



## Official Community Plan

### *A Guide to Official Community Plan amendments*



#### **This Guide Explains:**

- The purpose of an Official Community Plan (OCP)
- OCP amendment applications
- The OCP amendment process
- Commonly asked questions

*This pamphlet is a guide only. It is general in nature, and is not a legal document. Any contradiction, dispute or difference between the contents of this brochure and applicable bylaws, plans, policies or guidelines will be resolved by reference to the bylaws or other official documents.*

### **What is an Official Community Plan (OCP)?**

An Official Community Plan (OCP) is a bylaw of policies that reflect the goals and objectives of the community. They are developed with considerable public input and describe what a community would like to see in terms of land use and servicing.

An OCP provides the Council, and the community with a set of policies that guide future growth and land development, as well as written policies, the OCP also contains maps that designate categories of land use and where such land uses may be considered appropriate.

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Local Area Plans, or policy plans for specific topics can also form part of an OCP. Those requirements are considered in land use applications in

### **How is an Official Community Plan used?**

The policies in an OCP are used to help guide land use decisions in the City of Courtenay. OCP policies are consulted when evaluating the following applications:

- Rezoning (an application to change land uses)
- Development Permits
- Subdivisions
- Land Use Contract Amendments

All applications must consider all the relevant policies of the OCP. For example; an application to change from one zone to another under *Zoning Bylaw 2500, 2007* may be required to consider the general policies of the OCP as well as other policy documents that form part of the OCP such as a Local Area Plan.

If an application (such as a zoning amendment) does not conform to the OCP for the area, an OCP bylaw amendment application to change the land use designation is required. Usually, both applications may proceed through the process simultaneously.

It is important to remember that an OCP reflects the objectives of the community and is the result of a long public process. An application to change a designation in the OCP will be carefully considered in light of the overall policies and objectives.



### **How is an application to amend the OCP made?**

The Planning Services Department has application packages that outline the required information, drawings and fees. It is important to make an appointment with planning staff before submitting a formal application. Staff will be pleased to review the requirements and provide information. This will ensure a complete application and prevent any unnecessary delays.

If Council defeats an application the applicant must wait 12 months before resubmitting a substantially similar application.

### **What are the application costs?**

The cost of an OCP amendment can vary depending upon the complexity of the application. Some typical costs are:

- The application fee. Please refer to the City of Courtenay Fees and Charges Bylaw and all amendments thereto;

- Any document/plans necessary to complete application requirements. This may include: site plans, building plans, or any plans necessary to illustrate the OCP amendment;
- Any professional reports or information required by City departments, external agencies, or Council;
- Any offsite requirements such as road improvements, or drainage issues;
- Any documents/plans or information required in order to make a decision; and,
- Any legal fees such as legal interpretation, or the registering of amendments or restrictive covenants on the title of the subject property.

### What is the Official Community Plan amendment process?

The Local Government Act regulates the process for an application. A summary of the process is outlined in this brochure.

Included in the process are public notification, public hearing, and four opportunities for consideration of the application by Council (called 'readings'). The application can only be approved at the fourth and final reading.

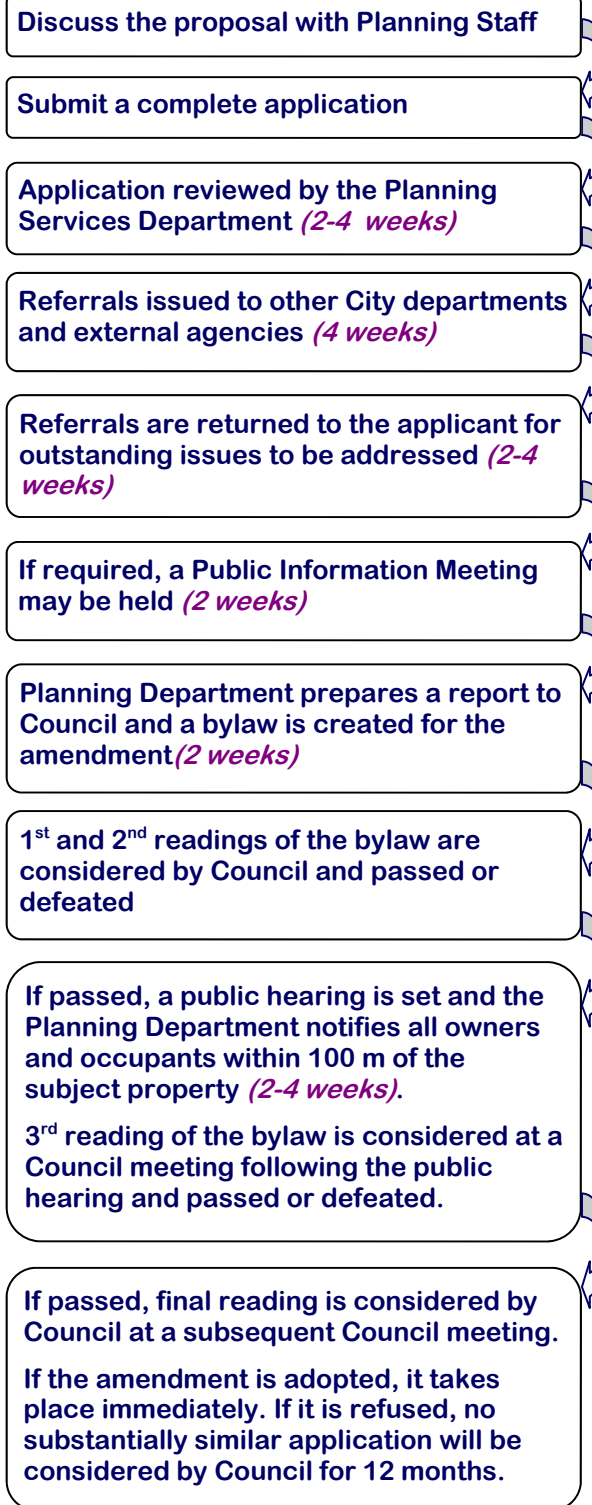
It is important to remember that submitting an application does not guarantee approval.

### How long does the process take?

City Staff do their best to ensure that applications are dealt with in a timely manner. Most typical Development Variance Permit applications take approximately 3-4 months to proceed through the evaluation and approval process once a complete application has been received.

Additional information may be requested at any time during the process and the application cannot proceed before that information is provided. An applicant can considerably reduce any delays by supplying prompt replies with complete information.

### The OCP Amendment Process



### For More Information:

You should always refer to the official copies of the Official Community Plan, Zoning Bylaw, Subdivision Control Bylaw, Development Application Procedures Bylaw, and other formal City of Courtenay documents if you are unsure of any procedure or requirement. Staff will be pleased to be of assistance.

For more information, please contact planning staff at the Planning Services Department 250-334-4441. We will be pleased to help you and answer any questions that you might have.



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