

Date: October 2, 2023

To: City Council

From: Eric Holmes, City Manager

Re: OUR VANCOUVER – Goals Framework

Cc: Chad Eiken, Director, CDD; Rebecca Kennedy, Deputy Director, CDD; Domenique Martinelli, Senior Long Range Planner; William Cooley, Community Engagement Manager, CMO.

Intent

Provide Council with a high-level overview of the community visioning work that's occurred over the last two years, and how it informs the overall framework for goals within the comprehensive plan.

Background

The City of Vancouver's Comprehensive Plan provides the overall long-term vision and policy direction to manage the built and natural environment in Vancouver and provide necessary public facilities to achieve that vision. The City adopted its first comprehensive plan under Washington's Growth Management Act in 1994 (Chapter 36.70A RCW), with a major re-write occurring in 2004, and a less substantive update occurring most recently in 2011. On December 19, 2022, City Council authorized the City manager to execute a consulting services contract with WSP to assist City staff in updating the plan. On February 27, City Council endorsed a chartering framework for the Comprehensive Plan process, which included a framework for goals within the overall plan – to ensure policies, regulations, and implementation methods are rooted in an articulated purpose.

OUR VANCOUVER **Phase One**

Over the summer, the City engaged community members across 15 events on the Comprehensive Plan, creating awareness of the plan update effort and talking with residents about their hopes for the future, what they would like to see more of in their neighborhoods, what would make Vancouver a more equitable and inclusive place to live and how issues such as housing and transportation are affecting them and people they know. Community members were also asked to identify the places, spaces and things that help them feel a sense of belonging in our community. Feedback gathered during these conversations was highly consistent with what was heard during the community visioning process and engagement conducted throughout 2022 and 2023, which is described further below.

Community Visioning Process

The City conducted a robust visioning process, which engaged more than 1,015 community members between June 2022 and February 2023. Since then, staff have engaged more than 1,200 additional community members through one-on-one and small group conversations, Council Community Forums, online engagement and tabling at community events.

During this process, community members were asked about their hopes, needs and concerns, and their big ideas for the future of Vancouver. Some of the most frequently mentioned concerns included public safety, economic opportunity (jobs, business development and growth), housing affordability, homelessness, and climate change. Some of the most frequently mentioned hopes for the future include safety in all forms, economic prosperity, affordable housing and preventing displacement, community and neighborhood connections (between places and between people), environmental stewardship and climate resiliency, and care for parks and public spaces.

A detailed summary of themes from the visioning effort was shared earlier this year with members of the Strategic Plan Advisory Committee to help inform their work. Following

additional conversations with community members and groups throughout 2023, staff developed a draft community vision statement, which reads:

“Vancouver is an equitable and prosperous community, which ensures that all residents, businesses and organizations benefit from the growth and advancement we make together. Vancouver will be recognized for our quality of life, as evidenced by affordable housing in vibrant, safe and walkable neighborhoods, access to jobs and economic opportunity for all, and resilience to the impacts of climate change.”

To help ensure alignment and cohesion between the Comprehensive Plan and the Strategic Plan, the draft goals framework was developed from the draft visioning statement above.

Proposed Policy Structure

While the community vision statement stands as the foundation for the overall Comprehensive Plan, the vision is further broken down into plan goals, which describe desired outcomes toward which planning efforts should be directed. Policies are then developed from the goals established for each chapter, which define more specific actions or initiatives that advance the broader goals. Finally, an implementation matrix will outline the timeframe for advancing policy actions over the next 20 years.

Existing Policy Structure

The existing comprehensive plan is organized into seven chapters, with a preface and five appendices. Each chapter contains a set of policies but does not contain any goal statements or any overarching vision for each subchapter. The current plan does not include indicators to track ongoing implementation.

- **Preface** – Contains the plan’s vision statement as defined during the 2008 strategic plan process, brief community history statement, general intent of the plan, and how the plan relates to existing city plans and local and state regulations.
- **Community Development** – Describes the vision for land use and development of the built environment (centers and corridors strategy), the comprehensive land use designation map, the general intent of each land use designation, and identified policies to enhance the vision.
- **Economic Development** – Includes 10 year trends and indicators for economic data by sector, summary of largest employers, economic development tools and programs, future direction and vision, and identified policies to enhance the vision.
- **Housing** – Includes a summary of housing stock, vacancy, conditions, tenure, costs, and affordability, constraints on housing, summary of housing programs and plans, future direction and vision, and identified policies to enhance the vision.
- **Environment** – Includes a summary of existing environmental conditions, including water resources, fish and wildlife habitats, landscape, air and climate. Overview of state environmental regulatory considerations, high level vision statement on future direction and identified policies to enhance the vision.
- **Public Facilities and Services** – public facilities and services are broken down into the following categories in the plan:
 - Transportation
 - Transit
 - Airport
 - Public Water
 - Sanitary Sewer
 - Stormwater
 - Parks and Recreation
 - Fire and EMS
 - Police
 - Schools
 - Library Services
 - Solid waste and facilities
 - General government

- **Annexation** – Phased map of potential annexation areas within the Vancouver Urban Growth Area (VUGA), provides reference to the Annexation Blueprint plan and a set of annexation policies.
- **Implementation** – Narrative description of how plan implementation functions (i.e. Title 20 Land Use Code codifies Land Use Vision, development review applies code standards to proposed development), table outlining the review criteria for minor comprehensive plan and map changes, and identified implementation policies.

Regulatory Requirements

Revised Code of Washington Section 36.70a.070 requires that the following elements be included in chapters within a Comprehensive Plan:

- Land Use
- Housing
- Capital Facilities (Water, stormwater, green infrastructure, sewer, police, fire,, other public facilities)
- Utilities
- Transportation
- Economic Development
- Parks and Recreation
- Climate Change and Resiliency
- Ports (Cities with annual maritime port revenues greater than \$60M)

Proposed Chapters and Goals Framework

The Community Partners, which are the core committee of City residents who are tasked with co-creating policy with the City, held their first meeting in June. Over the course of four meetings, the Community Partners have helped develop the overall proposed framework for goals. This input, along with feedback received during the community visioning process and OUR VANCOUVER community engagement events, have fed into and shaped the proposed goals framework below. The framework includes chapters, represented in **bold text**, along

with core goals and desired outcomes that will, once finalized, guide the Comprehensive Plan update going forward.

- **Introduction:** Our Community's Core Values + Focus Areas
- **Community Feel and Vision:** Inclusive + Affordable + Safe + Shared Prosperity + Walkable
- **Land Use and Development:** Emphasize Mix of Compatible Uses + Increased Livability + Compact and Strategic Infill + Transit Oriented Development + Preservation of Critical Areas and Environmentally Sensitive Lands + Adaptive Reuse + Social Infrastructure
- **Housing:** Affordability + Universal Resident Needs + Culturally Appropriate Housing + Neighborhood Cohesion + Keep Existing Housing Affordable + Focus on Missing Middle
- **Equity and Inclusion:** Inclusive and Reparative Policies + Land Use Impacts On Health + Universal Access to Resources (Shelter and Food) + Nurturing and Valuing All People
- **Climate, Environment, Community Health, Sustainability, and Resiliency:** Equitable and Just Transition + Increase Tree Canopy + Stewardship + Supporting Holistic Cycles of Consumption and Production + Waste Diversion + Access to Healthy Food + Physical Health Through Walkability + Response and Resilience to Natural and Manmade Events
- **Economic Opportunity:** Support Businesses and Industry + Facilitate Startups + Innovation + Equity and Inclusion + Circularity+ Creative Vitality
- **Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Community Well Being:** Enhance Walkability + Increase Green Spaces + Inclusive Public Spaces + Increase Health Opportunities Through Recreation
- **Transportation and Mobility:** Reliable and Frequent Public Transit + Walkability + Multi-Modal Streets + Ways to Encourage Public Transit
- **Infrastructure, Public Facilities and Services and Utilities:** Targeted Approach to Infrastructure Provision + Expand Services and Programs + Serving More Residents With Less Infrastructure Through Strategic Land Use
- **Annexation:** Sustainable Growth + Maintain Levels of Service
- **Implementation:** Actionable Policies + Alignment with Strategic Plan + Local and Regional Coordination + Accountability

Next Steps

Following this work session, the draft vision statement will be released for a four week public comment period. Additionally, the proposed goals framework will be updated to reflect Council's feedback and further refined with the Community Partners. Following this, staff will bring forward a resolution to formally endorse the plan's three initial frameworks—Equity, Community Partners and Goals. In the next phase of the Plan update process, these frameworks will inform and shape the development of land use alternatives that outline how and where growth could occur over the next 20 years. Each alternative will reflect Council's core policy priorities of safety, equity and climate action and the final version of the draft vision statement including above. The Council will take part in several upcoming workshops, including a joint work session with the Planning Commission, to inform and ultimately choose a final alternative to include in the updated Comprehensive Plan.

Attachments

- Memorandum
- Presentation
- Engagement and Visioning Process Summary
- Summary of Community Partner Meeting #4
- Equity Framework
- Community Partnership Framework

Staff Contact

Domenique Martinelli (she/her), Senior Long Range Planner

Domenique.martinelli@cityofvancouver.us

William Cooley (he/him), Community Engagement Manager

William.cooley@cityofvancouver.us