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**From:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** FW: The OCP and community engagement

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**From:** Annie Booth **Redacted**  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 25, 2025 10:57 AM  
**To:** cityclerk <cityclerk@princegeorge.ca>  
**Subject:** FW: The OCP and community engagement

Greetings,  
Can you make this letter part of the record on the public hearing on the OCP, please.

Thank you,

Annie L. Booth PhD, MES, BA  
Professor  
Environmental and Sustainability Studies  
University of Northern British Columbia  
3333 University Way  
Prince George, British Columbia  
V2N 4Z9 Canada

**Redacted**

True leaders know that leadership is not about asserting power over others, but about inspiring and empowering them.

Lao Tzu

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**From:** Annie Booth  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 11, 2025 2:53 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Council **Redacted**  
**Subject:** The OCP and community engagement

Greetings,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the public engagement strategies for the OCP refreshment.

As a retired planner, I am of the view that OCP's are aspirational documents in nature, they are, of course, easily abrogated by Council to bring in contradictory projects, but they remain, nonetheless, important documents expressing a potential future for the municipality. As such, they are critical documents around which sound and extensive public engagement needs to occur, so that elected representatives and city staff have cogent and clear data from which to make publicly responsible decisions (Council and staff are defacto in service to the community which has delegated to them formal decision-making authority).

As someone who has been employed to undertake, and teaches a course on, sound public engagement strategies for over three decades, I must, once again, express my dismay over the public engagement approach taken around the OCP refreshment. The consulting company did not do due diligence in its work (at one point it tried to limit engagement as they “had heard enough on that issue”; they also said they were doing limited engagement as Council did not give them enough money. This is not a professional approach). Limited methods were employed, as noted some people were discouraged from participating and the end document was a cut and paste with limited Prince George content. I have no doubt that similar work is being recycled to other communities who chose to employ that company.

Further there appears to be little opportunity to provide feedback on the final product by the public. I urge open and fulsome opportunities to comment before Council makes its decision.

Prince George has so much potential to be a truly great community with attributes that many other communities have long since lost. Yet piecemeal decisions threaten to turn PG into a poor version of suburban hell. I strongly urge Council to do two key things:

1. Really engage your publics, especially the ones you want to retain and attract. I have been asked by any number of city leaders how do we keep UNBC students. And the answer is, you give them an attractive desirable community with nature, amenities, affordable housing and a variety of employment options, including small businesses that also add to the city’s character and attractiveness (honestly PG needs no more fast food and liquor stores). If that is who you want to attract, you need to allow them to tell you what they want and need. And that is through high quality public engagement.
2. Engage in long range planning. At the moment you make decisions with no clear concept of what you are striving towards in 10, 20, 30 years. There is no long term vision into which your decision-making is fitting It is literally one poor development at a time. This is not leading to sound community development. Yes, it is another staff position. Yes their opinions need to be respected and not subsumed to whatever political decision-making is driving current poor practice. But it is more likely to allow you to create a diverse, vibrant community where a great many people wish to live (not just folk who have lived in PG all their lives and cannot see any alternatives).

I will also say this again: UNBC offers many resources that the City could draw upon to enrich its work at very low costs. We have talented faculty and really amazing graduate and undergraduate students who would welcome opportunities to link learning with tangible hands-on doing. You just need to create the opportunities with us.

With respect,

Annie L. Booth PhD, MES, BA  
Professor  
Environmental and Sustainability Studies  
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3333 University Way  
Prince George, British Columbia  
V2N 4Z9 Canada

**Redacted**

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