

**ABOUT THE
CITY OF PORT ALBERNI OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN
BYLAW NO. 4602
(adopted April 10, 2007)**

Why do we have an Official Community Plan Bylaw?

The Official Community Plan is a general statement of the broad objectives and policies of the local government respecting existing and proposed land use and servicing requirements in the area covered by the plan.

- It serves as a framework whereby the Council may be guided in making decisions
- It identifies factors relevant to the use and development of land
- It helps to avoid inconsistencies in decision making that may lead to inefficient resource allocation or land use conflicts
- It provides a base for consensus between civic officials and the groups of individuals they represent, regarding overall objectives and strategies for community action

The OCP is not a static plan. Its objectives and policies may change over time as the community's needs and aspirations change.

Why and How can the Official Community Plan be changed?

Official Community Plan amendments are usually triggered by rezoning proposals that are inconsistent with the Plan. Other general changes to the Official Community Plan may be proposed to keep the Plan up-to-date and to meet changing needs of the community. Any proposed change to the Official Community Plan must be passed by City Council as a Bylaw and must have a Public Hearing. A developer or individual who is proposing a change to the Official Community Plan Bylaw should note the following explanation of the process:

- Applicant should consult with the City Planner to accurately determine the current property designations in the Official Community Plan. If a development proposal does not comply with the Official Community Plan, the applicant must apply for an amendment to the Official Community Plan Bylaw. The Planner will help determine the appropriate designation and any amendments required.
- It is rare that an Official Community Plan amendment is required without a related Zoning Bylaw amendment. In the City of Port Alberni, Official Community Plan amendments may be jointly processed with pertinent Zoning Bylaw amendments.
- Applicant must file a complete application for an Official Community Plan Amendment at City Hall and pay the application fee. The application must be accompanied by accurate drawings detailing the proposed changes and a detailed written description of the proposed change. **All registered owners of the property must sign the application and a copy of a current Land Title document (current within 30 days) must be included with the application.** In addition the applicant is required to erect signage on the property giving notice of the proposed change and the Public Hearing information.
- The Planning Department refers the application to all appropriate city departments, as well as to other government agencies and/or community groups, asking for input or comments pertaining to the proposed amendment.

The *Local Government Act* requires local government to provide one or more opportunities for consultation with persons, organizations and authorities it considers will be affected when developing, amending or repealing an Official Community Plan. This consultation is additional to the legislative requirement for a public hearing.

- The City Planner prepares a report with recommendations to the Advisory Planning Commission. The APC will discuss the proposed amendments and provide a recommendation (including any specific conditions of approval) to City Council.
- If City Council makes the decision to proceed with the amendment process City staff will be directed to prepare the amending bylaw.
- The amending Bylaw is introduced to City Council for 1st and 2nd reading at a regular Council meeting and a Public Hearing is scheduled.
- A Notice of the Public Hearing including details of the proposed amendment is sent to owners and occupiers of properties within 75m of the subject property. The Notice is also published in the newspaper prior to the Public Hearing. In addition the applicant is required to amend the signage posted on the property to give notice of the Public Hearing information.
- The City Planner prepares a report to Council summarizing the status of the application and all comments and concerns to date.
- The Public Hearing is open to all members of the public who deem their interest in property to be affected by the proposed amendment. The Public Hearing affords all citizens an opportunity to be heard by Council or to make written submissions to Council pertaining to the proposed amendment.
- Following the Public Hearing the amending bylaw will go back to Council for a 3rd reading. Council may decide to deny the proposed amendment at this time or to proceed. If Council decides to proceed they may make final adoption of the amending bylaw subject to the applicant fulfilling specific conditions. The applicant is then notified of the conditions that Council has specified.
- Final adoption of the Bylaw by City Council will not take place until all conditions have been fulfilled by the applicant. Once all conditions of approval have been fulfilled the applicant must notify City staff (City Planner). If the Min. of Transportation has approved the Bylaw in principal, they will be asked to sign the Bylaw at this time.
- The City Planner will prepare a report to City Council making a recommendation in regards to final adoption of the amending bylaw.
- Council makes a decision on final adoption of the amending bylaw at the next regular Council meeting.

**For more information contact:
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City of Port Alberni - Official Community Plan Bylaw Amendment Process

(Often done concurrently with a Zoning Bylaw Amendment)

