

City of Fernie
Official Community Plan Task Force
Terms of Reference

Adopted by Resolution of Council **XX**

1. PURPOSE

To provide the City of Fernie with valuable insights and suggestions on various community matters concerning the Housing Needs Report and Official Community Plan (OCP) update.

2. MISSION

The OCP Task Force's mission is to deliver balanced, community-driven guidance that shapes a long-term vision for the municipality. By representing a broad cross-section of interests and perspectives, the Task Force will actively assist and support City Administration and the consultant team in the OCP update, enabling alignment with shared community values, while enhancing the quality of life for Fernie residents.

3. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 The Official Community Plan Task Force's role is to advise the OCP project team on all matters related to the City of Fernie's Official Community Plan (OCP). The Task Force acts as an advisor to Administration and the consultant team, with final decisions in all matters brought before the Task Force resting with City Council and staff.

3.2 Responsibilities of the OCP Task Force are as follows:

- Provide input and counsel on key issues, opportunities, and community priorities.
- Review and provide general guidance and advice on OCP goals, objectives, policies, and implementation strategies.
- Assist the municipality in identifying and evaluating draft policy directions and potential alternatives to key community issues.
- Review draft policy directions, scenario options and recommendations.

- Bring forward diverse perspectives and local knowledge, taking into consideration input from the public.
- Participate in community engagement activities and promote throughout the community when available.
- Support education and advocacy of the OCP.
- Respond and execute to other duties as identified by the City of Fernie staff and Council.

3.3 While carrying out the duties and responsibilities of the Task Force, all efforts shall be made to:

- Create a supportive space for sharing ideas and opinions.
- Emphasize learning by listening to others.
- Collaborate to achieve positive outcomes, solutions, and recommendations.
- Honour past decisions while planning for the future.
- Consider all members in the community in decision-making.

3.4 Specific roles and responsibilities of individual Task Force members include:

- Serve as a liaison between the Task Force and the broader community by listening to public concerns, sharing ideas from diverse voices, and relaying Task Force updates back to the community where appropriate.
- Engage respectfully with other members, City staff, and consultants, with a focus on consensus-building and solution-oriented dialogue.
- Acknowledge the advisory nature of the Task Force, recognizing that final decisions rest with City Council.
- Support the OCP engagement process by promoting events and activities and encouraging broad participation from all sectors of the community.
- Be mindful of and responsive to equity, diversity, and inclusion in all Task Force discussions, considering the needs of all Fernie residents.
- Respect the confidentiality of sensitive materials or discussions as needed and uphold the integrity of the Task Force by avoiding conflicts of interest and acting in the public interest at all times.
- Bring their lived experience, professional expertise, or local knowledge to the process, but must remain open to new ideas and perspectives to provide a balanced and community-centred approach to policy development.

4. APPOINTMENT AND MEMBERSHIP

4.1 Task Force members shall be appointed by City Council from interested applicants, as recommended from Administration, that demonstrate an understanding of, and interest in, the goals, objectives, and policies articulated within the OCP.

4.2 The OCP Task Force will strive to reflect the diversity of the community, including a range of ages, lived experiences, cultural backgrounds, and perspectives. Task Force members will be selected to ensure broad representation of local interests and community knowledge.

4.3 The Task Force should include both subject-matter perspectives and community-based experience for a well-rounded and community-informed process. Membership will aim to include individuals with experience, interest, or involvement in areas including, but not limited to:

- Environmental stewardship and climate resilience;
- Health, wellness, and social services;
- Housing;
- Land development;
- Local business, entrepreneurship, and the economy;
- Arts, culture, and heritage;
- Education and youth development;
- Tourism and recreation;
- Transportation and mobility;
- Indigenous relations and reconciliation;
- Resources;
- Equity, diversity, and inclusion; and
- Community members at large, including youth, seniors, renters, and families.

4.4 The OCP Advisory Task Force will include 8 community members. Recruitment tactics will comply with City practices and include public notice.

4.5 Council will appoint one Council member and one alternate to the OCP Task Force.

4.6 The Mayor is an “ex-officio” member of the Task Force and possesses all the rights, power, privileges and duties of the other members when present at a meeting of the Task Force.

4.7 The CAO shall appoint a staff liaison. They are not a member of the Task Force. Their role is to provide information and professional advice;

- Support the chairperson in promoting effective committee function;
- Assist with the preparation of reports to Council;
- Assist with creating Task Force workplans; and
- Provide orientation for Task Force members.

4.8 Designated members of staff will attend the OCP Task Force meetings. Staff resources to the Task Force shall be comprised of:

- The Chief Administrative Officer;
- The Director of Operational Services;
- The Director of Planning;
- Staff support; or
- Other designates.

4.9 Administrative Support

- Administrative support will be available for:
 - Providing procedural advice; and
 - Supporting the staff liaison in developing and distributing agendas, arranging meetings, taking and distributing minutes, and supporting the recruitment of members.

4.10 Task Force members are expected to attend meetings regularly. Efforts in attendance should be made to ensure majority of the Task Force is present for decision purposes. Should a member want to resign from the Task Force, a letter to that effect needs to be sent to Council, and proper notice procedures to follow to appoint a new member.

4.11 The term for membership in the Task Force shall conclude upon completion of the project. Members must wait one year after stepping down to be eligible for reappointment to the Task Force.

4.12 Task Force members will serve without remuneration.

5. DECISION-MAKING AND VOTING

5.1 The Task Force will operate primarily by consensus and be a non-voting group.

Where consensus cannot be reached and a decision is required to provide clear direction to the OCP team, a simple majority vote may be conducted. Votes are

non-binding and serve to inform recommendations to the OCP project team or Administration prior to bringing forward direction and policies to Council.

6. MEETING GUIDELINES

6.1 Task Force meetings will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Community Charter and Council Procedure Bylaw, including, but not limited to, the requirements for notice of meetings, scheduling, minutes, quorum, conduct and debate.

6.2 The Task Force will select one of its members as the chair. The chair will be appointed from the date that the committee is established by a resolution of Council.

6.3 After each meeting, the Task Force must submit meeting minutes to the Director of Corporate Administration Services for inclusion on Council Agendas as information.

7. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

7.1 Task Force members must avoid any conflicts of interest.

- A conflict arises when a member is a director, employee, or member of an organization seeking benefits from the City based on the Task Force's recommendation, or when a member has a financial interest, direct or indirect, in the Task Force's decisions. A conflict of interest does not occur if the Task Force member's financial interest is shared by the general members of the municipality or if the financial interest is too minor or distant to reasonably influence the Task Force member's judgment on the matter.
- An interest is any personal, professional, or organizational involvement that a Task Force member has in a subject matter being discussed. Interests are natural and expected. Members are often selected because of their relevant experience, knowledge, or connections. Simply having an interest does not disqualify a member from participating in Task Force discussions.

7.2 Where a conflict of interest exists, the Task Force member must take the following actions:

- Declare and state the general nature of why there is a conflict of interest.

- Immediately leave the meeting or the part of the meeting where the matter is being discussed, ensuring to not take part in any discussions or potential votes on the matter.
- Not attempt to influence consensus, recommendations or voting on the matter at any time, whether before, during, or after the meeting.

7.3 When a Task Force member declares a conflict of interest, the Task Force must take the following actions:

- The Task Force must document the member's declaration, including the stated reasons, and the times of the member's departure and return, if applicable, in the meeting minutes.
- The Task Force chair must ensure the member is absent during any vote on the matter.

7.4 If a perceived conflict of interest arises, the member may acknowledge the perception but is not required to declare a conflict or leave the meeting if they believe no actual conflict exists.

7.5 If the Task Force believes a member has an undeclared conflict of interest, it may request a review by the Director of Corporate Administration Services. If the issue remains unresolved, it can be referred to Council for further review.

8. AUTHORITY AND REPORTING

8.1 Task Force members will not represent themselves as having any authority beyond what has been delegated by Council.

8.2 The Task Force may contact external organizations and agencies to gather information and make inquiries. However, it must secure the City's approval before expressing opinions or making recommendations to them.