

Staff Report to EPC

Planning and Development

FILE: 11-5280-02/22

REPORT DATE: July 18, 2022 **MEETING DATE:** July 26, 2022
TO: Mayor and Council
FROM: Angie Lucas, Director of Planning and Development
SUBJECT: Economic Development Strategy Scope and Engagement Process

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REVIEW/APPROVAL:



RECOMMENDATION(S):

THAT the Committee:

- A. Receive for information the staff report titled “Economic Development Strategy Scope and Engagement Process” presented at the July 26, 2022 Engagement and Priorities Committee meeting; OR
- B. Other.

PURPOSE

To present the project scope and engagement survey for a new economic development strategy for Pitt Meadows and receive input that will inform its creation.

☒ Information Report ☐ Decision Report ☐ Direction Report

DISCUSSION

Background:

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the City launched the Economic Resiliency Task Force (ERTF) as a temporary measure to support local businesses. From March to September 2020, the ERTF developed initiatives and shared information on available resources and grant programs with local businesses to mitigate the economic impacts of the pandemic. To provide long-term support for local businesses, Council subsequently directed staff to establish an Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC), which launched in October 2021.

As an initial project, EDAC members were asked to review the City's 2008 Economic Development Strategy and help identify ideas for updating the strategy. Feedback received from both the committee and Council was used to draft the project scope for a new economic development strategy that will be more responsive to the City's current governance model and available resources.

The Economic Development Advisory Committee is serving as a steering committee for the economic development strategy project in collaboration with Jamie Vann Struth, an economic development consultant.

Relevant Policy, Bylaw or Legislation:

Official Community Plan includes policies that support:

- fostering a business friendly environment;
- growth that protects and enhances the “small town” feel in all neighbourhoods;
- increasing the range of businesses in Pitt Meadows; and,
- identifying for appropriate opportunities for growth at the airport.

Analysis:

Project Scope

The completed economic development strategy will help the City identify suitable initiatives, policies, and programs to enhance Pitt Meadows' business environment and the community's quality of life. It will be developed using information on the community's business climate, workforce and population projections, constraints, opportunities, and priorities.

Delivery of this project has been broken up into three phases.

Phase 1 includes:

- Background research, including:
 - analysis of available data on employment, labour force, housing, and demographic information; information on existing businesses and business sectors;
 - a cross comparison with adjacent and similar communities;
 - evaluation of the economic impact of specific topics such as the COVID-19 pandemic, build-out of the Golden Ears Business Park, and other matters.
- Targeted interviews with representatives from key market sectors and public surveys of business owners, managers, and operators, and residents. The interviews and surveys will build on prior engagement with the EDAC and Council.
- Development of a draft vision, initial priorities, and ideas and areas of focus for the strategy will be informed by the recently completed Official Community Plan, interviews

and survey results, and other input from EDAC, Council, and community members. The results from this phase are expected to be available at the end of August 2022 and will provide initial ideas and input for consideration in the City's 2023 business planning cycle.

Phase 2 includes:

- Development of a full, multi-year strategy. This will be a more comprehensive document that builds on the identified vision and initial priorities with long-term projects and initiatives that look five or more years into the future. These may include leveraging earlier projects and fostering partnerships with rights-holders, stakeholders, and other levels of government. The multi-year strategy is expected to be completed by early October 2022.

Phase 3 is an addendum that will utilize 2021 Statistics Canada data to provide a detailed analysis on industry trends, comparative advantages within the region, workforce expertise and gaps, and commuting pattern implications on local business sectors. The Statistics Canada information is expected to be released in approximately November 2022 and the phase 3 analysis, to be completed by January 2023, will insure the strategy is based on the most recent data.

The completed strategy will be living document that can be expanded upon or revisited as initiatives are completed and new opportunities arise.

Engagement Survey

The engagement portion of phase 1 will include targeted interviews, focus group discussions, and public surveys for residents and local business owners/operators. Targeted interviews and focus groups will be used to gather information on prominent business sectors, institutions, business associations, and business areas in Pitt Meadows. The public surveys opened up on July 18th and have been advertised on social media, newspaper advertisements, digital signs, and by direct mailout to all addresses in Pitt Meadows. The advertisements include web addresses and QR codes linked to the survey landing page on the City's engagement website (www.haveyoursaypittmeadows.ca).

The public survey for business owners, managers, and operators (attachment A) includes questions on:

- Pitt Meadows as a business and investment location,
- experience with regulatory and permitting requirements,
- transportation and infrastructure needs,
- labour supply,
- market/sector trends,
- availability of business support,
- comparable alternative locations, and
- ideas for improving the business climate.

The resident survey (attachment B) is slightly different with questions about the resident's:

- reason for choosing to live in Pitt Meadows,
- employment status,
- proportion of household spending at Pitt Meadows businesses,
- if there are certain business types or services that are under or over represented in the city,
- whether commuters would consider working locally if comparable jobs were available,
- relative satisfaction with lifestyle amenities (e.g., cultural amenities, infrastructure, transportation options, housing options, etc.), and
- ideas or concerns for improving the business climate.

The responses are anonymous, but participants are asked for a postal code to provide insight into community engagement. The answers will be compiled to identify themes, trends, and recommended initiatives, policies, and programs. The consultant will incorporate the findings into their work with the EDAC members to identify the initial priorities and to draft the longer multi-year strategy.

COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

- ☒ Principled Governance ☒ Balanced Economic Prosperity ☐ Corporate Excellence
☐ Community Spirit & Wellbeing ☐ Transportation & Infrastructure Initiatives
☐ Not Applicable

Community Voice. Engage stakeholders in meaningful discussion around the current and future success and prosperity of Pitt Meadows.

Business Vitality. Foster a vibrant and diverse economy where local businesses thrive.

Employment. Help residents improve their quality of life by encouraging and sustaining diverse, well-paying employment opportunities close to home.

Airport. Encourage economic development initiatives for the Pitt Meadows Regional Airport and strengthen its interface with the community.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- ☐ None ☒ Budget Previously Approved ☐ Referral to Business Planning
☐ Other
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There are no financial implications associated with this report.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

☒ Inform ☒ Consult ☒ Involve ☐ Collaborate ☐ Empower

Comment(s):

The project and the survey were advertised on social media, in the newspaper, on digital signs around the City, and via postcards sent to all business and residential addresses in Pitt Meadows. Community members are invited to fill out surveys specific to business owners, managers, and operators and/or residents. The collated responses will inform the preparation of the economic development strategy. Additionally, community volunteers appointed to the Economic Development Advisory Committee members are serving as a steering committee, guiding the development of the draft strategy.

KATZIE FIRST NATION CONSIDERATIONS

Referral ☐ Yes ☒ No

SIGN-OFFS

Written by:

Colin O'Byrne,
Manager of Planning

Reviewed by:

Angie Lucas,
Director of Planning and Development

ATTACHMENT(S):

- A. Economic Development Strategy - Business Survey Questions
- B. Economic Development Strategy - Resident Survey Questions