

AGENDA ITEM NO: \_\_\_\_\_ 7-I-1

MEETING DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ June 7, 2022

**STAFF REPORT – COVER SHEET**

SUBJECT: OCP Amendment /  
Yarrow Neighbourhood Plan DATE: May 27, 2022

DEPARTMENT: Planning & Strategic Initiatives  
OCP00043 PREPARED BY: Madelaine Peters / tr

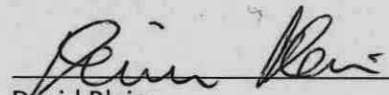
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**1. SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

After a comprehensive planning and community engagement process, an Official Community Plan (OCP) Amendment is now proposed to incorporate the Yarrow Neighbourhood Plan as a schedule in the OCP. The Yarrow Neighbourhood Plan ("the Plan") provides clear expectations with respect to new development and guides future land use decision-making, taking into account resident concerns and aspirations, and fine-tuning the 2040 OCP vision for this area. In addition, corresponding amendments to the OCP mapping and select text changes have been developed to bring the Yarrow Neighbourhood Plan into the OCP.

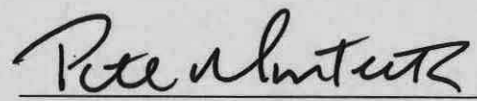
**2. RECOMMENDATION:**

Recommendation that "Official Community Plan Bylaw Amendment Bylaw 2022, No. 5215", a proposed text amendment to include the "Yarrow Neighbourhood Plan" as a new Schedule D-8 in the "2040 Official Community Plan", including relevant text and map changes, be given first and second reading; and further, that a Public Hearing be called for June 21, 2022. (OCP00043)

  
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David Blain  
Director of Planning & Engineering

**3. CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION/COMMENTS:**

Supports recommendation.

  
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Peter Monteith  
Chief Administrative Officer

## STAFF REPORT ON OCP00043 / YARROW NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

PREPARED BY: Madelaine Peters DATE: May 27, 2022  
POSITION: Planner III DEPARTMENT: Planning & Strategic Initiatives

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### 1. DEFINITION OF ISSUE:

After a comprehensive planning and community engagement process, an Official Community Plan (OCP) Amendment is now proposed to incorporate the Yarrow Neighbourhood Plan as a schedule in the OCP. The Yarrow Neighbourhood Plan (“the Plan”) provides clear expectations with respect to new development and guides future land use decision-making, taking into account resident concerns and aspirations, and fine-tuning the 2040 OCP vision for this area. In addition, corresponding amendments to the OCP mapping and select text changes have been developed to bring the Yarrow Neighbourhood Plan into the OCP.

### 2. BACKGROUND/PURPOSE:

- 2.1 The City’s 2040 OCP defines Yarrow as a rural community that is expected to see limited future growth. Future growth in Chilliwack will instead be directed to other neighbourhoods located within the City’s Urban Growth Boundary.
- 2.2 The neighbourhood planning process for Yarrow was initiated in response to a requested lot width variance to facilitate a panhandle subdivision, which raised questions and concerns relating to density, privacy, impact on rural character, and servicing.
- 2.3 The Plan process explored and determined how and where limited growth could be accommodated while maintaining the community’s rural character and natural setting.

### 3. DISCUSSION:

#### Plan Engagement and Analysis

- 3.1. With the launch of the neighbourhood planning process in spring 2021, the City shared information online and through various social media channels to inform residents, property owners, businesses, and stakeholders about the project and invite them to participate. A project webpage was created on Engage Chilliwack to serve as a central forum for all project-related communications and materials. The webpage included background information on the project, Frequently Asked Questions, outlined opportunities for engagement and offered the option for the public to ask questions and submit feedback about the project. Key engagement opportunities for the draft Yarrow Neighbourhood Plan included:

- online community survey (August 12 to September 30, 2021);
- two virtual community meetings (October 4th and 6th, 2021);
- open house (April 6, 2022);
- staff attendance at Yarrow Ratepayers Association Annual General Meeting (April 12, 2022);

- a presentation to the Affordable Housing and Development Advisory Committee (April 27, 2022); and,
- a final community survey (May 4th to 20th, 2022).

More detail on the public engagement results can be found on the City's website and on Engage Chilliwack at [www.engagechilliwack.com/yarrowplan](http://www.engagechilliwack.com/yarrowplan).

- 3.2. On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022, Council received a presentation on the draft Plan, after which final community engagement and pre-consultation referrals were undertaken.
- From May 4<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> 2022, a public survey was available online. Recognizing the majority of community feedback was obtained during the open house held at the Yarrow Community Centre on April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022, where over 110 people attended, the online survey gathered input as a final check-in. The survey also gave those who could not attend the open house a final opportunity to participate. In addition to the 130 responses received during the open house, a total of 18 additional responses were submitted during this final survey period (May 4-20) and feedback generally aligned with what City Staff heard throughout the planning process.
  - Referrals of the draft Plan were sent to First Nations (People of the River Referrals Office, Stó:lō Tribal Council, Semá:th - Sumas First Nation), ALC, and the Chilliwack School District #33, in accordance with the Local Government Act, regarding the proposed OCP amendment. Those referrals have been made, and comments have been requested to be submitted prior to the Public Hearing.
- 3.3. To ensure a comprehensive understanding of how Yarrow functions, various aspects of the neighbourhood were analyzed. Key components such as servicing, subdivision, mobility and transportation were assessed to determine potential opportunities and challenges associated with future development and neighbourhood priorities in Yarrow. Regular inter-departmental working group sessions with City Staff brought together critical input and collaborative solutions from various departments.
- *Servicing:* The servicing assessment included a technical review to develop a better understanding of the cumulative impact of subdivision and increased residential development on existing infrastructure. Dependence on septic system disposal and Yarrow Water Works service limits the capacity for growth in the neighbourhood.
  - *Subdivision:* The subdivision assessment included a review of the number of residential properties in Yarrow that have the potential to subdivide based on existing lot sizes. There are approximately 60 properties in Yarrow zoned for residential use with a lot size exceeding 0.4 hectares (1 acre), connected to community water, with the potential to subdivide. In some instances, panhandle subdivision may be the only viable way to facilitate subdivision on lots that are large enough to subdivide but are narrow in width.

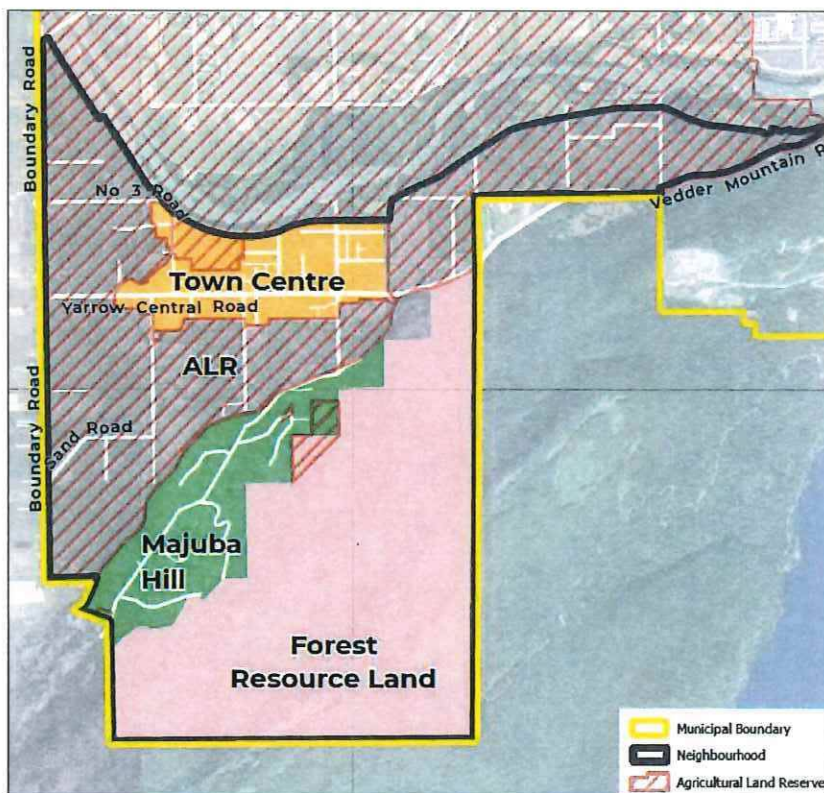
- *Mobility & Transportation:* The mobility and transportation assessment indicate there are potential opportunities to safely accommodate and integrate pedestrians, cyclists, and motor vehicles. Conceptual road cross-sections have been prepared to illustrate various design scenarios, which suggest a long-range vision for the potential design of Yarrow Central Road and local roads to improve the overall comfort, accessibility, character and functionality of the streets in the neighbourhood.

**Plan Direction and Content**

- 3.4 The Plan presents an appropriate and unified vision for the neighbourhood and provides clear direction for future decision-making regarding limited subdivision and associated residential development in Yarrow, with an emphasis on promoting complete and healthy community development.

*Yarrow will remain a close-knit community characterized by its rural lifestyle. Minimal growth will balance this rural character while allowing residents to age in place, accommodate multiple generations, welcome newcomers, and support neighbourhood businesses. Yarrow’s natural amenities, such as parks, trails, and rivers, will be protected. Pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, such as sidewalks and bike lanes, will be created where feasible.*

- 3.5 Responding to community feedback, Yarrow’s boundaries were expanded and include two sub areas – Town Centre and Majuba Hill – surrounded by the Agricultural Land Reserve and Forest Resource Land.



3.6 The Plan vision is supported by six overarching principles that inform the land use, policy direction, and future decision making and investment in Yarrow:

1. Maintain the rural character;
2. Manage growth within existing servicing capacity;
3. Establish a compact and distinct commercial core;
4. Protect natural assets;
5. Improve comfort, safety and functionality of Yarrow Central Road; and,
6. Continue to build and enhance resident participation in planning processes.

3.7 The Future Land Use Plan provides a long-term perspective and illustrates where in Yarrow to accommodate various land uses in the neighbourhood. A key component of the Plan was the review of land use designations to ensure their alignment with the expectations for the future of Yarrow. This review led to the development of two Yarrow-specific land use designations.

Designation	Objective & Built Form
<p><b>Yarrow Residential</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To support low density housing with large lots in established residential areas while maintaining the overall form and character of the neighbourhood.</li> <li>• Single detached dwellings and coach houses (minimum lot size 0.2 hectares and connected to Community Water System).</li> <li>• For properties that also have the “Yarrow Commercial Core” designation, commercial development fronting Yarrow Central Road is also permitted as a principal use.</li> </ul> <p>* New residential development will have maximum gross floor area limits that will be added to the R1-A (Urban Residential) Zone, with floor area increases demonstrated through substantiated engineering reports.</p>
<p><b>Yarrow Commercial Core</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To support small-scale and locally serving commercial development along Yarrow Central Road that contributes to a compact, walkable, and pedestrian-friendly commercial core.</li> <li>• Small scale, ground-oriented commercial buildings, with street facing frontage to support “main street” style pedestrian-oriented development.</li> </ul> <p>* Use and density of new commercial development to be determined through an independent review with substantiating information to ensure: 1) soil capacity in the area and proposed septic system can support increased loading, and 2) adequate water can be supplied by Yarrow Water Works.</p>

3.8 The Plan also has several policies that respond to the servicing constraints identified in the neighbourhood through the planning analysis. These include not supporting communal wastewater treatment or septic disposal systems, and requiring applicants to demonstrate feasibility of uses on a case-by-case basis through an independent review of water and septic services.

## Plan Implementation

- 3.9 Implementation is the process that moves the Plan from strategy to action. The implementation objectives of the Plan acknowledge the following:
- The Plan is a living document whose implementation includes monitoring and amendments, as needed, over time to respond to emerging community needs and Council priorities, through established public processes.
  - The Future Land Use Plan acknowledges that redevelopment timelines are dependent on the market and property owner interest, and that not all properties will be redeveloped.
  - Redevelopment will occur as individual land owners determine the viability of redevelopment, in accordance with City policies, plans, and bylaws.
- 3.10 To support the development application process, applicants will be required to undertake early neighbourhood engagement and are expected to attend the Public Hearing or Public Information Meeting.
- 3.11 Other implementation tools and processes that support the Plan:
- *Zoning Bylaw:* Following the completion of the Yarrow Neighbourhood Plan, amendments are proposed for the Zoning Bylaw to add maximum gross floor area for residential buildings to ensure they reflect the servicing constraints in the neighbourhood.
  - *Delegation Authority Bylaw:* Amendments are also proposed to the Delegation Authority Bylaw to establish a streamlined variance application process that considers variances to the maximum gross floor area for residential buildings, based on substantiated engineering reports.
  - *Independent Review:* An independent review of servicing capacity will be required to determine feasibility of changes in the use and density of non-residential development (commercial, industrial, and institutional).
  - *Development Variance Permit:* In instances where a standard residential subdivision layout is not feasible, a maximum of one panhandle subdivision may be considered through the issuance of a Development Variance Permit, while meeting standards as detailed in the Plan. In some cases, additional panhandle lots with a single shared access may be considered at the discretion of the City, in addition to meeting further conditions as detailed in the Plan.
  - *Road Frontage Upgrades:* Typical road frontage upgrades will occur through subdivision and redevelopment, but additional City investment will be required outside of these areas to bridge gaps, prioritized where maximum overall community benefit can be achieved.

#### 4. FINAL PLAN ADJUSTMENTS

Based on comments made at the May 3<sup>rd</sup> Council meeting, AHDC meeting, as well as feedback from the public engagement, minor amendments have been made to the Plan.

- The Plan's Implementation Table (Section 8) has been finalized and is organized by general themes, summarizes the action items, and assigns a lead, a timeline, and potential partners for implementation. Timelines are based on short (0 – 3 years), medium (4 to 6 years) and long term (7+ years).
- An amendment has been made to the "Yarrow Residential" land use designation and Section 7.4 (Residential) to remove policy language relating to bareland strata development. Upon further review, City Staff determined regulating this form of development through land use was not appropriate, and further studies are required to understand and explore options for regulation through the Zoning Bylaw.
- Policy has been amended under Section 7.7 (Servicing) that outlines the substantiated engineering report requirements for non-residential (commercial, industrial, institutional) development proposals that reviews the servicing capacity to determine feasibility. This policy also outlines criteria to help guide City Staff in their review process.
- Minor spelling, formatting, mapping and image edits.

#### 5. RECOMMENDATION & SUBSTANTIATION:

##### Recommendation:

Recommendation that "Official Community Plan Bylaw Amendment Bylaw 2022, No. 5215", a proposed text amendment to include the "Yarrow Neighbourhood Plan" as a new Schedule D-8 in the "2040 Official Community Plan", including relevant text and map changes, be given first and second reading; and further, that a Public Hearing be called for June 21, 2022. (OCP00043)

##### Substantiation:

The Yarrow Neighbourhood Plan sets out planning principles and policies to guide land use and development decisions in the neighbourhood. This document is a resource for Staff, Council, development applicants, and residents alike. Taking into consideration the community values and concerns, the Plan establishes clear expectations with respect to land use and development in this rural neighbourhood. The corresponding text amendments to the overarching OCP have been developed to support the implementation of the Yarrow Neighbourhood Plan by ensuring consistent policy application/interpretation, mapping, and terminology usage.