

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF COURTENAY

BYLAW NO. 2638

A bylaw to amend Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2638, 2010

WHEREAS the Council has adopted an Official Community Plan and a Zoning Bylaw;

AND WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 895 of the Local Government Act, the Council shall, by bylaw, establish procedures to amend a plan or bylaw or issue a permit;

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the Corporation of the City of Courtenay in open meeting assembled enacts as follows:

1. This bylaw may be cited for all purposes as “**Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw No. 2638, 2010**”.
2. That *PART 10 PLANNING FOR CLIMATE CHANGE* of Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2387, 2005 be hereby amended by deleting sections 10.1 and 10.1.1 and replacing with the following:

10. PLANNING FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

10.1 INTRODUCTION

The potential threat associated with global changing climatic conditions has global, regional and local implications for ecosystems, infrastructure and people. While climate change science is complex and the outcomes hard to predict, the scientific community (represented by the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)) is in consensus on a number of points:

- i. That some degree of climate change is occurring;
- ii. That greenhouse gases (GHGs) contribute to climate change by trapping in solar radiation;
- iii. That human-related activities increase the release of GHGs through the combustion of carbon-based materials into carbon dioxide. Methane is another powerful GHG that is produced from decomposing waste; and
- iv. That climatic change will continue to occur if action to reduce GHGs is not taken immediately.

Unchecked, climate change is expected to have significant impacts on ecosystem integrity, water supply, fluctuations in temperature and food supply in the Comox Valley. Communities around the world are investing in development models that lower GHG emissions through the strategic location of land uses, reduce automobile use, enhance water and energy efficiency and by protecting and restoring ecosystems.

Recognizing the required collective effort and important role local governments can play in mitigating climate change, the provincial government has mandated that all B.C. local governments include GHG reduction targets, actions and policies in their Official Community Plans to set the framework for such low carbon community development models. This legislation is referred to as the *Local Government (Green Communities) Statutes Amendment Act (Bill 27, 2008)*.

The City of Courtenay adopted a number of overarching climate change policies on May 10, 2010:

- 1. The City of Courtenay will be supporting the “British Columbia Climate Action Charter” by developing specific strategies to achieve the following goals: being carbon neutral in respect of municipal facilities; measuring and reporting on Courtenay’s operational and community-wide Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions profile; and creating complete, compact, more energy efficient communities.*
- 2. The City of Courtenay supports the Provincial Government initiatives to enact legislation to provide local governments with the necessary tools to better address climate change and energy efficiency issues.*
- 3. The City of Courtenay will continue to incorporate climate change, its potential impacts, and mitigation measures when reviewing new development applications and undertaking long-term planning initiatives.*
- 4. The City of Courtenay will engage the community by raising awareness respecting climate change and promote community wide emission reductions and carbon neutral initiatives.*

This section of the OCP proposes a comprehensive and complimentary set of actions to lead us to reach a number of defined objectives. Because the nature of the problem is multi-factoral, so too are the strategies proposed. Therefore, achievement of our goals will occur when these actions occur in concert with one another.

While GHG reduction measures are the focus of this review, it is worthwhile to note that policies that address climate change also have the potential to contribute to overall community-wide and global sustainability goals and the realization of community development models that contribute to high quality of life.

10.2 GOALS

To reduce the City’s annual community-wide greenhouse gas emissions 20% below 2007 levels by 2020, with an incremental reduction target of 2% per year between 2010 and 2020.

Sector specific targets include:

- i. Homes: Reduce average energy demand per home by 20 per cent by 2020. This is consistent with provincial targets for this sector.
- ii. Businesses: Reduce the energy demand at work by nine per cent per square metre by 2020. This is consistent with provincial targets for this sector.
- iii. Public sector buildings: Make public sector buildings (and other operations) carbon neutral by 2012. This is consistent with the Climate Action Charter, which the City of Courtenay has signed.
- iv. Transportation: Achieve a modal split as follows targets as follows:

Mode	Courtenay current (2006 data, mode to work)	2020 Courtenay target
Transit	1.4%	5%
Cycling	4.6%	10%
Walking	9.8%	15%
Carpool	7.6%	15%
Single occupancy vehicle	74%	55%

- v. Water: To reduce water use with a target of 30% lower household water usage rates below 2007 levels by 2020. This is consistent with the province’s Living Water Smart goals.

10.3 OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

Objective 1: To focus GHG reduction efforts in the transportation sector as this is Courtenay’s greatest source of community-wide emissions as determined by the provincial Community Energy and Emissions Inventory. Establish a transportation hierarchy for planning, design and capital spending that will prioritize active modes of transportation over motorized modes as follows:

1. Walking
2. Cycling
3. Transit
4. Commercial delivery of goods and services
5. Private automobile use

This hierarchy will take a ‘mobility management’ approach, as opposed to a supply approach, in making transportation decisions, where mobility management refers to strategies that treat mobility as a means to an end, rather than an end in itself.

Policies

- I. The City will encourage and support initiatives that reduce the number of passenger vehicle trips throughout the community.
- II. The City will create a Pedestrian Plan for the City of Courtenay which will:
 - a. Identify roads and trails within the City as important pedestrian priorities.
 - b. Develop guidelines and standards for the design and construction of pedestrian friendly streets and neighbourhoods, to be included in all Development Permit Areas and subdivision and servicing regulations.
 - c. Promote walking as an important transportation mode.
- III. The City will create a Cycling Plan for the City of Courtenay which will:
 - a. Identify a connected local network of dedicated bike lanes throughout the City that connect seamlessly with the region.
 - b. Develop guidelines and standards for the design and construction of dedicated bike lanes and associated amenities, to be included in all Development Permit Areas and subdivision and servicing regulations.
 - c. Contain a feasibility study on pedestrian and cycling friendly crossings across the Old Island Highway and Courtenay River as these have been identified as major barriers to east-west connectivity.
 - d. Promote cycling as an important transportation mode.

In the interim before such a plan has been adopted, the City will use the *2007 Comox Valley Cycling Plan* (prepared for the Comox Valley Cycling Task Force) as a reference document to negotiate cycling infrastructure amenities with developers and to provide a resource for granting opportunities.

- IV. The City will reduce the ratio of parking for new developments within its jurisdiction.
- V. The City will review the Off-Street Parking Reserve Fund and consider future funds to be used for low emission transportation infrastructure as well as vehicular parking.
- VI. The City will work to improve transit service throughout the community. This will involve:
 - a. Collaborating regularly with BC Transit, including on the development of a Comox Valley Transit Plan in late 2011 (BC Transit plans to begin the planning process at that time).
 - b. Establishing transit amenity standards (e.g. upgrade or new local bus stop with amenities such as shelters, accessibility features and lighting) for all new developments within a reasonable range of an existing bus route.
- VII. The City will promote anti-idling as an educational tool that supports similar anti-idling efforts undertaken by School District 71.

Possible reasons for idling include waiting for passengers, preparing to leave the house including heating up the car, waiting to refuel or have the car washed, running

quick errands or waiting in stalled traffic. Turning off the engine at these times can reduce emissions, improve local air quality and even save money to the car owner over the long run.

The City recognizes that awareness about anti-idling, promoted through a bylaw, can make an impact on motorist behavior.

- VIII. The City will increase capital spending on improving walkability and cycling infrastructure through improved pedestrian friendly streetscapes and a City-wide connected trail system.

Objective 2: To mandate the planning, design and construction of energy efficient, low environmental impact neighbourhoods through existing land use policies that encourage complete, connected and compact community development, recognizing that site selection influences significantly the viability of other GHG reducing initiatives, notably walking, cycling and transit use.

Policies

- I. The City recognizes the link between land use patterns and vehicle emissions and will continue to investigate ways of reducing vehicle emissions and trip distances through policies and regulations that **prioritize** the expenditure of resources (time, energy, capital expenditures) on forms of development as follows:
- a. Urban core settlement area (on the west side of the river, downtown centre. Many of this will be in the form of revitalization and infill development);
 - b. Suburban settlement areas within municipal boundaries (located along trunk service corridors containing water, sewer and transportation);
- II. The City will ensure that all new Neighbourhood and Local-Area Plan processes will include the following:
- a. Future growth will be located in core settlement areas and along an efficiently planned transit system that includes existing and new transit routes;
 - b. Policies and strategies that encourage complete and mixed-use neighbourhoods in core and suburban settlement areas;
 - c. Policies and strategies that prioritize walking and cycling in the core and suburban settlement areas;
 - a. Incorporation of integrated and sustainable community design principles and approaches on all lands using South Courtenay Local Area Plan as an example of good practice.

This principle recognizes that approaches may vary for different development intensities. For example, district heating infrastructure requires a minimum density to be feasible thus restricting its application to core settlement areas.

- III. To encourage incremental infill development in core and suburban settlement areas, the City will:
- a. Encourage compact developments within 400 m of service corridors;

- a. Revise the secondary suite policy to encourage infill development in single-residential neighbourhoods in the form of secondary suites and auxiliary buildings such as carriage suites.
 - b. Exempt small unit housing (50 square metres or smaller) from paying Development Cost Charges. Exempting small unit housing from paying DCCs is now required under Bill 27.
- IV. Schools, institutions, commercial and other community-wide amenities will be located centrally to ensure use by the greatest number of residents within the City, accessible by a variety of modes. The City will continue to work with School District 71 to plan for the strategic location of schools.
- V. The City will incorporate energy and water efficiency and environmental protection measures into appropriate sections of the Development Permit Area guidelines. Guidelines for development might include any or all of the following:
 - a. Results based targets which allow developer freedom to choose how they will achieve targets.
 - b. Energy standards for multi-residential, commercial and institutional development using industry adopted standards such as LEED ND, Built Green or the highest AHSRAE rating.

ASHRAE is the world's best best-known energy standard for buildings. Produced by the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-conditioning Engineers, it was developed in the 1970s and is updated regularly. The most current versions provide comprehensive standards for building energy efficiency;
 - c. Landscaping guidelines that: prohibit invasive and undesirable plants, identify species that are consistent with Courtenay's overall street tree and urban forest strategy, and guide the placement of landscaping features to promote passive design goals;
 - d. Restoration of sensitive landscapes, in particular streams including culverted waterways that may be appropriate for daylighting;
 - e. Guidelines around the provision of community gardens in multi-residential developments;
 - f. Green infrastructure provisions such as renewable energy, green roofs and/or innovations in stormwater management that could contribute to both GHG reductions, piloting of technological innovations and community education;
 - g. Parking guidelines that state parking maximums and parking standards for other modes such as cycling;
 - h. Multi-stream separation of solid waste (recyclables, organic waste, garbage).
- VI. The City recognizes that not all of its land area is created equally and that some land is well suited for development and other land should be preserved in its natural state. As such, the City will require that all future local area plans incorporate principles of systems based planning which aim to protect natural systems and their functions on a site, and to understand that site in relation to other sites.

- VII. The City will create an Environmental Management Strategy that will set clear guidelines on development expectations to protect environmental values on all City lands.

This will be done by reviewing existing Environmental Development Permit Area guidelines and researching how to integrate best available science and Best Management Principles (BMPs) into development guidelines and Local-Area Plans, recognizing that provincial BMPs may fall short of objectives to protect environmentally sensitive areas and habitat.

Areas of environmental value that are currently not within the boundaries of an existing EDPA will be identified using best available research, their ecosystems values will be recorded and appropriate development guidelines put in place to ensure their protection. Such areas include Millard and Piercy Creeks, some other fish bearing streams identified by Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) and a number of terrestrial ecosystems.

Monitoring requirements subsequent to satisfaction of implementing DP requirements and completion of approved project will be integrated into DP guidelines.

Objective 3: To work towards energy and water efficiency and reduction in the operation of existing and new buildings, including their landscaping, through the development of appropriate tools, policies and actions; and to acknowledge the different approaches available to achieving optimum efficiency in new and existing buildings.

Policies:

- I. The City supports the Province's efforts in updating the BC Building Code to become more energy and water efficient and will require the implementation of the BC Green Building Code in all new developments. This includes:
 - i. Requiring that homes are solar hot ready where practical;
 - ii. Requiring new private residential homes to achieve energy performance using the following standard: EnerGuide 80 (standard rate is between 71-76);
 - iii. Requiring new multi-residential, commercial and institutional buildings to achieve energy performance using the following standard: ASHRAE 90.1 2004;
 - iv. Requiring high efficiency toilets and increased use of non-potable water for toilet flushing, irrigation and cold water clothes washing in new buildings.

- II. The City will undertake research to determine Courtenay-specific green building technologies and passive design techniques, recognizing that each community has unique ecological and climatic conditions that influence the viability of such technologies and design approaches.

- III. The City will explore incentive programs such as tax or permit discounts and density bonusing, possibly structured around other incentive programs from other levels of government for promoting green renovation and/or energy efficiency retrofits of existing buildings, including businesses.
- IV. The City will explore the appropriateness of a revitalization tax exemption bylaw for green and/or energy efficient buildings and brownfield developments such as the former theatre site on Fifth Ave.
- V. The City will continue to monitor the cost/benefit realities of water metering as a tool to reduce water consumption in both new and existing homes, and explore the expansion of water reduction programs, which could include metering, over the long term.
- VI. The City will permit all buildings to collect rainwater and help to facilitate regulatory changes that support rainwater reuse for non-potable purposes.

Objective 4: To use and promote a ‘design with nature’ approach in the provision of energy and design of buildings and infrastructure to make maximum use of ecological processes before employing heavily engineered approaches (e.g. solar hot water heating, water purification through the use of plants and soils, use of greenroofs for thermal regulation). This includes minimizing the use of non-renewable energy and resources by increasing the use of low GHG emitting and efficient renewable energy supply systems and resources.

Policies:

- I. The City will work towards integrating infrastructure systems to address multiple low-environmental impact objectives. This includes exploring how to maximize opportunities for harvesting waste heat or generating energy from water and/or waste water; how to promote the use of grey water reuse systems in new construction and rainwater capture in all homes.
- II. The City will conduct a feasibility study for a district heating system for the Lewis Centre, Filberg Centre, Sid Williams Theatre and The Linc as they are all City owned buildings and are in close proximity to one another.
- III. The City will develop a wood first policy to support the use of wood materials in all civic buildings as a means of supporting a local industry and renewable building material.

Objective 5: To protect a representative variety of Courtenay’s natural heritage and to maintain, and where necessary enhance, water and air quality, healthy soils and all species native to Courtenay, with an emphasis on rare and endangered species, sensitive ecosystems and essential ecosystem functions.

Policies:

- I. The City will conduct a comprehensive Parks and Greenway Plan for the City of Courtenay.

The Plan will consider urban wildlife habitat requirements (including wildlife corridors) in addition to recreational needs. The Plan will identify urban trail standards to lend clarity to the creation of a comprehensive and interconnected greenway system through development negotiations and other park acquisitions.

- II. The City will increase the absorption opportunities for carbon throughout the municipality through the conservation and restoration of forested areas and stands of trees and other urban ecological systems throughout the municipality.
- III. The City will review the Tree Bylaw to improve the retention of Courtenay’s urban forest, including trees in riparian zones and threatened Coastal Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii* var. *Menziesii*).
- IV. The City will review and amend all landscaping policies for all land uses to promote naturescaping principles to screen and protect sensitive ecosystems, control and direct surface run-off and ensure that only plant species native or non-invasive to Courtenay are used.
- V. The City will explore tax incentive opportunities to support private property owners’ efforts to preserve and protect environmentally sensitive areas (see Islands Trust examples on their Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Program).
- VI. The City will continue to support community-based air-quality research and monitoring initiatives including monitoring of greenhouse gas emissions.
- VII. The City will continue to regulate and reduce the amount of point-source toxins entering the environment by amending pesticide bylaws to include wider application beyond residential lands.
- VIII. The City will amend the Fill placement/Soil removal bylaw to remove the section that permits the placement of fill in the floodplain; to ensure that the transport of invasive

species in soil/fill material is minimized or eliminated; and to coordinate with the City's protocol for dealing with contaminated sites and soils.

Objective 6: To reduce the amount of solid waste being generated within the municipality and to increase diversion rates of recyclable and compostable materials.

Policies:

- I. The City will continue to pursue steps to reduce solid waste through a variety of approaches including education, promotion, advertising around recycling and home composting, including within multi-residential housing, major commercial and industrial developments.

This will include reviewing opportunities and barriers for recycling in existing multi-residential buildings and working with the Regional District on a city-wide or regional-wide curbside composting pilot collection program.

Objective 7: To strengthen community resiliency to changing resource supplies – food, energy, groundwater security – as an adaptation measure to future uncertainty around these commodities.

Policies:

- I. The City will support food security actions within the community including ensuring that sufficient land and incentives exist to encourage the growth of local food processing facilities and industries, including those for seafood, recognizing that the seafood industry is an important part of the regional economy.
- II. The City will encourage the provision of private garden plots in multi-residential buildings through the multi-residential Development Permit Area guidelines.
- III. The City will conduct a community-wide energy plan to assess renewable energy potential. The plan will include possible adaptation measures to expected rises in the price of fossil energy.

Objective 8: To encourage innovation and lead by example towards the attainment of GHG reduction goals. Complimentary objectives are to raise the profile of these initiatives and use such opportunities to showcase best practices in sustainable community development.

Policies:

- I. The City will encourage pilot projects for alternative energy production and distribution and will work with local, regional and provincial agencies and organizations for their development and implementation.

Objective 9: To encourage optimization of energy utilized during the full life cycle use of public and private assets. This includes the production, transportation and assembly of materials; the lifetime operation and maintenance of the asset; and the retirement, re-use and replacement of the asset.

Policies:

- I. The City will develop a protocol for assessing internally the life-cycle cost of community-wide planning and infrastructure decisions, similar to the City's Corporate sustainable purchasing policy.

Objective 10: To work towards reducing regulatory barriers that inhibit, and providing incentives that promote, the attainment of the City's GHG reduction goals.

Policies:

- I. The City will review the Development Cost Charges bylaw to provide reductions in fees for the attainment of defined criteria which may include any or all of the following:
 - i. Size of lots (small-lots between 3,000 and 5,000 square feet) as well as proximity to major destinations;
 - ii. Percentage of materials sourced locally;
 - iii. Provision of greenroofs;
 - iv. Re-use of existing structures, materials, water;
 - v. Attainment of a defined green building, energy and/or water efficiency standard above provincial code;
 - vi. Provision of district heating;
 - vii. Proximity to transit and/or provision of non-auto transportation infrastructure;
 - viii. Provision of a defined mix of land uses.
- II. The City will review subdivision and servicing regulations to ensure they are broadly consistent with the objectives of low GHG development as described in this chapter of the OCP, and to ensure that the regulations include reference to the protection of sensitive ecosystems and biodiversity.

Objective 11: To incorporate these climate action goals and policies into the full cycle of the development process (front counter service, planning, operations, Council approval) to ensure an internally consistent and coordinated approach to achieving these goals.

Policies:

- I. The City will build on its existing Sustainability Checklist to enhance its function as a user-friendly and robust set of evaluation criteria for assessing development opportunities. The Checklist will include criteria around incentives for developments with high compliance. The following incentives will be considered:
 - i. Discounted building permit fees for use of ‘green’ strategies;
 - ii. Density bonusing guidelines;
 - iii. Fast-tracked process for permit approval where ‘green’ strategies are met;
 - iv. Relaxed standards and variances allowed where OCP goals are clearly met;
 - v. Recognition and promotion.
- II. The City will incorporate a sustainability section for all reports prepared for Council’s consideration, similar to the Strategic Plan Reference. This will be done to ensure that Council has the ability to judge how well proposals contribute to the City’s GHG reduction goals.

Objective 12: To recognize local work that has been done in these areas and on similar initiatives, by honoring and incorporating relevant adopted policies and plans; and working with neighbouring jurisdictions, senior governments and significant land holders such as School District 71, where applicable, to develop consistent, efficient and effective approaches to achieving these goals.

Policies:

- I. The City will form and lead a GHG reduction Technical Advisory Committee with staff from the Town of Comox, Village of Cumberland, Comox Regional District, and possibly City of Campbell River, as a means of sharing information and coordinating efforts, recognizing that all communities in the province are working towards similar goals.
- II. The City will continue to collaborate with staff from neighbouring jurisdictions on other cross-boundary land use matters such as species protection and watershed management.

Objective 13: To work with local community partners to educate residents on emissions reductions and encourage initiatives to achieve these goals.

Policies:

- I. The City will initiate a public Community Greenhouse Gas Reduction Committee as a means to identify implementable projects and programs consistent with these objectives, to lend expertise, and to include the public in decisions that affect their community.
- II. The City will develop an educational program on sustainable land use initiatives as part of OCP updates to ensure that community members understand the costs and benefits associated with sustainable community development patterns and methods. Educational efforts might take the form of:
 - i. The City's website becoming a source of information on the City's climate change initiatives and how communities can contribute, similar to other communities throughout the province;
 - ii. The development of a Community Based Social Marketing strategy to target message delivery on GHG reduction initiatives;
 - iii. A speakers series in partnership with local organizations, businesses and educational centres working in these fields.

Objective 14: To dedicate sufficient funding in the annual budget for projects consistent with the existing and new policies in the OCP.

Policies:

- I. The City will require that all budget items reflect the goals of the OCP and aim to reduce GHGs specifically.

Objective 15: To evaluate the success of the City's efforts, remain vigilant to gaps in our knowledge, remain current with innovations and best practices and to strive to incorporate new ideas into the full cycle of the development process.

Policies:

- I. The City will develop a reporting protocol for community-wide GHG reduction status and attainment of City's sustainability objectives as part of internal reporting, similar to annual budget reporting.
- II. The City will consider ways to report on the attainment of the City's GHG reduction goals, possibly through the use of the City's Annual Report. Indicators of success will need to be determined.

3. This bylaw shall come into effect upon final adoption hereof.

Read a first time this 1st day of November, 2010

Read a second time this 1st day of November, 2010

Considered at a Public Hearing this day of , 2010

Read a third time this day of day of , 2010

Finally passed and adopted this day of , 2010

Mayor

Manager of Corporate Administration