That Richmond Official Community Plan Bylaw 9000, Amendment Bylaw 10725, to update the Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) Map, ESA Development Permit Guidelines and ESA Development Permit Exemptions, be introduced and given first reading;***

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- (3) *That Richmond Official Community Plan Bylaw 9000, Amendment Bylaw 10724, and Richmond Official Community Plan Bylaw 9000, Amendment Bylaw 10725, having been considered in conjunction with:*
- (a) *the City's Financial Plan and Capital Program; and*
  - (b) *the Greater Vancouver Regional District Solid Waste and Liquid Waste Management Plans;*
- is hereby found to be consistent with said program and plans, in accordance with Section 477(3)(a) of the Local Government Act;*
- (4) *That Richmond Official Community Plan Bylaw 9000, Amendment Bylaw 10724, and Richmond Official Community Plan Bylaw 9000, Amendment Bylaw 10725, having been considered in accordance with Section 475 of the Local Government Act and the City's Official Community Plan Bylaw Preparation Consultation Policy 5043, is found not to require further consultation with the exception of a referral to the Board of Education of School District No. 38 (Richmond);*
- (5) *That Richmond Official Community Plan Bylaw 9000, Amendment Bylaw 10724, and Richmond Official Community Plan Bylaw 9000, Amendment Bylaw 10725 be referred to the Provincial Agricultural Land Commission for comment, as required by Section 477(3)(b) of the Local Government Act;*
- (6) *That following first reading for Richmond Official Community Plan Bylaw 9000, Amendment Bylaw 10724, that the updated Regional Context Statement of the Official Community Plan be referred to the Metro Vancouver Board for acceptance as a condition for final adoption;*
- (7) *That Council Policies, for single-family lot size policies, as listed in Attachment 1 to the report titled "Official Community Plan 2050 Targeted Update – Update to Land Use Map, Housing Affordability Policies, Environmentally Sensitive Areas, and Regional Context Statement" dated November 19, 2025 from the Director, Policy Planning, be rescinded; and*
- (8) *That the following bylaws that have received third reading, Richmond Official Community Plan Bylaw 9000, Amendment Bylaw 10649 (9040 Francis Road) and Richmond Official Community Plan Bylaw 10655 (9000 No. 3 Road), be adopted for the purposes of in-stream provisions.*

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The question on the motion was not called as discussion ensued regarding Tier 2 Arterial Connectors and potential refinements to be considered prior to the December 8, 2025 Council meeting.

The question on the motion was then called and it was **CARRIED** with Cllrs. Day and Hobbs opposed.

The following **referral motion** was introduced:

It was moved and seconded

*That staff investigate the history of how Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) came to be, how ESAs have evolved over time, and their impacts on development, and report back.*

**CARRIED**

Staff advised that a memorandum providing further clarification on key discussion points will be provided prior to the December 8, 2025 Council meeting.

## ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded

*That the meeting adjourn (5:52 p.m.).*

**CARRIED**

Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Special meeting of the General Purposes Committee of the Council of the City of Richmond held on Wednesday, December 3, 2025.

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Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie  
Chair

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Shannon Unrau  
Legislative Services Associate