

Report

City of Merritt
REGULAR Council Meeting
June 16, 2020

File Number: 8310

To: Scott Hildebrand, Chief Administrative Officer
From: Don McArthur, Planning Manager
Date: June 10, 2020
Subject: Active Transportation Plan Update

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council receive this report as information.

Background:

The Province provided the City with a \$25,000 grant, which the City matched, for the creation of an Active Transportation Plan. Active transportation includes any form of human-powered transportation, including walking, cycling, or rolling using a skateboard, in-line skates, scooter, wheelchair, or other wheel-based forms of human-powered transportation. The goal is to provide transportation options that are more affordable, better for human health and the environment, while reducing traffic congestion.

The Request for Proposals for the project was published on March 3rd. Due to the COVID-19 shutdown, the closing date was extended to provide proponents additional time to apply. Following the proposal evaluation process, staff selected Urban Systems to develop the plan. Sarah Freigang is the Project Lead for Urban Systems, while Don McArthur will be the City's Project Manager. Ms. Freigang was an author of the Province of BC's Active Transportation Design Guide. Her extensive knowledge will be a great asset for the project.

Initial Meeting and Site Visit

The start-up meeting with the Urban Systems team was held by videoconference on May 14th. Staff from the Engineering & Public Works, Recreation & Facilities, Economic Development and Planning & Development Services departments attended the

meeting, and will be providing input into the development of the plan over the duration of the project.

On June 4th, the consultant visited Merritt to learn more about the challenges and opportunities of implementing a bicycle network in Merritt.

Engagement

A Communications and Engagement Strategy has been developed for the project (Attachment 1). Residents will have the opportunity to provide input into the plan development via online surveys, the first of which will be launched June 19th, as well as at an engagement event in September. The survey will be posted on the City's website and social media channels.

A dedicated webpage on the City's new website is being developed for the project. Details of engagement opportunities, survey results and other information about the project will be posted on the page. Staff encourage residents to check the website often for updates.

Plan Development

Following the conclusion of the engagement phase, a draft plan will be developed. The plan will be reviewed by staff and Council. Following the required revisions, and if there are no further COVID-19 related work interruptions, the final plan will be presented at a Council meeting before the end of 2020.

Next Steps

- Online Survey launch June 19th
- Staff report to Council July 21st

Options / discussion

1. That Council receive this report as information.

Financial / Risk Implications:

None.

Others Consulted:

N/A

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Active Transportation Communications and Engagement Strategy

Respectfully submitted,

Don McArthur
Planning and Development Services Manager