



## REPORT FOR INFORMATION

Agenda Item Number: 4.1

Meeting Date: 4/8/2024

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**TO:** Mayor and Council

**FROM:** Planning & Development

**SUBJECT:** Downtown Revitalization Implementation Strategy (DRIS)

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### RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Committee of the Whole receive the Draft Downtown Revitalization Implementation Strategy (DRIS) report and attachments for information;

THAT the Committee of the Whole refer the draft DRIS Big Moves to the Task Force for comment;

THAT the Committee of the Whole recommend that Council direct staff to undertake public engagement at the Community Open House/BBQ Event on the draft DRIS Framework; and

FURTHER THAT the Committee of the Whole recommend that Council direct staff to report back to Council with a summary of engagement alongside a final Downtown Revitalization Implementation Strategy for consideration.

### PURPOSE

To provide Council members an opportunity to review and provide feedback on the draft Downtown Revitalization Implementation Strategy and associated materials, prior to undertaking public engagement and subsequent finalization of the document.

### COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

On November 14, 2023, Council passed the following resolution RC-23/11/14-009:

*THAT Council establish the Downtown Revitalization Task Force to advise and make recommendations to Council regarding the Downtown Revitalization Implementation Strategy (DRIS) and adopt the Terms of Reference as presented.*

### CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS COMMENTS

Approved for Council's consideration.

## REPORT

### BACKGROUND

The DRIS project was initiated in the Fall of 2023. Its intended purpose was to identify specific actions to be taken by the District that would lead to new development activity and improved vitality in the downtown

core. The project focused on establishing a financially viable implementation framework. This activity is in line with Council's Strategic Priorities and the OCP.

Downtown Peachland could support approximately 750 – 1,000 new housing units if redeveloped at current maximum allowable density. The District's recent housing needs report identifies that Peachland will need 1,650 housing units over the next 20 years to accommodate growth. As noted in that report, increasing the choice of housing types is critical to resident's diverse and evolving housing needs. The actions identified by DRIS are expected to lead to increased residential development in the Downtown to partially meet this need.

A previous plan for Downtown was completed in 2010, titled the "Sustainable Downtown Peachland Plan". Since that time, there has been minimal development in Downtown. The 2010 report, while strong in its vision and development objectives, lacked clear actions or an implementation strategy. As a result, fulfillment of the plan's vision has stalled.

The DRIS report is not intended to replace the 2010 plan. Rather, DRIS supplements the 2010 plan with an updated vision and identifies actionable implementation steps that can be taken immediately. DRIS will address many but not all of the objectives of the 2010 plan. Some of those from the 2010 plan that are not addressed, are better served through other means (such as revised municipal tree planting standards, parks planning activities, capital improvement design, and implementation of the BC Energy Step Code).<sup>1</sup>

The extent of the plan area being considered for DRIS is indicated in Figure 1:



A major component of the DRIS project has been input from the DRIS Task Force. In November 2023, Council approved the establishment of a 13-member Task Force to serve an advisory group for DRIS. The Task Force met six (6) times between February 2024 and November 2024 to engage in the review and input of key elements of DRIS content. The Task Force has been instrumental in shaping the content of the DRIS framework and actions, as will be described in further detail later in this report.

<sup>1</sup> The boundaries of the DRIS plan are much smaller than the 2010 Sustainable Peachland plan. DRIS incorporates only the 'Downtown' neighbourhood boundaries identified by the OCP. The 2010 plan extended further north.

## DISCUSSION

### Project Components

The DRIS project has incorporated several specialized scopes of research, analysis, and input to inform the actions identified in the draft framework. These information sources included:

- land use economics and feasibility testing;
- retail demand analysis;
- existing policy review and analysis;
- existing constraints analysis;
- buildout analysis and volumetric building modelling;
- parking analysis;
- wastewater and water servicing needs review;
- zoning constraints analysis; and
- development of conceptual imagery.

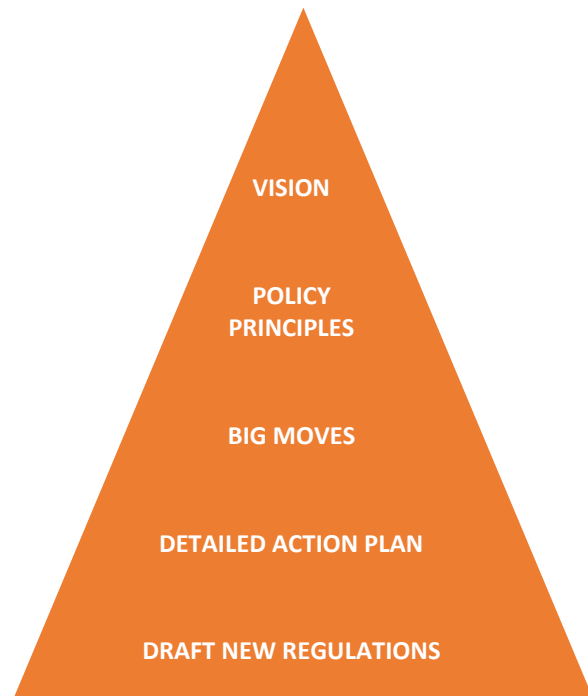
Each of these components of work has been considered in the development of the DRIS framework which are subsequently detailed later in this report.

### Key Elements of DRIS

The DRIS framework is structured around a hierarchy of five (5) key components. The 5 key components are detailed in Figure 2.

This framework forms the basis for the remainder of the content in this report. Each component of the framework, including the Vision, Policy Principles, Big Moves, and Detailed Actions is briefly described in this report. The attachments, as noted below, contain further detailed information on each component and it is intended that these be reviewed alongside this report.

Note that the 'Draft New Regulations' component of the framework has only been partially developed. The preliminary components of these pieces are described here, with supporting materials attached. Finalization would follow in the next stage of this project.



*Figure 2. Framework for Downtown Revitalization*

### DRIS Framework: Vision Statement

Vision Statements are intended to establish and describe a desired future state. It is important for vision statements to be evocative, ambitious, and yet detailed and realistic. The DRIS vision was developed from the previous Vision Statement in the 2010 Sustainable Peachland Plan and refined with input from the Task Force. The revised Vision Statement for DRIS is:

*Downtown Peachland is a dynamic and lively community hub. It fosters a strong year-round economy and meets the evolving needs of Peachland by embracing change and new development. With its history and waterfront beauty, it attracts residents and visitors of all lifestyles, ages, and abilities to live, work, gather and play. Downtown Peachland offers a wide variety of services and housing choices, creates new opportunities for small business, shopping, recreation, tourism and hospitality, while still offering a unique small-town charm.*

#### DRIS Framework: Guiding Policy Principles (Attachment #1)

The vision extends to 10 interrelated guiding principles. With consideration of the principles developed in the 2010 Sustainable Peachland Plan, these new guiding policy principles inform the balance of DRIS and all of the implementation actions. These principles can be thought of as becoming the 'mileposts' for what the DRIS actions are intended to achieve. The principles were developed with feedback from the Task Force, the public, and through a review of existing Peachland plans, policies and Council priorities. The 10 guiding principles are as follows:

- Mixed Use Growth Area
- Community and Connections
- Pedestrian Scale
- History and Sense of Place
- Advocacy and Partnerships
- Tourism and Hospitality
- Economic Viability
- Change is Supported
- Waterfront
- Okanagan Connections

#### DRIS Framework: Big Moves and Action Plan (Attachment #2)

The guiding principles lead to 5 'Big Moves', which are the fundamental building blocks of activities to achieve the vision. The majority of the actions within DRIS are framed around these Big Moves. The Big Moves respond directly to the Policy Principles.

Collectively, the Big Moves are the core of the implementation for DRIS. The Big Moves are complementary to each other and are all important to fully realize DRIS's Vision Statement. Undertaking a limited number of them may lead to only partial success in realizing the DRIS Vision. The Big Moves for the DRIS are as follows:

Big Move 1:	Update OCP and Zoning regulations to establish clear design expectations that maintain the identity of Downtown Peachland and align with economic feasibility.
Big Move 2:	Actively prioritize and financially invest in the growth and development of Downtown
Big Move 3:	Modernize Parking Policies in the Downtown
Big Move 4:	Activate Public and Pedestrian spaces in Downtown
Big Move 5:	Invest in improved active transportation connections to and within the Downtown

Each of the 5 Big Moves include two or three categories of implementation actions. Each Big Move also includes a degree of urgency, along with a suggested timeline to complete. In general, policy changes are suggested to be undertaken immediately (Big Moves 1 and 3). It is anticipated that operational and financial investment activities (Big Moves 2, 4 and 5) will necessitate additional preparatory measures.

Attachment #2 provides a detailed table of the Big Moves. Each Big Move has the following complementary information:

- Alignment with Guiding Policy Principles;
- Urgency and timeline;
- Categories of detailed actions; and
- A description of why the Big Move is necessary and how it supports the Vision.

#### DRIS Framework: Draft New Regulations - Design Guidelines Overview & Objectives (Attachment #3)

The Big Moves identify recommended changes to the OCP to support the vision, specifically a new set of Design Guidelines. The DRIS process has developed a series of renewed objectives for design outcomes in the Downtown and corresponding design guidelines have been developed. Design Guidelines are important so that Council, on behalf of the community, can set clear expectations for the form and character of new developments. The DRIS process has identified the small-town character of Downtown Peachland as being of critical importance, and the design guidelines have been developed in response to this.

Attachment #3 contains critical elements of the Design Guidelines, especially the *Intent and Objectives*. These are the measures against which development proposals are evaluated, and thus it is important that they clearly articulate expectations for design. Also included are several corresponding graphics that support these objectives.

A set of detailed guidelines to specifically guide development applications, along with further supporting visuals, will be included with the final DRIS plan.

#### DRIS Framework: Draft New Regulations - Zoning Parameters (and Constraints Analysis) (Attachment #4)

Zoning is a key tool to regulate land use, form, and density. Zoning can facilitate development if development regulations are appropriate for the surrounding community, and local land economics is aligned with the vision for development. If zoning is misaligned with current development trends, it can present a major barrier to redevelopment as the rezoning processes introduce risk, uncertainty, and extended timelines (and thus interest holding costs) to potential developments.

Big Move #1 includes making amendments to zoning to better facilitate growth in Downtown Peachland by aligning zoning with current economic realities. This framework is included in the Big Moves package. A land economics analysis and zoning constraints analysis have informed these proposed zoning parameters.

In summary, existing zoning in Downtown Peachland has been identified as a major barrier to redevelopment. While some current downtown zones allow up to 4.0 FAR and up to 6 storeys of development entitlements, existing density bonus regulations, limits on the percentage of residential uses, and parking requirements would lead to the need for zoning amendments and variances. The proposed zoning framework aims to remove these barriers.

A detailed breakdown of the analysis that informed the draft zoning parameters developed for the DRIS Big Moves is contained in Attachment #4.

#### Supporting Materials: DRIS Task Force & Public Engagement What We Learned Report (Attachment #5)

A major component of the DRIS project has been input from the DRIS Task Force. In November 2023, Council approved the establishment of a 13-member voting (plus auxiliaries) Task Force to serve and

represent the community as an advisory group for DRIS. The Task Force met six (6) times between February 2024 and November 2024 to engage in the review and input of key elements of DRIS content. These six meetings focused on the following content:

- Development of the Downtown Peachland Vision Statement;
- Development of guiding principles for revitalization actions;
- Input on Design Guidelines and priorities for form and character of both the public realm and new development:
  - One workshop specifically for Beach Avenue area;
  - A second workshop specific to land west of Waldo Way;
- An evaluation of competing priorities and trade-offs, combined with input on policy opportunities;
- Review and comment the results of economic viability analysis;
- Review and comment on the potential actions and a draft policy framework.

Engagement with the DRIS Task Force identified a broad range of priorities for downtown and their feedback has been instrumental in shaping the content of the DRIS framework, its priorities, and the details of actions. Throughout the process, extensive changes have been made to content and further work has been undertaken to ensure that the concerns and input of the Task Force has been addressed in some form.

A small amount of public engagement on the Vision, Policy Principles, and 'Key Directions' was undertaken at the Community Open House/BBQ Event in June 2024. Additional modifications to address feedback from the public have been made.

A DRIS 'What we Learned' report was prepared which compiles the feedback from the DRIS Task Force and the broader Peachland community. This is contained in Attachment #5. Notably, the What We Learned Report contains a summary of "Overarching Task Force Key Themes and Takeaways" as well as "Key Themes and Feedback by Topic."

For further details, it also contains a synopsis of specific activities and individual feedback from each Task Force Meeting, as well as that from the public engagement event.

#### Supporting Materials: Conceptual Visual Renders (Attachment #6)

A series of conceptual hand-sketch renders have been prepared to support a visualization of the implementation of the DRIS with its corresponding zoning and design guideline recommendations. These include a pedestrian view of the streetscape as if new development, in line with proposed zoning parameters, were in place. An axonometric (3D aerial) view which illustrates a series of conceptual developments throughout the downtown area, based on proposed zoning parameters, was also developed. Figure 3, on the following page, shows a conceptual streetscape of Beach Avenue looking north from the intersection at 1<sup>st</sup> Street.

These initial sketches convey a visual intended to reflect the built-form outcomes of proposed policies in DRIS. It is important to note that they are conceptual in nature and have been developed to be suggestive of the outcome of policy. Specific and detailed design elements and materials would be determined by prospective development proponents, who would be required to address the Design Guidelines as part of their applications. Both the Streetscape and Axonometric images are provided in Attachment 6, along with some supporting explanations of how these drawings align with the proposed DRIS policy framework.





#### Supporting Materials: Parking Policy Review & Management Strategy (Attachment #7)

In 2016, Peachland undertook a Parking Policy Review & Management Strategy which was intended to provide the District with a framework for future parking policy development. The management strategy identified that in Peachland there was no shortage of on-street parking in the Downtown, with parking stall occupancy throughout the area averaging at 52%. Since 2016, given the relative lack of new development in the Downtown area, on-street parking conditions have not drastically changed and the findings of the 2016 strategy remain relevant.

As one of the Big Moves of the DRIS strategy is to ‘Modernize Parking Policies,’ the findings of the 2016 study again become highly relevant. Additional context and detailed of the findings of that report are contained in Attachment #7, which is used in part to justify the proposed move to eliminate required commercial parking within new developments.

#### Supporting Materials: Land Economics Viability Analysis

A detailed land economics analysis has been undertaken as part of the DRIS strategy to inform zoning parameters and ensure that economic feasibility underpins decisions that have been made surrounding land use regulations. The zoning parameters that have been put forward, including density provisions and parking in the Big Moves, are informed by this analysis.

Additional explanation of how the land economics analysis was undertaken and a summary of its findings will be included in the presentation to the Committee of the Whole meeting.

### DRIS Next Steps

This report has been brought forward to Committee of the Whole to provide an update on work completed as part of DRIS, and to gather feedback on the major components of the draft framework. Following Council's consideration, and incorporation of any feedback, work on the final document will begin. This will include, at Council's direction, gathering feedback from the Task Force on the Big Moves and supporting actions, gathering feedback from the public on the overall Framework, finalizing the DRIS document with additional visual materials and contextual information, and ultimately bringing this back to Council for endorsement. This would, at Council's discretion, be followed by introduction of amending bylaws to begin implementation.

### **STRATEGIC DIRECTION**

The DRIS aligns with several of Council's strategic objectives, including:

- Key Focus Area #2 – Vibrant Downtown
- Key Focus Area #3 – Infrastructure Improvements
- Key Focus Area #5 – Increase Housing Choice

### **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION (Attachments)**

1. Guiding Policy Principles
2. DRIS Big Moves
3. Design Guidelines Overview & Objectives
4. Zoning Parameters and Constraints Analysis
5. What We Heard Report (DRIS Task Force and Public Engagement)
6. Conceptual Visual Renders
7. Peachland Parking Policy Review & Management Strategy (2016) - Executive Summary

### **REVIEWED & APPROVED BY**

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