
MEMORANDUM

To: Chair and Members of the Electoral Area Services Committee
From: Dawn Smith, MCIP, RPP - Planner 1
Date: May 27, 2014
Subject: Electoral Area "D" Official Community Plan Update - Consultation Strategy
File No.: 6480-20-427

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT pursuant to section 879 of the Local Government Act, the Regional Board approve the memorandum including attachments dated May 27, 2014 as the consultation strategy for the Electoral Area "D" Official Community Plan Update;

AND THAT the Regional District undertake early and ongoing consultation with:

- a) Electoral Area "D" and specifically residents and business/land owners by means of newsletters, meeting / events, open house and a public hearing;
- b) People of the River Referral Office¹, Sto:lo Nation Society, Popkum Band, Peters Band, Seabird Island First Nation, and Skwah First Nation by means of written notification of plan development, request for input, identification of preferred consultation approach, and referral of a draft Plan;
- c) School District 33 (Chilliwack) by means of written notification and request for input, staff level meetings, and referral of a draft Plan; and,
- d) local, provincial and federal government agencies by means of notification of plan development, request for input, staff level meetings as desired, and referral of a draft Plan.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES:

In the interest of providing a consultation approach which meets the legislative requirements of the Local Government Act and the needs of the public and stakeholders, the Regional District must consider who and how to undertake consultation for the EA "D" OCP update. The strategy provides for a strong community role through newsletter and online/social media communication, in-person meetings with ratepayers and business groups (ie. small business, agriculture, and development interests) and community members as requested. This memo will outline the consultation strategy for the Regional Board's consideration.

BACKGROUND:

There are both legal and practical reasons why consultation is necessary in the development of an Official Community Plan. Legally local governments are compelled by Section 879 of the Local

¹ People Of The River Referral Office includes notice to: Aitchelitz Band, Chawathil Band, Cheam Indian Band, Leq'a:mel First Nation, Scowlitz First Nation, Shxw'ow'hamel First Nation, Skawahlook Band, Skowkale First Nation, Squiala First Nation, Sumas First Nation, Tzeachten Indian Band, Yakwekwioose Indian Band

Government Act to provide one or more opportunities it considers appropriate for consultation with persons, organizations and authorities it considers will be affected.

This local government must consider whether the opportunities for consultation with one or more of the persons, organizations and authorities should be early and on-going, and specifically whether consultation is required with:

- i. other municipalities;
- ii. first nations;
- iii. school boards and improvement district boards; and
- iv. Provincial and federal governments and their agencies.

At a minimum the Regional Board must provide one opportunity for public input. This is in addition to the statutory Public Hearing under Section 882(3) (d) of the LGA. The Regional Board is not limited to those groups identified in the Local Government Act, and may also wish to extend consultation opportunities to others who may have an interest.

Section 879 LGA also requires the Regional Board to consider whether consultation should be early and ongoing. This provides the Board with discretion to consider different methods of consultation for different groups, meaning that a one size fits all consultation approach is not required. While the terms *early and ongoing* consultation are not defined by the LGA it may involve:

- early - opportunities for interested parties to identify issues or concerns before a Plan is substantially developed or at first reading in the bylaw adoption process;
- ongoing - regular and frequent opportunities for consultation throughout the Plan process such as a local working group or Advisory Planning Commission.

In addition to our legal obligations, the Regional District has an interest to ensure that residents and stakeholders participate in the preparation in the OCP update and that Plan policies reflect community values and issues. Therefore engaging the community in the Plan update is essential. The Area "D" OCP update will provide an opportunity for community input through online options such as:

- dedicated OCP Update website
- Facebook and Twitter communication
- email list notifications and updates
- online survey

The consultation strategy is appropriate to the scale of the OCP update, as no significant land use changes are anticipated. The Electoral Area "D" plan update will utilize online consultation options and group meetings based on interests (ie. residents, agriculture, business and development community) rather than form an ongoing Advisory Planning Commission (APC). This will allow the community to learn more and provide feedback online on their schedule, and/or participate in a meeting oriented to their interests. All feedback will be collected, summarized and accessible for the Regional Board and community members.

DISCUSSION:

To meet our statutory obligations and ensure a broad range of interests are represented in the OCP update, the following five primary audiences should be consulted: (1) general public, including residents, ratepayers/landowners; (2) specific audiences – such as business or agriculture community members; (3) first nations; (4) school district, and; (5) other local, provincial and federal government organizations (including FVRD internal departments, Agricultural Land Commission, BC Parks, Ministry of Transportation and infrastructure, Ministry of Forestry, Lands and Natural Resources and more).

In practice, the timing and extent of consultation with each group depends on their interest in the Plan update. Some groups may have a specific area of focus or topic, whereas others may have wide

ranging interest across the landscape. Also the structure of each audience influences the consultation approach. Formal/organized groups can be contacted directly, whereas input from informal audiences such as the general public are require a variety of participation methods ranging from surveys, public open houses, newsletters by mail, along with website access to Plan information and feedback options.

Expanded details of the proposed Consultation Strategy are presented in the Table 1.0 – Consultation Strategy for the Electoral Area “D” OCP Update.

Table 1.0 – Consultation Actions for the Electoral Area “D” OCP Update	
AUDIENCE	ACTIONS
Residents & landowners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ newsletter – all EA “D” addresses (Summer & Fall) ▪ website ▪ facebook and Twitter ▪ online survey ▪ in person meetings (business, ratepayer, agriculture, etc. groups) ▪ media releases ▪ fire hall open house, October 2014 ▪ utility billing OCP reminder note ▪ additional/follow up meetings as requested ▪ Open house and public hearing at 1st reading of the Plan
First Nations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ early referral letter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - notify that an OCP is under development; - request pertinent information that is useful in development the OCP; - provide an opportunity to identify issues of concern early on; - offer to meet and discuss issues of concern; - receive feedback from agency/group on preferred consultation approach; and - inform that a draft Plan will be referred after it has first reading. ▪ follow up contact – by phone call, email, and meeting offer ▪ referral copy of draft plan and bylaw referral
Government Agencies - local - provincial - federal	

In keeping with previous OCP update projects, the following general principles will guide consultation efforts:

- consultation should guide a Plan which represents values and aspirations of the community, and therefore receives broad public support;
- public communications should be easily understandable and presented in plain language;
- a tone of openness, accessibility and respect should be maintained throughout the Plan Update process;
- opportunities for consultation should not be denied to any party that expresses a desire for input.

As we move forward with the Plan update process the consultation input will be shared with the EASC and Regional Board, including: original written submissions and public meeting notes as received; and compiled submissions (including first nations and government responses) along with staff prepared summary/analysis prior to giving reading or adoption of the OCP bylaw.

COST:

The Electoral Area “D” OCP update is a scheduled 2014 Electoral Areas Planning Section work plan priority. Anticipated costs are included in the approved 2014 budget.

COMMENTS BY:

DIRECTOR OF EA PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT:

Reviewed and supported.

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:

No further financial comment.

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER:

Reviewed and supported