



AGENDA CITY OF MERRITT REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL

Tuesday, May 26, 2020

7:00 P.M.

Held online due to social distancing requirements

Public access link published on City website

& social media accounts

Mission Statement: *The City of Merritt is a progressive, attractive, economically viable City that is socially responsible and environmentally sustainable.*

Pages

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. LATE ITEMS
3. PUBLIC INPUT 10 m
4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES
 - 4.1 Regular Council Meeting Minutes- May 12th, 2020 5

Recommendation:
THAT the Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held on May 12th, 2020 be adopted
5. PUBLIC HEARING
6. GENERAL MATTERS - Delegations and Recognitions
 - 6.1 Fraser Basin Council - Gas Tax proposal 12

Presentation by Mike Simpson
 - 6.2 Merritt Chamber of Commerce - Covid-19 Economic Recovery Initiatives 19

Presentation by Ryan Wuthe

Recommendation:

THAT Council unanimously agrees to Consider the delegation at the same meeting, under s21(c) of the City of Merritt Council Procedures Bylaw 2055, 2008.

Recommendation:

THAT Council allocate \$5,000 from the Council contingency fund to support the marketing initiatives of the Economic Recovery Task Force, as presented by Mr. Wuthe.

6.3 Draft 2019 Audited Financial Statements

File: 1680

Draft 2019 Audited Financial Statements for the City of Merritt.

Presentation by Mario Piroddi, CPA, CA, CISA Partner through a corporation BDO Canada LLP

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

8. BYLAWS

9. NEW BUSINESS

9.1 2019 Audited Financial Statements for the City of Merritt

File: 1680

Recommendation:

THAT Council accept the Draft 2019 Audited Financial Statements for the City of Merritt;

AND THAT the Mayor and Director of Financial Services & IT be authorized to sign on behalf of the City

9.2 Economic Recovery Initiatives: Permit Relaxations

20

To be introduced by Mr D. McArthur, Planning and Development Services Manager

Recommendation:

THAT Council temporarily waives the Development Permit application fee and requirement to submit professional design drawings for commercial patio construction;

Recommendation:

THAT Council temporarily waives the Sign Permit application fee and requirement to submit a colour rendering for sign installation;

Recommendation:

THAT Council temporarily waives the Development Permit application fee for commercial façade improvements;

Recommendation:

THAT Council temporarily enables retail businesses to apply for approval of outdoor display of goods which do not conform to the Business Licence Bylaw regulations, subject to approval by the Planning and Development Manager.

9.3 Agreement to Remove or Demolish, 1550 Williams Cres., PID 003-963-934

25

Recommendation:

THAT Council accepts the Agreement to remove or demolish the mobile home at 1550 Williams Crescent, following the issuance of an occupancy permit for the new dwelling;

AND THAT the Mayor and Director of Corporate Services be authorized to execute the Agreement on behalf of the City.

9.4 Economic Development Committee - Terms of Reference

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Mayor Brown requested that this item be brought forward for the May 26th, 2020 meeting, to support and provide framework for the Economic Recovery Task Force.

Council may amend the proposed Terms of Reference at its discretion by resolution.

Recommendation:

THAT Council establish the Economic Development Committee with the attached Terms of Reference;

AND THAT Council direct staff to post notice and begin accepting applications for this Committee.

9.5 Public Works Update

Oral report provided by Charlie Henderson

9.6 Recreation and Facilities Oral Update

Oral report provided by Sky McKeown

9.7 Finance Department Update

Oral report on re-opening from Sheila Thiessen/Wayne Anderson

9.8 CAO Update

Oral report provided by Scott Hildebrand

10. NOTICES OF MOTION

11. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL

12. INFORMATION ITEMS

12.1 City of North Vancouver

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12.2 City of Nanaimo

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12.3 Mr D Osborne

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12.4 Strategic Planning Priorities

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13. TERMINATION OF MEETING



MINUTES

CITY OF MERRITT

REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL

Tuesday, May 12, 2020

7:00 P.M.

Held online due to social distancing requirements

Public access link published on City website

& social media accounts

PRESENT:

Mayor L. Brown

Councillor M. Bhangu

Councillor K. Christopherson

Councillor A. Etchart

Councillor T. Fehr

Councillor T. Luck

Councillor M. White

Mr. S. Hildebrand, Chief Administrative Officer

Mr. S. Smith, Director of Corporate Services

Ms. S. Thiessen, Director of Finance & IT

Mr. G. Lowis, Deputy Corporate Officer

Mr. W. George, Tourism & Economic Development Manager

Mr. W. Anderson, Financial Services Manager

Mr. D. McArthur, Planning & Development Services Manager

Mr. S. McKeown, Recreation and Facilities Manager

1. CALL TO ORDER

1.1 Call to Order

Mayor Brown called the meeting to order at 7:00pm

2. LATE ITEMS

3. PUBLIC INPUT

Nil

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 Regular Council Meeting Minutes- April 21st, 2020

Resolution No:

THAT the Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held on April 21st, 2020 be adopted

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

5. PUBLIC HEARING

6. GENERAL MATTERS - Delegations and Recognitions

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

8. BYLAWS

8.1 Claybanks RV Park Fees Bylaw

File: 3900.2280

Mr McKeown outlined the nature of the bylaw as has passed three readings.

Resolution No:

That Council Adopt Fees and Charges Amendment Bylaw No 2280, 2020;

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

8.2 Five Year Financial Plan Bylaw

File: 3900.2281

Prior to readings of the Financial Plan Bylaw, Sheila Theissen, Director of Finance and IT will present to Council an overview of the Financial Plan and Tax Rate Bylaws.

Ms Thiessen presented about the budget process, and the impact of COVID-19, including the opportunity to do capital projects and maintenance at closed facilities.

She explained the requirement for a 5 year budget bylaw, the tax basis, and the various grants the City has access to.

Councillors confirmed that all parts of the Financial Plan other than taxes can be adjusted as needed, and the nature of the flood restoration works planned.

Resolution No:

THAT Council give first reading to Five Year Financial Plan Bylaw No 2281, 2020;

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

Resolution No:

THAT Council give second reading to Five Year Financial Plan Bylaw No 2281, 2020;

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

Resolution No:

THAT Council give third reading to Five Year Financial Plan Bylaw No 2281, 2020;

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

Resolution No:

THAT Council Adopt Five Year Financial Plan Bylaw No 2281, 2020;

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

8.3 2020 Annual Property Tax Rate Bylaw

File: 3900.2282

Ms Thiessen explained the direction from council of reducing tax rates, which areas the City had control over, and noted that a tax calculator would be provided on the City's website at merritt.ca from Wednesday 13th May onwards to allow people to estimate their bills before the formal ones arrive.

She also explained that a revised scheme had been adopted, pushing back the due date, and reducing the penalty for late payment, and that if

people wished to opt out of the later date and reduced penalty, they could do so by informing City Hall by June 15th.

Councillors spoke to note they had done what they could to make life easier for residents while being in compliance with government regulations.

Resolution No:

THAT Council give first reading to Annual Property Tax Bylaw No 2282, 2020;

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

Resolution No:

THAT Council give second reading to Annual Property Tax Bylaw No 2282, 2020;

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

Resolution No:

THAT Council give third reading to Annual Property Tax Bylaw No 2282, 2020;

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

Resolution No:

THAT Council Adopt Annual Property Tax Bylaw No 2282, 2020;

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

9. NEW BUSINESS

9.1 Facilities & Recreation Update

Oral report from Sky McKeown

Mr McKeown explained how recreation managers were working across the Province to return to recreation facilities. These provide mental support, aid healthy living, and community cohesion during troubled times.

He explained that the plan was for the Province's Public Health Officer to approve plans for re-opening, which will need to emphasize cleaning and personal distancing. He spoke about staff who have already returned, or who will be soon. There is currently no hard date for re-opening, which is intended to be co-ordinated across British Columbia.

Councillors asked questions about the plans to re-open, which user groups might be involved, potential timescales, and communications.

9.2 Zoning Bylaw Update

Oral report from Don McArthur

Mr McArthur provided an update on the status of the Zoning Bylaw updates. The March 4th plan had been an aggressive proposal to bring the Bylaw to the May 12th meeting, but the effects of COVID-19 meant this work was not able to be completed on that timeline.

He also provided an update on the GIS update underway, the Official Community Plan update, and the North Bench Plan, and the work of the department overall.

Councillors asked about the bench development, the status of applications, and discussed the possibility of adding summer meetings if needed to consider the Zoning Bylaw expeditiously.

9.3 CAO Update

Mr Hildebrand praised staff for their work over the last 8 weeks as the City shut down to essential services, progressed to core services, and began working towards the re-opening.

Ms Thiessen will be retiring in the next 6 weeks, and plans are being made to replace her.

The Voght St corner project is progressing towards flood mitigation, and is currently under budget.

Emergency Operations Centre has been open for the last two months, beginning with Covid-19, and now focusing on flooding, and preparing for summer fires. Working to ensure community stays as dry as possible, and shifting towards fire awareness.

Continuing to work with BC housing to support the vulnerable population with housing and washrooms.

Audit and Finance meeting coming up, Worksafe visited the school and made a surprise visit to the City's public works, whom they gave a great evaluation.

Business group is being established to talk through re-opening strategy.

City hoping to reopen City Hall safely after long weekend on Wednesday May 20th, with limited hours, on the first floor only. Residents are encouraged to do everything they can online, but those who cannot will be able to make payments and access services at a safe distance.

Councillors spoke to praise work done by the CAO and staff through the crisis.

10. NOTICES OF MOTION

Nil.

11. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL

Councillor Christopherson wanted to mention activities were happening at the airport when possible, including crack sealing.

12. INFORMATION ITEMS

12.1 Strategic Planning Priorities

12.2 District of Lake Country

13. CLOSED SESSION

Resolution No:

13.1 Vote to close item to press and public

THAT this meeting be closed to the public pursuant to Section 90(1)(c) of the *Community Charter*

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

13.2 Personnel Update

13.3 Vote to return to public meeting

Resolution No:

THAT this meeting be returned to open session, having conducted the business that required closure pursuant to Section 90(1)(c) of the Community Charter

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

14. TERMINATION OF MEETING

The Mayor declared the meeting ended at 8:52pm

Corporate Officer

Sean Smith

Certified correct in accordance with Section 124(2) (c) of the Community Charter

Confirmed on the ____ day of ____, 20__

Mayor

Linda Brown

Project Proposal

Project Title: Assessment of Groundwater – Surface Water interactions along the Coldwater and Nicola Rivers, Merritt, BC

Creation Date: May 11, 2020

Proponent: Fraser Basin Council, on behalf of the Nicola Basin Collaborative Research & Technical Cttee

1.0 Project Description

The Coldwater and Nicola Groundwater and Surface Water Interaction Study (the “Project”) is an initiative to monitor the interaction between surface water and groundwater along the Coldwater and Nicola Rivers in the Merritt, BC area, and the effects of pumping from groundwater wells on these rivers.

There is considerable interest in the Merritt area regarding these interactions, particularly how river flows contribute to the aquifers in the area and how pumping from wells may impact the flow in the river. Groundwater pumping from shallow wells can reduce the amount of groundwater that flows to the adjacent rivers. Shallow groundwater in aquifers and surface water are generally interconnected in the Coldwater and Nicola area, and drawing down water in wells may cause water levels in neighbouring streams to drop as well, potentially impacting ecosystems and other water users.

In 2018 and 2019, drought conditions and low flows in the Coldwater, required the province to consider restricting water withdrawals, which led to the City of Merritt to implement water restrictions. Also, recent research and water budget projects have raised questions of aquifer sustainability. This has prompted a need for a better understanding of these interactions to assist with water use planning to preserve needed flow volumes in the Coldwater River during critical periods.

The various parties with interest in this initiative include:

1. City of Merritt (CoM);
2. BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD);
3. BC Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (ENV);
4. Thompson Nicola Regional District (TNRD);
5. Scwexmx Tribal Council (STC);
6. Fraser Basin Council (FBC);
7. Nicola Basin Collaborative Research and Technical Committee (RTC);
8. Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT); and,
9. Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO).

This project will be guided by a technical advisory committee, with representation from all of the interested parties through the Research and Technical Committee (RTC), with primary input from CoM, FLNRORD, ENV, and STC. FBC provides secretariat and coordination support to the RTC.

2.0 Project Purpose

The overall purpose of this Project is to build on recent work to continue our understanding of the interaction between the Nicola and Coldwater Rivers and the underlying groundwater system, and how pumping from wells impacts adjacent rivers.

3.0 Objectives

The objective of this Project is to monitor surface water and groundwater interactions along the Coldwater and Nicola Rivers, to enhance our understanding of pumping induced effects and to inform the hydrogeology of the area for future modeling use.

The study will meet multiple objectives:

- to better understand groundwater availability;
- for infrastructure planning and water management by local water purveyors;
- to support FLNRORD groundwater licensing decisions;
- for environmental flow needs determinations;
- for the Coldwater and Nicola River Restoration Initiatives;
- for the NTA and DFO ongoing fisheries enhancement activities; and,
- for research by faculty and students at NVIT.

The longer-term objectives are to provide a network of monitoring points for on-going measurements of flow in the rivers and water levels in the adjacent aquifers, which will aid both water governance and future research initiatives.

4.0 Background

Groundwater and surface water are linked in the hydrologic cycle – both are supplied by precipitation, and they are often in direct hydraulic connection. Many streams demonstrate a direct correlation between flows and groundwater levels. Often groundwater provides flows to surface water and surface water recharges the aquifers, which establishes co-dependent ecosystems (e.g., salmon and other species rely on cooler and cleaner groundwater at critical times in their lifecycle). However, in most studies of hydrologic systems, each system component (groundwater, surface water, etc.) is analyzed and/or modelled individually, treating the other interconnected component as a source or sink. In reality, these components are intricately linked and must be considered simultaneously. Because of the interchange of water between these two components of the hydrologic system, understanding the basic principles of the interaction of groundwater and surface water is needed for effective management of water resources. Groundwater abstractions can have detrimental impacts on streamflow in connected aquifer-stream systems. Therefore, knowledge of the hydraulic connectivity between groundwater and streams is essential for management of both resources.

Previous work in the area has included:

- Aquifer Mapping (2017-2018): Completed in March 2018, the aquifer mapping project resulted in 13 additional mapped aquifers, increasing the total number of provincially mapped aquifers

to 25 within the study area (Golder Associates Ltd., 2018. 1772201-001-R-RevA Nicola Watershed Aquifer Mapping and Classification).

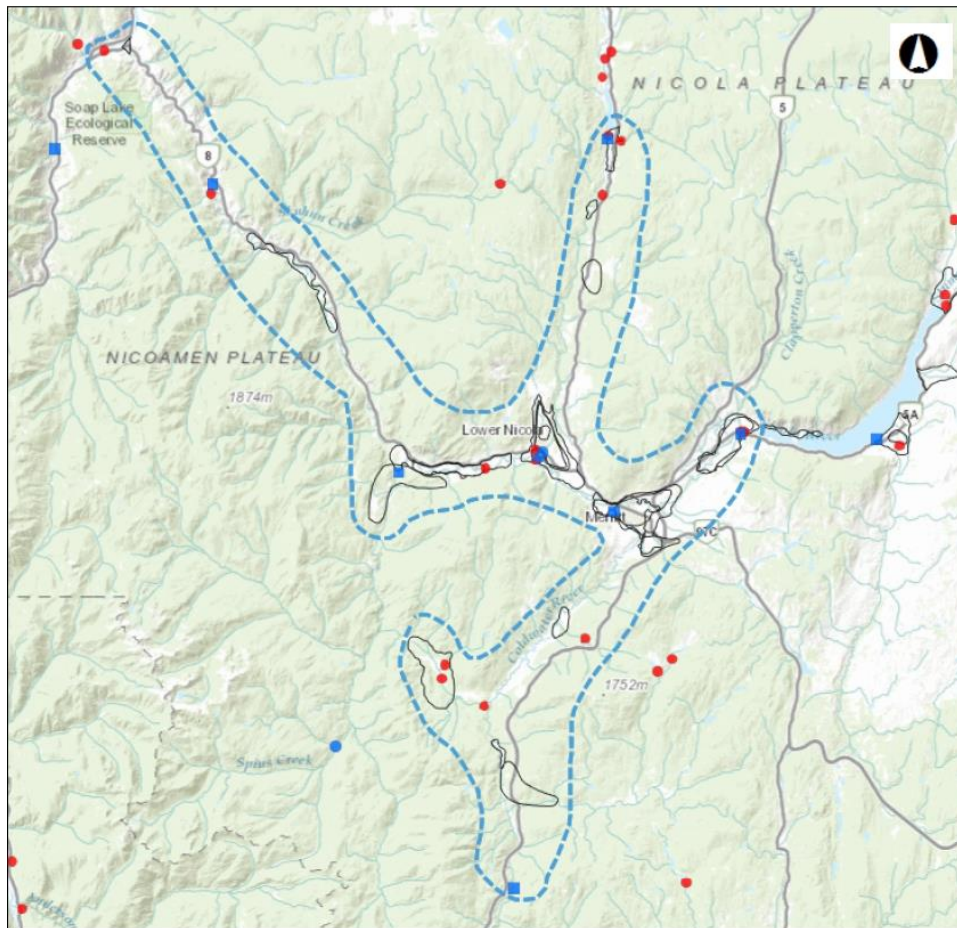
- Development of a Conceptual Groundwater Model (2017-2018): Working with the Fraser Basin Council, a conceptual groundwater model of the project area was produced.
- Data Compilation Plan (June 2018): To support the development of a regional numerical flow model, a data compilation plan was outlined, that included the compilation and analysis of existing data, updated the conceptual hydrogeological model for the project area, identified key data gaps and uncertainties, and discussed the implications of those data gaps.
- Technical Memorandum (March 2019): the memorandum addressed some preliminary data analysis, defined groundwater units, compiled and interpreted key data gaps – all are necessary for the development of a groundwater flow model.
- Numerical Groundwater Flow Model for the Nicola Watershed (May 2020): A steady state numerical groundwater flow model for the Nicola watershed was submitted to the province as a preliminary step to understanding the groundwater system.
- Coldwater River Groundwater/Surface Water Interaction Study Phase 1 (March 2020): A preliminary review of the Coldwater River to identify priority reaches for further assessment.

The proposed project outline below builds on these previous studies to refine, update, and collect additional data to address key gaps from the Numerical Groundwater Flow Model for the Nicola Watershed (Golder, 2020) and the Coldwater River Groundwater/Surface Water Interaction Study Phase 1 (Golder, 2020). Both previous studies identified critical data gaps related to the seasonal effects on the water balance. The following work plan addresses some of these key data gaps.

5.0 Study Area

The project boundaries were delineated as part of previous studies to incorporate local interests and stakeholder engagement, as well as populations and area of interest for fisheries, hydrology and groundwater within the Nicola Watershed. The project boundaries within the Nicola Watershed are the Nicola River from below the Nicola Dam (WSC 08LG065) to the confluence with the Thompson River near Spences Bridge; the Coldwater River from the Brookmere (WSC 08LG048) to the confluence with the Nicola River; and Guichon Creek from Mamit Lake (WSC 08LG041) to the confluence of the Nicola River. **A localized area of more focused data collection will be in the City of Merritt and immediate surrounding area.**

Project Boundary Map:



6.0 Proposed Work Scope

This Project will undertake field work to address data gaps identified during the calibration and development of the regional groundwater numerical model to better understand groundwater flow interactions between aquifers and surface water flows. There is a need to understand groundwater flow dynamics to determine the cause of seasonal fluctuations within the aquifers underlying the City of Merritt; identify aquifer recharge mechanisms; and impacts from groundwater pumping on local rivers. Collecting data to address these uncertainties will allow refinement in existing models that predict the flow of water in groundwater systems, and develops scenarios of water use and the impacts of rivers and aquifer sustainability. There will also be further work to determine the availability of existing datasets that may be used to refine the current understanding and help inform the development of a localized groundwater model for the City of Merritt area. It will be critical for the City of Merritt to provide data regarding historical usage of surface water and the various groundwater wells they operate for the success of the project

The proposed work scope will include the following:

1. Measure incremental river flows using handheld flowmeter at 15 locations distributed relatively evenly along the Coldwater River as part of a 5-day snap-shot monitoring event. Where tributaries are observed, measurements of tributary inflows will be measured also.

2. Install short-term hydrometric stations to monitor stage and river flows in the Coldwater River from June to November 2020.
3. Survey all the measurements points associated with the temporary hydrometric stations and functional provincial hydrometric sites located on the Coldwater River and Nicola River to obtain accurate (cm-scale) geodetic water elevations. Any flood damaged stage gauges will be reinstalled prior to undertaking the survey work.
4. Perform a wellhead survey of the City of Merritt wells (with well records) to obtain geodetic water elevations. The survey would ideally include all the active production wells and a representative sample of the shallow City's monitoring wells. The wells surveyed would be determined in consultation with the City of Merritt representative.
5. Wellhead survey of additional wells, outside the boundaries of the City of Merritt, with a well record, including provincial observation well number 296, to obtain geodetic water elevations.
6. Assessment of any existing wells in the study area for short- and long-term water level monitoring.
7. Collect major ion water chemistry and isotope (H, O) samples from at least 20 sites between Brookmere and Spences Bridges.
8. Agricultural Groundwater Use data input layer: build a Digital Agricultural Land Use Inventory (ALUI) mapping layer which outlines properties used by agriculture (within the Agricultural Land Reserve, ALR) and also includes information on activity and land cover (crop type, type of livestock, natural area, trees etc). In the current model, irrigated farmland was roughly estimated using Google Earth imagery and all farmland was assumed to grow hay, the primary crop type. ALUI mapping together with estimates of water demand by crop type specified in the Agricultural Demand Report for the Nicola Region, could be used to improve the estimated groundwater usage for farmland irrigation in the current model.
9. Addition of Domestic Groundwater Users: The model currently does not account for domestic groundwater use. Its proposed to use digital Zoning and Land Inventory mapping and metered data being collected within the study area (i.e. City of Merritt or regional water systems, if available) that may be shared with the Province to assign a nominal groundwater usage rate to these residential properties based on land use and typical household water use rates for the region.
10. Development of a Local Hydrogeological Model at the City of Merritt Well field:
 - There are limitations on the types and accuracy of predictions that are possible with a regional model, whether it is run in steady state or transient mode. A local, refined groundwater flow model would be developed for the area around the City of Merritt. This model would reduce uncertainty in its predictions with the collection of sufficient, accurate calibration data (local hydraulic heads and flow) and developed local geology/hydrogeology and conceptual model. Results from the regional model would be used to support the development of the local model; specifically, the upgradient inflow and downgradient outflow estimates from the regional model would be used as boundary conditions in the local model. With enough data there may be the potential to simulate a scenario to assess

Stream Vulnerability, hypothetically using a new pumping well to assess the potential vulnerability of the nearby river reach and the nearby shallow groundwater level to long-term pumping from the unconfined aquifer.

7.0 Project Deliverables

Following the recommendations of recent reports (Section 4), the Numerical Groundwater Flow Model for the Nicola Watershed (Golder, 2020) and the Coldwater River Groundwater/Surface Water Interaction Study Phase 1 (Golder, 2020), this project proposes:

- To collect critical data on river flows and groundwater levels from June – November 2020 at a minimum (pending ongoing resourcing and durability of hydrometric stations);
- Support the collaborative engagement between project partners and the Nicola Research Collaborative, delivering on a common need among Nicola water users and water purveyors to improve the understanding of availability and environmental flow needs of the Coldwater and Nicola Rivers and supporting aquifer(s);
- A report will be generated at the end of the year with information on the results of all monitoring, spatial and temporal analysis of data, updated model inputs, and the development of a Local Hydrogeological Model in the vicinity of the City of Merritt Well field. The report will describe the fieldwork completed, analysis and interpretation of the data, and provide recommendations for improved water management.

8.0 Budget

The requested budget is \$25,000 from Gas Tax funds to help realize the work scope above. FLNRORD has submitted a separate funding request for matching funds, for a total project value of \$50,000. In-kind project support will be provided by project partners.

9.0 Extension

Groundwater is under stress from increasing, often competing, groundwater demands (e.g., agricultural, industrial, municipal activities), environmental flow needs (EFN), and the growing impact of climate change, among other factors. The extraction and use of groundwater can result in lowered water levels in adjacent water bodies (i.e., a decrease in base-flow to streams affecting aquatic ecosystems and species), rise in water temperatures, water quality and habitat degradation and conflicts between water users (i.e., lowered water levels in neighbouring wells).

Regulating extraction and use of groundwater is a key to hydrologic sustainability and will provide the opportunity to better integrate surface and groundwater planning, allocation, and decision making. With the implementation of the *Water Sustainability Act*, decision makers are dealing with increasingly complex water authorization decisions related to groundwater withdrawals, requiring guidance and tools to support science-based allocation decision-making.

The proposed project would lead to a better understanding of hydraulic connectivity (groundwater – surface water interaction), including how it varies temporally and spatially, and how it varies with geologic/hydrologic environment.

Water is critical to all aspects of our lives. Protecting water sources is important because it ensures there is enough safe water for all of our uses - now and in the future. Source water protection is the protection of water resources such as lakes, rivers and groundwater from contamination or overuse.

Ideally, the analysis of sustainable groundwater extraction is completed through the development of complex groundwater-surface water numerical flow models. However, the provincial government faces several challenges in developing numerical flow models: a lack of necessary hydrogeologic/hydrologic data; insufficient resources to collect the necessary data; and a lack of personnel/expertise to develop or update numerical models. Therefore, the overall objective of the study is to collect information that empowers science-based decision making, based on more reasonable data requirements. This will ensure that source water can be protected by employing effective planning that involves all major water users in the process.

Contact:

Mike Simpson
Director, Interior Regional Programs
Fraser Basin Council
Kamloops, BC
msimpson@fraserbasin.bc.ca

- d) if defeated, and the outcome being that the motion is preserved unchanged, the same motion may not be brought back before Council for six (6) months from the date of the latest vote, except with two-thirds (2/3) consent of all members of Council.

21. Delegations

- (a) Any person(s) wishing to appear before Council as a delegation may do so by first notifying the Corporate Services Manager in writing prior to 12 Noon on the Wednesday preceding the regular meeting, except when the Mayor declares an extraordinary occasion.
- (b) Delegations to Council shall be limited to three (3), for any one meeting, except when the Mayor declares an extraordinary occasion.
- (c) Council shall not act on a request from a delegation until the next regular meeting, unless consent by unanimous resolution of Council present is given to consider the matter.
- (d) Delegation(s) shall appoint a speaker (or at the discretion of the Mayor, more than one speaker), and shall be allowed ten (10) minutes (or a longer time, at the discretion of a majority vote of Council), to make their presentation or by prior arrangement with the Corporate Services Manager.
- (e) During the course of a Council meeting and other than at the Public Input period, members of the public wishing to address Council regarding an agenda item may be recognized by the presiding member subject to the unanimous consent of Council present.

Report

City of Merritt
REGULAR Council Meeting
May 26, 2020

File Number: 3800

To: Scott Hildebrand, Chief Administrative Officer
From: Don McArthur, Planning Manager
Date: May 21, 2020
Subject: Economic Recovery Initiatives: Permit Relaxations

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council temporarily waives the Development Permit application fee and requirement to submit professional design drawings for commercial patio construction;

And

THAT Council temporarily waives the Sign Permit application fee and requirement to submit a colour rendering for sign installation;

And

THAT Council temporarily waives the Development Permit application fee for commercial façade improvements;

And

THAT Council temporarily enables retail businesses to apply for approval of outdoor display of goods which do not conform to the Business Licence Bylaw regulations, subject to approval by the Planning and Development Manager.

Background:

Due to restrictions on businesses as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, many businesses are experiencing financial hardship. In conjunction with the Economic

Recovery Task Force, staff have developed a number of potential initiatives to assist businesses in re-starting the local economy.

Each of the below potential initiatives would be temporary (ending December 31, 2020) and subject to the business submitting a completed application form for the proposed development. Receipt of an application will enable staff to evaluate the proposed development to ensure it does not pose a risk to public safety.

Development Permits for Patios

Proposed Initiative: Temporarily waiving the Development Permit application fee and the requirement to submit professional design drawings for the development of a commercial patio.

This initiative would reduce the costs of patio creation, enabling restaurant and bar owners to take advantage of outdoor space to spread out their clientele and therefore ensure adherence to physical distancing requirements.

The business owner would be required to complete and submit an application form, provide a hand drawn sketch with measurements, and if the patio is located on City property, provide proof of \$2,000,000 liability insurance with the City of Merritt as a named insured.

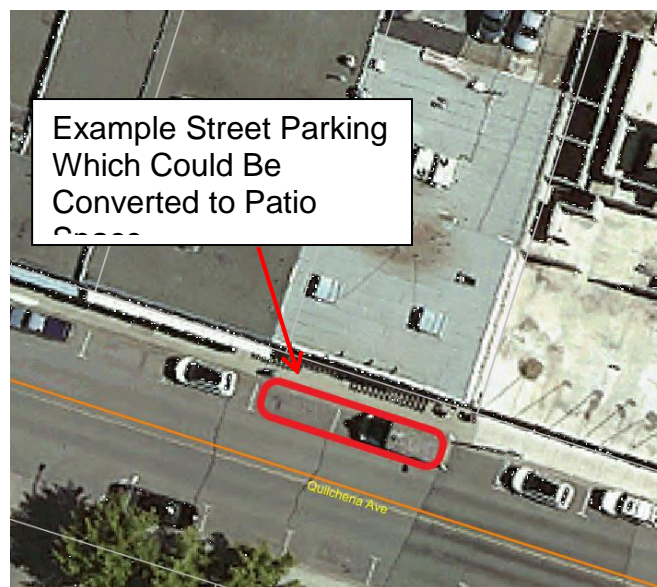


Figure 1: Street Parking to Patio Conversion

In order to ensure safety of patio users, staff would work with business owners to ensure barriers are established between vehicle lanes and seating areas. Potential barrier items could include planters, cones, traffic barricades or other similar objects. Staff will also explore reducing traffic speed limits on certain streets, such as Quilchena Avenue.

Sign Permits for Sign Installations

Proposed Initiative: Temporarily waiving the Sign Permit application fee and the requirement to submit a colour rendering for the installation of a sign for a home-based business, or commercial or industrial signs.

Sign Permits are required for many types of signs. The permit process enables staff to ensure proposed signs are aesthetically pleasing and do not pose any safety risks for residents. By temporarily waiving the application fee and requirement to submit a colour rendering, business owners would reduce their costs for installation of signage.

The business owner would be required to complete and submit an application form, provide a hand drawn sketch with measurements, and in the case of a sandwich board sign located on City property, provide proof of \$2,000,000 liability insurance with the City of Merritt as a named insured.

Development Permits for Façade Improvements

Proposed Initiative: Temporarily waiving the Development Permit application fee for commercial façade improvements.

This initiative would reduce the costs of façade enhancements, enabling retail business owners to beautify their premises, which will enhance the appearance of the City's commercial districts, thereby inspiring residents and visitors to shop locally.

The business owner would be required to complete and submit an application form and meet the Development Permit Area requirements in order to obtain a permit.

Permits for Outdoor Display of Goods

Proposed Initiative: Temporarily enabling retail businesses to apply for approval of outdoor display of goods which do not conform to the Business Licence Bylaw regulations, subject to approval by the Planning and Development Manager.

The Business Licence Bylaw includes regulations which enable the outdoor display of retail goods on sidewalks, as follows:

5.3. Any retailer with a valid Business Licence may exhibit, offer for sale, or display goods on sidewalks immediately abutting and within one (1) metre of their retail premises, provided that such display does not impede pedestrian traffic.

To provide more flexibility for retail business owners, staff could accept applications for alternative display plans which do not conform to the Bylaw, such as the use of more than 1 metre of sidewalk where the sidewalk is wide enough to accommodate pedestrian traffic, the display of goods on the street during a street closure or the conversion of a street parking space into display space. This initiative could be

particularly helpful for retail businesses where physical distancing of clientele is difficult due to with limited internal square footage.

The business owner would be required to submit a written request to the Development Services department, along with a hand drawn sketch of the proposed display and proof of \$2,000,000 liability insurance with the City of Merritt as a named insured. The application would be subject to Planning and Development Services Manager approval.

Options / discussion

Option 1: THAT Council temporarily waives the Development Permit application fee and requirement to submit professional design drawings for commercial patio construction;

AND THAT Council temporarily waives the Sign Permit application fee and requirement to submit a colour rendering for sign installation;

AND THAT Council temporarily waives the Development Permit application fee for commercial façade improvements;

AND THAT Council temporarily enables retail businesses to apply for approval of outdoor display of goods which do not conform to the Business Licence Bylaw regulations, subject to approval by the Planning and Development Manager.

Option 2: THAT Council receives this report for information

Financial / Risk Implications:

Waiving the fee requirements would mean a loss of Development Permit revenue of \$750 per development and Sign Permit revenue of \$50 per application.

Others Consulted:

- Economic Recovery Task Force

Attachments:

None

Respectfully submitted,

Don McArthur
Planning and Development Services Manager

Report

City of Merritt
REGULAR Council Meeting
May 26, 2020

File Number: 3800

To: Scott Hildebrand, Chief Administrative Officer
From: Don McArthur, Planning Manager
Date: May 21, 2020
Subject: Agreement to Remove or Demolish, 1550 Williams Cres., PID 003-963-934

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council accepts the Agreement to remove or demolish the mobile home at 1550 Williams Crescent, following the issuance of an occupancy permit for the new dwelling;

AND THAT the Mayor and Director of Corporate Services be authorized to execute the Agreement on behalf of the City.

Background:

Robert and Valerie Cox, the owners of 1550 Williams Crescent would like to build a new single family dwelling on the subject property and have indicated to staff that they will be submitting a building permit application. There is an existing mobile home located on the property. The owners want to live in the existing dwelling while the new house is under construction. They have agreed to demolish or remove the existing dwelling subsequent to receiving final occupancy of the new house (See Figure 1 below).

The subject property is zoned Low Density Residential (R2) which does not permit two single family dwellings on one lot. Staff is obliged to reject the building permit application because it does not comply with the Zoning Bylaw No. 2187, 2015.



Figure 1: Subject Property and Dwelling to be Removed
Staff developed the attached agreement to:

- ensure compliance with City bylaws; and
- enable the owner to proceed with the construction of their new home.

As the property is within Development Permit Area No. 6 Environmentally Sensitive Areas, a development permit application would have to be submitted by the applicant prior to approval of the building permit.

The owner has signed the agreement (see Attachment A) and agreed to provide the financial security subsequent to Council approval of the agreement.

Options

1. THAT Council accepts the Agreement to remove or demolish the mobile home at 1550 Williams Crescent, following the issuance of an occupancy permit for the new dwelling;

AND THAT the Mayor and Director of Corporate Services be authorized to execute the Agreement on behalf of the City.

2. THAT Council receive this report for information

Others Consulted:

N/A

Attachments:

A: Draft Agreement

Respectfully submitted,

Don McArthur
Planning and Development Services Manager



AGREEMENT

THIS AGREEMENT MADE THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2020

BETWEEN:

CITY OF MERRITT

P.O. Box 189
2185 Voght Street
Merritt, B.C., V1K 1B8

(hereinafter referred to as the "**CITY**")

AND:

**ROBERT KELLY COX
VALERIE SYLVIA MARIE COX**

1550 Williams Crescent
MERRITT, BC V1K 1K9

(hereinafter referred to as the "**OWNER**")

NOW THEREFORE, In consideration of the conditions and agreements herein contained, the CITY and OWNER covenant and agree each with the other as follows:

1. DEFINITIONS:

"PROPERTY" means Lot A, DISCTRICT LOT 173 KAMLOOPS DIVISION PLAN B14390, PID 003-963-934; 1550 Williams Crescent, Merritt, BC; V1K 1K9

Whereas the owners, **Robert Kelly Cox and Valerie Sylvia Marie Cox**, of 1550 Williams Crescent (PID 003-963-934) want to build a new single family dwelling on the subject property.

Whereas the property currently has an existing dwelling (mobile home) located on the property.

Whereas the owner commits to remove or demolish the existing dwelling subsequent to receiving final occupancy of the new house.

Whereas the City of Merritt is willing to accept and process the Development Permit and Building Permit applications for the new proposed single family dwelling on the property subject to the following conditions:

1. The owner provides the City with financial security in the amount of \$5,000.00 (five thousand dollars) which will be returned to the owner subsequent to the removal or demolition of the existing dwelling.
2. The owner applies for a demolition permit upon receipt of final occupancy of the new house, if applicable.
3. By signing this agreement, the owner commits to remove or demolish the existing dwelling within sixty (60) days of receiving the final occupancy of the new house.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF THE PARTIES HERETO HAVE SET THEIR HANDS AND/OR SEALS:

OWNERS OF 1550 Williams Crescent

Robert Kelley Cox, OWNER

WITNESS

Valerie Sylvia Marie Cox, OWNER

WITNESS

THE CORPORATE SEAL OF THE CITY OF MERRITT WAS HEREUNTO AFFIXED IN THE PRESENCE OF:

THE CITY OF MERRITT:

LINDA BROWN, MAYOR

SEAN SMITH, DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

Economic Development Committee Terms of Reference

Type:

Select Committee

Purpose:

The Economic Development Committee will advise Council on matters pertaining to economic development, downtown revitalization, investment, business attraction, and long-term economic sustainability.

Composition:

The Committee shall consist of up to 11 voting members, comprised of:

- Up to 3 members of Council, appointed by the Mayor
- Business owners that serve the City of Merritt
- Persons with expertise in business, investment, marketing, communications or planning and who have an interest in supporting and improving the economic viability of businesses in Merritt

In a non-voting advisory and support capacity:

- Chief Administrative Officer
- Tourism, Economic Development and Communications Manager
- Committee Clerk
- Representative from Community Futures Nicola Valley
- Representative from the Merritt and District Chamber of Commerce
- Electoral Area “M” Director
- Electoral Area “N” Director

Duties:

1. Facilitate the development of action plans to implement Council’s approved economic plans and initiatives
2. Provide advice and recommendations to Council regarding making amendments to or establishing new economic development plans and initiatives

3. Organize, facilitate and actively participate in efforts to implement economic plans and initiatives
4. Monitor, evaluate and report progress and achievements
5. Monitor funding available for economic development initiatives and encourage local government or other eligible agencies to apply for this funding, and provide input on funding applications
6. At the direction of Council, Liaise directly with local businesses regarding the formation of and provision of support to business improvement areas or downtown business association
7. Facilitate broad public involvement in community economic development and at Council's direction, provide educational opportunities and events related to planning and implementation of economic development plans and initiatives
8. Pursue any other matters referred to the Committee by Council and report back to the Council expeditiously, as required
9. Members of this Committee are expected to be involved in committee activities for approximately ten (10) hours per month, which may include evenings and weekends

Reporting:

The Committee will arrange to report to Council, on at least a semi-annual basis, though the Committee may make arrangements to come before Council more often to meet the needs of the Committee.

Term:

The Term of Committee member appointments will coincide with the term of Council.

Meetings and Administration:

- At the first Committee meeting, members will appoint a Chair by vote.
- The Economic Development Committee will meet a minimum of four times per year, or more frequently at the call of the Chair.
- Committee procedure shall be governed by the [Council Committee Policy](#)



May 8, 2020

Hon. David Eby
Room 232 Parliament Buildings
501 Belleville St.
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Eby:

RE: Supporting Businesses by Making Liquor Licensing More Flexible

As Mayor of the City of North Vancouver I want to start by thanking you for the work you have done to serve British Columbians.

I appreciate how quickly your government has responded to the needs of people and businesses. This pandemic has highlighted, among other things, the agility and speed of our public service when they are needed urgently.

It is with that same urgency I ask you to consider examining how we can increase flexibility in outdoor seating and liquor licensing in support of our businesses.

I have been hosting business round tables to learn about the unique needs of our business sectors. From these conversations I have learned of a few actions that could be taken immediately to ensure restaurants, pubs, and breweries can be resilient businesses as we begin to re-open gradually.

As you are aware, the current liquor licensing regulations for pubs, breweries and restaurants requires only permanent changes when adding potential capacity such as increased outdoor patio space.

Our City is in the process of revising our outdoor dining process to allow these businesses to expand their patio areas on a temporary basis as we begin BC's restart plan. This will assist these businesses to be able to serve customers on their premises while meeting safe distancing requirements.

My understanding is that the current provincial licensing requirements will not permit temporary changes, therefore I am concerned this will negatively impact these businesses and discourage many from being able to open up to serve the public on their premises.

Changing this model to allow greater flexibility could be the difference in countless businesses being able to keep their doors open and expanding their service from their current significantly reduced levels.

We have seen new challenges like never before, and your government has acted swiftly to deliver results. I urge you to consider what I have detailed to you in this letter. We now know

changes can happen quickly when they are needed, and these changes are needed immediately to support our food and liquor industry.

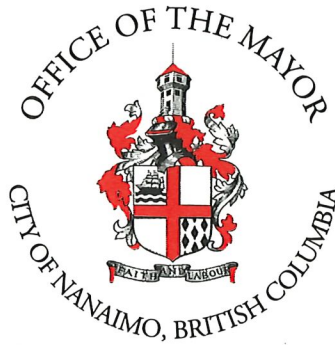
Do not hesitate to contact me if you require additional information. I thank you in advance for your consideration.

Yours Truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Linda C. Buchanan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Linda Buchanan
Mayor of the City of North Vancouver

c.c. All B.C. municipal governments
Bowinn Ma, MLA for North Vancouver-Lonsdale
BC Restaurant & Food Services Association
Alliance of Beverage Licensees
BC Craft Brewer's Guild
North Vancouver Chamber of Commerce
Lower Lonsdale Business Improvement Association



2020-May-13

Via email: AG.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Honourable David Eby, Q.C.
Attorney General
Parliament Buildings (Room 232)
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Eby,

Re: Supporting Businesses by Making Liquor Licensing More Flexible

At the Special Council meeting of 2020-May-11, the City of Nanaimo Mayor and Council, by way of motion, unanimously supported the City of North Vancouver - Mayor Linda Buchanan's letter of May 8, 2020 regarding the request for flexibility with the liquor licensing regulations for businesses who are looking to expand their outdoor seating area as BC begins its COVID-19 Phase 2 restart plan with enhanced protocols.

Council's motion reads as follows:

"It was moved and seconded that Council direct Mayor Krog to write a letter in support of the City of North Vancouver's request to Honourable David Eby, Q.C. supporting businesses by making liquor licensing more flexible."

The City of Nanaimo firmly believes if the province can provide pliancy, in these unprecedented times, to amend the current liquor licensing regulations community businesses will have a better chance of success.

Sincerely,


Leonard Krog
MAYOR

cc: Mayor Linda Buchanan, City of North Vancouver, mayor@cnv.org
All BC municipal governments
MLA Sheila Malcolmson, sheila.malcolmson.mla@leg.bc.ca
MLA Doug Routley, douglas.routley.mla@leg.bc.ca
Michelle Stilwell, michelle.stilwell.mla@leg.bc.ca
Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce, ceo@nanaimochamber.bc.ca

Mayor Brown and City Councillors:

Two matters that I wish you to consider in public meeting forum:

1. Water Restrictions: For a number of years we have had a diligent volunteer group concerned with the viability of our water: The Nicola Valley Watershed Roundtable; and Council has given support of their objectives by assisting with community meetings etc. But, the sad fact is that here in our valley we have a shortage of water, and the severe water rationing of Summer '19 is a sad reminder of that fact. So what can the City do? Please meet with the Roundtable to continue to learn what they have researched over the years.

While the City and its residents and businesses represent only a portion of water usage in the valley, I believe the time has come for the City of Merritt to adopt a pro-active stance towards water consumption. I urge you to find a way to penalize profligate water users; and to reward those who treat water as the scarce commodity that it is. Obviously, one method of doing this is water meters. And in that regard, I am advised that most cities of our size in BC utilize meters for all structured properties; and it appears that invariably, a typical residential water usage bill is considerably less than the flat rate that Merritt charges all residents. The careful users are subsidizing the wasteful in Merritt. Council should get the full facts.

For over twenty years Merritt has required home builders to buy a water meter from the City, only (a profitable venture by the City) and to install it before final occupancy. We have bought 38 of them. Sadly, most of these meters are now redundant; outdated, and worthless! It's not your fault present Council, but the time has come to curtail that costly requirement, and formulate a plan of action to both safeguard our water, and let residents who wish to use water wisely, profit from reduced water consumption charges.

I urge City Council to take affirmative action to safeguard our water supply; whether it be metering, or some other practice. I foresee the day that we won't need water 'restrictions'; because our water usage rates will do that for us.

2. I commend Council for the positive public messaging via the daily flooding forecast; and for acting cautiously to stockpile the new, re-usable, long lasting sandbags. But, let's plan for the day that buying and stockpiling sandbags, and staff duties absorbed with flood forecasting will not be required.

It may well be that our insurance rates will decrease; when insurers are advised that we are not in the same league as Grand Forks (which is buying 80 homes along their river).

Now is the time for the city to request the BC and Canada governments to help us; join with Merritt to update the 'Urban systems' report of 2012 (commissioned by the NV Stockbreeders Association). That, and only that, will show us what the most cost-effective

way is to control the Nicola River at freshet; and, hopefully, also deal with the cause of Mill Creek flooding; because the uncontrolled Mill Creek has a major effect on the Nicola volume.

I urge Merritt City Council to update the study, described above, now in 2020, so that we can all know what the solution is; and end the conjecture---and the apparent apathy of Council to concern itself with the real problem; control.

Thank-you for your consideration of the above. And, should Council decide to strike a committee for either of these initiatives, I'd be pleased to offer my assistance.

Sincerely

Darch Osborne
1699 Ponderosa Way
V1K 1J5

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES CHART

July 2019

CORPORATE PRIORITIES (Council/CAO)

NOW

1. **FLOOD MITIGATION PLAN: Request for Proposals**
2. **TRANS MOUNTAIN IMPACT ANALYSIS: Options**
3. **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY: Review / Direction**
4. **AIRPORT MASTER PLAN: Review / Direction**
5. **YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE**
6. **DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PLAN: Terms of Reference**

TIMELINE

August
September
September
October
September
September

NEXT

- COMMUNICATION STRATEGIC PLAN: Framework
- DEVELOPMENT COST CHARGES/SUBDIVISION BYLAW: Review
- OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN REVIEW: Terms of Reference
- LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN: Model
- MARKETING STRATEGY: Review
- HOUSING NEED ASSESSMENT: Scope
- LONG TERM CAPITAL PLAN: Draft

ADVOCACY / PARTNERSHIPS

- *HOUSING NEED ASSESSMENT: Grant*
- *Community Forest: Application*

OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES (CAO/Staff)

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

1. COMMUNICATION STRATEGIC PLAN – Oct.
2. Customer Service Consultations – Oct.
3. **TRANS MOUNTAIN IMPACT: Options** – Oct.
 - Human Resources Strategy: Scope
 - Integrated Capital Budget: Approach

PUBLIC WORKS

1. **FLOOD MITIGATION PLAN: RFP** – Aug.
2. **AIRPORT MASTER PLAN: Review** – Oct.
3. Asset Management: Team Setup – Sept.
 - Function Review – Dec.
 - 5 Year Capital Plan - Review

RECREATION

1. Department Restructuring Plan – Sept.
2. Asset Management Plan: Scope – Nov.
3. School Division Joint Use Agreement: Draft – Dec.
 - Trail Systems: Gap Analysis
 - Land Property Development: Options

DEVELOPMENT

1. OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN: Review : ToR. – Dec.
2. SUBDIVISION SERVICING BYLAW: Update – Dec.
3. Planner: Hire – Aug.
 - DCC Bylaw review
 - TBD with new hire

CORPORATE SERVICES

1. Human Resources Manager: Hire – Sept.
2. Meeting Management: Implementation – Sept.
3. **YOUTH ADVISORY: ToR** – Oct.
 - Business Licence Bylaw: First Reading – Sept.
 - **HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

FINANCE & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

1. Wireless Network: City Buildings – Sept.
2. LONG TERM FINANCIAL MODEL: Plan – Oct.
3. City-Wide IT Training
 - Improved Financial Report
 - Staff Cross Training

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. **DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PLAN: ToR** – Sept.
2. MARKETING STRATEGY: Review – Oct.
3. **ECONOMIC DEV. STRATEGY: Review** – Sept.
 - GIS implementation
 - Rural Dividend Grant: Application

PROTECTIVE

1. Bylaw Enforcement Policy: Direction – Sept.
2. Fire Services Master Plan: ToR – Oct.
3. Fire Station Addition: Options– Sept.
 - Bylaw Offence Notices: Options
 - Fire Safety Bylaw Review

BOLD CAPITALS = Council NOW Priorities; **CAPITALS** = Council NEXT Items; *Italics* = Advocacy; **Title Case Bold** = Organizational Excellence, Title Case = Departmental Strategic Initiatives