

DHE comments to Council Jan 7, 2013
(as OCP Implementation Committee Chair)
@ DNV Staff presentation re: further public LVTC consult'n)

Good evening, everyone. The OCP Implementation Committee is 15 members of the public who represent a broad cross-section of community interests, groups and networks. We have volunteered to help advise Staff on 4 things:

1. engaging the community in implementing the 2011 OCP
2. ensuring that implementation is consistent with the OCP
3. strategies related to the Network of Centres Vision and policies (e.g. housing, climate action)
4. monitoring progress toward 11 targets that are listed in the OCP.

I have been involved in planning as a community volunteer for quite a few years, and I appreciate this chance to make a few observations:

- a) There's no mystery about planning. Provincial law requires municipalities to plan for their future. The Metro Region agrees on growth rates for the various municipalities.
- b) Community-based planning has been going on in Lynn Valley since 1994. The 1998 Local Area Plan gave us the new Library and Town Square, plus some re-development which surrounds the Town Centre. Change is.
- c) Most people are too busy to get involved with plans until they see a change that concerns them directly. This is normal.
- d) Change inspires some people, but it scares or angers others. Hopes and fears need to be voiced and understood. This is normal.
- e) Different groups in society have different needs and priorities. That's what makes planning complicated and can sometimes bring up tough choices and loud debate. This is normal.

I think Council, Staff and our Committee would all agree that good planning is about getting as many people involved as possible, and seeing that they understand all of the big issues on the table, as well as their own special concerns. That's why I'm really happy to see more and more people are taking an interest.

There are major consequences for the choices to be made here, including very substantial impacts for not making changes. The OCP involves competing factors which require trade-offs. So it's critically important that lots of people understand the whole picture, the big picture. Housing. Jobs. Taxes. Infrastructure. Transportation. Environment. Parks, public spaces and other amenities. Social well-being. Why does the OCP say what it says? It's that "why" that we need to understand and talk about.

For the last 3 years Council and Staff have tried hard to get the public's attention through a wide-open, inclusive OCP process. Now that people are getting more engaged, I am hopeful that the outcome will be thoughtful, sensible choices about implementing it. So to everyone here, please do what you can to learn about the OCP, and to get your friends and neighbours involved. It's our future and our childrens' future and it matters. Thank you.