



# Village Update

## SPECIAL EDITION

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## UPDATES FROM MUNICIPALITY

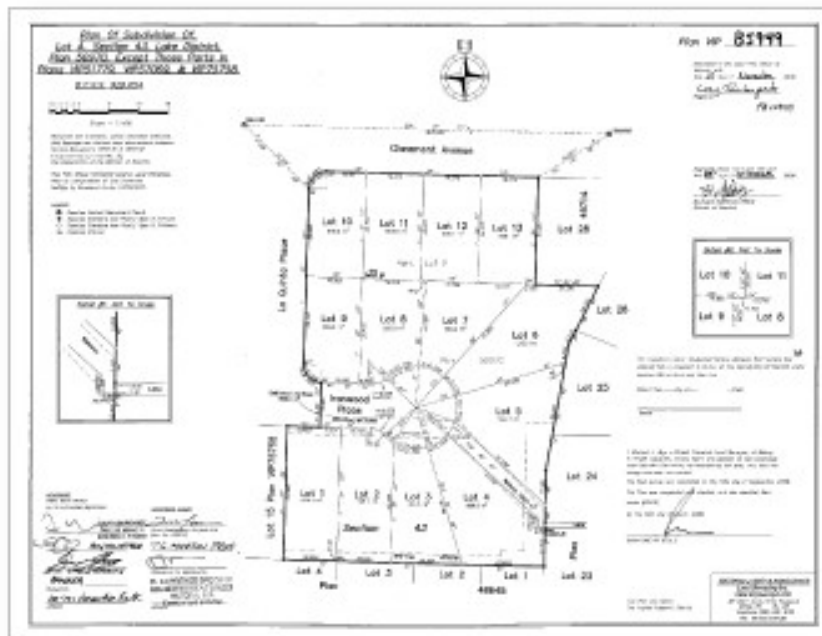
### Planning Update – Clarifying Current Planning Processes in Lions Bay

The Municipality is providing the following information in response to a number of misleading and increasingly sensationalized comments currently circulating online regarding planning matters in Lions Bay. The purpose of this update is to clarify the nature of the various processes currently underway, what they involve, and equally importantly, what they do not involve.

At present, there are three separate and unrelated matters before the Municipality that appear to have become conflated in some public discussion.

**1.** The first relates to a subdivision application in the Kelvin Grove area. Under British Columbia legislation, subdivision applications are primarily governed through the *Land Title Act* and the *Local Government Act*. Unlike rezonings, subdivision applications are not determined by Council. The statutory decision-maker is the Approving Officer, who is required to independently assess applications based on technical compliance with applicable bylaws and regulations.

The current application has received a Preliminary Layout Review letter, which outlines a comprehensive series of technical requirements that must be addressed before any subdivision approval can be considered. These requirements are standard for subdivision applications in Lions Bay and most communities and include matters such as geotechnical assessment, environmental review where applicable, servicing capacity for water, sewer, stormwater and utilities, roadway access, and compliance with the *Zoning Bylaw*. Each proposed lot must demonstrate a viable and safe building envelope. Importantly, no building permits have been issued, and **the subdivision process itself does not authorize/permit development activity**. If the technical subdivision requirements can be met, a subdivision application approval simply results in the registration of a plan of subdivision in the Land Title and Survey Authority British Columbia. Here is an example of what a plan of subdivision can look like (**this is not from Lions Bay**):



**2.** The second matter is the June 2 Public Hearing regarding proposed amendments to the RS-1 provisions within the *Zoning and Development Bylaw*. Contrary to some statements online, this is not a broad “rush to change zoning bylaws” or a municipality-wide densification initiative. Rather, the proposed amendments address long-standing technical deficiencies and internal inconsistencies within the existing Bylaw. It does not “suddenly” permit the increased densification of the municipality. This is another proposed amendment in a series of Zoning Bylaw amendments that have been before Council for its consideration.

The issue: currently, the RS-1 Zone establishes a base minimum parcel area of 8,000 m<sup>2</sup> while also containing provisions permitting reduced lot sizes to a minimum of 700 m<sup>2</sup> where Community Amenity Contributions (CACs) are provided [Bylaw 520 - Zoning and Development Certified \(Consolidation BL650\).docx.pdf](#). However, the Municipality does not have a CAC policy or framework which would set out a clear path for pursuing the existing 700 m<sup>2</sup> mls, nor is such a policy a legal tool in this context. As a result, the existing *Bylaw* language creates planning and legal concerns. **What this proposed amendment does not do is introduce a new/different minimum lot size than what already exists in the *Zoning Bylaw*.**

The proposed amendment seeks to address these technical and legal deficiencies by establishing a clearer and more defensible framework tied to actual planning, technical, and servicing considerations rather than an inappropriate CAC reference – and is based on existing minimum lot size language. Importantly, practical subdivision potential in Lions Bay remains heavily constrained by geotechnical conditions, environmental limitations, servicing requirements, topography, and the ability to establish compliant building envelopes. **Even where a technical minimum lot size exists in the Bylaw, the physical realities of the community significantly limit subdivision opportunities.** The scope of the June 2 **Public Hearing is limited to representations regarding removal of the reference to existing *Zoning Bylaw* language pertaining to Community Amenity Contributions and the minimum lot size conflict of 8,000 m<sup>2</sup> versus 700 m<sup>2</sup>.** The Public Hearing is not intended to hear representations on other matters pertaining to zoning or land use.

**3.** The third and entirely separate matter is the *Official Community Plan (OCP)* (2008) and *Zoning Bylaw* (2017) Refresh process. The Village has received \$155,786 in Provincial funding specifically intended to support housing-related planning initiatives, including modernization of the OCP and Zoning Bylaw. The current OCP and Zoning Bylaw are dated and were developed prior to many significant legislative, demographic, environmental, and housing-related changes affecting municipalities across British Columbia. **This is not for the purpose of compliance with Bill 44 obligations.**

The purpose of this process is not to fundamentally transform the community, but rather to modernize and update existing planning documents so they align with current legislation, planning practices, and local needs. **The funding must be expended by December 31, 2026.** While the timeframe is tight, the work is achievable given the relatively modest scale of the Municipality's planning framework and the fact that the process contemplates a refresh and modernization rather than a complete rewrite.

Importantly, the **OCP and Zoning Bylaw Refresh process will involve a comprehensive public engagement program utilizing a variety of methods and opportunities for community participation.** Details regarding the engagement process will be released once finalized. The process also presents an opportunity to explore tools currently absent in Lions Bay, including Development Permit Areas and associated guidelines related to hazard lands, environmentally sensitive areas, and FireSmart principles, for example.

The Municipality recognizes that planning matters can generate strong opinions and interest within the community. However, residents are encouraged to rely on factual information and direct communication with municipal staff rather than inflammatory or inaccurate online commentary. If community members would like further information regarding any of these processes, they are encouraged to contact the Municipal Office directly or arrange to speak with staff.



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