



Electoral Area 'H'  
Official Community Plan  
Bylaw No. xxx, 2017

**DRAFT Version 1.0 of Section 1 Introduction**

**November 17, 2016**

Note to the reader:

This is an annotated draft. Explanatory notes are in the right side-bar. The draft includes the text of the current OCP with underline used to show proposed new text, and strikethrough used to show text proposed to be deleted.



## Schedule A – Policy Document

### 1. Introduction and Purpose

The *Local Government Act* defines an Official Community Plan as a general statement of the broad objectives and policies of the local government respecting the form and character of existing and proposed land use and servicing requirements in the geographical area covered by the Plan.

*Reworded to make consistent with LGA*

The purpose of the Electoral Area 'H' Official Community Plan (OCP) is to provide a comprehensive set of objectives, guidelines and policies for managing existing and future uses of land, coastal areas and the surface of the water within the Plan Area. The objectives and policies contained in this OCP are a reflection of community values and the regulations of the local, provincial, and federal government with interests in the Plan Area.

*Reworded for consistency of terminology*

The Electoral Area 'H' Official Community Plan Area includes approximately 28,615 ha of land and is bordered by the ~~Regional District of Comox-Strathcona~~ Comox Valley Regional District to the north, Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District to the west, the Strait of Georgia to the east, and Electoral Areas 'G' and 'F' to the south. The Qualicum First Nation Reserve is surrounded by but legally not a part of Electoral Area 'H'. For the purposes of community planning and this OCP, the Qualicum First Nation community is considered to be a part of the fabric of the community.

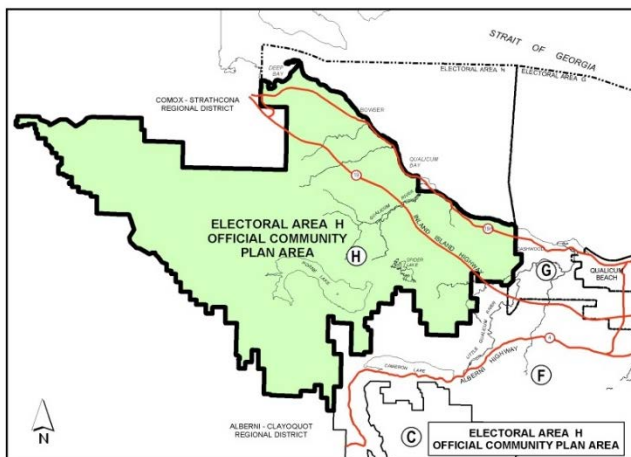
*Updated Regional District name*

*Call "Map No. 1" not "Figure".*

*Added sentences re QFN*

The Plan Area includes several distinct neighbourhoods including ~~the neighbourhoods of~~ Deep Bay, Bowser, Qualicum Bay, Qualicum First Nation Reserve, Dunsmuir, Shaw Hill/Baylis Area, Spider Lake, and Horne Lake. The Plan Area is shown on ~~Figure~~ Map No. 1.

#### Map 1: Electoral Area H Official Community Plan Area



It is important to distinguish the OCP from land use and subdivision bylaws. The OCP acts as a guide for the RDN Board, land developers, consultants, property owners, and other agencies in determining 'best practice' community desired uses for land and water surfaces in the community. The Plan provides direction

*Next three paragraphs have been moved to be located before section on*

and a basis for the preparation of related bylaws to regulate land use and development. In addition, the Plan will also provide criteria from which development proposals will be considered by the community and the RDN Board.

*population,  
demographics and  
housing needs.*

The Electoral Area 'H' Official Community Plan has been prepared based on the direction provided by the community in the "Community Values Statement". In addition, this OCP has benefited from past work from the previous 'Shaw Hill Deep Bay Official Community Plan' and the Regional Growth Strategy. The Plan will guide development in a manner that reflects the "Community Value Statement" and "Development Guidance Guideline Criteria Statement" drafted by the people of Electoral Area 'H' for the 2004 OCP. In 2016 – 2017 this OCP went through a significant update process with engagement from the community.

*Added reference to  
current OCP update.*

The intent of this OCP is to provide direction on how the Plan Area will grow and change over the next 5 to 10 years. However, with changes in legislation, growth projection expectations, changing attitudes of the residents and landowners, and amendments to the Regional District of Nanaimo Regional Growth Strategy (RGS), it is recommended that the Plan be reviewed, as necessary.

## 1.1 Population Growth, Demographics, and Housing Needs

The population of the Plan Area increased from 1,648 residents in 1986 to 3,509 residents in 2011. During this time, the Area experienced two distinct periods of growth; annual population growth of over five percent per year in the late 1980s and early 1990s, followed by a period of slower growth starting in the later half of the 1990s that continues until today.

*New section heading added.*

*Text updated to reflect current census and growth projections.*

**Table 1: Electoral Area 'H'  
Growth Rate, 1991 - 2011**

Census Period	Growth Rate (%)
1981 – 1986	10%
1986 – 1991	31%
1991 – 1996	25%
1996 – 2001	5%
2001 – 2006	12%
2006 – 2011	1%

*The 2016 census population release date is February 8, 2017 so may be in time to include in the OCP.*

Taking a modest growth rate of 2%, approximately 6,356 people will live in the Area by 2041.

Population projections are imperfect. They are only projections and cannot factor in future influences of climate, economy and migration. They also do not anticipate any new government initiatives in land use policies, development or housing. For these reasons population projections must be considered as best estimates.

*New text*

The Area's population has aged significantly since 1981 with the majority of the population now over the age of fifty. In 2011 the median age of residents was 56.2 years old compared with the provincial median age of 41.9 years old. This trend is expected to continue which has significant implications for land use, housing, services and employment.

*New text*

The projected population growth rate has the potential to translate into demand for an additional 150 to 200 dwelling units in Area 'H' over the next five years. With the continued trend of an ageing population is anticipated that some of this demand will be for housing that is sought by the senior's population such as smaller dwellings close to amenities or a senior's housing facility. Housing needs over this time period will generally be accommodated in the village centres and through the infill and subdivision of existing Rural and Rural Residential Lands.

*Revised text using current projected population growth.*

## 1.2 Public Engagement

The Electoral Area 'H' Official Community Plan is the result of a comprehensive public consultation strategy that was designed to directly and effectively engage a wide cross section of the people that make up the communities in Electoral Area 'H'. The public process focused on input from both the general public and a group of interested volunteers in the form of the Community Planning Working Group. This Working Group had representation from all Area 'H' neighbourhoods, various stakeholder groups, and Water Improvement Districts, and represented local social, economic and environmental perspectives. Starting in January of 2003 the public was engaged using a number of methods including a series of Public and Working Group Meetings, an Agency Forum, Newsletters, Flyers, an Internet Website, an Area Site Office, Public Information Meetings, and the Public Hearing on the OCP held January 5, 2004. Using these methods, the community as a whole came together to discuss key issue areas, to establish community priorities and to outline the vision for the future development of the area in Community Values and Development Guideline Criteria Statements.

*Section heading re-worded*

A public engagement process began in 2016 for an update to this Official Community Plan. It was initiated with an online survey asking community members to describe what has changed and what has stayed the same in their community since the last OCP Review, and what are the most important issues for the community right now. Through a series of public open houses and Community Working Group meetings, these issues were further explored. A project website, email subscriber list, and outreach activities at local events aimed to spread the word about the project and invite input via email, letter, and meeting with the lead planner at weekly office hours held in Bowser.

*New*

The resulting updates to the OCP confirm continued relevance of the Community Values and Development Guideline Criteria, and add renewed emphasis on economic development, affordable housing, active transportation and climate change adaptation.

The Regional District recognizes the need for ongoing public consultation through the implementation of this Plan. The community will continue to be consulted through public information meetings (PIMs) held on development applications and through other ongoing RDN consultation initiatives.

### 1.3 Community Values Statement

Area 'H' is made up of distinct neighbourhoods that have a diverse range of activities and interests but share many common values. Over the years, the area has developed to accommodate a broad mix of rural, residential, recreational, tourist, small scale commercial, and resource uses with an emphasis on mutual respect and diversity. The combination of climate, spectacular natural environment, outdoor recreation opportunities, water resources, entrepreneurial spirit, and the progressive attitude of residents have resulted in a highly desirable and vibrant community.

Given the attributes of the area, the residents of Area 'H' recognize that there will be pressure for change and development in their neighbourhoods. As the future unfolds, the residents of Area 'H' will embrace compatible development, while at the same time maintaining the values that are fundamental to the health and prosperity of the community. These values have been formed based on the input and priorities of the residents who make up the neighbourhoods of Electoral Area 'H' and will be used to help guide future decisions on development proposals, environmental protection initiatives, and infrastructure development for the community, the RDN and senior government agencies. These values include:

*Are there new values that should be included, or values that should be changed?*

1. Protect rural character and contain urban development to village nodes;
2. Identify and protect watersheds and aquifers from degradation, inappropriate development and pollution to ensure a continued safe water supply;
3. Recognition that the sustainable development of the area must be linked to groundwater quality and quantity for all residents;
4. Protection and promotion of natural, environmental, and geographic features;
5. Support for development regulations to protect environmentally sensitive areas, natural hazard lands, the marine/freshwater foreshores, and aquifer recharge areas;
6. Recognition that a comprehensive approach to managing sewage/septage is required;
7. Recognition that a comprehensive approach to stormwater management is required;
8. Support for a diversified economy, focusing on small scale commercial, human service sectors, and tourism within the village nodes;
9. Support for economic diversity in new and existing developments that complement the rural integrity of Area 'H';
10. Recognition of the importance of home based businesses in the growth and diversification of the area;
11. Consultation with First Nations to develop approaches to issues of mutual interest;

12. Protection of resource lands for suitable resource uses;
13. Minimize the encroachment of incompatible land uses;
14. Recognition of Horne Lake as a unique recreational opportunity;
15. Support for environmentally responsible shellfish aquaculture, recreational and commercial fishery, and salmon enhancement;
16. Recognize and support Deep Bay Harbour as a viable commercial and recreational port;
17. Preservation and enhancement of green space, access to public lands, integrated trails and beaches;
18. Recognize the need for and continued support for Electoral Area 'H' local schools and community centres;
19. Promotion of a mixed community providing economic opportunities, affordable housing, and services for all residents;
20. Recognition and support for enhanced transportation corridors; and
21. Require comprehensive public consultation with respect to decisions about the future development of all lands and services within our communities.

#### 1.4 Consistency with Regional Growth Strategy ~~Regional Context Statement~~

Area 'H' is one of ~~eight~~ seven electoral areas within the Regional District of Nanaimo. These electoral areas, in partnership with the City of Nanaimo, the City of Parksville, the Town of Qualicum Beach, and the District of Lantzville have agreed to limit sprawl and contain development through the adoption of a Regional Growth Strategy. The Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) articulates a vision of a desirable, future Region and sets out ~~eight~~ eleven goals for attaining this vision. In accordance with Section 445 of the *Local Government Act*, this OCP must be consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy. In response to the RGS goals, the Electoral Area 'H' OCP does the following:

*Updated to reflect 2011 RGS 11 goals. A paragraph will be added under the heading of each goal below once a first draft of the rest of the OCP has been completed*

RGS Goal 1: Prepare for Climate Change and Reduce Energy Consumption

RGS Goal 2: Protect the Environment

RGS Goal 3: Coordinate Land Use and Mobility

RGS Goal 4: Concentrate Housing and Jobs in Rural Villages and Urban Growth Centres

RGS Goal 5: Enhance Rural Integrity

RGS Goal 6: Facilitate the Provision of Affordable Housing

RGS Goal 7: Enhance Economic Resiliency

RGS Goal 8: Enhance Food Security

RGS Goal 9: Celebrate Pride of Place

RGS Goal 10: Provide Services Efficiently

RGS Goal 11: Enhance Cooperation Among Jurisdictions



## 1.5 Legislative Framework

The Electoral Area 'H' Official Community Plan has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of Part 14 of the **Local Government Act**, implementing Regional District policies for land use and development. All bylaws, permits issued and works undertaken within the Plan Area shall be consistent with the provision of this Plan. The Community Plan may be implemented by regulatory bylaws of the Regional District including the "Regional District of Nanaimo Land Use and Subdivision Bylaw No. 500, 1987".

~~In addition, it is noted that the Development Permit Areas attached to and forming part of this OCP (Appendix A) are considered 'regulatory' bylaws pursuant to the **Local Government Act**.~~

*Not needed.*

~~This Plan Area is a development approval information area pursuant to "Regional District of Nanaimo Impact Assessment Bylaw No. 1165, 1999".~~

*Moved to Section 5*

## 1.6 Organization of the Plan

The Electoral Area 'H' Official Community Plan includes text and corresponding maps. The Plan is organized around the key issue areas identified during the Official Community Plan public consultation process, and includes development permit areas which are regulatory tools that assist in implementing objectives and policies of this Plan. ~~The Electoral Area 'H' Official Community Plan contains **Appendix A** Development Permit Areas. In addition, **Appendix A** titled Development Permit Areas, is considered part of the Electoral Area 'H' OCP and contains regulatory bylaws pursuant to the **Local Government Act**.~~

*Revised to reflect DPAs not in appendix anymore.*

Each section of the Plan contains objectives and policies. Objectives express the community's values and long term aspirations. They are the community's statements of what is important to the residents and land owners of Electoral Area 'H'. Policies express the community's response to these objectives. The policies are the 'how to' for each objective and provide specific direction to the RDN Board, the community, land developers, and provincial and federal agencies on future uses in the Plan Area. Abbreviations used in this Plan include the following:

**RDN**- Regional District of Nanaimo

**RGS** - Regional Growth Strategy

**ALR** - Agricultural Land Reserve

**MOTI** - Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

**DPA** - Development Permit Area

**OCP** - Official Community Plan

**PIM** - Public Information Meeting

**ALC** - Agricultural Land Commission

**DFO** - Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada

**MOE** - Ministry of Environment

*Updated to reflect changed Ministry names*

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase in this Bylaw is for any reason held to be invalid by the decision of any court, such section, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase may be severed from the remaining portion of this Bylaw.