

Input to draft SCRD Board Policy for OCP Amendments

1 message

HB Community Development Forum <cdf@halfmoon-bay.ca>
To: Julie.Clark@scrd.ca
Cc: planning@scrd.ca, Justine Gabias <justine.gabias@scrd.ca>

Tue, Apr 18, 2023 at 9:29 AM

Dear Julie,

The Committee of the Halfmoon Bay [Community Development Forum](#) supports the initiative by the SCRD to put in place a policy to guide decisions on proposed amendments to OCPs, noting that a timeline for updating the OCPs has not yet been presented. We also appreciate the opportunity to provide input to this draft policy, which you will find below.

1. We understand that this policy will be used as a 'screening tool' to help clarify what types/forms of development should move forward in the OCP amendment process. We propose that the:
 - a. policy clearly states in the preamble the purpose and intent behind these criteria;
 - b. make clear that OCP amendment proposals that are reviewed against these criteria will still be subject to the full OCP amendment review process (e.g. notice, public hearings, readings, etc).
2. We suggest that staff consider the following questions as they revise the criteria:
 - a. Considering the time, cost, and expertise required, should the SCRD reduce the criteria to a more manageable number? There appear to be too many categories and criteria in the draft, with varying degrees of importance and linked to various OCP objectives. If the criteria are too many and the purpose of each is not clear, there is the risk that prospective developers will be discouraged by evermore bureaucracy, community members confused on what the combined answers show, and planners overwhelmed when analyzing the answers and explaining their decisions.
 - b. How many of these criteria will need to be met for an amendment proposal to move into the full OCP amendment review process?
 - c. Which criteria will be considered 'showstoppers' ie. the answer will determine whether the amendment application will not move forward or not. (This will save the developer and SCRD time and in some cases may reduce community anxiety related to lengthy processes for controversial proposals).
 - d. How will conflicting criteria/trade offs be considered? (e.g. if all of the 'land use compatibility and density' + 'economy' criteria are met, would that trump the others?)
 - e. How will these criteria change in response to recently-announced provincial policy (e.g. the BC Housing Plan) and plans to overhaul legislation (i.e. blanket up-zoning for single family lots)? Although it's not clear whether these sweeping changes would apply to rural lands, it's our understanding that, once passed, the new legislation will mean that when a multi-unit development on a single-family lot is considered by the Board, as long as it meets all the required parameters around setbacks and size, the Board must approve the project.
3. The SCRD should do a desk-top application of the final draft criteria on 1-2 current OCP amendment proposals to test them, given that this policy will be in play for many years. The results can be used to finalize the criteria and make sure they can be applied with useful and understandable decisions.
4. For consideration in the upcoming OCP review process, the SCRD should consider developing SMART indicators to accompany each criteria, that the developer, community and SCRD can understand. This will help to eliminate criteria that are too subjective/vague and provide a clear and consistent means for explaining decisions.

We hope you find these comments helpful as you finalize this important policy.

Kind regards,
Alistair Higson, Chair

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