



The City of Whitehorse is Rewriting the Zoning Bylaw!

A main function of the Planning and Building Services Department is to draft and enforce land use regulations. The broad vision and specific land use policies that guide planning are set out in the Official Community Plan (OCP).

In 2002, the City completed a two-year review of the OCP. This process involved public consultation and resulted in the development of an updated OCP. The City is now working on rewriting the Zoning Bylaw regulations to reflect any changes to land use policies laid out in the new OCP. The Zoning Bylaw amendment process will take place in the fall of 2004 and will include public and stakeholder consultation.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

Property owners and residents should be aware that changes to the Zoning Bylaw can lead to new land use and development regulations, which could affect both homes and businesses. The Planning and Building Services Department has been carrying out **Part 1** of the Zoning Bylaw update, which involves drafting changes resulting from OCP implementation.

Part 2 of this process, public consultation, will get underway late October. City staff will present the proposed changes and finalize the Zoning Bylaw amendments based on the comments received.

Watch for the following **opportunities for input** starting in October: public

open houses, bylaw drafts online, meetings with community associations, public hearing and ads in the City pages.

For more information contact Senior Planner Mike Gau at 668-8333 or new.zoning@city.whitehorse.yk.ca.

WHAT'S NEW?

Some of the changes envisioned for the Zoning Bylaw include implementation of the policies in the OCP, new landscaping regulations and the designation of new Environmental Protection areas.

The existing Zoning Bylaw can be viewed online at www.city.whitehorse.yk.ca or purchased from the Planning Services Office. A copy is also available at the Whitehorse Public Library.

Plan our Downtown

The City of Whitehorse is beginning work on a new Downtown Plan which will replace the existing plan completed in 1994. In recent years there has been significant downtown development and a new plan is needed to foster continued growth in the heart of Whitehorse.

Downtowns across Canada have come under increased threats. Changes in retail patterns, population shift towards the suburbs, the loss of heritage resources, the dominance of vehicular traffic and the deterioration of infrastructure are all undermining traditional downtowns. Municipalities everywhere are undertaking downtown planning exercises to ensure that their city centres remain strong.

Downtown Whitehorse is a vibrant, lively and historic area. The city centre is home to a mix of land uses and activities and is a year-round destination for residents and visitors alike.

The Official Community Plan (OCP) for Whitehorse, completed in 2002, outlines broad community planning goals and provides the context for the Downtown Plan. According to the OCP, the Downtown Vision is *"To maintain a strong sense of community by locating essential services and commercial opportunities downtown."*

The downtown planning process will get underway this fall and will involve significant public input, an analysis of the

issues facing our downtown and the development of specific strategies aimed at shaping growth in the city's core. The Downtown Plan will focus on issues such as heritage, urban design, pedestrian linkages, parking, transportation, parks, housing and commercial development.

To complete this process, the City will be working with a consultant and an Advisory Committee. There will be a range of opportunities for public input throughout the year-long planning exercise. Your involvement in the Downtown Plan will ensure that an innovative, relevant and practical plan is produced.

Please contact Zoë Morrison at 668-8338 for further information.

Watershed Wonderings – A Watershed Management Update

The City of Whitehorse is preparing a Watershed Management Plan to help ensure continued high quality drinking water for the City. The importance of this exercise is outlined in the City's Official Community Plan, which states:

The protection of Schwaatka Lake and the surrounding watershed is of paramount importance. The City shall preserve, protect and enhance water supply areas by keeping recharge areas free from incompatible development and sources of contamination.

The idea of developing a plan to guide land use in relation to our watershed has been around for many years. Besides being part of the Official Community Plan, the concept was included in the Yukon River Corridor Plan (1999) as well as in many other discussions and planning processes.

Watershed management plans for drinking water protection are a necessity if we are to prevent the kinds of water-borne disease outbreaks that have occurred elsewhere.

The intent of this project is to have a realistic watershed management plan that recommends actions that should be taken to protect our drinking water. Such actions may include strengthening or filling gaps in existing bylaws or management policies, or limiting or prohibiting certain uses and types of developments. Besides recommending specific actions for the City of Whitehorse, the plan also outlines appropriate 'best management practices' that citizens, visitors, contractors and other watershed users should adopt.

Preparation of the watershed plan started in the spring of 2003 with the hiring of a

team of environmental consultants (UMA Engineering of Victoria and Environmental Dynamics of Whitehorse). In preparing the watershed plan the consultants reviewed the existing land planning policies, looked at the risks facing the watershed, and discussed key issues with stakeholders and other Whitehorse residents. A first draft of the plan was released in December 2003. Based on concerns and comments about that first draft, a revised plan was released in April 2004. A final draft of the Plan will be presented to City Council in the fall of 2004.

If you have questions about the watershed management plan, or if you would like a copy of the latest draft, please contact Mr. Ross Burnett, the City's Habitat Coordinator at 668-8347 or habitat@city.whitehorse.yk.ca.

Shipyards Park – The City's Newest Park

The Downtown Riverfront Plan outlines a vision for the waterfront. This vision is focussed on creating a vibrant, public, mixed-use area that includes multi-family dwellings, stores, restaurants, tourist accommodation, marine activities, parks and open space. Shipyards Park, located between the Yukon River and 2nd Avenue, is at the northern end of downtown and is just one small piece of the future of the City's waterfront.

Shipyards Park was designed to be enjoyed year round and to provide access to the river. A large open space for festivals and community events, an outdoor amphitheatre, a toboggan hill and a skating loop all support Whitehorse as a Winter Festival City.

Work began on the park in 2003 and included site preparation, water and sewer servicing, parking lot and trail construction, installation of the irrigation system and the initial landscaping.

The official opening took place in December 2003.

This year the electrical work was completed and the plans for the picnic shelters and landscaping were finalized. There is, however, still a lot of work left to do before Shipyards Park is finished. We will be installing the final sculpture, adding benches, bike racks and wind blocks and planting the remaining trees and shrubs in the near future.

Future plans for Shipyards Park include the continuation of the trolley track north through the park, the restoration of the heritage buildings, the addition of a large fire pit, an outdoor amphitheatre, a boat launch and a viewing platform as well as the construction of a park building housing a warm up area and other park facilities.

Come down and check out the progress on your new waterfront park!

Planning & Building Services Contacts

Planning: 867-668-8335

Building Inspections: 867-668-8346

Fax: 867-668-8395

Anne Bruce, Planning Clerk, 668-8335
anne.bruce@city.whitehorse.yk.ca

Lesley Cabott, Manager of Planning & Building Services, 668-8337
lesley.cabott@city.whitehorse.yk.ca

Mike Gau, Senior Planner, 668-8333
mike.gau@city.whitehorse.yk.ca

Zoë Morrison, Planner, 668-8338
zoe.morrison@city.whitehorse.yk.ca

John MacDougall, Development Officer, 668-8334
john.macdougall@city.whitehorse.yk.ca

Pat Ross, Planning Technologist, 668-8339
pat.ross@city.whitehorse.yk.ca

Ross Burnett, Habitat Coordinator, 668-8347
ross.burnett@city.whitehorse.yk.ca

Joy Janssens, Building Clerk, 668-8340
joy.janssens@city.whitehorse.yk.ca

Carla Pshebylo, Building Clerk, 668-8346
carla.pshebylo@city.whitehorse.yk.ca



Please direct feedback regarding this newsletter to Zoë Morrison at 668-8338.