



## COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date: May 14, 2024  
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Meeting Date: June 12, 2024  
[Submit comments to Council](#)

TO: Standing Committee on Policy and Strategic Priorities  
FROM: General Manager of Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability  
SUBJECT: Vancouver Official Development Plan – Project Scope and Terms of Reference

### Recommendations

THAT Council approve the project scope and Terms of Reference for the Vancouver Official Development Plan generally as outlined in this report.

### Purpose and Executive Summary

This report outlines the project scope to create Vancouver's first comprehensive city-wide Official Development Plan By-law (ODP), a new Provincial requirement, and key action to implement the Vancouver Plan. The current Vancouver Plan comprises a significant amount of the final content anticipated to be included in the Vancouver ODP and will be supplemented with additional content as needed to meet Provincial legislative requirements. A summary of the new legislation is outlined in the tables on pages 5 and 6 of this report. Further, the Vancouver ODP will provide a high-level understanding of the land use and development potential across the city – for staff, Council, members of the public, and developers.

This project is one of several underway to implement the Vancouver Plan (2022). Other concurrent initiatives are illustrated in the diagram below, many of which will be integrated, to some degree, in the Vancouver ODP. In addition, the Vancouver ODP will need to reflect Transit Oriented Areas (Bill 47) and Residential Development (Bill 44) required under recently enacted Provincial legislation. See page 11 'Related Work' for further details and other related work items.



**Figure 1: Vancouver Plan implementation projects**

### Council Authority/Previous Decisions

- Vancouver Charter
- Vancouver Plan (2022)
- Housing Needs Report (2022)

### City Manager's Comments

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing recommendations.

### Context and Background

#### 1. Background

##### Vancouver Plan (2022) as the basis for the city-wide ODP

The Vancouver Plan is the city's first comprehensive city-wide land use strategy and was approved by Council in July 2022 following a substantial three-year planning process. The Plan-making effort was one of the most extensive in the City's history, involving over 52,000

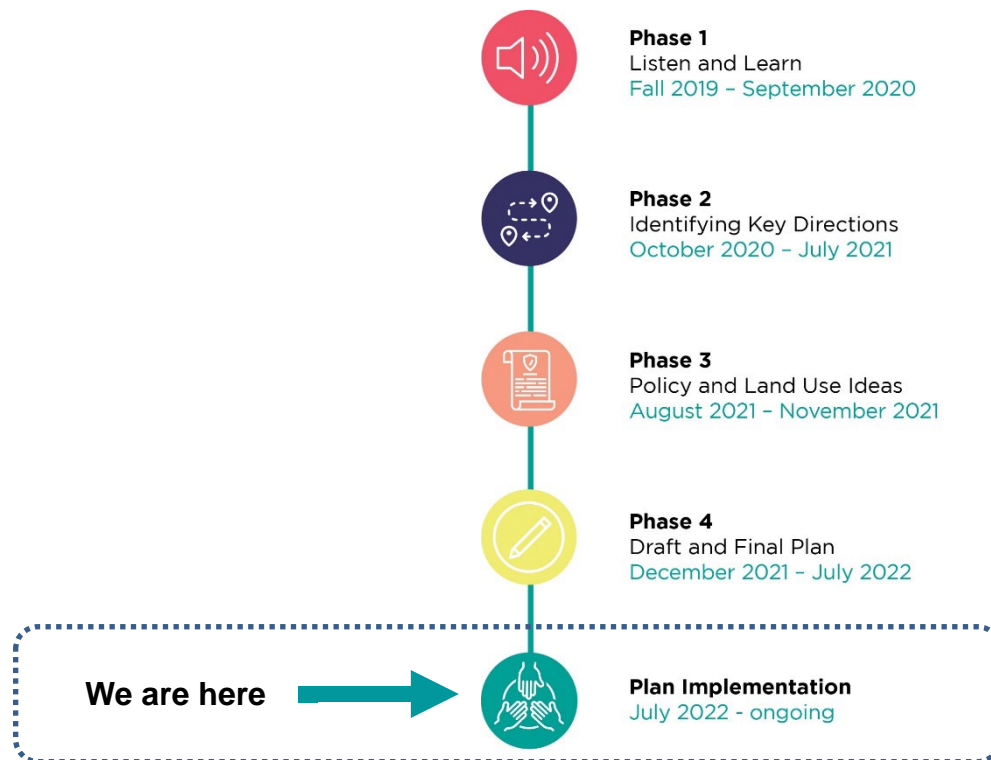
engagement touchpoints, more than 520 events, and the participation of hundreds of stakeholder organizations. Specialized efforts resulted in an extraordinarily diverse array of participation, including partnership agreements with xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam Indian Band), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish Nation), and səliwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh Nation).

We are now in the implementation phase of the project. Many work streams are underway to advance the vision and big ideas contained in the Plan. This includes advancing detailed area planning initiatives, such as the Rupert and Renfrew Station Area Plan, advancing housing actions, work related to employment lands and ecology land use planning, together with simplifying zoning regulations and developing new tower zones to support streamlined housing delivery.

This report focuses on a key element of the Vancouver Plan implementation program, transforming Vancouver Plan into the City’s first comprehensive city-wide ODP. The reason for this effort is two-fold:

1. To meet new legislative requirements in the Vancouver Charter and respond to recent Provincial directives; and,
2. To provide a high-level understanding of the land use and development potential across the city – for staff, Council, members of the public, and developers.

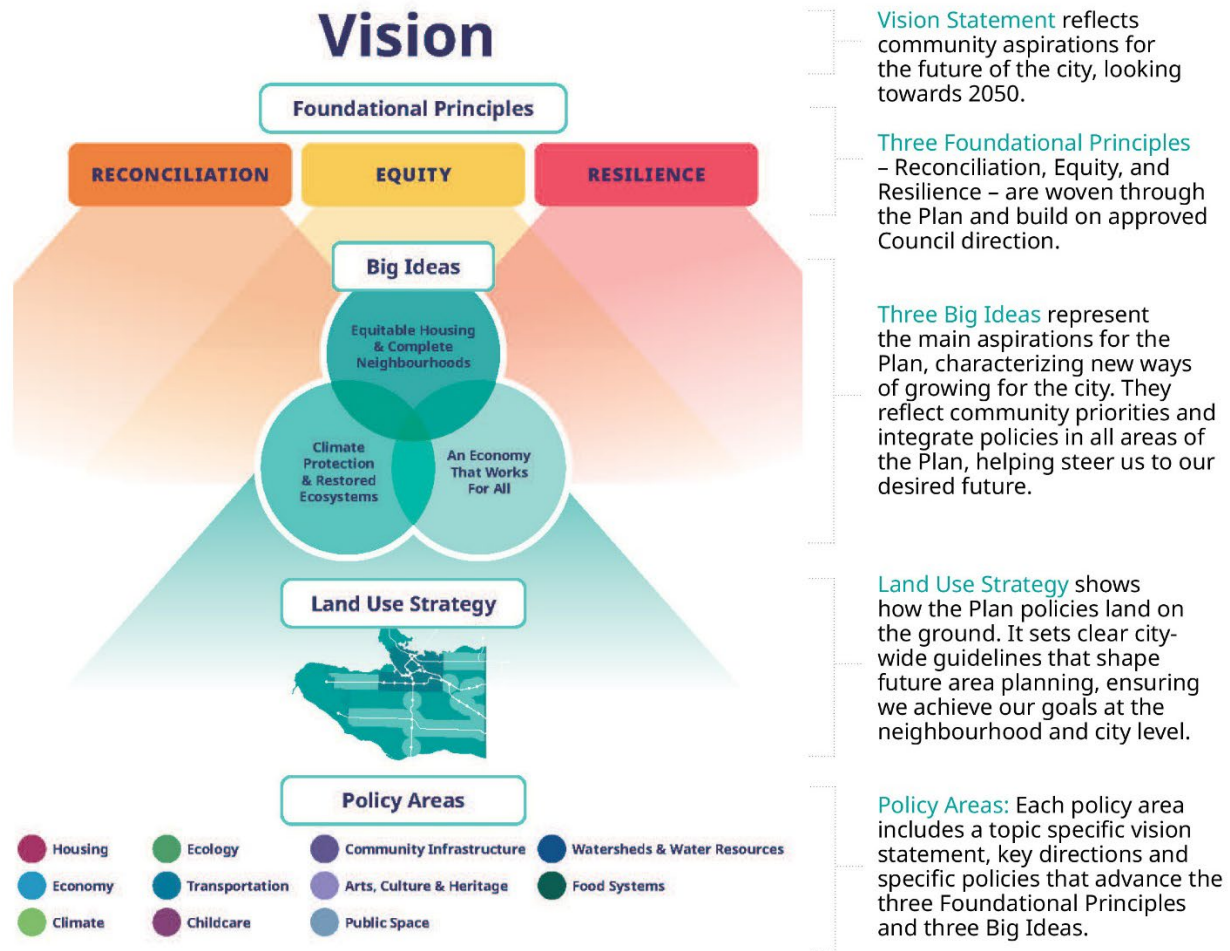
As a quick recap on the Vancouver Plan process, **Figure 2** below illustrates the four key phases of consultation, followed by the implementation phase we are in now.



**Figure 2: Vancouver Plan process**

The Vancouver Plan is a long-range land use plan to guide growth and change in the city for the next 30 years and beyond. The Plan provides a unified vision of the city’s future land uses and shapes economic, transportation, and neighbourhood planning decisions. The Plan spreads

more housing options across all neighbourhoods and in doing so, sets the course for a more equitable, livable, affordable, and sustainable city with a strong economy where people and nature thrive. The Vancouver Plan (2022) will form the foundation of the Vancouver ODP. **Figure 3** below illustrates the key components contained in the Vancouver Plan.



**Figure 3: Key Components of Vancouver Plan (2022)**

Overview of Legislation

In April 2024, the Provincial government adopted new legislation (the Vancouver Charter Amendment Act (No. 2), 2024 – “Bill 18”) to amend the *Vancouver Charter* to include requirements for a city-wide ODP. Bill 18 has been given Royal Assent – but many of its sections will only come into effect through regulation adopted by Cabinet. The legislation requires Council to adopt an interim city-wide ODP by June 30, 2026.

The content and process requirements for the ODP set out in Bill 18 are similar to those for an Official Community Plan found in the *Local Government Act* governing municipalities outside of Vancouver.

In terms of content requirements, the amendments to the *Vancouver Charter* (Bill 18) include a number of ‘**must haves**’ and ‘**may haves**’ for the new ODP, summarized in the table below.

Key component (Content related)	Effect of the Legislation
Content requirements for the ODP ( <b>‘must haves’</b> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statements and map designations for:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Residential development to meet 20-year anticipated housing needs</li> <li>○ Commercial, industrial, institutional, agricultural, recreational, public utility land uses</li> <li>○ Restrictions for hazardous conditions or environmentally sensitive areas</li> <li>○ Location and phasing of major road, sewer and water systems</li> <li>○ Location and type of present and proposed public facilities: schools, parks and waste treatment and disposal sites</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Policies for affordable housing, rental housing and special needs housing</li> <li>• Targets to reduce GHG emissions, and policies/actions to achieve targets</li> <li>• Consider the most recent housing needs report</li> <li>• Regional Context Statement</li> </ul> <p><i>Requirements apply to the interim and future versions of city-wide ODP</i></p>
Non-essential content for the ODP ( <b>‘may haves’</b> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May include policies relating to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Social needs, well-being, and social development</li> <li>○ Maintenance and enhancement of farming (in a farming area or area designated for agricultural use)</li> <li>○ Preservation, protection, restoration and enhancement of the natural environment, ecosystems, and biodiversity</li> <li>○ Transportation demand management</li> </ul> </li> <li>• May designate:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Areas for special projects</li> <li>○ Heritage conservation areas</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

With regards to process requirements, there are key deadlines that must be met and specific requirements related to public hearings and consultation, summarized in the table below.

Key component (Process related)	Effect of the Legislation
Public hearing requirements to adopt or amend ODP and zoning by-law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public hearing required to adopt, amend, or repeal ODP by-law, and to adopt / amend a zoning by-law <b>unless</b> it is consistent with the ODP</li> <li>• Public hearing must <b>not be held</b> if the zoning by-law is consistent with the ODP, and its sole purpose is to permit a development with at least 50% residential gross floor area</li> <li>• Council decision still required at a regular Council meeting</li> </ul>

Key component (Process related)	Effect of the Legislation
Public hearing procedures and notice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adds requirements / processes in relation to public hearings for adoption, amendment or repeal of ODP by-laws and zoning by-laws – generally consistent with existing procedures for public hearings required for rezonings</li> </ul>
Development approval procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adds requirement to define approval procedures under which a landowner can apply for an ODP amendment or zoning by-law</li> </ul>
Current ODPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content requirements in the Bill won't apply to "current" ODPs</li> <li>• Council may retain, amend or repeal "current" ODPs until June 30, 2030</li> <li>• Regional Context statement must be referred to Metro Vancouver Regional District, if being amended or adopted</li> </ul>
Interim ODP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council must adopt a city-wide interim ODP by June 30, 2026</li> <li>• By June 30, 2030, "current" ODPs must be repealed or integrated into the city-wide ODP</li> </ul>
Process requirements for the ODP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before adopting an official development plan, Council must consider the ODP in conjunction with relevant financial planning documents and policies</li> <li>• Consider the ODP in conjunction with waste management plans</li> <li>• Regional Context Statement must be referred to Metro Vancouver Regional District, if being amended or adopted</li> <li>• Consider Transit Oriented Area (TOA) guidelines</li> <li>• Requirement to consult with a) persons, organizations and authorities considered affected and b) boards of Education on planning for school facilities</li> <li>• Council must also review the ODP alongside Housing Needs Report updates (every 5 years) and amend if necessary</li> </ul>

## 2. Policy Context

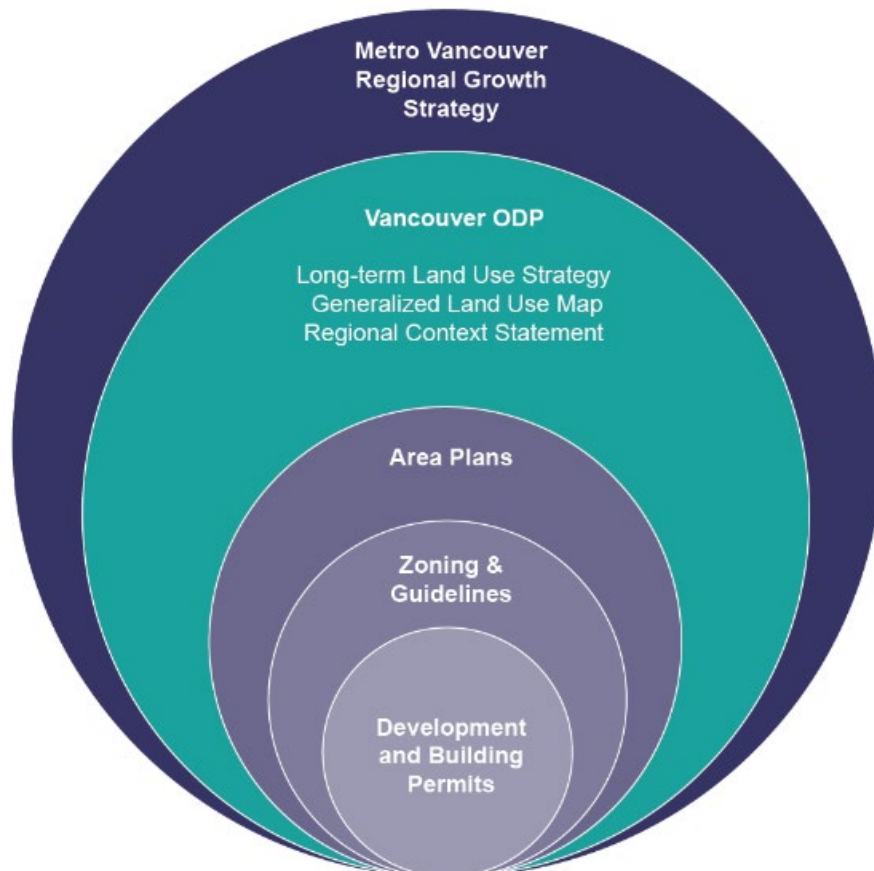
### What is a city-wide ODP?

The Vancouver ODP will be very similar to Official Community Plans in other municipalities in British Columbia. These plans describe the long-term vision of communities, guiding planning and land use management, setting direction for growth and development in a community. The city-wide ODP must incorporate how long-term housing needs are to be met, as well as key infrastructure requirements planned for the city. Council must hold a public hearing to consider the Vancouver ODP, which must be adopted by by-law. Once adopted, all by-laws, regulations, development proposals and works undertaken must be consistent with the ODP. Since the City of Vancouver has authorities and tools available in the *Vancouver Charter* that are distinct from other BC municipalities governed by the *Local Government Act*, the City of Vancouver's will continue to be called an Official Development Plan.

As a by-law that will require conformity of all future by-laws, regulations and proposals, the function of the ODP will differ from how the Vancouver Plan functioned. However, since much of the content required for the ODP already exists in Vancouver Plan, the Vancouver Plan will be

used as the base for the ODP and supplemented with additional information necessary to meet legislative requirements.

### Policy context of the Vancouver ODP



**Figure 4: Policy and Regulatory Context**

The diagram in **Figure 4: Policy and Regulatory Context** summarizes the policy and regulatory framework in which the Vancouver ODP sits. Each circle should align with the higher layer(s) above (in some cases, it *must* align), and the level of detail increases as you move down the diagram.

*Metro Vancouver Regional Growth Strategy:* This is the highest order policy, guiding growth across the Metro Vancouver region. It is the regional federation’s collective vision for how growth will be managed.

*Vancouver ODP:* This is adopted by by-law and sets out long-term policy for land use and development city-wide over the next 20-30 years. The ODP will include the Regional Context Statement that links Vancouver’s land use plans and policies to the Regional Growth Strategy.

*Area plans:* These plans are Council policies, adopted by resolution that provide more detailed direction related to future land use, anticipated densities, heights, and building form at a smaller geographic scale than the ODP. These plans also include supportive policies related to amenities and services required to support growth. The policies and land use within area plans must be guided by and aligned with the Vancouver ODP.

*Zoning and guidelines:* The Zoning and Development By-law regulates development based on policy directions set out by the ODP, Area Plans, policy statements, and rezoning policies. Council adopted guidelines provide guidance on a range of topics and are used in conjunction with a section or district schedule in the Zoning and Development By-law.

*Development and building permits:* Development permits regulate the built form and ensure land uses are appropriately located. Building permits are required for new construction, or additions, alterations, or demolitions. Both types of permits must align with the regulations in the Zoning and Development By-law.

#### What the city-wide ODP is not:

The city-wide ODP is not regulation like a Zoning By-law. Rather, it is a statutory policy document adopted by by-law, containing goals, objectives and policies that will be implemented through area plans, rezoning policies and the Zoning and Development By-law over time. The ODP is also not a replacement for area plans. Area plans and policies will still be required to provide more detailed direction for future land use and development in specific areas of the city.

While the city-wide ODP includes housing needs and infrastructure requirements, it is not a capital planning document, i.e. the City will continue to prepare 10-year Capital Strategic Outlooks and 4-year Capital Plans. The city-wide ODP will inform these capital planning documents.

### **3. Project Approach**

#### General approach to developing a city-wide ODP

There was a high degree of complexity, staff resources and public and stakeholder involvement in developing the Vancouver Plan over four phases of engagement and nearly three years. This resulted in a comprehensive Plan that meets many of the requirements set out by the new Provincial directives. The approach for developing the ODP takes this into account so efforts aren't duplicated and ensures ODP delivery by the Provincially mandated deadline of June 30, 2026. The work program also accounts for the numerous projects currently underway to deliver both Council and Provincial priorities, which will need to be considered and integrated into the ODP work.

Therefore, the proposed approach is to *keep it simple* in order to meet the legislated deadlines. This means working with Vancouver Plan as the “base” of the city-wide ODP, since the Vancouver Plan is anticipated to provide the majority of the content required for the city-wide ODP. New content and consultation for the ODP will be limited to that which is outstanding and required under the *Vancouver Charter*, aside from minor changes that bring the plan up to date with policy recently adopted by Council.

There will be opportunity to build on this document in the next version (June 30, 2030) and future versions thereafter, as Council is required to review the ODP alongside the Housing Needs Report updates every 5 years.

## **Discussion**

### Project Scope

As noted above, to meet the Provincial deadline of June 30, 2026, the scope is limited to



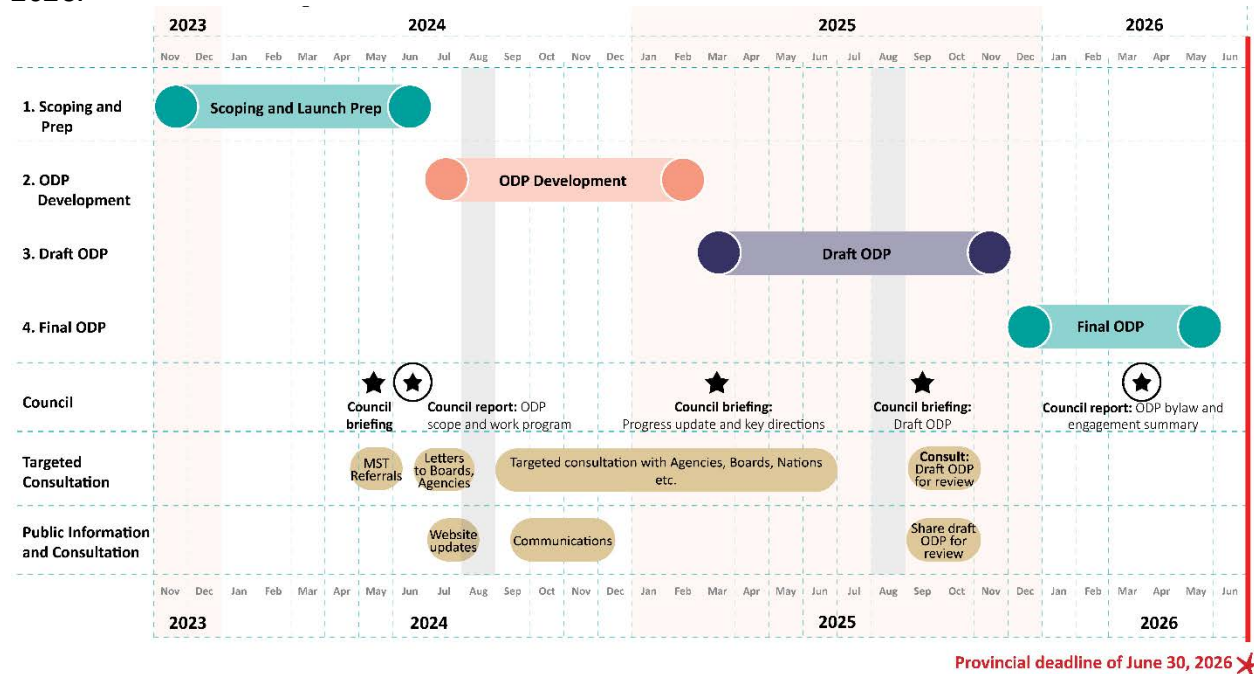
changes and additions to meet the requirements in the *Vancouver Charter* and/or those resulting from new Council policy/direction within the time since Vancouver Plan was adopted.

Accordingly, the Vancouver city-wide ODP will include much of the Vancouver Plan content and the following *additional* content, some of which has already been created:

1. Additional information to meet legislative requirements:
  - i. *Housing needs/targets*
  - ii. *Ecological and hazardous areas and directions content*
  - iii. *Direction related to schools in consultation with VSB/CSF*
  - iv. *Updated Regional Context Statement to support Metro 2050*
  - v. *Utilities / servicing plan – sewer, water, waste treatment, disposal sites*
2. Land use strategy amendments to align with new Provincial legislation, including Transit-Oriented Areas
3. Minor amendments to reference any updated/new Council approved documents/projects
4. Generalized land use map conveying development potential across the city through Council-approved rezoning policies (block level detail)
5. Implementation content
  - i. *Rezoning enabling policy*
  - ii. *Strategy to update the ODP*
  - iii. *Monitoring framework*

The proposed work program will take place in four phases over approximately two years as outlined in **Figure 5**. The project is expected to include public communications to build awareness about the ODP initiative and articulate how it is connected to Vancouver Plan and its implementation. It will include an opportunity for the public to review and comment during the Draft ODP stage. Staff anticipate ongoing consultation with agencies, boards, and Nations throughout the ODP Development and Draft ODP stages.

*Council is obliged by the Provincial legislation to adopt an interim city-wide ODP by June 30, 2026.*



**Figure 5: Vancouver ODP Work Program Timeline**

### General approach to ODP consultation<sup>1</sup> and communications

The City engaged extensively in the making of Vancouver Plan. As a result, the goals of the consultation and communications strategy are as follows:

- Focus ODP consultation on key changes / additions noted above under Project Scope, given deep and extensive engagement for creating Vancouver Plan.
- Meet consultation requirements in the Vancouver Charter.
- Coordinate external consultation / engagement and communications among internal work groups involved in Vancouver Plan implementation projects to ensure consistency of messaging.
- Build public and internal awareness about the ODP initiative and the key additions / changes to Vancouver Plan.
- Communicate clearly to audiences that the ODP is a continuation of Vancouver Plan, which had an extensive engagement process.

### Process participants and audiences

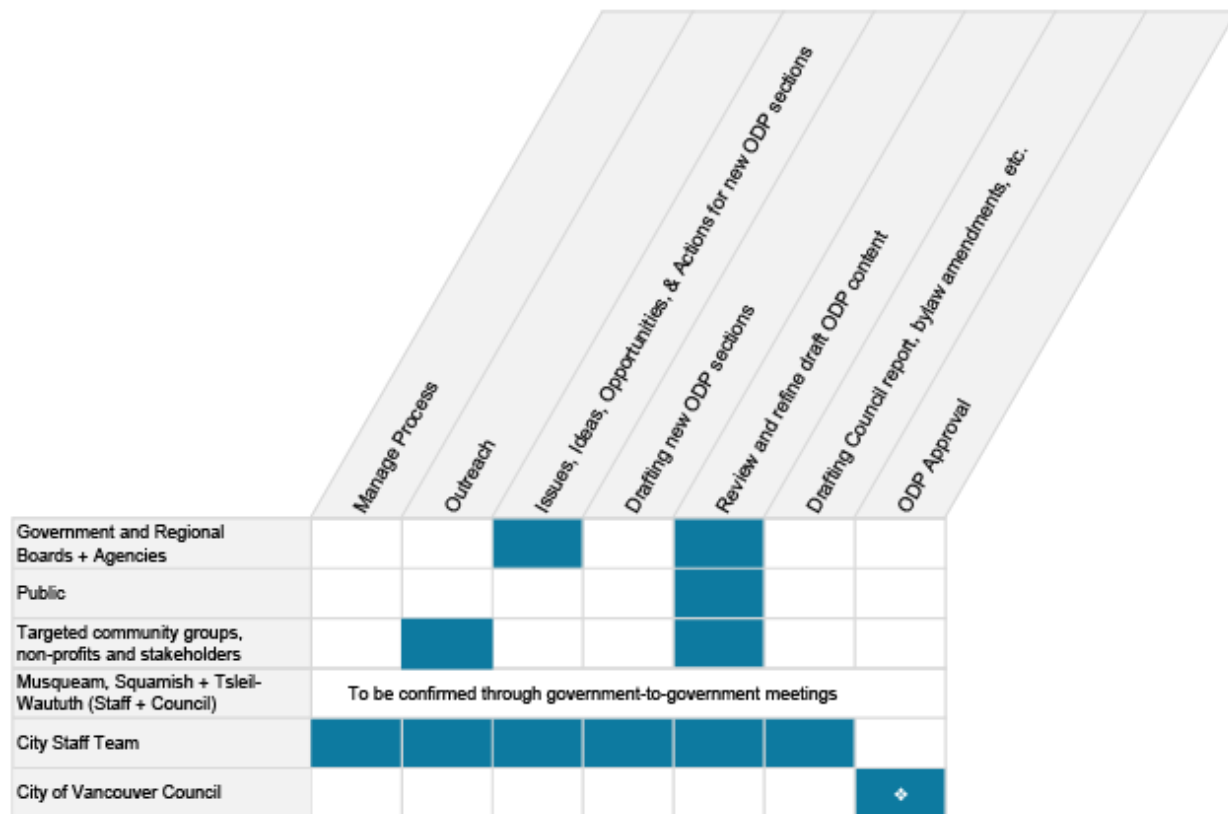
The following process participants have been identified:

- ***xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam Indian Band), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish Nation), and səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation)*** were key partners in developing the Vancouver Plan. Project referrals have been sent to each of the Nations to provide an update on this implementation phase of work, and to invite further engagement on new or updated content for the ODP. There will be capacity funding available for identified engagement opportunities to enable meaningful engagement.
- ***Urban Indigenous Peoples:*** The City also partnered with Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Executive Council (MVAEC) for the development of Vancouver Plan. For the ODP project, staff expect to inform MVAEC and invite further engagement on new or updated content for the ODP.
- ***Boards and Agencies:*** Staff will consult with various boards and agencies. The *Vancouver Charter* includes a requirement to consult with the boards of education (Vancouver School Board and Conseil Scolaire Francophone), and we will also inform and invite regional, provincial and federal boards and agencies, based on their potential interest in key changes and additions to the Vancouver Plan:
  - Regional agencies / authorities such as Metro Vancouver Regional District, Greater Vancouver Water District, Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District, TransLink
  - Provincial authorities / agencies such as BC Housing, Vancouver Coastal Health, BC Hydro, Agricultural Land Commission
  - Federal authorities / agencies such as Vancouver Fraser Port Authority, Ministry of Environment, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Vancouver International Airport

Many of these entities were involved in the creation of Vancouver Plan and their continued participation is uncertain given the limited scope of changes.

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<sup>1</sup> This report uses the term consultation here to mirror the language in the *Vancouver Charter* and also signal to public and stakeholders that it is a more limited activity than 'engagement,' given the significant engagement involved in the development of Vancouver Plan.



**Figure 6: Roles and Responsibilities**

Related work

In addition to the legislation relating to the ODP, other recent/forthcoming legislative requirements from the Province will intersect with this work. Key items which have their own work programs and will need to be reflected in the ODP include:

- The (interim) Housing Needs Report (Bill 44)
- Zoning changes to add Small Scale Multi Unit Housing (SSMUH) options in “restricted zones” before June 30, 2024, (Bill 44)
- Designation of the Transit-Oriented Areas (TOAs) by by-law and Parking By-law changes before June 30, 2024 (Bill 47), which will include a rezoning policy to guide development within these areas
- Zoned capacity analysis to ensure the City has sufficient lands zoned to meet our housing needs (Bill 44)
- Update of the City’s Financing Growth framework, including an implementation approach to develop Amenity Cost Charges (ACCs) as well as changes to Development Cost Levies in 2026 (Bill 46), both of which involve work related to “standards of service in the city”
- Incorporating new inclusionary housing and density benefit by-laws to support the delivery of social and supportive housing and complete neighborhoods (Bill 16)
- Modifications to public hearing procedures, and establishment of development approval procedures (Bill 18)
- Advancement of other workstreams relating to Vancouver Plan Implementation (e.g., ecology land use planning).

## Financial Implications

The PDS staff team and the technical teams from other departments assigned to support the Vancouver ODP will be funded from the respective departments' existing operating budgets.

The enactment of Bill 18 – the Vancouver Charter Amendment Act (No. 2) – presents an opportunity for the City to improve its mid to long-term infrastructure planning to support growth in a financially sustainable way.

The City's ODP must include components such as housing, water and sewer infrastructure, transportation and parks. These components require significant capital funding, both to renew existing assets and expand their capacity to meet demands generated by a growing population and workforce, as well as ongoing funding for operating and lifecycle costs.

A key step is to establish “levels of service”, which involves balancing the desired service needs over 10-20 years within the City's long-term financial capacity. This aligns with Recommendation 13 of the [Mayor's Budget Task Force Report](#), which identified the need to “implement a rigorous capital asset management framework” including establishing “standardized service levels (...) within each area (to) provide a uniform baseline for decision-making” (p. 25).

As key infrastructure components such as water and sewer infrastructure, and transportation are integrated into broader regional systems, this highlights the critical need for a long-term regional infrastructure plan and financial strategy, including how costs are shared among the various municipalities in Metro Vancouver.

It is in this context that the Province made it a requirement for Council to consider “any financial planning documents or policies that the Council considers relevant” before adopting an ODP. Therefore, in support of the Vancouver ODP and as part of the Bill 46 implementation, the City will need to formulate city-wide infrastructure and amenity plans that are financially viable and sustainable over the long term.

## Legal Implications

In accordance with Bill 18, the City of Vancouver is required to approve a city-wide ODP by June 30, 2026. The project scope outlined in this report responds directly to these new legislative requirements; the scope is intentionally limited to ensure the Provincially set deadlines are achievable. A future report to Council will be brought forward with recommendations and a proposed by-law to give effect to the legislation.

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## APPENDIX A

### Bill 18: Vancouver Charter Amendment Act, 2024

The Provincial Legislature approved Bill 18 on April 25, 2024.

According to the provincial news release:

“Proposed legislative amendments will help improve planning and public hearing processes to support the timely delivery of housing for people in Vancouver. If passed by the legislature, Bill 18 – Vancouver Charter Amendment Act (No. 2), 2024, will amend the Vancouver Charter to better align with rules and authorities provided to other local governments under the Local Government Act. The proposed legislation would create change in three key areas.

The legislation requires Vancouver to adopt a city-wide ODP, similar to an official community plan. This requirement will be phased in to reflect that Vancouver does not currently have a city-wide ODP. The legislation also establishes the same rules for public hearings as those set for other local governments. This will phase out one-off public hearings for rezonings for housing projects that are consistent with the ODP. Instead, the emphasis will be on providing opportunities for people to be involved upfront in shaping their communities through the official development plan process.”

More information on the above is available at the following links:

- Website – [News release](#)
- Legislation – [see Bill 18](#)

### Bill 18: Official Development Plans and Public Hearings

#### Intent:

- To replace existing provisions of the Vancouver Charter and update the City’s authorities with regards to the required content and engagement processes pertaining to Official Development Plans
- To prohibit Council from holding a Public Hearing for a rezoning application that is consistent with the ODP, and is at least 50% residential
- To provide Council with the option to waive a Public Hearing for any other rezoning application that is consistent with the ODP
- To introduce other powers and authorities regarding Public Hearing procedures, development application procedures, form of development approval authority, fee authority and other technical changes to give effect to the legislation.
- This legislation applies only to the Vancouver Charter.

## APPENDIX B

### Project Governance Structure

