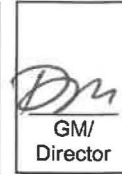
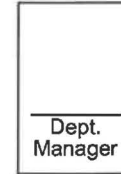


Info Package

Date: May 16, 2023



## The District of North Vancouver INFORMATION REPORT TO COUNCIL

May 3, 2023

File: 13.6750.01/000.000

**AUTHOR:** Neonila Lilova, Business Services and Economic Development Manager

**SUBJECT:** Economic Development Strategy: Project Update and Next Steps

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### REASON FOR REPORT

On February 13, 2023 Council approved the District's [2023 Economic Development Initiatives](#), including preparation of an Economic Development Strategy (EDS, Strategy). This report provides Council with an update and next steps for delivering the Strategy, including:

1. Guiding principles
2. Project scope
3. Engagement plan
4. Key milestones and deliverables

### BACKGROUND

The District recognizes that protecting its industrial lands and concentrating growth in its town and village centres provides potential for business growth and economic development that supports the needs of both local residents and the broader regional economy.

District businesses represent nearly 30% of the District's tax base and the District provides a range of policies, programs and services to foster business and job growth.

The 2011 OCP and 2021 OCP Action Plan provide the overarching framework for the District to work in partnership with businesses and economic development stakeholders to tackle transportation, housing and climate change challenges and to invest in opportunities to establish a future-proof and resilient local economy. The impact of the pandemic on local businesses, as well as the current inflationary and global economic challenges, have further exacerbated these challenges and brought on new opportunities, creating the need for a focused, strategic approach in local economic development efforts.

### ANALYSIS

As recommended by the OCP Action Plan Economy & Employment Lands white paper, the District has recently secured a dedicated staff resource to lead its business services and economic development efforts. As a next step, an Economic Development Strategy is

economic development efforts. As a next step, an Economic Development Strategy is required to identify, prioritize and resource relevant 2021 OCP Action Plan initiatives, as well as other programs and projects that may arise in preparation of the Strategy, and to focus the work of the business services and economic development department.

### **Guiding Principles**

The Strategy development process and deliverables will be guided by three core principles:

1. **Inclusive and meaningful engagement** – a comprehensive business engagement plan will be executed as part of developing the Strategy. Details on the engagement plan are included further in the report.
2. **Asset-based, opportunity-founded, and data-driven approach** – a thorough employment lands, industry trends and community assets review will inform the development of the Strategy.
3. **Visionary yet flexible, with actionable outcomes** – the Strategy will present an opportunity for the District to articulate its vision as a community to do business and invest in, as well as prioritize key strategies and specific programs and projects towards achieving the goals.

### **Project Scope**

With the support of a consultant, the project will engage with businesses and economic development stakeholders to establish a current state and develop a future state vision for the District economy. It will result in a set of goals, key strategies, programs and projects for the District to implement to achieve its 2030 economic development objectives. The Strategy will determine a service delivery model and provide resourcing recommendations to implement. Specific programs, projects and process improvement initiatives identified in the Strategy will be resourced separately.

### **Engagement Plan**

A three-tier engagement approach is proposed to deliver the Strategy in alignment with its guiding principles:

1. Tier One – Survey

District businesses will be asked to provide their views on the opportunities and challenges facing the District economy within the OCP 2030 planning horizon. Opinions and perspectives will also be solicited from residents.

2. Tier Two – Business Workshops:

A series of workshops with key subsets of the District's economy will be held to generate input and brainstorm ideas and actions directly from business groups that are facing common opportunities and challenges. A sample business segmentation approach for the workshops is included below, with further fine-tuning of segments expected as the project progresses. The business workshops will be delivered in partnership with the North Vancouver Chamber of Commerce.

- Small businesses – businesses in the commercial nodes in town centres/villages and businesses providing services to residents
  - Waterfront industries – trade, marine and upstream logistics industries on or near the waterfront and adjacent light industry areas
  - Regional growth sectors ecosystem – trade, technology, sustainability, life sciences and other sectors of regional, provincial and national economic development priority
  - Businesses and organizations serving business – lawyers, commercial bankers, general contractors, commercial/industrial real estate, developers and supporting business associations
  - Businesses and organizations serving visitors – tourism attractions, tour companies, hospitality operators, and supporting organizations
3. Tier Three – Business Task Force (12-16 members):

A business task force, comprised of key District economy stakeholders and developed, will be formed for the duration of the project to provide feedback and advice on key deliverables. The task force will be composed of:

- Representatives of each business segment identified in Tier Two
- District economic development partners, such as the North Vancouver Chamber of Commerce, Capilano University, The Tsleil-Waututh and Squamish Nations

#### Staff Working Group

A District staff working group will be established for the duration of the project, with representatives from key departments invited to contribute to the Strategy and other stages of the project, as required (6-8 participants, including Community and Development Planning, Climate Change, Transportation, the Film Office and others).

#### **Project Deliverables**

The Economic Development Strategy will be developed in four phases, with each phase comprising the following deliverables:

1. Phase 1: Project Foundations
  - a. 2023 Economic Development Initiatives framework (complete)
  - b. Establish staff working group and business task force
  - c. Complete RFP process and consultant contract
2. Phase 2: Data Gathering & Analysis
  - a. Business survey and results summary report
  - b. Business workshops outcomes report

- c. Employment lands, industry and asset analysis report and recommendations<sup>1</sup>
- 3. Phase 3: 2030 Economic Development Strategy
  - a. Strategic planning workshop with the Business Task Force to develop the 2030 Economic Development Strategy vision, key strategies and goals
  - b. Draft Economic Development Strategy vision, key strategies and goals
- 4. Phase 4: Implementation & Service Delivery Plan
  - a. Criteria and list of prioritized SMART actions, programs and projects toward achieving the Strategy goals
  - b. Service delivery model with timelines and resources to implement the Strategy
  - c. Draft Economic Development Strategy with implementation and service plan

**Timing/Approval Process**

It is anticipated that the draft Strategy will be delivered in early 2024. The key milestones for the project deliverables and engagement are as follows:



**Concurrence**

The Communications department has reviewed and provided feedback on the engagement plan.

**Financial Impacts**

A one- time funding amount of \$150,000 has been allocated in the 2023 budget toward all aspects of delivering the Strategy, including consulting expertise, engagement, contingency and potential value-added innovative solutions. Actions, programs and projects identified to implement the Strategy will be subject to a separate resourcing process.

<sup>1</sup> The employment lands/industry needs review will incorporate both District-wide employment considerations and specific areas of economic development significance, such as town centers (Lion’s Gate/Marine Drive, Lynn Valley, Lynn Creek, Edgemont, Maplewood and Deep Cove) and the industrial waterfront

**Liability/Risk**

There are no liabilities and no unmanageable risks to delivering the Strategy. Strategies to mitigate low-level risks to the budget and timeline are included below:

- Budget – it is possible that securing qualified multi-disciplinary expertise would lead to higher costs than the allocated to consulting support in the project budget. A 20% project contingency has been built into the overall project budget to offset unforeseen costs.
- Timeline – it is possible that the initial RFP process does not yield a consultant contract in time to deliver the Strategy along the proposed project timeline. Mitigation strategies to mitigate delays include implementing a contractor incentive from the 20% budget contingency and moving out the draft Strategy deliverable to later in 2024.

**Social Policy Implications**

District businesses create jobs and income for local residents, as well as contribute to the District being one of the highest median-income communities in the region. Businesses also account for larger contribution to local taxes than to local consumption of services. The ability of the District economy to retain and attract a variety of businesses and jobs is, therefore, a key ingredient of providing local services and achieving the District’s social well-being goals.

**Environmental Impact**

Local businesses contribute to both challenges and opportunities related to community sustainability and de-carbonization. Therefore, Strategy implementation initiatives that support both economy and climate change mitigation objectives will be considered in development of the Strategy and implementation plan.

**Public Input**

The proposed engagement plan comprises significant business involvement and collaboration in the development of the Economic Development Strategy. Input and ideas generated through the survey and business workshops will be utilized further in collaborative review and development of recommendations by the business task force and staff working group. The public input process will thus represent a “Collaborate” approach along the public engagement spectrum.

**PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SPECTRUM**  
Adapted and used with permission from the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2 Federation)

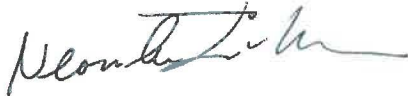
Inform	Listen & Learn	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
“We will keep you informed. We will provide information that is timely, accurate, balanced, objective, and easily understood. We will respond to questions for clarification and direct you to sources of additional information.”	“We will listen to you and learn about your plans, views, and issues; and work to understand your concerns, expectations, and ideas.”	“We will keep you informed, and listen to and acknowledge your concerns and aspirations in developing final solutions, and we will report back to you on how your input influenced the decision.”	“We will work with you to ensure your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed, and we will report back on how your input influenced the decision.”	“We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions, and we will incorporate your recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.”	“We will implement what you decide.”

**Conclusion:**

The Economic Development Strategy is a foundational project for the District's economic development service. The Strategy will articulate the District's economic development vision and guide its efforts towards achieving the 2030 OCP objective for a diversified and resilient local economy supporting 36,000 jobs. Development of the Strategy will be guided by a robust, collaborative and multi-faceted engagement process and will comprise four project phases, with associated deliverables. Regular Council updates will be provided at critical milestones and a draft Strategy will be completed and brought forward to Council by Q1-2024.

Please contact the author of this report with any questions.

Respectfully submitted,



Neonila Lilova  
Business Services and Economic Development Manager

REVIEWED WITH:					
<input type="checkbox"/> Community Planning	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Clerk's Office	_____	External Agencies:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Development Planning	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Library Board	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Development Engineering	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Finance	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> NS Health	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Utilities	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Fire Services	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> RCMP	_____
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<input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Bylaw Services	_____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Review and Compliance	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Planning	_____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Climate and Biodiversity	_____				