



The Corporation of the City of Courtenay

Staff Report

To: Council

File No.: 1470-20

From: Director of Development Services

Date: October 23, 2024

Subject: Downtown Local Area Plan Communication Strategy and Workplan

PURPOSE: For Council to receive the report and endorse the Communication Strategy for the Downtown Local Area Plan (DLAP).

BACKGROUND:

At the regular meeting of Council held on July 17, 2024 staff provide a report on the consolidation of Harmston Precinct, Downtown Playbook, OCP Downtown Centre and provided a new boundary for a Downtown Local Area Plan (DLAP) which Council approved. Staff indicated they would report back to Council with a Communication Strategy for the DLAP and staff is seeking Council's endorsement of the proposed plan in accordance with the community engagement and consultation requirements of the Local Government Act.

DISCUSSION:

The DLAP is intended to inform and amend the Official Community Plan which triggers consultation requirements pursuant to Section 475 of the Local Government Act in addition to the requirement under Section 477 (3) (c) for the subsequent bylaw amendment.

The proposed communication strategy and actions is outlined in Attachment 1 and provides an overview of the engagement approach. The strategy will provide opportunities, with a variety of methods and utilizing communication tools, to provide early and on an ongoing consultation to form a draft local plan for Council to consider in 2025. This project is intended to implement the OCP and provides and aligns with Council's Strategic priorities. This work has been incorporated into staff's workplan and has been identified in the 2023-2026 financial plan.

In accordance with the legislation, the communication strategy includes broad public and engagement with parties with a direct interest in the DLAP study area. This strategy is designed to reflect the Public Interest will include the general public and groups including but not limited to: Downtown Business Association, Chamber of Commerce, Comox Valley Arts Council, and local property owners. In order to engage with intergovernmental authorities who have an interest in the plan area the strategy includes contact with School District 71, CVRD, MoTI and BC Transit. With respect to K'omoks First Nation, a detailed engagement plan will be developed through following direct contact with the Nation to determine their level of interest in the study area as well as to determine how they would like to be involved in the project and subsequent consideration of the OCP amendment.

Table 1 below is a high-level summary of the three phases of the communication strategy which supports the development of the local area plan by the project team. Staff have initiated the development of the communication strategy and engaged on the first two tasks in Phase 1 in order to provide the strategy to Council and seek endorsement of the plan.

TABLE 1 Summary of Communication Strategy Plan

<p>PHASE 1: Planning Context & design Foundations Engagement Planning Workshop (with project team) Communications Strategy Plan (developed with Team) Public Interest and Intergovernmental Interviews</p> <p>Summary of what we heard Material preparations for Social point</p> <p>PHASE 2: Key Directions & Concept Plan Public Open house/Pop-up Virtual Engagement Public Interest and Intergovernmental follow-up What we Heard Summary</p> <p>PHASE 3: Refinement & Draft Plans Virtual Engagement (Social Point) Public Interest and Intergovernmental follow-up meeting Engagement Analysis & Report</p>
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This communication strategy supports the development of the local area plan while building upon the work undertaken through the OCP and Downtown play book as discussed at the July 17, 2024 council meeting. Tools being utilized include virtual, in person, survey, and interviews. The engagement will be summarized and utilized to inform the development of the local area plan. Staff will report back to Council at the end of Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the communication strategy to provide status updates and to outline how the engagement is informing the local area plan. These steps will be taken prior to the DLAP being presented for consideration of the OCP Amendment Bylaw.

POLICY ANALYSIS:

Section 475(1) in the *Local Government Act* that during the development of an amendment to the Official Community Plan (OCP) the proposing local government must provide one or more opportunities it considers appropriate for the consultation with persons, organizations and authorities it considers will be affected.

- For the purposes of subsection (1), the local government must*
- (a) consider whether the opportunities for consultation with one or more of the persons, organizations and authorities should be early and ongoing, and*
 - (b) specifically consider whether consultation is required with the following:*
 - (i) the board of the regional district in which the area covered by the plan is located, in the case of a municipal official community plan;*
 - (ii) the board of any regional district that is adjacent to the area covered by the plan;*
 - (iii) the council of any municipality that is adjacent to the area covered by the plan;*
 - (iv) first nations;*
 - (v) boards of education, greater boards and improvement district boards;*

(vi)the Provincial and federal governments and their agencies.

*(3) Consultation under this section is in addition to the public hearing required under section 477
(3) (c).*

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The 2023-2026 financial plan includes \$150,000 for the Harmston Local Area Plan. The Downtown Local Area Plan includes the Harmston Local Area Plan and has incorporated a number of strategic priorities like the Duncan Mews to create a comprehensive and coordinated local area plan to guide implementation of key actions that have been identified in the Downtown Playbook and OCP. To date \$45,000 has been spent on the first phase of the DLAP to create a SWOT analysis which is required to initiate and inform the communication strategy with the development of the DLAP.

MODUS has provided a proposal to support the DLAP process of \$45,000 plus additional \$10,000 to build the Social point page (Virtual Engagement) and monitor the page throughout the engagement process. The total cost to support the DLAP process is \$55,000 which leaves \$50,000 in the budget. The \$50,000 will be utilized for EKISTICS support to complete the DLAP. Any additional requirements outside of this plan would require additional funds.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS:

This project is being delivered with a combination of staff resources from Development Services and external consultants. Internally the project will require support from Communications to utilize city social media, webpages, media and newsprint where required. This project will include input and support from all city departments in the development and implementation of the DLAP.

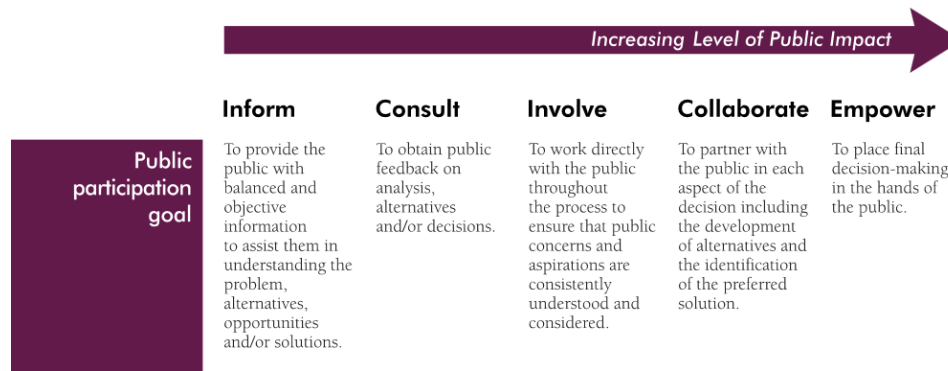
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES REFERENCE:

This initiative addresses the following strategic priorities:

- Streets and Transportation - Improve Cliffe Avenue and 5th Street intersection pedestrian facilities
- Streets and Transportation - Plan and implement bike parking and secure storage
- Buildings and Landscape - Update Zoning Bylaw - review maximum building heights
- Buildings and Landscape - Develop a local area plan for Harmston Avenue Civic Precinct
- Buildings and Landscape - Implement Duncan Commons/Downtown Courtenay Playbook, 5th Street staging/phasing
- Buildings and Landscape - Review and update land use regulations and bylaws for consistency with OCP

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Based 2 Spectrum the communication strategy will inform, consult, involve and collaborate.



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As discussed at the July 17, 2024 Council meeting, Staff is utilizing the engagement undertaken to date from the Downtown Play Book and the OCP to inform the development of the DLAP.

The DLAP will amend the OCP and the amending bylaws to the OCP will be prepared for Council's consideration after the conclusion of the communication strategy that supports the development of the DLAP.

Staff anticipate initiating and completing the Social Point page to be live and completing the public interest and intergovernmental agencies interviews in November 2024.

Phase 2 would be initiated in February 2025 followed by Phase 3 in April 2025.

OPTIONS

1. THAT Council receive the report on the Downtown Local Area Plan Communication Strategy and Workplan and endorse the communication strategy outlined in Attachment 1 in order to guide community and and interest holder engagement;

THAT Council pursuant to section 475 and 476 Local Government Act, Council will provide opportunities it considers appropriate for consultation with persons and parties it considers will be affected, including the Comox Valley Regional District, Town of Comox, Village of Cumberland, First Nations, and the province/provincial agencies and pursuant to section 476 Local Government Act, Council will consult with Comox Valley School District 71 prior to considering amendments to City of Courtenay Official Commuity Plan Bylaw No 3070, 2022.

2. THAT Council provide alternative direction to staff.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Communication Strategy Downtown Local Area Plan
2. July 17, 2024 SDDR Local Area Plan Update - Staff Report

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