



REPORT

TO: Lorraine Hilton
Chief Administrative Officer

FILE: 6520.21
DATE: February 17, 2023

FROM: Laura Beckett
Municipal Planner

To Council
February 21, 2023

RE: DRAFT SOUTH HIGHLANDS LOCAL AREA PLAN

PURPOSE

For Council to review and consider next steps for the Draft South Highlands Local Area Plan.

BACKGROUND

The full background for the South Highlands Local Area Plan can be found at this web link: <https://www.highlands.ca/504/South-Highlands-Local-Area-Plan>.

CHANGES TO JANUARY 2023 VERSION

The most recently completed stage was public review of the June 2022 version of draft local area plan. This stage finished on July 10, 2022. Please find attached the latest version dated January 2023. Changes include integration of all public input and an internal review.

Overall, the public who responded to the June 2022 draft were supportive of the document and its strong environmental policy direction. Landowners of the properties proposed to be designated Environmental Stewardship were not supportive of this change to their properties. Some concern has also been expressed by Millstream Industrial Park regarding the implications for community amenity contributions for their property.

The CRD and Province – both who have interest in 1965 Millstream Road (Millstream Meadows) – provided input. The CRD's correspondence was previously included in Council's July 18, 2022 agenda. The province provided the attached correspondence dated August 25, 2022. Attachment 2 contains input directed to Council following its June 21, 2021 motion to have all further correspondence provided in conjunction with the draft plan.

The most notable changes in the January 2023 draft are:

1. Policy wording to allow for more wide-ranging land use options and increased flexibility.
2. More Highlands' specific images where possible, including an explanation of the difference between land use and land use activities and programming.

OPTIONS AND NEXT STEPS

This is Council's first opportunity to consider the draft South Highlands Local Area Plan. The process has sought to incorporate public and stakeholder input throughout.

Section 8 provides implementation actions, with the first short-term action as, "Update OCP to be consistent with policies from the SHLAP." If Council wishes to realize the directions of this document, it could direct staff to bring forward an Official Community Plan amendment to incorporate the South Highlands Local Area Plan's policies for

formal consideration. It would be Council's subsequent adoption of such an OCP amending bylaw that would affect any future rezoning applications to subject properties.

The following options are available for Council's consideration:

1. That a bylaw amending the Official Community Plan be brought forward for consideration that incorporates the policy directions of the January 2023 version of the South Highlands Local Area Plan.
2. That alternative action be given.

DISCUSSION

Financial

- Other than legislated public hearing notification requirements for an Official Community Plan amendment bylaw, the budget for this project has been reached.

Legal/Bylaw/Regulatory

- Council may change its Official Community Plan as it sees fit.
- The South Highlands Local Area Plan has no effect on its own.
- If Council were to amend the Official Community Plan to incorporate the South Highlands Local Area Plan, all bylaws and projects approved and undertaken by Council must be consistent with that Official Community Plan. This would require that any subsequent rezoning applications would need to be consistent with that Official Community Plan.
- The original intent of this project was to have Highlands residents consider the direction of the Official Community Plan in South Highlands.
- The draft document uses broad policy language to provide Council some flexibility in its consideration of future decisions including rezoning applications.

Intergovernmental

- The CRD and the BC Ministry of Forests have interest in the property at 1965 Millstream Road known as Millstream Meadows. In the letters provided, they express that they are not supportive of the "Environmental Stewardship" proposed land use designation for that property.
- The province is the owner of two other properties within South Highlands that are proposed to have the "Special Plan Area" land use designation that would require a future site-specific planning process.

Integrated Community Sustainability Plan

- Attached is the Sustainable Highlands Decision Making Framework with the interpretation that the proposed action is, "OCP Amendment incorporating policy direction of January 2023 version of South Highlands Local Area Plan."
- At the end of the form, staff did not select a "level of comfort with moving forward." Staff can advise from a planning perspective that the plan is generally sound and a long, thoughtful process led to the draft plan.

Consultation

- The draft document has incorporated public and stakeholder input throughout the process.
- No comments were received by Tsartlip First Nation regarding their fee simple-owned property within South Highlands. For this reason, that property is proposed to have the "Special Plan Area" land use designation that would require a future site-specific planning process.

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CONCLUSION

The draft South Highlands Local Area Plan is before Council for consideration of next steps.

RECOMMENDATION

If Council is satisfied with the South Highlands Local Area Plan:

That a bylaw amending the Official Community Plan be brought forward for consideration that incorporates the policy directions of the January 2023 version of the South Highlands Local Area Plan.

Respectfully submitted,



Laura Beckett, MURP, MCIP, RPP
Municipal Planner

Concurrence



Lorraine Hilton,
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachments:

1. [Draft South Highlands Local Area Plan, January 2023](#)
2. [Additional correspondence received from:](#)
 - a. *Lyle Knight, Director, BC Crown Land Opportunities and Restoration Branch, dated August 25, 2022*
 - b. *Larisa Hutcheson, P.Eng., General Manager, CRD Parks and Environmental Services, dated July 13, 2022*
 - c. *R.G. McMinn, June 2, 2021*
 - d. *Steven HARRY, General Manager, GFL Environmental Inc., dated May 10, 2022*
 - e. *Steven HARRY, General Manager, GFL Environmental Inc., dated March 21, 2022*
3. [Filled-in Sustainable Highlands Decision Making Framework](#)