



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF COURTENAY

STAFF REPORT

To: Council
From: Director of Corporate Services
Subject: City of Courtenay Communication Strategy

File No.: 1470-00
Date: January 10, 2024

PURPOSE: To seek Council approval of the City of Courtenay Communication Strategy.

BACKGROUND:

Under the Good Governance banner of the 2023-2026 Council Strategic Priorities, Council directed staff to undertake the following activities to increase community engagement:

- Complete Communication Strategy
- Complete a Community Survey
- Complete a Community Engagement Strategy

The community survey was completed in September 2023, and the engagement strategy is scheduled to be undertaken in 2024.

To facilitate the development of a Communications Strategy, the City engaged Spur Communication, a strategic communication consultancy with significant experience in enhancing local government communications.

DISCUSSION:

The Communication Strategy (Attachment 1) comprises the strategic recommendations, planning framework guidelines, and methodology leveraged by Spur Communications for the City of Courtenay. The strategy provides the City with an actionable communication plan to effectively inform residents, providing transparency of the necessary resources, tools, and frameworks. The Strategy outlines the following:

- **Methodology:** of the research and engagement activities undertaken before preparing the strategy
- **Communication Channels:** audit, identification and recommendations on the usage of each channel
- **Tooling:** identification, recommendations, and alternative tools to best engage
- **Work Plan:** a guide, outlining the usage of the *Resource Planning Tool*
- **Recommendations to the City:** 1) Strategic Recommendations, 2) Connecting with the Engagement Framework, and 3) Novel Technology use.

Upon adoption of the Strategy, communication tools, channels and resources will be expanded over time to achieve Council's desired level of service. Utilizing the *Resource Planning Tool*, the City will be able to more accurately estimate the staff time required to successfully manage various communication campaigns, leverage tools to the greatest impact.

POLICY ANALYSIS:

Canada's anti-spam legislation (CASL) protects consumers, businesses, and residents from the misuse of digital technology, including spam and other electronic threats. As the City seeks to expand communication channels, it is important to ensure that we remain compliant with CASL.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Costs associated with the implementation of the Communication Strategy will be brought forward through annual budget approval processes for Council's consideration.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS:

Staff support for the development of the Communication Strategy was part of the 2023 Communication Division workplan. The Communication Division will initiate the implementation of the plan in 2024, subject to Council approval.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES REFERENCE:

This initiative addresses the following strategic priorities:

- Good Governance - Increase community engagement for all segments of the community: complete communication strategy, community survey, and community engagement strategy

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Public engagement undertaken to inform the development of the Communication Strategy is outlined under the Strategy's Methodology Section.

OPTIONS:

1. THAT Council approve the City of Courtenay Communication Strategy.
2. THAT Council provide alternative direction to staff.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Communication Strategy

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