



Memo to Council

Date: February 11, 2025
Subject: Need for a Community Referendum on Tower Development in Moody Centre –
Motion Served by Councillor Haven Lurbiecki

Motion Served

Notice of the following motion was provided at the January 28, 2025, Regular Council meeting:

THAT a community referendum be held to determine if the community supports tower development up to 40 storeys in Moody Centre ;

AND THAT any decisions on OCP amendments/rezoning that would allow for towers up to this height be deferred until the referendum results are determined.

Background

Port Moody city council is in the process of deciding if it should approve the first residential towers proposed under the Moody Centre TOD Framework¹ - a vision for 14 towers up to 40 storeys that if enacted will transform our city both in form and in character. The TOD Framework, as the biggest change ever proposed in this community, will affect the daily lives of every resident – impacts to parks, roadways, services and long-term tax burden will compound the impacts from already-approved population growth in the city (over 6000 units have been approved over the last years alone²) as well as regional growth. But is this TOD Framework supported by the community at this time?

The TOD Framework was adopted by a majority vote of council in late 2023 without a formal public engagement process. Developers have proceeded to submit applications under the 40-storey framework and council has so far moved these applications forward. Implementation of this framework has also occurred ahead of an Official Community Plan update process - a process that is intended to be informed through extensive city-wide engagement with residents.

While there has been no community engagement undertaken on the TOD Framework, the City has undertaken past engagement on the future of Moody Centre. Results from household surveys sent to every home in 2020 already showed a significant lack of support³ for tower heights and density that was less than what is now outlined in the TOD Framework. Other

¹ Moody Centre Transit-Oriented Development Area Guidance Framework for Official Community Plan Amendment and Rezoning Applications

² Housing Supply Act – Annual Report

³ Community Survey #3 Summary – Land Use Scenarios

surveys conducted by the city (such as the bi-annual resident satisfaction survey) also indicate residents of Port Moody have significant and ongoing concerns over the pace and scale of development and its impacts on quality of life. In addition to formal surveys, recent public input at council meetings, the start of resident advocacy movements, and even online community forums appear to reflect these concerns as growing within the community. Yet, what the community wants to see happen in Moody Centre remains a central disagreement at the council table.

Is there a majority that do support the development plans proposed for Moody Centre but have not indicated this through engagement channels to-date? Are the surveys and other engagement completed so far reflective of the community’s views? City councils have a mechanism they can use to seek clarity and direction from the public. One of these is a community referendum.

A community referendum needs to happen before we make decisions of such immense consequence and profound impact on our city as approving development up to 40 storeys in Moody Centre.

Council is here to represent the community and therefore should not be afraid to ask if it has the mandate or not to start the transformation of Port Moody into a totally different place, before final decisions are made.

Requested Timeline

<u>Level</u>	<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Staff Turnaround Time</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urgent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulatory or interjurisdictional requirements Major and immediate risk and/or financial impact 	< 3 months
<input type="checkbox"/> Time-sensitive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant impact to the community Significant financial impact 	3-6 months
<input type="checkbox"/> Non-urgent	All other work	< 12 months
<input type="checkbox"/> Other		

Council Strategic Plan Alignment

This motion aligns with the following Council Strategic Plan Goal(s):

- Strategic Goal 1.3 – Lead with Good Governance; and
- Strategic Goal 3.1 – Create Complete and Connected Communities through Balanced Growth

Council Options

The following responses are available for Council consideration:

1. Receive for information.
2. Refer to staff to bring back a report (staff will determine if the nature of the work warrants a project proposal or a staff report, and will include considerations with respect to feasibility, resources, timeline, strategic plan alignment, and legislative analysis).
3. Other.