

MINUTES OF A COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

Monday, March 3, 2025
Council Chambers, District of Hope Municipal Office
325 Wallace Street, Hope, British Columbia

Council Members Present: Mayor Victor Smith
Councillor Scott Medlock
Councillor Heather Stewin
Councillor Pauline Newbigging
Councillor Angela Skoglund
Councillor Dusty Smith

Staff Present: John Fortoloczky, Chief Administrative Officer
Robin Beukens, Director of Community Development
Branden Morgan, Deputy Corporate Officer

Others Present: 1 member of the public

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Smith called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved / Seconded

THAT the March 3, 2025 Committee of the Whole Meeting Agenda be adopted, as presented. **CARRIED.**

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

(a) Committee of the Whole

Moved / Seconded

THAT the Minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting held February 3, 2025, be adopted, as presented. **CARRIED.**

4. OTHER PERTINENT BUSINESS

(a) Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw Update – Council Workshop

Representatives from Stantec Consulting were in attendance to present to Council and seek input regarding the Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw Update Project. In their presentation, the following items were discussed:

- Homes for People – The Province Acts
 - Speeding up delivery of housing
 - Increasing the supply of attainable small-scale, multi-unit housing
 - Helping those who need accommodations most
 - Fighting speculation and profiteering

Council inquired as to whether the Province will begin to provide any tools for municipalities to make permitting processes easier when they involve archaeological, floodplain, or other hazard permitting. The Director of Community Development advised that clarity regarding these permitting processes can be improved, and that the District can advocate to the Province to find ways to expedite these processes.

- Provincial Legislative Context
 - Bill 16: Inclusionary Zoning (IZ)
 - Bill 35: Short-Term Rental
 - Bill 44: Residential Development
 - Bill 46: Development Financing
 - Bill 47: Transit-Oriented Areas
- Provincial Timeline Expectations
 - All local governments must update their Housing Needs Reports using a standard method for a more consistent, robust understanding of current and anticipated local housing needs by January 1, 2025
 - Municipalities must update their Official Community Plan every five years, with housing planning to take place over 20 years. The first update must be completed by December 31, 2025.
 - Municipalities must align their Zoning Bylaw with the Housing Needs Report and Official Community Plan by December 31, 2025.
- Official Community Plan
 - Should be general in nature and identify areas to accommodate the community's land use needs
 - Used as a guide for future development
 - Land uses are identified at a higher level
 - Not intended to be totally reflective of existing development
- Zoning Bylaw
 - Should be specific with defined boundaries of each zone
 - Used to regulate existing development
 - Each zone has detailed regulations that are applied per legal parcel
 - Should identify only what is currently approved for development on a specific parcel
- Engagement Strategy Goals
 - Inform the public about the roles of the OCP and Zoning Bylaw and how they are used by municipal staff
 - Showcase the progress that has been made since adoption of the last OCP
 - Provide several, on-going opportunities for participants to share their opinions about the future of Hope

- Engagement Schedule
 - Engagement Round 1 (In-Person/Virtual) – Winter 2025
 - Council workshop
 - In-person public information sessions (2)
 - Online survey
 - Pop-up events at local gathering spots (3)
 - Meetings with other governments
 - Meetings with community representatives
 - Engagement Round 2 (In-Person/Virtual) – Summer 2025
 - Council workshop
 - In-person public information sessions (2)
 - Online survey
 - Pop-up events at local gathering spots
 - Meetings with other governments
 - Meetings with community representatives
 - What has changed since the last Official Community Plan update?
 - Over 8% population increase in Hope between 2016 and 2021, contrasting a population decline of 3.5% between 2006 and 2011
 - The median price for a detached home in Hope was \$308,000 in 2016, and has risen to \$702,561 in January 2025
 - The median household income in Hope was \$51,226 in 2015, and rose to \$62,400 in 2020
 - COVID, the Atmospheric River event, and 2022 Flood Falls Fire have all impacted the District
 - District of Hope Actions to Date:
 - Master Plans and Studies
 - Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing zoning to transform single-family zones
 - Interim Housing Needs Report identified 2,123 more units required over 20 years
 - FVRD Regional Growth Strategy (2024)
 - 149 housing permits approved since 2021
 - Residential Form & Character Development Permits for 60 dwelling units since 2022

The delegation advised that the remainder of the workshop will include questions to gather Council's input. Below is a summary of that discussion:

- Is the existing vision in the Official Community Plan still accurate?
 - The vision is still accurate, but more time needs to be spent working towards it
 - The community has seen significant change in certain areas over the last five years and the Official Community Plan has been amended many times as a result of development

- How can the District promote densification while maintaining community values?
- How can the District ensure that residential, commercial, and industrial can co-exist?
- How can the Downtown Core be promoted to encourage visitors and residents to stay and spend their money in Hope instead of Chilliwack?
- How much revenue is tourism bringing to the District and whether it is seen as a destination?
- Homelessness issues and how it is affecting the public's perception of the community when visiting?
- What are the priority areas?
 - Creating a healthy community where younger families can commit to living long-term
 - Increasing availability of services in the area between Highway 1 Exit 165 and Silver Skagit Road to promote light industrial land uses
 - The District is moving away from its vision of a service-based economy with the recent additions of light service industrial and manufacturing lands
 - The District's strategic position at the intersection of four major highways
- What defines Hope as a community?
 - Hope is a community that you can become a part of, not just a place that you live in
 - High levels of volunteerism and community involvement
 - Welcoming, diverse, and generous community
 - Connectivity to larger urban areas while maintaining a rural identity
 - The people are welcoming, but many people view the District as a temporary stop
- What are the biggest opportunities and challenges the community faces?
 - Something needs to be done to attract more people to the downtown area
 - Businesses sometimes need to take pride in the way that they look, and how the District can incentivize improvements
 - Absentee landowners not contributing to the community appearance
 - Loss of downtown businesses including the cinema and impending CIBC bank closure
 - Small businesses have difficulty supporting themselves outside of tourist season
 - Commercial area continues to move towards Old Hope Princeton Way
 - The Downtown Revitalization Plan included ideas for increasing density, accommodations, activities and events
 - Aging infrastructure in amalgamated areas requires repair and

- replacement
- Permitting required by the Province has increased costs and timelines for projects
- A lack of recreation programs causing families to leave the community
- What do you want Hope to be known for in 20 years?
 - A place where you can raise a family and afford to live and work
 - Having a high quality of life
- What are your priorities for future community growth in Hope?
 - Make sure decisions made today promote affordability for the future
 - Instilling a sense of pride and celebrating the rich cultural diversity in the community
 - Expanding alternative accommodations that are allowed in the District in a respectable way
- What characteristics define Hope?
 - Hope is a mountain community with ample greenspace
 - Timber, stone, and earth tones are featured around the community
 - Carvings located around the community
- What are your key design priorities in Hope?
 - Providing appearance guidelines including colours for businesses to follow when building or renovating
- What does success look like in an updated OCP and Zoning Bylaw?
 - A document that is easy to understand and can be referenced by both Council and the public
 - Plain English, suitable for a wide range of audiences

Council inquired as to how the District can provide a sufficient number of housing units to meet the 20-year project in the Housing Needs Report. The delegation advised that a model will be created to understand the number of units currently available, the number available if housing under current zoning is maximized and determine how many units are added due to changes in the Official Community Plan and Zoning bylaws. They added that the purpose of the Official Community Plan is not to stifle growth, but to create flexibility so that growth can be facilitate.

5. QUESTION PERIOD

There were no questions from the public.

6. CLOSE

Moved / Seconded

THAT the March 3, 2025 Committee of the Whole Meeting adjourn at 9:04 p.m.

CARRIED.

Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held on March 3, 2025 in Council Chambers of the District of Hope, British Columbia.

Original Signed by Victor Smith

Mayor

Original Signed by Donna Bellingham

Director of Corporate Services