



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VERNON REPORT TO COUNCIL

SUBMITTED BY: Wesley Miles, Senior Planner

COUNCIL MEETING: REG ☒ COW ☐ I/C ☐

COUNCIL MEETING DATE: February 10, 2025

REPORT DATE: January 15, 2025

FILE: 3340-20 (OCP00103)

**SUBJECT: OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN AMENDMENT APPLICATION FOR 580
COMMONAGE ROAD**

PURPOSE:

To present for Council's review an Official Community Plan Amendment application for the properties located at 580 Commonage Road, for a proposed future mixed-use Neighbourhood.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council support, in principle, Official Community Plan Application OCP00103 to amend the Future Land Use designation from RAGR – Rural/Agriculture and ALR – Agricultural Land Reserve to Commonage Hillside Neighbourhood for the North ½ of the South West ¼ of Section 17, Township 9, ODYD, Except Plans M12623 and KAP63397. The North West ¼ of Section 17, Township 9, ODYD, Except Plans M12623 and KAP63398, The South West ¼ of Section 19, Township 9, ODYD, Except Plans B974 and 5164. The Fractional West ½ of Section 18, Township 9, ODYD Except Part Formerly Known as District Lot 737 ODYD, The Part of the South West ¼ of Section 19, Township 9, ODYD Shown on Plan B974 Except Plan 5164, The East ½ of Section 18, Township 9, ODYD Except: (1) Part Formerly Known as DL 737, ODYD (2) Plan KAP64786, The South ½ of Section 20, Township 9, ODYD Shown on Plan DD1222 Except Plans 5164 and KAP63395, The South East ¼ of Section 19, Township 9, ODYD Except Plans 192 and 5164, The Part of the South West ¼ of Section 20, Township 9 ODYD Lying West of Plan DD1222 Except Plans 192 and 5164 and That Portion of Section 18, Township 9 ODYD Formerly Known as District Lot 737 ODYD (580 Commonage Road) as outlined in the report titled “Official Community Plan Amendment Application for 580 Commonage Road” dated January 15, 2025 and respectfully submitted by the Senior Planner, Current Planning;

AND FURTHER, that Council's support of OCP00103 is subject to:

- a) Commitment to design and build Apollo Road Extension to 580 Commonage;
- b) Commitment to build a multi-use corridor along Commonage Road and Mission Road to the DND lands;
- c) Dedication of a minimum of 120 ha (296 ac) of park land to the City of Vernon to establish a new Natural Area Park to protect the sensitive southwest facing grassland ecosystem;
- d) Protection of an additional 142 ha (350 ac) of environmental sensitive and natural areas as part of the new Neighbourhood;
- e) Commitment to build a comprehensive trail network through the subject properties as part of the new Neighbourhood;
- f) Registration of a Section 219 Restrictive Covenant that 46% or 1,832 units meet the definition of Attainable Housing and/or Affordable Housing in perpetuity;
- g) Construction of two new water reservoirs to service the new Neighbourhood and provide benefit to the overall water system; and
- h) Adoption of an Official Community Plan Bylaw Amendment to create the Commonage Hillside Neighbourhood designation.

AND FURTHER, that Council has considered appropriate consultation opportunities for OCP00103 and supports the following consultation opportunities in addition to the statutory public hearing:

- a) Hosting of a Public Open House;
- b) Referral to the City of Vernon Advisory Planning Committee for review and a recommendation to Council;
- c) Referral to the City of Vernon Climate Action Committee for review and a recommendation to Council;
- d) Referral to the City of Vernon Housing Advisory Committee for review and a recommendation to Council; and
- e) Referral to the Regional District of North Okanagan for review and comment.

ALTERNATIVES & IMPLICATIONS:

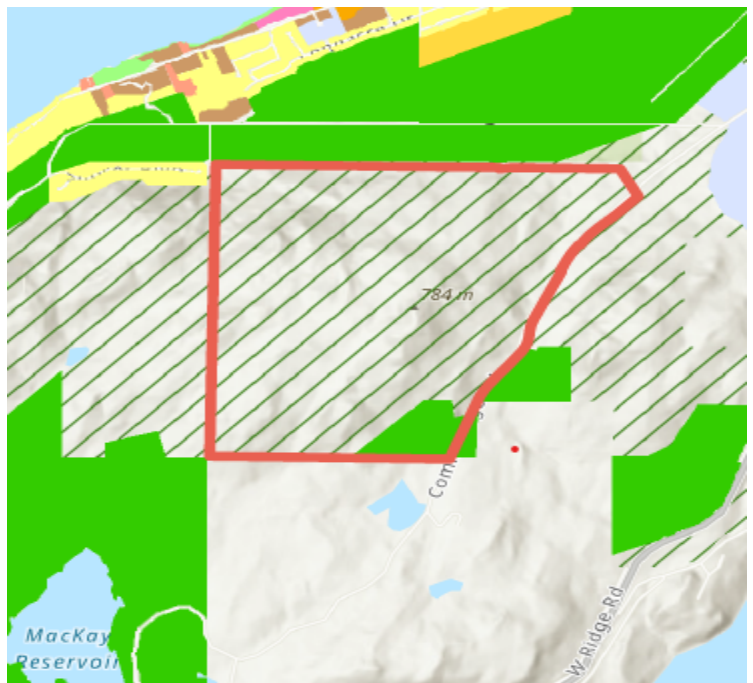
1. THAT Council not support, in principle, Official Community Plan Application OCP00103 to amend the Future Land Use designation from RAGR – Rural / Agriculture and ALR – Agricultural Land Reserve to Commonage Hillside Neighbourhood for the North ½ of the South West ¼ of Section 17, Township 9, ODYD, Except Plans M12623 and KAP63397, The North West ¼ of Section 17, Township 9, ODYD, Except Plans M12623 and KAP63398, The South West ¼ of Section 19, Township 9, ODYD, Except Plans B974 and 5164. The Fractional West ½ of Section 18, Township 9, ODYD Except Part Formerly Known as District Lot 737 ODYD, The Part of the South West ¼ of Section 19, Township 9, ODYD Shown on Plan B974 Except Plan 5164, The East ½ of Section 18, Township 9, ODYD Except: (1) Part Formerly Known as DL 737, ODYD (2) Plan KAP64786, The South ½ of Section 20, Township 9, ODYD Shown on Plan DD1222 Except Plans 5164 and KAP63395, The South East ¼ of Section 19, Township 9, ODYD Except Plans 192 and 5164, The Part of the South West ¼ of Section 20, Township 9 ODYD Lying West of Plan DD1222 Except Plans 192 and 5164 and That Portion of Section 18, Township 9 ODYD Formerly Known as District Lot 737 ODYD (580 Commonage Road) as outlined in the report titled “Official Community Plan Amendment Application for 580 Commonage Road” dated January 15, 2025 and respectfully submitted by the Senior Planner, Current Planning.

Note: This alternative does not support the OCP amendment and prevents the proposed mixed-use neighbourhood project from moving forward. Without these approvals, the properties could support a maximum of three dwelling units each under the existing OCP and zoning designations.

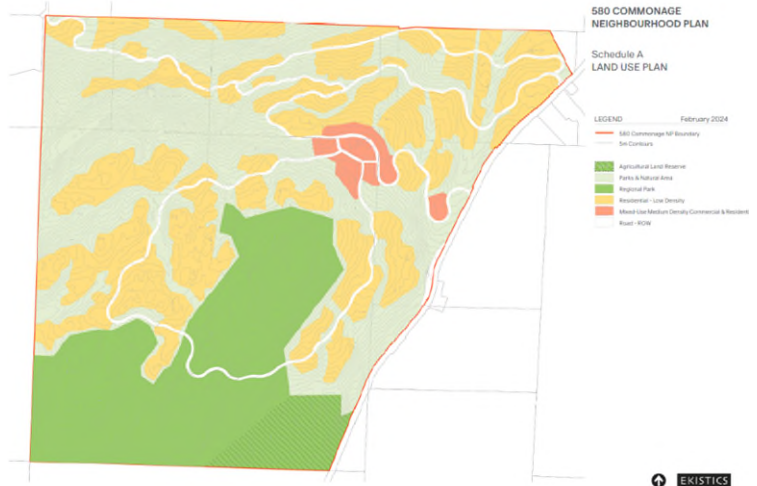
ANALYSIS:

A. Overview:

1. This application proposes to re-designate ten parcels of land totalling 421 hectares (1,040 acres) for mixed use residential housing, parks/natural open space, and Neighbourhood commercial. The proposal anticipates 3,960 units in a mix of single family, duplex/fourplex, townhomes and small apartment forms with over 120 ha (296 ac) of dedicated park land and over 142 ha (350 ac) of natural areas protected. The total proposed commercial space would be approximately 9,290 m² (100,000 ft²) to service the local residents.
2. The proposed OCP application is for a large-scale development and new hillside Neighbourhood for the City of Vernon. The



application is considered to be in the preliminary planning stages and is recommended by planning staff to proceed with conditions to facilitate further discussion and review. If Council chooses to support the application in principle, additional public feedback, committee feedback, staff reporting, and plan refinement would come further in the process.



3. The application is proceeding through the standard application process for the City of Vernon and as required by the Local Government Act. As outlined in the recommendation, Administration is proposing to refer the OCP Amendment application to the Advisory Planning Committee (APC), the Climate Action Committee, the Housing Advisory Committee, the Regional District of North Okanagan and the public via a developer hosted open house as part of the consultation plan. This is the required standard; however Council has the ability to add requirements through the process as it deems necessary. A detailed outline of the OCP application process and the subsequent land use approvals required is provided in Attachment 1.
4. The Official Community Plan (OCP) designation is Rural/Agriculture (RAGR) and ALR – Agricultural Land Reserve (Attachment 2) and the zoning is Agriculture & Rural Large Block (Non-ALR), Agriculture & Rural Small Block (Non-ALR) (AGRS) and ALR – Agricultural Land Reserve.
5. The application is to change the property designation from Rural / Agriculture (RAGR) and ALR – Agricultural Land Reserve to Commonage Hillside Neighbourhood which would be a new OCP designation created specifically for this proposal and encompass the entire project area.
6. The breakdown of total proposed land uses by area is 31.8% Residential, 2.0% Mixed Use Residential/Commercial, 62.2% Parks & Natural Area / Open Space, 4.0% Street Right-of-Way shown in the proposed land use plan in Attachment 3.

B. Project Details

7. The preliminary site layout establishes residential development nodes intentionally placed to avoid steep hillsides and environmentally sensitive areas. Low density residential covers the largest amount of area and is intended for single-family dwellings (SFD) and ground oriented multi-family dwellings (duplex to fourplex). These dwellings are intended to have smaller footprints than a typical SFD with a range of size options.
8. The proposal includes a mixed-use village centre shown in red on the proposed land use plan. It would be a medium density residential with a commercial component to provide nearby amenities to local residents along with destination commercial uses. This may include restaurants, coffee shops, pubs, shops, health services and small offices. Considerations of hotel and short-term accommodation uses are also contemplated. Incorporated into the commercial element would be a mix of townhomes and small apartment buildings to complete the village centre design. The addition of the village centre helps create a complete community where residents do not have to travel greater distances for some day-to-day amenities.
9. The project is divided into two overall stages. Stage 1 would include residential areas in the north-east area, the mixed-use commercial village, and parkland dedication. Detailed phasing of the project is provided in Attachment 4, with five phases in total for Stage 1 which is anticipated to be built out over six to seven years. Stage 2 would be the remainder of the residential development areas.

10. The project proposes to achieve affordability goals through a housing strategy which utilizes a leasehold model for a portion of the housing, small/compact building footprints, and green building standards. The benefits of the leasehold model are to reduce upfront land costs for homebuyers and lower overall housing costs over time due to shared maintenance responsibilities. The smaller footprint homes help reduce construction costs and environmental impact with lower long-term energy consumption and maintenance costs.
11. City of Vernon's [Housing Needs Report \(Technical Memo\)](#) was completed in November 2024 and projected housing needs over the next 5, 10 and 20 year timelines. The report analysed the housing demand anticipated per income level in very low, low, moderate, average and above average categories. In summary it showed a need for all housing types to provide for future growth projections with a focus on more affordable price points of low, moderate and average incomes.
12. Based on an analysis and comparison to the Housing Needs Report (Technical Memo) the applicants proposal offers a total of 1,832 units as meeting the attainable definition (i.e. with a median family income range of \$51,200 or in the moderate-income group defined as \$35,000 - \$59,999). The units would be in a mix of unit types from small single-family homes, duplex to fourplex, seniors' apartment and rental housing. The 1,832 units equals 46% of the total units proposed in the overall development. A detailed breakdown of unit count and typology is provided in Attachment 4 with additional affordability metrics provided by the applicant.
13. The applicant has submitted a Preliminary Environmental Assessment report conducted by Ecoscape Environmental Consultants, dated February 28, 2024. An executive summary is provided as Attachment 5. Overall the report states that the subject properties have an exceptional diversity of flora and fauna that collectively are uncommon in the greater Okanagan region and provide habitat to several provincially and/or federally listed species. The preliminary report identified 49% of the total area is Sensitive Ecosystem Rating 1 (High), 44% SER 2 (Medium) and 6% SER 3 (Low). Due to the site's environmental importance, a focus on environmental protection is a key consideration. A large portion of the total SER 1 area would be protected in perpetuity by the proposed parkland dedication. In addition, natural areas and open space between development nodes would be protected by either dedication or restrictive covenant.
14. The development would be ultimately served by four access points, two from Commonage Road, one to the Ramsay Rd in the far north-west corner of the property and a new proposed Apollo Road connection to ultimately connect with Okanagan Landing Road. A number of internal local roads would service the proposed development areas and feed back to collector roads and access points. The anticipated Apollo Road connection would be made through City owned lands (Hesperia Lands) and partially over Agricultural Land Reserve lands. Coordination and approval from Agricultural Land Commission would be ultimately required for this connection.
15. The proposal has a preliminary servicing report for water, sewer and drainage. Further reporting will be needed if the project progresses including detailed review by Greater Vernon Water. In general, the area is within a designated service area and would require two new reservoirs to service the development and bolster the existing GVW system.
16. The Commonage lands and the subject properties were once part of the Canadian Armed Forces Camp Vernon, and were used for military training including live fire ammunition exercises. As a result, there has been several cases involving the public and Unexploded Explosive Ordnance (UXO) in the past. Due to the history, the applicant has submitted a comprehensive Geophysical Survey and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) Clearance report from Munitions Response Services and K&L Land Partnership dated January 4, 2022. The report concludes that all accessible areas of the commonage properties have been cleared to the criteria accepted by the Department of National Defence and the Federal Government.

C. Policy Analysis

17. Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) Bylaw 2500, 2011 identifies the subject property as being within a Rural Protection Area outside of the identified future growth areas and designated within the Hillside Residential and Agricultural District (District 3) in the City's Official Community Plan.
 - RGS GOAL UC-1 – Focus Development Into Growth Areas
 - RGS GOAL UC-2 – Protect Rural Lands
18. OCP Section 5.0 - Growth Strategy and Land Use:
 - (Goal) Protect and preserve green spaces and sensitive areas
 - (Goal) Ensure housing meets the needs of the whole community
 - (Goal) Create strong, compact and complete communities
 - (Goal) Protect Agricultural Land
19. OCP Section 7.0 – Residential:
 - (Goal) Explore innovative ways of supporting the provision of attainable housing
 - (Guiding Principle) Ensure housing meets the needs of the whole community
 - (Guiding Principle) Create strong, compact and complete Neighbourhoods
20. OCP Section 13.0 - Environment:
 - (Goal) Protect sensitive and essential habitats and ecosystems
 - (Guiding Principle) Ensure ecosystem services are maintained and conserved, and integrated into Neighbourhood planning
 - 13.1 Maintain a clear and consistent approach to environmental management and ecosystem protection throughout the City in accordance with the Environmental Management Areas Strategy
 - 13.2 Protect open spaces and access to natural amenities which support and facilitate the high quality of life found in Vernon.
 - 13.12 Ensure development practices avoid negative impacts on natural features and environmentally significant areas in the siting, servicing and establishment of new Neighbourhoods.
21. OCP Section 16.0 – Parks
 - (Goal) Improve the livability of our community by identifying and securing parks and open space that meet the needs of residents
 - 16.7 in partnership with RDNO and GVAC, support the creation and expansion of natural areas or passive parkland servicing the needs of the community and meeting the following criteria:
 - Preserves and enhances a unique or threatened ecosystem or species
 - Provides connection between natural areas
 - Provides protection of visually significant areas of the City
 - Provides non-invasive public access opportunities to protected features through facilities such as viewing platforms, low impact trails, and interpretive centres
22. The existing AGRL AND AGRS zone is intended for agricultural and rural uses or smaller parcels outside of the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). It permits up to three dwelling units: a single detached home, a secondary suite, and an accessory dwelling unit. Minimum lot size under this AGRL and AGRS zone is 12 ha or 29.65 ac.

23. Table 1 below indicates the surrounding OCP designations, zoning, and land uses.

	OCP	Zoning	Actual Use
North	ALR – Agricultural Land Reserve	ALR: Agricultural Land Reserve	City Owned Carlson Park Agriculture
East	Rural / Agriculture (RAGR) ALR – Agricultural Land Reserve	AGRS – Agricultural & Rural Small Block (Non-ALR)	Commonage Road Rural Residential Agriculture
South	ALR – Agricultural Land Reserve (RDNO)	LH – Large Holdings (RDNO)	Rural Residential Agriculture
West	Rural / Agriculture (RAGR)	AGRS – Agricultural & Rural Small Block (Non-ALR)	Rural Residential Agriculture

Table 1: Surrounding Properties – OCP, Zoning & Actual Use

D. Rationale:

24. While Administration holds a general position of not promoting new hillside developments outside of already approved Neighbourhood Plans in order to promote more urban development patterns in the City, Administration supports the OCP amendment application due to public benefit demonstrated in the following areas:

- Provides substantial parkland dedication in perpetuity;
- Protects and preserves the environmentally sensitive areas and open space;
- Provides a comprehensive constructed public trail network;
- Helps achieve key transportation objectives including the Apollo Road connection and multi-use corridor along Commonage Road;
- Provides commercial amenities/village center; and
- Provides a variety of housing types including a significant amount of attainable housing.

E. Consultation Plan:

25. Sec. 475 of the LGA requires Council to decide how to consult with stakeholders before the public hearing on an OCP amendment. To comply, Administration recommends referring the OCP Amendment application to the Advisory Planning Committee (APC), the Climate Action Committee, the Housing Advisory Committee, the Regional District of North Okanagan and the developer hosting a public open house, in addition to the statutory public hearing.

26. The applicant has provided a summary of proposed community engagement which would go beyond the required public open house, including a comprehensive website with public feedback forums.

27. The City is currently reviewing its Official Community Plan and public consultation is currently underway. In the Phase 2 Community Survey a question was directed specifically at future hillside development. *Question #12 – How should the City approach reviewing applications for further development in hillside areas outside of currently approved developments?* A total of 734 responses were received with a summary provided below:

- Unsure / no opinion – 13 (1.8%)
- The City should encourage further development of hillside areas to increase housing supply and access to hillside amenities for more residents – 120 (16.3%)
- The City should cautiously review further development proposals in hillside areas and make decisions on a case-by-case basis – 322 (43.9%)

- The City should honour existing development plans and discourage further development of the hillsides beyond what has already been approved to be built – 279 (38%)

F. Attachments:

Attachment 1 – Application Process Review
Attachment 2 – OCP Map
Attachment 3 – Proposed Land Use Plan
Attachment 4 – Project Rationale & Public Benefit Summary
Attachment 5 – Environmental Executive Summary

G. Council's Strategic Plan Alignment

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Governance & Organizational Excellence | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Livability |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recreation, Parks & Natural Areas | <input type="checkbox"/> Vibrancy |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environmental Leadership | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable |

H. Relevant Policy/Bylaws/Resolutions:

- OCP Bylaw 5470
- Zoning Bylaw 6000
- Housing Action Plan
- OCP Amendment Applications – Policy

BUDGET/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

The exact cost implications are not yet available.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

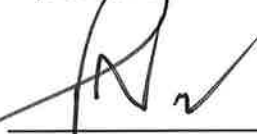
- ☒ None ☐ Budget Previously Approved ☐ New Budget Request
(Finance Review Required)

Prepared by:

Approved for submission to Council:

X 

Wesley Miles
Senior Planner



Peter Weeber, CAO

Date _____

X 

Terry Barton, Director
Planning & Community Services

REVIEWED WITH

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Operations | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Current Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bylaw Compliance | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Works/Airport | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Long Range Planning & Sustainability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate | <input type="checkbox"/> Facilities | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building & Licensing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> RCMP | <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering Development Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fire & Rescue Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation Services | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure Management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Parks | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Services | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Economic Development & Tourism |
| <input type="checkbox"/> COMMITTEE: APC (date) | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: | | |