

## Modified Public Engagement for Draft Local Area Plans during COVID-19 Pandemic

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### STATUS OF LOCAL AREA PLAN UPDATES

The Draft Cordova Bay Local Area Plan is ready for release for stakeholder and community review and feedback. The Draft Cadboro Bay Local Area Plan will be ready for release in late summer.



Following the Draft Plan Review phase, revisions will be made to the Local Area Plans and they will be presented to Council for consideration in Phase 5 Plan Finalization.

### IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The COVID crisis hit just as the draft Cordova Bay Local Area Plan was ready for release for public review and comment. Public engagement was paused as the District followed Public Health orders and out of concern for the impacts of COVID-19 on the lives of community members.

Moving forward, COVID-19 pandemic will continue to impact public engagement, notably the ability to hold in-person public engagement. In-person engagement is an important part of the Draft Plan Review process, and modifications will need to be made to undertake some form of it before the Draft Plans are presented to Council for consideration.

It is challenging to predict the timeframe and extent of COVID-19 restrictions, but it is likely there will continue to be some restrictions on assemblies of groups of people for many months. Public engagement for the Draft Local Area Plan Review phase will need to be continually evaluated and adjusted as directives from Provincial and Federal health authorities are provided.

### MODIFICATIONS TO THE ORIGINAL PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

Council endorsed a public engagement program as part of each project's Terms of Reference. To address the impacts caused by COVID-19, the following adjustments will be made:

- Make modifications to public open houses and other events so that in-person engagement can be undertaken safely;
- Reach out to those who are unable or not comfortable attending in-person events and may not have the technology and/or feel uncomfortable accessing information and providing feedback online; and,
- Provide extended timelines for engagement as necessary.

The original public engagement program includes a virtual open house (online) and community survey (online and paper) which serve to provide a solid foundation for draft plan engagement. Given the COVID-19 situation, changes can be made such as enhancing virtual engagement opportunities, modifying in-person engagement, and enhancing communications in order to provide accessibility, flexibility, and safety to community members who wish to review the Draft Local Area Plans and participate in public engagement events.

The following table identifies the original public engagement program and outlines proposed modifications. Ongoing adaptations to a modified public engagement program are likely as conditions concerning COVID-19 impacts change.

<b>Engagement tool</b>	<b>Original Public Engagement Program</b>	<b>Modified Public Engagement Program</b>
Open houses	In-person open houses – typically 75-200 people per event	Modified in-person open houses (i.e. limited attendance at one time; appointment-only)
Postcard mail-out	Not included	Sent out prior to release of Draft Plan to notify residents of modified approach and how they can learn more and provide feedback
Plan Summary mail-out	Mailed out to every household and business	Same distribution – additional content on options for review and comment. Timed to advertise in person engagement opportunities
Stakeholder meetings	In-person meetings and presentations	Stakeholder follow-up mostly by phone/email/virtual meetings
First Nations follow-up	In-person meetings	Follow-up mostly by phone/email/virtual meetings
Community survey (online, paper)	Community survey (online, paper)	Community survey (online, paper) with extended timelines
Virtual open house (online)	Identical virtual open house available online	Virtual open house (online) with possible enhancements (i.e. community call-ins, email inquiries with staff, video presentations, discussion forums, webinars)
Pop-ups or mini open houses	Small scale pop-ups in various community locations (staffed)	Expanded community information displays (unstaffed)
Other community events		Rolling/updated FAQs online; Some flexibility for additional techniques as the need arises