CITY OF NANAIMO
THE HARBOUR CITY

Staff Report for Decision

DATE OF MEETING April 14, 2025

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SUBJECT FORM AND CHARACTER DESIGN GUIDELINES PROJECT

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To present draft Development Permit Area 8 (DPA8) Form and Character Design Guidelines, and related amendments to the landscape regulations for consideration.

Recommendation

That the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council direct Staff to proceed with preparing a bylaw to amend Zoning Bylaw No. 4500 with the updated Development Permit Area 8 (DPA8) Form and Character Design Guidelines, and related amendments to the landscape regulations; and a bylaw to amend the "Development Procedures and Notification Bylaw 2024 No. 7375", as outlined in the Staff Report dated 2025-APR-14.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of the Form and Character Design Guidelines project is to update the design guidelines in Development Permit Area 8 (DPA8). The form and character design guidelines provide clarity for the development community and City Staff to understand the City of Nanaimo's expectations for site, building and landscape design. DPA8 establishes guidelines for the form and character of commercial, industrial, multi-family residential (which includes intensive residential), and mixed-use development. DPA8 also promotes energy and water conservation, and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. In accordance with the *Local Government Act, City Plan* provides the justification and objectives for the City's development permit areas. The City's development permit guidelines are within Part 18 of the City of Nanaimo "Zoning Bylaw 2011 No. 4500".

The Form and Character Design Guidelines project fulfills two priority actions in the *Integrated Action Plan*:

- "Update the Development Permit Area guidelines to be consistent with City Plan policies, with specific focus on: General Development Permit Area Design Guidelines." (Priority Action #202)

- "Update development permit requirements to include energy, climate, and water efficiency from a site and building design perspective. Develop guidelines that may include passive design techniques, shading, rainwater management, green roofs,

building orientation, Water Wise landscape, building energy systems and renewable power generation, among other topics." (Priority Action #5)

The Form and Character Design Guidelines project commenced in February 2024, and the steps in the process to date are outlined below:

i. In February 2024, consultants were retained to support the Form and Character Design Guidelines project.

ii. From March to May 2024, Staff and the consultants conducted background research and prepared for the phase one engagement process.

iii. In June and July 2024, the phase one engagement took place, including workshops with the general public, neighbourhood associations, development community, and Staff. In addition Staff consulted with the Design Advisory Panel (DAP) and Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness (ACAI). A survey was also launched on the City's Get Involved webpage.

iv. From July to October 2024, Staff worked with the consultants to review the phase one input, and to prepare the November draft of the guidelines.

v. In November and December 2024, the phase two engagement took place to obtain input on the draft guidelines. The phase two engagement included obtaining input through the City's Get Involved webpage, press release, social media promotion, DAP meeting, as well as outreach to the development community, neighbourhood associations, and ACAI. Staff from several departments also provided input on the draft guidelines.

vi. From January to March 2025, Staff reviewed the phase two input and updated the draft guidelines. Also, Staff reviewed Part 17 'Landscaping' of the Zoning Bylaw in relation to the design guidelines, which has led to recommended amendments to the Zoning Bylaw and Development Procedures and Notification Bylaw. In March 2025, the proposed amendments to the landscape regulations were presented to landscape professionals for their review and input.

With consultation complete the proposed Development Permit Area 8 (DPA8) Form and Character Design Guidelines are presented for consideration, with related proposed amendments to the landscaping regulations.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the DPA8 Form and Character Design Guidelines is to:

a) Communicate clear design expectations and encourage innovative design solutions that align with the community needs and vision as outlined in *City Plan*.
b) Encourage a high level of design and quality of construction.
c) Prepare for climate impacts, promote energy and water conservation, and encourage the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.
d) Support development permit reviews and assessment of development proposals.

The Form and Character Design Guidelines apply to private property. Other reference documents are used for design considerations impacting the public realm (i.e. street frontages,

roads, stormwater management), such as the City's Manual of Engineering Standards and Specifications (MoESS) and the Complete Street Design Guide.
The proposed new Form and Character Design Guidelines (Attachment A) are organized into the following sections:

Introduction

- The introduction includes the document purpose, design goals, how to use the document, and consideration of variances in the development permit process.

General Design Guidelines

- The General Design Guidelines apply to all commercial, industrial, multi-unit, and mixed-use development in any land use designation, and set the expectations for site design, building design, and landscape design.

Design Guidelines for Land Use Designations

- In addition to the General Design Guidelines, the design guidelines for land use designations will apply to proposed development, and reinforce the unique form and character envisioned in *City Plan* for each land use designation to support consistent interpretation and application of the guidelines.

Glossary

- The Glossary provides clarity on specific terms used in the design guidelines.

Each *City Plan* land use designation serves a unique purpose, and the form and character design guidelines are a critical tool for ensuring that each proposed development is contributing to the purpose of the land use designation. In addition, the guidelines provide an opportunity to support the five main goal areas of *City Plan*, a Green, Connected, Healthy, Empowered, and Prosperous Nanaimo as experienced in the built form. A summary of how the proposed new design guidelines help achieve *City Plan* goals can be found in Attachment B.

An objective of the project was to simplify the process for development permit reviews by consolidating multiple existing DPA8 form and character design guidelines into one primary document. Consolidation helped to clarify and eliminate inconsistencies between guidelines. The proposed new Form and Character Design Guidelines are a consolidation of guidelines found in the following documents:

- General Development Permit Area Guidelines (1992)
- Triplex and Quadruplex Infill Design Guidelines (1995)
- Nanaimo's Old City Multi-Family Residential Design Guidelines (1990)
- Design Guide: Chase River Town Centre (2000)
- Departure Bay Neighbourhood Plan (2006)
- Downtown Urban Design Plan and Guidelines (2008)
- South End Neighbourhood Plan (2010)
- Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Plan (2011)
- Harewood Neighbourhood Plan (2013)

The update to the guidelines also provided an opportunity to apply a new lens to form and character such as accessibility and climate adaptation. The "High Performance Buildings" section of the guidelines provides design guidance for resilient, energy efficient buildings that can meet the current and future step code requirements of the BC Building Code. The new

guidelines respect the trade-offs that may be required for high performance buildings (i.e. simple building form with less articulation to mitigate energy loss).

The proposed guidelines also incorporate feedback from the pubic during the phase one and two engagement processes (Attachment C). For the phase two engagement process in November and December 2024, a rough first draft of the form and character design guidelines was released, which proved to be an effective way to obtain more direct and clear public input for the project. Highlights of input received during phase two, and resulting changes to the design guidelines include:

- The development community emphasized that it should be clearer that the design expectations for industrial development should be more flexible than what is expected in an Urban Centre or Corridor land use designation, and this request is reflected in the proposed Form and Character Design Guidelines.
- The design guidelines in the 'Waterfront' section were improved to provide better guidance for the types of development expected in this land use designation.
- Many of the guidelines in the November 2024 draft were too prescriptive with detailed measurements, and these were generalized to achieve intent.
- Guidelines for protecting trees, natural features, and to create natural environments in site design were also improved.

To create the proposed design guidelines, Staff have leaned on *City Plan* policy guidance and best practice advice from consultants; have carefully reviewed and integrated existing guideline documents; and incorporated input from two phases of engagement. The resulting proposed Form and Character Design Guidelines (Attachment A) provide clarity for DPA8 form and character development permit applications in a user-friendly format.

Summary of Proposed Landscape Regulation Amendments

Through the Form and Character Design Guidelines review, Staff identified landscaping regulations in Part 17 'Landscaping' (of the Zoning Bylaw) that are better suited as a landscape design guideline or as a procedure within another bylaw. The recommended amendments will eliminate regulatory redundancies in other City bylaws, and will update the landscaping regulations which have remained relatively unchanged since 1993.

Many aspects in the Part 17 'Landscaping' section are proposed to be removed because they have, over time, been addressed by other bylaws such as the Management and Protection of Trees Bylaw, Manual of Engineering Standards and Specifications, and Off-Street Parking Bylaw. In addition, the proposed new Form and Character Design Guidelines contain more comprehensive landscape guidelines that allow for adaptation to specific site conditions. The proposed changes to the landscaping regulations also reflect a thorough review of best practices in comparable jurisdictions.

Key proposed changes include:

- The requirements for landscape buffers along lot lines remains in the Zoning Bylaw, however, are simplified. Also, proposed to remain in the Zoning Bylaw are setback requirements for waste management enclosures, clarity around the provision of public plazas, and expectations regarding fencing abutting parks. Aspects that are proposed to be removed from the Zoning Bylaw, and integrated into the Form and Character Design

Guidelines are guidelines for fencing, minimum landscape treatment levels, screening of waste management enclosures, and character of landscaping.

- It is proposed to move the landscape security requirements from the Zoning Bylaw to the Development Procedures and Notification Bylaw to reflect best practice, given the procedural nature of these regulations.
- Also, in the Development Procedures and Notification Bylaw, it is proposed to update the landscape security requirements, including increasing landscape securities from 65% of the cost estimate (with a maximum of $100,000) to 100% (no maximum); and for restoration securities to increase from 100% of the cost estimate to 125%, as well as setting out a security release schedule. The proposed security requirement and phased release schedules are consistent with the approach taken in other jurisdictions and will more effectively support the installation and maintenance of landscaping in new developments.

With the updated and more comprehensive landscaping guidance in the proposed DPA8 Form and Character Design Guidelines, Staff recommend concurrently amending the regulations in Part 17 'Landscaping' of the Zoning Bylaw. The proposed amendments reflect design intentions in City Plan goals, input gathered throughout the project engagement, and best practices in other jurisdictions.

Next Steps

The next steps for this project is for Council to direct Staff to proceed with preparing a bylaw to amend Zoning Bylaw No. 4500 with the updated Development Permit Area 8 (DPA8) Form and Character Design Guidelines, and related amendments to the landscape regulations; and a bylaw to amend the Development Procedures and Notification Bylaw No. 7375 to update landscape security requirements. A public hearing would be required for the proposed amendment to the Zoning Bylaw.

OPTIONS

1. That the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council direct Staff to proceed with preparing a bylaw to amend Zoning Bylaw No. 4500 with the updated Development Permit Area 8 (DPA8) Form and Character Design Guidelines, and related amendments to the landscape regulations; and a bylaw to amend the Development Procedures and Notification Bylaw No. 7375, as outlined in the Staff Report dated 2025-APR-14.

   The advantages of this option: The proposed DPA8 Form and Character Design Guidelines are an effective tool for implementing *City Plan* policy and will provide clarity and certainty for the development community to understand the City of Nanaimo's expectation for urban design.

   The disadvantages of this option: If the proposed guidelines do not provide the right balance to ensure appropriate development in the city, Council may wish to direct Staff to revise the proposed DPA8 guidelines.

   Financial Implications: The contract with the consultant is complete, and Staff are taking on the final steps to complete the project.

2. That Council provide alternate direction to Staff.

SUMMARY POINTS

- The purpose of the Form and Character Design Guidelines project is to update the design guidelines in Development Permit Area 8 (DPA8). The proposed form and character design guidelines provide clarity and certainty for the development community and City Staff to understand the City of Nanaimo's expectation for design in development permit application reviews.
- To create the proposed design guidelines, Staff have leaned on City Plan policy guidance and best practice advice from consultants; have carefully reviewed and integrated existing guideline documents; and incorporated input from two phases of engagement.
- With the updated and more comprehensive landscaping guidance in the proposed DPA8 Form and Character Design Guidelines, amendments to Part 17 'Landscaping' of the Zoning Bylaw are also proposed.

ATTACHMENTS:
ATTACHMENT A: Form and Character Design Guidelines
ATTACHMENT B: Summary of How the Guidelines Achieve City Plan Policy
ATTACHMENT C: Summary of How the Guidelines Respond to Engagement Input

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ATTACHMENT B

Summary of How the Proposed Form and Character Design Guidelines Achieve City Plan Policy

DPA8 'Form and Character Development Permit' guidelines are one way that the City can implement policies in City Plan: Nanaimo ReImagined for proposed new multi-unit, mixed use, commercial, and industrial development. The table below is a list of the policies in City Plan that are being implemented in the proposed Form and Character Design Guidelines.

City Plan Reference	City Plan policy related to the form and character of multi-family, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use development	Proposed form and character guidelines to achieve the City Plan policy
A GREEN NANAIMO		
C1.1.4	Accelerate zero carbon and energy efficient building design and practices for all new construction before 2030, and require this for all new construction after 2030.	Section 2.2
C1.3.2	Encourage street tree planting and other climate resilient landscaping in new and existing neighbourhoods and redevelopment sites.	Section 2.4
C1.3.5	Encourage private landowners to retain trees that are not a hazard and to replant or plant new trees that support and enhance the treed character of the city.	Sections 2.1.1 and 2.4
C1.3.8	Promote pollinator friendly plants on public and private lands throughout the city.	Section 2.4.2
C1.4.1	Review and regularly update City design standards and regulations for public and private development and rainwater management systems, to support resilience to climate change impacts.	Section 2.4 (and MOESS)
C1.4.2	Incorporate best management practices for new and existing developments to support watershed health, such as pervious paving, rain gardens, bioswales, deep absorbent soils…etc.	Section 2.4 (and MOESS)
C1.8.4	Continue to support dark sky principles balanced with safety considerations for new and upgraded buildings and developments.	Section 2.4.4

City Plan Reference	City Plan policy related to the form and character of multi-family, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use development	Proposed form and character guidelines to achieve the City Plan policy
A CONNECTED NANAIMO		
C2.1.2	Ensure that new developments and redevelopments incorporate a fine grained, redundant street network that encourages walking, rolling, and cycling, augmented with active mobility connections via trails and parks.	Section 2.1.2
C2.1.6	Prioritize the placement of high quality “first kilometer/last kilometer” (start or end of trip) amenities to encourage active and sustainable modes of travel, including transit, walking, cycling, electric vehicles, CarShare, and other options	Section 2.1.2 and 2.1.3
C2.5.3	Require new development to implement street oriented design approaches that support vibrant and accessible streetscapes.	Section 2.3 and 3.1.2, 3.2.2, 3.3.2, 3.4.2, 3.5.2, 3.6.2, 3.7.2
A HEALTHY NANAIMO		
C3.1.6	Encourage Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)	Section 2.1.5
C3.2.23	Encourage developers to incorporate amenity spaces that promote resident interaction and relationship building.	Section 2.1.4
C3.3.5	Promote the development of multi-unit housing which facilitates social interaction and intergenerational living.	Section 2.1.4
C3.3.9	Encourage development that meets Accessible BC standards.	Section 1.1
C3.4.11	Leverage opportunities to integrate food systems in new development projects and existing infrastructure adaptations.	Section 2.4.2

City Plan Reference	City Plan policy related to the form and character of multi-family, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use development	Proposed form and character guidelines to achieve the City Plan policy
AN EMPOWERED NANAIMO		
C4.3.8	Include universal design principles in City plans, policies, design standards, programs, and services that consider the needs of all people including those with physical, sensory, and cognitive disabilities.	This is addressed in most sections.
C4.7.4	Encourage incorporation of public art within new development.	Section 3.1.3, 3.2.3, 3.3.3
C4.9.16	Encourage appropriate integration and buffering between park spaces and adjacent land uses to balance passive surveillance and privacy of adjacent properties and provide attractive park edges.	Section 2.1.5, 2.4.2
A PROSPEROUS NANAIMO		
C5.5.8	Ensure that new or updated public and private built environments are high quality, visually appealing, and communicate a sense of place.	Most of the proposed guidelines address this policy.
CITY STRUCTURE – Urban Centres		
D4.3.3	Recognize and celebrate the unique characteristics and sense of place of each Urban Centre by retaining and complementing attractive existing natural and built features through new development and redevelopment, upgrading infrastructure, and supporting community initiatives.	Section 3.1
D4.3.9	Support redevelopment of large properties within Urban Centres where a proposal demonstrates the following characteristics: » improved public street connectivity, with new streets and pathways that break up large blocks and provide more direct and effective walking, rolling, cycling, and mobility links that coordinate with existing and potential future street crossings and intersections » improved walking, rolling, and cycling facilities to create a safe and comfortable user environment » identification and dedication / development of parks, public spaces, and community recreation and wellness facilities; urban forests and tree canopies; and/or rainwater management infrastructure » integration of transit infrastructure	Section 2.1, 3.1

D4.3.10	Ensure building heights and forms in Urban Centres provide appropriate transitions between taller buildings and adjacent existing residential land uses.	Section 3.1
City Plan Reference	**City Plan policy related to the form and character of multi-family, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use development**	**Proposed form and character guidelines to achieve the City Plan policy**
CITY STRUCTURE – Urban Centres (continued)		
D4.3.16	Discourage new large areas of surface parking or drive-thrus in Urban Centres. Under-building parking or underground parking is preferred. Continue to evolve existing auto oriented uses into more pedestrian friendly and accessible development forms and mix of uses.	Section 2.1.3 and 3.1
D4.3.17	Strengthen social connectedness and encourage amenities and spaces that provide opportunities for residents of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds to connect with their neighbours.	Section 2.1.4 and 3.1
D4.3.27	Downtown Urban Centre - Building heights will be a minimum of two storeys. Encourage high-rise development as per locations and guidelines described in the Nanaimo Downtown Plan and Port Drive Waterfront Master Plan.	Guidelines from these plans are integrated into Section 3.1 and other sections.
D4.3.37	Secondary Urban Centre - Typical building height will be two storeys to 12 storeys. Additional building height may be supported in Secondary Urban Centres on key sites.	Section 1.4
D4.3.44	Nanaimo North Urban Centre: Recognize the intersection of Island Highway and Mostar Road / Rutherford Road as a highly visible and important intersection. Require new development on the corners of this intersection to contribute to an urban, street oriented character.	Section 2.3 and 3.1
D4.3.47	Country Club Urban Centre: Recognize the intersection of Island Highway and Bowen Road / Norwell Drive as a highly visible and important intersection contributing to the character of Nanaimo and this Urban Centre. Require new development on the corners of this intersection to contribute to an urban, street oriented character.	Section 2.3 and 3.1
D4.3.53	Hospital Urban Centre: Require new development and redevelopment to account for the movement of emergency and support vehicles, including helicopter flight paths.	Section 2.1.2
CITY STRUCTURE – Neighbourhood Centres		
D4.3.66	Support the following typical building forms: mix of low-rise, mixed-use with street facing commercial and residential above/behind; commercial; low-rise residential apartments; and townhomes.	Section 3.2
D4.3.70	Create Neighbourhood Centres to be human scale, walkable areas that provide: retail/restaurants at grade, plazas/parks, pedestrian routes, compact housing forms, attractive transition between public and private realm.	Section 3.2

D4.3.71	Do not support development of large surface parking areas between the front face of the building and the street.	Section 2.1.3, 3.2.3
City Plan Reference	**City Plan policy related to the form and character of multi-family, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use development**	**Proposed form and character guidelines to achieve the City Plan policy**
CITY STRUCTURE – Corridors		
D4.4.2	Develop human scale building forms that are pedestrian oriented and support safe and accessible movement of walkers, rollers, cyclists, and transit users.	Section 3.3
D4.4.5	Ensure development addresses the interface with adjacent Neighbourhood designations by carefully considering design elements such as building siting, height, and massing to ensure a stepped transition in form and scale. These design elements can include upper floors that form a step-like wall; effective screening and buffering of parking and refuse areas; and site lighting.	Section 3.3
D4.4.8	Support redevelopment of large properties within Corridors where a proposal demonstrates the following characteristics: • improved street connectivity, through identification of new streets and pathways that break up large blocks • improved walking, rolling, and cycling environment • identification and dedication of parks; public spaces; and community recreation, culture, and wellness spaces • integration of pedestrian oriented connections and transit infrastructure	Section 3.3
D4.4.11	Mixed Use Corridors: Support the following typical building forms: low to mid-rise mixed use with street facing commercial and residential above/behind.	Section 3.3
D4.4.14 and D4.4.20	Mixed Use and Residential Corridors: Discourage development of primary parking areas and/or drive-thrus between the front face of a building and the street. Underground or underbuilding parking is preferred.	Section 2.1.3, 3.3.3
D4.4.17	Residential Corridor: Support the following typical building forms: low to mid-rise apartments and townhomes.	Section 3.3

City Plan Reference	City Plan policy related to the form and character of multi-family, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use development	Proposed form and character guidelines to achieve the City Plan policy
CITY STRUCTURE – Neighbourhoods		
D4.5.7	Strengthen social connectedness and encourage amenities and spaces that provide opportunities for residents of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds to connect with their neighbours.	Section 2.1.4, 3.4.3
D4.5.9	Encourage cluster housing designs and siting that protect environmentally sensitive features, hazard lands, and existing trees and that provide for open spaces.	Section 2.1
D4.5.10	Do not support gated communities.	Section 3.4.2, 3.5.2
D4.5.12	Encourage infill of residential lots, with infill designed to complement existing neighbourhood character.	Section 3.4
D4.5.14	Plan Neighbourhoods to provide a transition in building forms between Urban Centres, Corridors, and Suburban Neighbourhoods.	Section 3.4
D4.5.16	Support the following typical building forms: single-unit dwellings with secondary suites, duplexes, ground oriented multi-unit dwellings including triplex, fourplex, and townhomes; low-rise apartments; and small scale commercial/mixed use.	Section 3.4
CITY STRUCTURE – OLD CITY NEIGHBOURHOOD		
D4.5.25	Plan the Old City Neighbourhood as a distinct Neighbourhood independent of the Downtown Urban Centre. The designation recognizes the unique heritage values of this established Neighbourhood and supports preservation of architecturally and historically significant buildings.	Section 3.5
D4.5.26	Promote the preservation and rehabilitation of character homes and heritage features.	Section 3.5
D4.5.29	Support development and redevelopment of lands with residential infill. Infill design is to take into consideration the surrounding context including architecture, scale, character, densities, and lot and lane configuration.	Section 3.5
D4.5.32	Support the following typical building forms: single-unit dwellings, secondary suites, duplexes, multi-unit dwellings including triplex, fourplex and townhomes.	Section 3.5

City Plan Reference	City Plan policy related to the form and character of multi-family, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use development	Proposed form and character guidelines to achieve the City Plan policy
CITY STRUCTURE – OLD CITY NEIGHBOURHOOD (continued)		
D4.5.33	Typical building height will be up to three storeys. Building heights greater than three storeys may be considered where: » stepped transition is provided with adjacent land uses and built forms » height impacts are minimized by onsite or nearby natural or built features (e.g., slope of land or major transportation corridor)	Section 3.5
D4.5.34	Enhance the pedestrian orientation and character of the neighbourhood.	Section 3.5
D4.5.35	Preserve public ocean views to the greatest extent possible.	Section 3.5
D4.5.36	Encourage public squares, plazas, mini-parks, and other urban space opportunities in conjunction with new development.	Section 3.5
D4.5.38	The Old City Neighbourhood Concept Plan will serve as a guiding document in the review of development applications.	The guidelines from this document have been integrated into the Form and Character guidelines.

City Plan Reference	City Plan policy related to the form and character of multi-family, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use development	Proposed form and character guidelines to achieve the City Plan policy
CITY STRUCTURE – Industrial Lands		
D4.6.6	Require that development of new or existing Industrial Lands that are adjacent to or visible from Provincial Highways will be designed to provide an attractive façade or natural buffer facing the highway, regardless of the orientation of the building entrance. Approaches may include greater façade articulation, colour variation, windows, landscaping, or vegetative screening that add visual interest along the highway corridor. Blank side or rear walls, storage yards, and garage doors visible from the highway corridors are not supported.	Section 3.6.2
D4.6.8	Recognize that clean, sustainable industrial uses are important for the future, and support and encourage industrial businesses to use available technology to reduce water and energy use; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; eliminate noise, odours, and other emissions; and incorporate appropriate vegetation and natural features on site.	Section 3.6
D4.6.21	Light Industrial – Typical building height will be up to three storeys. Buildings greater than three storeys may be considered where: transition is provided with adjacent land uses and built forms, height impacts are minimized by onsite or nearby natural or built features.	Section 3.6
D4.6.23	Require that uses in the Light Industrial designation must not have visual impacts from public sightlines due to outdoor storage.	Section 3.6
D4.6.25	Require a substantial buffer of either natural or human made features or uses that provide adequate transition to residential uses, and between light industrial and residential designations (building form, landscaping, site lighting).	Section 3.6
CITY STRUCTURE – Waterfront		
D4.7.6	Support preservation of character views including the inner harbour, Newcastle Channel, and Departure Bay.	Section 3.7.1
D4.7.20	When considering land and water base development in this section, seek to preserve the character of and access to existing public views of Newcastle Channel and Saysutshun from Stewart Avenue.	Section 3.7.1
D4.7.27	Downtown Waterfront - When considering land and water based development in this section, seek to preserve the character of and access to existing views of Newcastle Channel and Saysutshun from the Downtown waterfront.	Section 3.7.1

ATTACHMENT C

Summary of How the Proposed DPA8 Design Guidelines Respond to the Phase 1 and 2 Engagement Input

Below is a summary of how the proposed new DPA8 Form and Character Design Guidelines respond to what we heard during the phase one engagement. A link to the Phase One Engagement 'What We Heard' Report can be found here.

	Table 1 - Key Themes Heard During Phase One Engagement – June and July 2024	**Proposed form and character design guideline that responds to what we heard**
1	Allow for creative building design and preserve and respect the uniqueness of Nanaimo's neighbourhoods, including heritage, friendly street frontages, and human scale architecture.	Section 3.1 to 3.7 design guidelines for land use designations.
2	Ensure the guidelines allow for housing affordability and energy efficient building design.	Section 2.2.1
3	Improve the public/private interface, connectivity, and create safe pedestrian infrastructure.	Section 2.1.2, 2.1.5 and 2.3
4	Include amenity spaces (such as covered areas for gathering).	Section 2.1.4
5	Parking areas should be underground or at the rear of a lot for better overall design. Parking areas should be screened from view.	Section 2.1.3 and 2.4
6	Site design should address noise concerns.	Section 3.1.3 and 3.6.3
7	Accessible parking should be located near entrances.	Section 2.1.3
8	Better tree preservation on private property during development.	Section 2.1.1
9	Consider viewpoints, such as to the waterfront.	Section 3.4.1, 3.5.3 and 3.7.1
10	Ensure attractive, eco-diverse landscaping, and consider long term maintenance when designing landscaping.	Section 2.4
11	Energy efficient features such as operable windows, solar shading, solar energy, and dark sky compliment lighting is important.	Section 2.2.1 and 2.4.4
12	Have design guidelines for industrial areas, however exterior material selection should be less important than in other land use areas. Ensure industrial buildings have appropriate loading areas.	Section 3.6
13	Exterior building finishes are important.	Section 2.2.1
14	Ensure appropriate building scale, and design should consider transitional spaces, and other amenity spaces for gathering.	Section 2.1.4 and Part 3 design guidelines for land use designations
15	Ensure amenities for all ages and abilities are incorporated into design (seniors, children).	Section 2.1.4
16	Allow natural light in building design.	Section 2.2.1

	Table 1 - Key Themes Heard During Phase One Engagement – June and July 2024	Proposed form and character design guideline that responds to what we heard
17	Allow for flexible building and site design to create variety.	Section 1.3
18	For apartment units ensure balconies offer usable space, and consider alternatives to balconies for outdoor living space, as balconies often do not offer privacy.	Section 2.1.4
19	Ground floor residential units should have a direct connection to the street.	Section 2.3
20	Pay greater attention to spaces in front of buildings.	Section 2.4
21	Ensure landscaping design and tree selection considers accessibility.	Section 2.4
22	Ensure wide and accessible connections from the entrances to the street and parking areas (with no stairs).	Section 2.3
23	Ensure the design guidelines allow for variation in housing options.	Part 3 design guidelines for land use designations
24	Require weather protection in commercial areas.	Section 2.3
25	Require bike storage, and EV charging stations.	Off-Street Parking Bylaw
26	Incorporate art into developments.	Section 2.4.1

Below is a summary of how the proposed new DPA8 Form and Character Design Guidelines respond to what we heard during the phase two engagement. A link to the Phase Two Engagement 'What We Heard' Report can be found here.

	Table 2 - Phase Two Engagement – November and December 2024 These are comments provided from DAP, the public, the developer community and neighbourhood associations about the November 2024 draft guidelines.	**Response to what we heard**
1	Improve guidelines in the Waterfront section of the document to provide clarity. Ensure waterfront development has interactive frontages to both streetscapes and the waterfront.	Section 3.7 – the guidelines in the Waterfront section have been improved
2	Provide clarity around expectations regarding public art on private land.	Guidelines regarding public art have been improved in Section 2.4.1
3	Improve clarity in the landscape section (to eliminate contradictions).	Section 2.4 Landscape Design has been improved.
4	Ensure balconies are adequately sized, and consider units with no balconies to assist with housing affordability.	Section 2.1.4 has guidelines to ensure functional balcony space, and adequate common space for residents.

	Table 2 - Phase Two Engagement – November and December 2024 These are comments provided from DAP, the public, the developer community and neighbourhood associations about the November 2024 draft guidelines.	**Response to what we heard**
5	Ensure infill development is sensitive to the local neighbourhood and fit with surrounding area. Draw from the current Old City neighbourhood infill design guidelines, and apply them to the Neighbourhood and Suburban Neighbourhood sections.	The guidelines in the Neighbourhood and Suburban Neighbourhood have been updated as requested. See Part 3.
6	In the Old City area use “require” instead of “encourage” for heritage related design guidelines.	The development community and private citizens had conflicting input on this request. The guidelines have been reviewed to ensure the ‘must’, ‘should’ and ‘encourage’ clauses are appropriate.
7	Improve guidelines related to safety and security (CPTED).	The CPTED guidelines have been improved since the November draft. See Section 2.1.5
8	Add guidelines to protect existing views, and protect current viewscapes to the waterfront.	This has been added to Sections 3.4, 3.5 and 3.7 guidelines for land use designations.
9	Concern regarding the applicability of the General Design Guidelines to Industrial development. Ensure the General Design Guidelines apply fairly to all development.	Section 3.6 Industrial has been updated to clarify that industrial sites may have a more simple design aesthetic.
10	Guidelines are too specific, they should be more general and goal oriented.	The specific guidelines, with measurement detail have largely been removed.
11	Do not use words such as ‘must’ and ‘require’, instead use ‘should’ and ‘encourage’.	The development community and private citizens had conflicting input on this request. The guidelines have been reviewed to ensure the ‘must’, ‘should’ and ‘encourage’ clauses are appropriate.
12	Inviting public use of private property is not appropriate in all situations.	The guidelines have been updated to add term ‘where appropriate’ to accommodate this request.
13	Support for keeping guidelines to protect trees and natural features (i.e watersheds, steep slopes).	Section 2.1.1 contains guidelines to protect trees and natural features.
14	Appreciate the guidelines allowing for simple massing to encourage high performance buildings.	Section 2.2.1 contains guidelines for energy efficient buildings.
15	Support for native plants in landscaping.	Section 2.4.2 contains guidelines for native plants in landscaping.

	Table 2 - Phase Two Engagement – November and December 2024 These are comments provided from DAP, the public, the developer community and neighbourhood associations about the November 2024 draft guidelines.	**Response to what we heard**
16	Support for guidelines to encourage green space, access to waterfront, permeability.	See Sections 2.4 Landscaping and Section 3.7 for access to waterfront.
17	Support for guidelines related to weather protection on buildings, and durable building materials.	See Section 2.3.1 for weather protection, and Section 2.2.1 for durable building materials.
18	Add more images in the document.	Many photos have been added to the document.
19	Improve guidelines related to accessibility (i.e. wheelchair users, vision impaired users).	Guidelines related to accessibility, access of all, and Universal Design have been added throughout the guidelines.
20	Support for design of modern buildings, rather than heritage designs.	See Section 2.2.1 Building Design
21	Support for amenity areas, especially in multi-family buildings. Support for shared common amenity space, rather than private amenity spaces.	See Section 2.1.4 Open Spaces and Amenity Areas
22	Allow for wide pedestrian paths.	See Section 2.1.2 Connectivity and Mobility
23	Ensure emergency vehicles and related attendants can access buildings.	See Section 2.1.3 Access Parking and Loading Areas
24	Allow for creative business signage.	See Section 2.3 Street Interface
25	Ensure development adjacent to parkland is designed to minimize impact to park use and enjoyment.	See Section 2.1.5 Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

CITY OF NANAIMO
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Form and Character Design Guideline Project

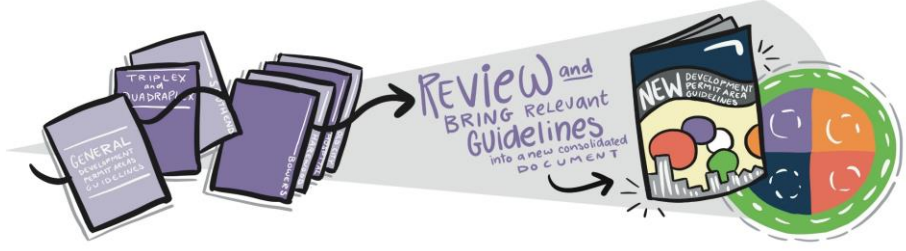
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1

CITY OF NANAIMO

Project Background

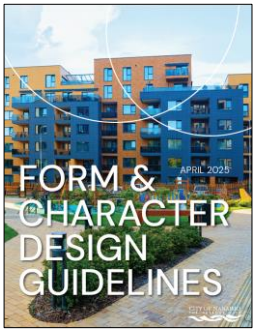
- *City Plan* establishes Development Permit Area 8 (DPA8) Form and Character, and the Zoning Bylaw contains the design guidelines.
- The purpose of the project is to update the DPA8 design guidelines, which are used to guide the design and review of new developments.
- The design guidelines provide clarity for developers to understand the City's expectations for the form and character of commercial, industrial, multi-unit, intensive residential and mixed use developments.



2

Consolidating Existing DPA8 Guidelines





3

Project Timeline

- **Mar-May 2024**
- Project Prep/ Research

June-July 2024
Public Engagement

Nov-Dec 2024
Public Engagement

- **July-Oct 2024**
- Prepare Draft DP Guidelines

- **Jan-Mar 2025**
- Revise Draft DP Guidelines

April 2025
Present to GPC

4

Implementing City Plan Policy

- The *City Plan* five goal areas provide the policy guidance that informs the updated Form and Character Design Guidelines.
- The design guidelines are a critical tool for ensuring that each development is contributing to the purpose of the land use designations in City Plan (Urban Centres, Corridors, Industrial etc).



5

Engagement

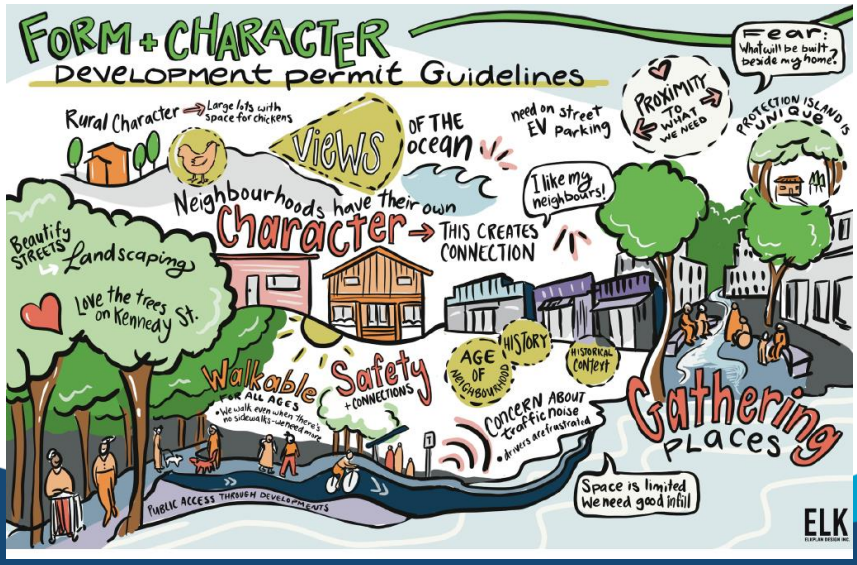
The following stakeholders were engaged through this project:

- City Staff Workshop
- Neighbourhood Association Workshop
- Public Workshop
- Developer Workshop
- Design Advisory Panel (DAP)
- Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness (ACAI)
- Get Involved (Public Submissions)
- Landscape Architects Workshop



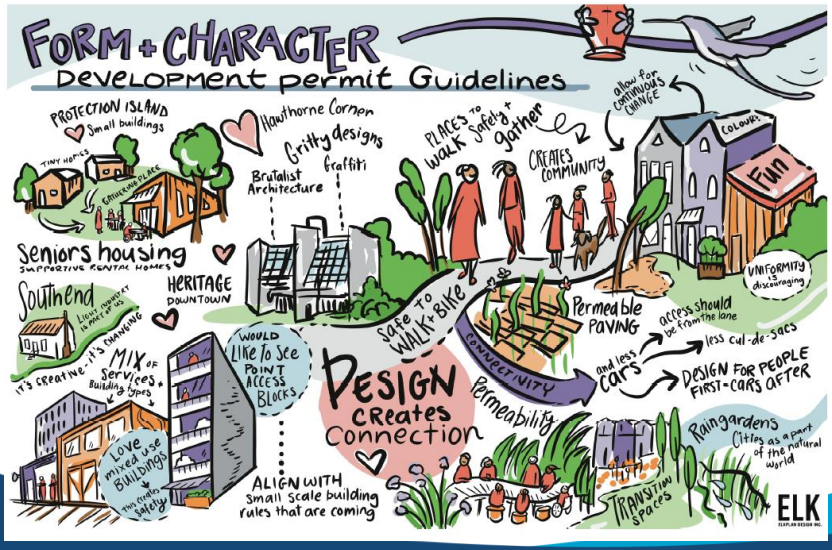
6

Phase One Engagement – June/July 2024



7

Phase Two Engagement – Nov/Dec 2024



8

Form and Character Design Guidelines

General Design Guidelines

- The General Design Guidelines apply to all commercial, industrial, multi-unit, intensive residential and mixed-use development in any land use designation, and set the expectations for site, building and landscape design.

Design Guidelines for Land Use Designations

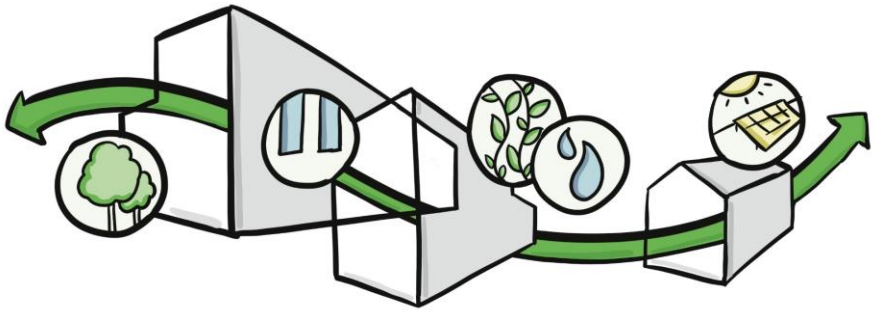
- In addition, the design guidelines for land use designations will reinforce the unique form and character envisioned in City Plan for each land use designation.



9

High Performance Buildings

- Durable, quality materials
- Optimal building orientation
- Efficient thermal envelope
- Strategic window placement
- Solar shading devices
- Reduce thermal bridging
- Reduce carbon footprint
- Renewable energy capture



10

Updates to Zoning Bylaw Part 17 –Landscaping

- **Keep in the Zoning Bylaw** simplified requirements for landscape buffers, waste management enclosure setbacks, and maintenance requirements.
- **Move to the new Form and Character Design Guidelines** elements of fencing standards, landscape treatment and screening guidelines, and allow for site specific landscape solutions.
- **Move to the Development Procedures and Notification Bylaw No. 7375** landscape restoration and security requirements, with updated practices, and a clear security release schedule.



11

Next Steps

April 2025 – GPC review of proposed Form and Character Design Guidelines, and direction to Staff to prepare amending bylaws.

May 2025 - Council consideration of proposed amending bylaw(s) to replace DPA8 form and character design guidelines and to amend the landscape regulations.

June 2025 - Hold a Public Hearing for proposed Zoning Amendment Bylaw, and Council consideration of adoption of proposed amending bylaw(s).

July-Sept. 2025 - Implementation of new Form and Character Design Guidelines.



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