

April 18, 2011

David Widdis
Central Okanagan Regional District
1450 KLO Rd.
Kelowna, BC
V1W 3Z4

Re: Review of New Monaco and the Regional Growth Strategy

Dear David:

Thank you for meeting with me to discuss the consultation and planning process on updating the regional growth strategy.

I have attached a document that outlines how we see New Monaco aligning closely with the Regional Growth Strategy. We reviewed the RGS in detail and have addressed all of the goals and objectives in the RGS that apply to a neighbourhood planning project.

I look forward to further discussions with you on this project and I look forward to participating in the next several years of discussion on the RGS update.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Holland", is positioned above a light blue rectangular background.

Mark Holland MCIP, LEED
Principal

Nanaimo: 320-256 Wallace St, Nanaimo, BC V9R 5B3

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A Regional Growth Strategy Evaluation of the New Monaco Neighbourhood Plan

Introduction

This document describes a new master planned community called New Monaco that is being planned in Peachland and outlines how it addresses and fits with the Central Okanagan Regional Growth Strategy.

Description of New Monaco

New Monaco is a new neighbourhood to be located on the eastern edge of Peachland on a piece of land that has the following characteristics:

- 125 acres
- between Highway 97 and Highway 97C (Connector)
- Not in the ALR
- Identified in Peachland's OCP as an area requiring an Area Structure Plan (ASP)

The project is part way through the process to develop an ASP and have it approved, including:

- An ASP application was submitted in Nov 2010 following several years of meetings and work with government agencies and the community;
- Multiple public meetings have been held to discuss issues and ideas with the community for refinements for the proposed project;
- Council gave the project 1st and 2nd reading in February 8, 2011;
- On April 12th, 2011, Council approved to send it to public hearing;
- A public hearing will be scheduled for May 12, 2011, with a 3rd reading proposed for late May.

The master plan that is being proposed for the ASP is based on the principles of sustainable development, and includes the following characteristics.

- A medium to high density, mixed use village, with a diversity of multi-family housing;
- A focus on pedestrians and transit for future mobility;
- Green buildings;
- An innovative landscape design strategy that addresses environmental preservation and enhancement, recreation, arts and culture, and food production;
- Innovative infrastructure to support energy efficiency, reduced GHG emissions, water conservation, and solid waste reduction;
- Community facilities to support a diverse population; and

- A foundation of jobs in the health / wellness / medical sector, supported by other sectors including digital technology, tourism and arts and culture.

Evaluation of New Monaco according to RGS goals and intent

New Monaco’s plan is fully aligned with the intent and goals of the RGS that are applicable to the development of a new neighbourhood, as outlined below:

RGS Goal # 1. Improve the quality of life through enhancement of the arts, culture, tourism, and recreation opportunities within the region.

- New Monaco will offer a high quality of life for its residents of all income levels, as well as increase the scope of recreation opportunities, cultural expression, arts and tourism opportunities for residents in Peachland and the larger region.

RGS Goal # 3. Ensure the financial well being of our municipalities and region through limitations on sprawl and the efficient use of land, resources, energy, and infrastructure.

- New Monaco is planned to be a highly efficient, medium to high density neighbourhood built around the principles of sustainable communities.

It has servicing (water, power, gas, telecommunications, etc) and is along the main transportation / transit route in the Valley.

It will pursue advanced green buildings and infrastructure wherever possible, including targeting a 50% reduction in per capita water consumption than Peachland’s current levels.

RGS Goal # 4. Coordinate future growth with the provision of adequate and affordable infrastructure.

- All new infrastructure upgrades will be paid for by New Monaco.

RGS Goal # 5. Reduce traffic congestion and improve the transportation system.

- New Monaco will be built around a pedestrian and transit-oriented plan, with the intent of having people chose walking, cycling, small electric mobility or transit instead of driving. The trail and greenway network on the site is intended to be the primary choice of travel for residents.

The developer intends to develop a shuttle service early in the project to connect workers and residents both to downtown Peachland and to the rapid-bus terminus in West
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Kelowna. A rapid bus stop will be planned into the project near the highway and it is intended that this neighbourhood would have one of the highest transit-mode shares of any neighbourhood in the Okanagan when it is complete and the rapid bus is connected to it.

RGS Goal # 6. Expand the economic base of the region's towns and rural communities.

- Peachland currently has few local employers and jobs. It is primarily a residential community with approximately 94% of its tax base residential.

New Monaco is focusing on jobs as its cornerstone, particularly through attracting and building for a medical services cluster, a supporting technology cluster, tourism, arts and local shopping. When the development is complete, Deloitte's economic impact study for the project estimated 1500 full time jobs would be created.

RGS Goal # 7. Protect the integrity of the agriculture and forest land base.

- New Monaco is planned for a site that has had a small orchard in the past, but is not in the ALR. The plan intends to install a significant numbers of community garden plots, a small orchard, vineyard, and a farmers market, based on a comprehensive food system strategy for the project.
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RGS Goal # 8. Improve the range of housing opportunities to meet the social and economic needs of the region.

- The majority of Peachland's housing is single family at this time. New Monaco intends to develop almost exclusively multi-family housing in a wide diversity of types. It also is committed to offering housing that supports all income levels, in order to have a vibrant, diverse and complete village neighbourhood.

New Monaco has committed to having 10% of its housing as "affordable" according to Peachland's classifications.

RGS Goal # 9. Improve regional air and water quality, and generally promote development that sustains and enhances the environment.

- New Monaco is pursuing advanced water conservation systems and will design stormwater runoff systems to ensure groundwater percolation and health. New Monaco's focus on pedestrians and transit will further support regional air quality standards.

A comprehensive sustainable development strategy is being developed for the project to ensure it meets the highest possible standards of sustainability performance in every area, including land use, transportation, buildings, landscape design, infrastructure, social facilities, food systems and economic diversity.

RGS Goal # 10. Protect the scenic quality of the region and preserve significant features, open space and cultural heritage resources.

- The rural edges of the site are planned to be protected and enhanced wherever possible in order to retain the rural edge experience along that area of the highway. In addition, in keeping with the principles to provide as much green space as possible and to development with the least disturbance to the natural landscape, New Monaco has planned to focus density on 2/3 of the site where the minimal disturbance is required leaving the western area closest to the existing Peachland community with very little development in order to retain its existing trees and rural edge character

A rich parks and trails network will be provided in the neighbourhood to enhance recreational and cultural opportunities.

New Monaco is also working with the Peachland Historical Society to foreground the history of Peachland in the design of the project, including in the naming of streets, trails, parks and other elements.

New Monaco and RGS process for new projects outside of existing town centers

One of the directives of the RGS is to encourage communities to combat sprawl through addressing infill in their current downtown areas. The ultimate goal for this is to reduce emissions and environmental impact across the whole Valley as well as to ensure efficient infrastructure systems with a density of development that can pay for future maintenance and upgrades with the tax base that is serviced.

The following outlines how New Monaco addresses all of the goals of the RGS that are applicable to a new neighbourhood plan.

1. All local governments shall use appropriate tools to place greater emphasis on containing urban growth to Town Centres and those areas already fully serviced, toward realization of Official Community Plan objectives. Growth and redevelopment in existing settlement areas with full services will be supported prior to supporting growth and development elsewhere.

- While locating urban growth to Town Centres suits many municipalities it encounters challenges when a Town Center is highly constrained due to topography, in which case the RGS directive of avoiding urban sprawl by ensuring that development takes place where adequate facilities exist or can be provided in a timely, economic and efficient manner would be the best application.

The downtown of Peachland is topographically constrained far more than any other town center in the Okanagan, and its current plan for intensification of its downtown has been approved, and only includes a

maximum of 800 units. As these are mostly multi-family, this means that Peachland's downtown can only accommodate approximately 1600 new residents, not counting the displacement of existing residents in the areas planned for redevelopment.

In the context of the next 50 years of growth in the Valley, this topographical constraint leaves Peachland unable to develop a greater mix of housing diversity, amenities, and a stronger job base to support its future.

Furthermore, without additional residential density in other areas of Peachland, the proposed commercial/retail uses in the downtown redevelopment plan will not have the critical mass of residents to provide the expenditure to attract strong retail tenants and therefore difficult to be sustainable according to Collier International's expert retail consultant. Currently, existing businesses have difficulty surviving in Peachland in a context of older buildings and lower rents. The increased cost of new buildings with higher rent is likely to be untenable for most businesses, resulting in a structural situation where more residents will have to drive to Kelowna and West Kelowna for most day to day needs, adding to GHG emissions.

In this context, Peachland needs to support growth in a smart manner in its other major neighbourhoods. In its OCP, it has identified 3 major neighbourhood areas to accommodate future development including: Ponderosa, New Monaco and Lower Princeton. Peachland is pursuing the planning and approvals of development in all of these areas concurrent to its downtown.

New Monaco is a serviced site along the major rapid bus corridor in the Valley that is planned in the future to connect Peachland to the other communities. The site has water, gas, electricity, telecommunications and major road access and as such, is one of the best places in Peachland to support growth in order to meet regional goals.

2. Residential development in existing or new urban areas should include a range of housing type, density, and affordability options.

- New Monaco will offer a diversity of housing, primarily multi-family, at a wide range of price points, including entry level housing, housing for families, and supportive housing for seniors (including independent, partly assisted, and fully assisted living).

10% of the total housing stock will meet Peachland's

affordable housing requirements.

3. Urban services, including an adequate supply of potable water, an appropriate means of sewage treatment and solid waste disposal, and an appropriate means of access must be available before development is permitted to occur.

- The New Monaco site is serviced with potable water supply, currently used for irrigating the orchard. It will need upgrading to service the development. New Monaco is working with Peachland to incorporate this plan into its Water Master Plan as was envisioned by Council when they approved the Terms of Reference for this ASP planning process in 2008.

The District has had water studies completed and in March, 28, 2011, the District's consultants, Urban Systems stated that there was enough water in its Water Master Plan to supply all proposed developments at full build out, in a 1:200 year drought, including allowances for climate change and beetle kill impacts.

Sewage treatment will be through the regional system. Some on-site greater treatment for re-use as irrigation may be pursued if appropriate.

Solid waste systems will support recycling and composting throughout.

A plan for innovative energy infrastructure is being considered with Fortis BC at this time, including possibly a district heating system with access to geexchange, solar and other renewable sources of heating and cooling.

4. Proposals for new growth areas, major OCP Amendments and major infrastructure projects shall assess the following:

- *The impact on existing services and facilities, and the ability of local governments and agencies to provide services in a timely, affordable, and effective manner;*
- *The short and long-term fiscal impact of the development on the community.*

- New Monaco can be serviced with all required infrastructure easily in the development timeline proposed, and it is working with the District and Provincial Ministries closely on all issues.

New Monaco will pay for all new infrastructure costs. Beyond initial infrastructure costs, the levels of density, mixed uses and efficiency expected from the proposed plan will guarantee a comfortable tax base from the project to cover all future infrastructure management costs (unlike single family projects in the Valley which almost never cover their future infrastructure maintenance costs).

5. *Require an environmental review of developments deemed to impact the ability of the land, watershed, and other natural resources to accommodate the proposed development.*

- New Monaco has undertaken a sequence of environmental studies to ensure development protects and enhances environmentally sensitive areas. A minimum of 11% of the site area is proposed for parks, with the greatest area set aside for natural areas protection.

Beyond protection, the project intends to develop an ecosystem enhancement strategy to guide landscape design throughout the site to enhance habitat for birds and other species.

6. *Urban development is to be directed away from hazardous areas, sensitive environmental areas, resource extraction areas, and farmlands, to reduce land use conflicts and development encroachments.*

- New Monaco is identified in Peachland's OCP as one of areas requiring an ASP for future development. New Monaco site plan is being structured around the sensitive areas on the site, to ensure they are adequately protected. Currently a minor part of the site is in agriculture, with about 8 acres of apple orchard and 3 acres of Peaches. With low prices for it crops and high costs, orchardists are experiencing increasing difficulty in finding labor at harvest time, a sizable portion of the fruits are left unpicked each year.

New Monaco has plan to install significant numbers of community garden plots, a small orchard, vineyard, and is in conversation with UBCO exploring a partnership to experiment a high output organic farming initiative.

7. *The efficiency of the transportation system is to be maximized by:*

- *integrating land use and transportation planning;*
- *making more efficient use of the existing infrastructure;*
- *investing in transit and other travel demand management programs;*
- *providing safe and convenient places to walk, cycle, and access transit;*
- *supporting initiatives which reduce the need to travel and support other modes of travel (e.g. telecommuting, pedestrian-friendly*

- New Monaco will be developed to meet this RGS goal as follows:
 - The neighbourhood is a mixed use plan that offers a strong balance of work, live, play, learn, and shop where residents needs are designed to be met with a pedestrian oriented focus;
 - This neighbourhood will add significant density (approx 5,000 residential population plus 150,000 of office space) to the existing road and transit corridor infrastructure, thereby making the future rapid bus line much more efficient;
 - A fine-grained network of paths and greenways will be provided to connect the entire site in a convenient way for pedestrians, cyclists and those using electric scooters or other similar micro-transport modes;
 - New Monaco will invest in an access to Highway 97 that ensures save access to the
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<p><i>communities, mixed-use developments);</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>considering needed and effective capital improvements to the regional transportation infrastructure.</i> 	<p>neighbourhood, and will likely be able to resolve long outstanding issues related to Drought Rd and its current intersection with Highway 97.</p>
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<p><i>8. Support a coordinated approach to the expansion and diversification of the economic base that provides for a healthy and dynamic business community and includes consideration of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Distribution;</i> • <i>Sustainability;</i> • <i>Compatibility.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Monaco is envisioned as the future job-center in Peachland with office space, retail space, and hospitality. The businesses and jobs included will form a key economic stabilizing influence on Peachland's tax base and economy. <p>Beyond Peachland, the creation of a desirable urban village with advanced offerings of medical and technology companies will further support economic development initiatives in the Valley to increase those sectors.</p>
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<p><i>9. Consideration is to be given to the social and economic benefits of arts, culture, tourism, and recreation amenities in public sector decision making.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Monaco intends to provide a rich arts and culture experience in the community. It is working on a flexible arts and culture and performance facility for the plan. It also intends to provide facilities for artists, including gallery space and studios if possible. <p>New Monaco has held special meetings with both the arts community in Peachland as well as with the Creative and Critical Studies Faculty at UBCO to build the arts program for the neighbourhood.</p> <p>A strong presence of public art is expected.</p>
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A commitment to sustainability

New Monaco is based on a comprehensive framework of sustainable community goals that address land use, transportation, buildings, community landscapes, infrastructure, local food systems, social support needs and economic diversity.

The neighbourhood is planned with the intention of being a good example of how development should occur to meet our sustainability objectives, including climate emission reductions, water efficiency, ecologically sensitive development, sustainable food systems, economic diversity, and the range of elements required to foster a healthy social community.

Conclusion

New Monaco is embracing the leading edge of sustainable community planning directions in its plan and as such, will be a model of how development can occur in the Valley in the future to accommodate growth and economic development in a socially and ecologically sensitive manner.