

Report

City of Merritt
REGULAR Council Meeting
June 16, 2020

File Number: 6480

To: Scott Hildebrand, Chief Administrative Officer
From: Don McArthur, Planning Manager
Date: June 11, 2020
Subject: Official Community Plan Update

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council receive this report as information.

Background:

Along with Council's Strategic Priorities and the Five Year Financial Plan, the Official Community Plan guides the City's growth and development. A Request for Proposals for the project was published on March 10th. 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 WSP to develop the plan. Chen Peng is the Project Lead for WSP, while Don McArthur will be the City's Project Manager.

A steering committee was formed of staff from the Engineering & Public Works, Recreation & Facilities, Economic Development, Fire, Corporate Services, Finance and Planning & Development Services departments, and will provide input into the development of the plan over the duration of the project. Council will also be consulted monthly by staff or the consultants.

Initial Meeting

The start-up meeting with the WSP team was held by videoconference on June 9th.

Engagement

An Engagement and Communications Strategy will be developed for the project. The consultant plans to present the strategy at the July 21st Council Meeting.

Residents will have the opportunity to provide input into the OCP development via an online survey in the Summer and at multiple engagement events in the Fall. In-person events will be subject to Province of BC restrictions and developed to ensure physical distancing is observed.

A dedicated webpage on the City's new website is being developed for the project. Details will be unveiled on July 21st.

Plan Development

Following the conclusion of the engagement phase, a draft plan will be developed. The plan will be reviewed by the steering committee and Council in Spring, 2021. 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 in Summer, 2021.

Next Steps

- Presentation by WSP at July 21st Council Meeting
- Online Survey launch in late July/ August

Options / discussion

1. That Council receive this report as information.

Financial / Risk Implications:

Staff applied for a \$25,000 grant from UBCM. The grants were supposed to be awarded by May 1st. Due to COVID-19, the award process has been delayed. If the grant application is not successful, reserve or other funds may need to be accessed.

Others Consulted:

N/A

Attachments:

None.

Respectfully submitted,

Don McArthur
Planning and Development Services Manager