Legislation Text

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Public Consultation Plan - Resident Input into Council's Strategic Direction
Presented by: Darija Slokar, Lead, Corporate Business Planning and Special Projects

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That the public participation plan to obtain resident input into Council's strategic direction and the ongoing business plan and budget cycle, as outlined in the March 20, 2017 agenda report titled "Public Consultation Plan - Resident Input into Council's Strategic Direction", be approved.

2. That Council approve a one-time withdrawal of $11,000 from the Stabilization Reserve to fund a Community World Cafe public consultation session and a facilitator for the Town Hall meeting in 2017.

3. That Administration bring forward a plan for ongoing public involvement approach to business plan and budget development for Council's consideration and discussion at a Standing Committee of the Whole meeting at a date to be determined by Agenda Committee.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report outlines Administration's proposed approach to facilitating the public participation activities related to receiving public input into Council's strategic direction and the annual business planning and budget process for the 2018-2020 cycle.

COUNCIL DIRECTION

On February 6, 2017 Council passed the following motion:

AR-17-050:
That Administration bring to Council by March 20, 2017, a public consultation plan in accordance with City Council Policy C-CG-06, Strategic Framework for the purpose of resident input for future updates to Council's strategic direction.

Council Policy C-CG-06, Strategic Framework standard 2 d) states:

*"*Consultation with the community through various public engagement methods will provide input into Council's Strategic Direction. These shall be determined and arranged in the first quarter of each year, to be held during the balance of the year."

Council Policy C-FS-05 Budget and Taxation Guiding Principles, Standards 1 d) states:

*"*Council shall engage the public prior and during the budget process when required by established policies with support from the City. Public input will be taken into consideration during the development of the proposed budget and in Council's deliberation of the proposed budget."

Council Policy C-CG-02 City of St. Albert Strategic Plan, outcome "Cultivate Excellence in Government" states:

"Engage the community to incorporate resident input and improve decision making:
2.1. Communicate and engage the community to promote two-way information sharing and provide the opportunity to provide input into the development of the City's plans, budgets, decisions and implementation of decisions that affect them.
2.2. Develop strategies to utilize online public engagement tools, social media and emerging technologies to enhance existing public engagement processes.
2.3. Improve access, remove barriers and provide opportunities for the community to get involved in the democratic process."

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

To develop the proposed plan, Administration considered feedback from Council, based on their experience with public participation activities, as well as input received from residents in development of the new Public Participation Policy. Administration is unable to implement all the input obtained and requires Council direction for future approaches, which will be sought through a Standing Committee of the Whole discussion.

The following activities are recommended to be done in 2017 for the 2018-2020 business plan and 2018 budget cycle:

1. November - World Cafe Discussion to take place following the presentation of the proposed business plan and budget. Funding required for this activity is approximately $10,000. As in previous years, this event will be conducted through invitation to randomly invited residents.

2. November - Town Hall Meeting to take place following the presentation of the proposed business plan and budget. Budget for this activity has already been approved. However, funding is required for a facilitator, approximately $1,000. Administration will communicate dates for the Town Hall meeting and work with community stakeholders to increase attendance as much as possible. Administration will also incorporate ability of residents to pose questions via social media during the event.

Please note that the Community Satisfaction Survey is scheduled to take place to gather input into programs and services and associated service levels that will inform the business planning and budgeting plans. The survey is planned to take place February 27 to March 19, 2017 and the results

will be presented to Council and the community on May 15, 2017.

STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATIONS OR ENGAGEMENT

The proposed plan is intended to enhance the City's ongoing public participation efforts.

IMPLICATIONS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

Financial:

For activities that are currently not funded for 2017 and recommended by Administration, World Cafe and Facilitator for Town Hall, an estimated $11,000 is requested to be funded from the Stabilization Reserve.

Administration will confirm the cost based on actual quotes and will either under spend the budget or will return to Council for additional funding request, if the quote is more than $5,000 more than anticipated; otherwise Administration will absorb the cost within the existing City budget.

Legal / Risk:
None at this time.

Program or Service:
The consultation plan will provide Administration and Council with better feedback and strategic insight that will be used to evaluate and improve programs and services to residents.

Sessions will provide more focused and timely feedback to Council that can be reflected in the future City' Strategic Plan and proposed business plan and budget.

Organizational:
Corporate Planning would coordinate delivery of all proposed activities.

ALTERNATIVES AND IMPLICATIONS CONSIDERED

1. If Council does not wish to support the recommendation for 2017 public participation plan, the following alternative could be considered:

Organize a Town Hall Meeting only and conduct a Community Satisfaction Survey for which funds are already built into the approved 2017 budget.

2. If Council doesn't wish to support the recommended approach for future years, the following alternative could be considered:

Conduct a Town Hall Meeting only and Community Satisfaction Survey every two years for which budget is already approved.

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS

City of St. Albert Strategic Plan (Policy C-CG-02)

Governance Strategy
Council is committed to ensuring that the City of St. Albert is a responsive, accountable government that delivers value to the community.

Service Delivery Strategy
Council is committed to ensuring that the City of St. Albert is engaging residents to identify opportunities to improve delivery of services to the community.

b) Long Term Plans (e.g. MDP, Social Master Plan, Cultural Master Plan, etc.)
- N/A

c) Corporate Objectives (See Corporate Business Plan)
- Deliver programs and services that meet or exceed our standards
- Ensure our customers are very satisfied

d) Council Policies, Bylaws or Federal/Provincial statutes
- C-CAO-18 Public Communication
- Council policy C-FS-05 Budget and Taxation Guiding Principles (Standard 1 a) and 1 d))
- Council policy C-CC-06 Strategic Framework (Standard 2 d)).
- Council policy C-CG-02 City of St. Albert Strategic Plan

e) Other Plans or Initiatives (Business Plans, Implementation Strategies, etc.)
- This policy will help assist the organization how to better engage the community for all strategic and budget processes.

Report Date (Council Meeting Date): March 20, 2017
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