



# Staff Report to Council

Community Services Department

**FILE:** 13-6900-01/19

**DATE:** February 26, 2019

**Date of Meeting –** March 5<sup>th</sup> 2019

**TO:** Mayor and Council

**FROM:** Alex Wallace, Manager of Community Development

**SUBJECT:** **Maple Ridge & Pitt Meadows Circle Farm Tour Sponsorship**

**RECOMMENDATION(S):** THAT Council:

- A. Support the 2019 / 2020 Circle Farm Tour campaign with a \$525.00 sponsorship fee in recognition and support of agri-tourism and local businesses; AND
- B. Endorse the promotion of the Circle Farm Tour campaign thru the City’s social media channels; AND
- C. Direct staff to fund the 2019 sponsorship fee from the operating reserve and include in the 2020 5-Year Financial Plan; OR
- D. Other.

**CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER COMMENT/RECOMMENDATION:**

**PURPOSE**

For Council to consider a sponsorship of the Maple Ridge & Pitt Meadows Circle Farm Tour.

Information Report

Direction Report

Decision Report

## DISCUSSION

### **Background:**

The Circle Farm Tour (CFT) is a regional and community “agri-tourism” development project. This initiative was established 15 years ago to build upon the efforts of the local communities within the Fraser Valley of British Columbia, and has helped develop a strong and vibrant tourism industry. The group is looking to update their campaign and hopes to enhance the Circle Farm concept that was initially created by the District of Kent in Agassiz and Harrison Mills in 2003. They are requesting a sponsorship of \$525.00 and to promote the Circle Farm Tours on social media channels

The 2019/2020 Circle Farm Tour Campaign is overseen by the Regional Circle Farm Tour Group (RCFT Group), which currently includes five Fraser Valley communities and organizations:

- Tourism Abbotsford
- Tourism Chilliwack
- Tourism Harrison
- Tourism Langley
- City of Maple Ridge

The mandate of the RCFT group is to establish a marketing partnership to showcase the diversity of quality agri-tourism and related businesses in the Fraser Valley. The focus is on marketing “export-ready” and “visitor friendly” products while providing a unique tourism experience. The marketing campaign for the RCFT is designed to position the agri-tourism sector in the Fraser Valley as a strong and vibrant component of the tourism industry. By working together and leveraging each community’s resources the RCFT offers visitors remarkable experiences and more reasons to visit the Fraser Valley. Currently the program offers the following self-guided farm tours:

- Abbotsford
- Agassiz + Harrison Mills
- Chilliwack
- Langley
- Maple Ridge + Pitt Meadows

The Maple Ridge + Pitt Meadows farm tour is mostly agricultural businesses and local restaurants that focus on serving local farm fresh food. The farm tour has been in the community for some time, and was originally handled by the former tourism office on Harris Road. It is now run by the Economic Development Office in Maple Ridge. Between the two communities there are 11 partners who pay a fee to be a part of the program. The partners in Pitt Meadows are:

- Dr. Bee’s Honeyland
- Leghorn Ranch
- Hopcott Meats
- Amsterdam Garden Centre
- Golden Meadows Honey Farm
- Blue Heron Winery

The CFT’s objectives have been to provide visitors with authentic farm experiences through the collaborative network of CFT communities stretching across the Fraser Valley. They would like to build on the success of the program and expand their social media presence. Now entering its 16th year, their objectives for Circle Farm Tour are to:

- Increase overnight stays and visitor expenditures in our communities and the Province of British Columbia.
- Provide return on investment for CTF partners and stakeholders.
- Create more awareness of the CTF brand among younger a demographic.
- Strengthen the perception of farm-based activities among urban residents.

**Relevant Policy, Bylaw or Legislation:**

The Official Community Plan outlines policies that aim to balance protection of agricultural land from non-farm uses with enabling value-added agricultural business initiatives that help diversify the agricultural economy.

**Analysis:**

The RCTF is asking for the City to be a sponsor of the program by giving \$525.00, to provide a small space where brochures can be displayed and to promote the CFT on social media channels.

Staff has reviewed the Grants and Cash Donations Policy NO. C072. The policy speaks to not providing grants or cash donations to local causes, organizations, associations or societies in order to keep taxes low. Proposals for fee for service agreements are to be considered individually on their own merits and should be negotiated or reviewed annually. Financial consideration for each fee for service agreement must be included in the Financial Plan.

Staff views this request as a fee for services proposal. The sponsorship is providing a tourism promotion service to the community of Pitt Meadows. The sponsorship will provide brochures and a program promoting agri-tourism and related community businesses. If approved, the funding would come from the operating reserve.

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**COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT**

- Corporate Excellence       Economic Prosperity       Community Livability
- Transportation & Infrastructure       Not Applicable

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**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- None       Budget Previously Approved
- Other       Referral to Business Planning
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If approved, the 2019 sponsorship would be appropriately funded by the operating reserve and included in the annual operating budget of the 2020 5-Year Financial Plan.

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**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Inform       Consult       Involve       Collaborate       Empower

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**KATZIE FIRST NATION CONSIDERATIONS**

Referral       Yes       No

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**SIGN-OFFS**

Written by:

Reviewed by:

A. Wallace, Manager of Community Development

M.Roberts, Chief Administrative Officer

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**ATTACHMENT(S):**

- A. Circle Farm Tours Website: <http://www.circlefarmtour.com/maple-ridge-pitt-meadows>
- B. Grants and Cash Donations Policy NO. C072

<b>PITT MEADOWS POLICY MANUAL</b>	<b>POLICY NO. C072</b>
<b>SUBJECT: Grants and Cash Donations</b>	<b>Approved by Council: March 21, 1995 Amended: February 19, 2008 Reaffirmed: June 16, 2015</b>

- (a) The City will not provide grants or cash donations. The responsibility for providing cash donations or grants to local causes, organizations, associations or societies is left to the individual taxpayer. This assists the Municipality in keeping taxation levels as low as possible.
- (b) Proposals for fee for service agreements are to be considered individually on their own merits and should be negotiated or reviewed annually. Financial consideration for each fee for service agreement must be included in the Financial Plan. Council may identify a small amount to be included in the financial plan for unforeseen fee for service agreements which may come up throughout the year.