



Staff Report

Finance and IT Services

Report To: Community Communications Advisory Committee
Meeting Date: June 17, 2019
Report Number: FAF.19.102
Subject: Communication Strategy Funding Information
Prepared by: Sam Dinsmore, Deputy Treasurer/Manager of Accounting and Budgets

A. Recommendations

THAT the Community Communications Advisory Committee receive Staff Report FAF.19.102 entitled "Communication Strategy Funding Information" for information purposes.

B. Overview

This report outlines the eligible expenses for the \$100,000 included in the 2019 Approved budget for the Communication Strategy (Attachment #1).

C. Background

A major portion of the funding (\$45,000) is coming from the General Government Development Charge Reserve Fund. The Town has an obligation to properly spend Development Charges, this responsibility ultimately lies with the Treasurer. The remaining funding comes from a mixture of taxation, reserves, and a small grant received from Grey County.

D. Analysis

Included in the Town's 2019 Development Charges Background Study is the creation of a Communication Strategy. As per the background study, the funding is split 45% General Government Development Charges and 55% other funding sources. The reason behind the split is first the General Government is a discounted service and the Plan has some benefit to the existing Town population.

In order to fully utilize the \$100,000 budget, the Communications Committee must spend the funding on the creation of a Communication Strategy. Eligible costs can include hiring an outside consultant, internal salaries and benefits (including contract staff), advertising for public consultation sessions or printing of the final plan. The key item is that all expenses must be related to the development of this strategy.

If additional funding is required for implementation of the strategy once it is established, a further request by the Communications Committee will need to be made to Council during the budget deliberations.

E. The Blue Mountains Strategic Plan

The Blue Mountains Strategic Plan

Goal #4: Promote a Culture of Organizational and Operational Excellence

Objective #4: To Be a Financially Responsible Organization

F. Environmental Impacts

N/A

G. Financial Impact

The \$100,000 included in the 2019 Approved Budget for the Communication Strategy is funded by \$45,000 General Government Development Charges, \$30,000 Taxation, \$22,500 Economic Development and Communication Reserve, and \$2,500 Grey County grant.

H. In consultation with

Shawn Everitt, Chief Administrative Officer

Ruth Prince, Director of Finance & IT Services

Tim Hendry, Communications & Economic Development Coordinator

I. Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report has not been subject to a Public Meeting and/or a Public Information Centre as neither a Public Meeting nor a Public Information Centre are required. Comments regarding this report should be submitted to Sam Dinsmore, Deputy Treasurer/Manager of Accounting and Budgets at finance@thebluemountains.ca.

J. Attached

1. Communication Strategy Business Case (2019 Approved Budget)

Respectfully Submitted,

Sam Dinsmore
Deputy Treasurer/Manager of Accounting and Budgets

Ruth Prince
Director of Finance and IT Services

For more information, please contact:

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Administration

Communications Strategy/Advisory Committee

Committee Mandate

The Communications Advisory Committee is an advisory committee of Council with a mandate to foster collaborative engagement between residents and the Town of The Blue Mountains. The Advisory Committee will focus on external communication processes and enhancements. As outlined below the Advisory Committee tasks may include the development and completion of a Communication Strategic Plan that would include extensive public consultation and consider external communications for the Town.

The mandate of the Advisory Committee is to:

- Assist, in an advisory capacity, Council and Staff on matters relating to Town communication;
- Attend regular monthly meetings of the Communications Advisory Committee to contribute to its communications work;
- Learn about all policy and advocacy work of the Communications Advisory Committee to ensure maximum effectiveness;
- Help further the goals of the Communications Advisory Committee and the Town through provision of input based on professional expertise;
- The Communications Advisory Committee will make recommendations in the most collaborative and collective manner possible, recognizing that all members may not agree, nor may Town Council who have final responsibility for Town policies;
- Direct and advise on a work-plan for the Communications Advisory Committee and establish a course of action in proceeding with a Communication Strategic Plan beginning in the second quarter of 2019.

To accomplish its mandate, the Communications Advisory Committee will:

- Provide advice and recommendations to Council through Town staff to ensure successful dialogue and engagement with residents;
- Cultivate a positive community-wide culture of engagement and dialogue among residents, staff and Council;
- Contribute to the development of a Communication Strategic Plan for the Town;
- Ensure that communication regarding key activities and processes in the Town are provided for the community;
- Oversee with Town staff the development of policies and plans in support of the communication strategy.

Proposed Meeting Schedule

3rd Monday of the Month at 9a.m.

Committee Resources

Staff Resources for this Committee are anticipated to be at a higher level in the initial stages of the development of the Committee and the potential Communication Strategy as outlined in this Committee Operating Sheet.

Staff has based the use of staff resources on a meeting per month schedule. Using existing Committees as the basis, the Administrative support outlined below will require approximately 6 hours of administrative support that is currently not provided by staff with this Advisory Committee being newly established. It is suggested that additional meetings will be required during the Strategic Plan development.

In addition to typical Administrative support, it is suggested that staff time be allocated to the following positions;

Chief Administrative Officer – 4 hours per month

Economic Development & Communication Officer – 10 hrs per month Committee specific

Administrative Support - 6 hours per month (time allotted and funded through Committee Budget);

- Agenda Preparation
- Scheduling of Meetings
- Minute Taking
- Minute preparation
- Minute circulation Collection of Correspondence
- Development and circulation of correspondence from the Board
- Coordinate with Clerks Department for Committee and Council Agenda Inclusion

Total Staff Resources for 2019 – Estimated \$10,393.00 (from March to end of December)

In addition it is recommended that the Communications Strategic Plan Project if approved through the budget process is to include an additional contract staff resource to be assigned as the Project Manager and be shared with the Economic Development Strategic Plan Project. It is proposed that the Project Manager would report to the Economic Development & Communications Coordinator.

Communications Committee Strategic Plan - Business Case

This project has been identified as a priority and is also a key initiative for the Town. This Strategy will focus on both internal and external municipal communications. Communications has been identified as a key focus area for the Town.

Strategic Alignment

Goal #1: Create Opportunities for Sustainability

Objectives: 5) Improved Visibility and Local Identity

Goal #2 Engage Our Communities and Partners

Objectives: 1) Improve external communications with our constituents

2) Use Technology to advance engagement

3) Strengthen Partnerships

Options or Solutions Analysis

This project requires additional staffing resources to provide to complete the strategic plan tasks, and may also require the hiring or purchasing of services from a consultant to provide expertise in specific areas.

It is anticipated that strong Committee membership will provide a high level of expertise and skill set to help in the development of the Communication Strategy.

Financial and/or Non-Financial Benefits

The Community needs information to be provided in a timely fashion that allows dialogue with Staff and Council prior to decisions being made. A communication strategy should clearly identify; why, what, where, when and how we communicate.

Risk Analysis

There have been some initiatives in 2018 in regards to communication, however staff feel that this could be enhanced for better community engagement and partnership relations.

Recommendation

That Council direct staff to initiate the process to complete a Communications Strategy to be completed by the 1st quarter of 2021.

Implementation Plan

2nd Quarter of 2019 pending budget approval, engage the Communication Advisory Committee to develop the framework of the strategic planning process.

3rd Quarter of 2019

Hiring of a shared Contract Project Manager for the Communication Strategy and Economic Development Strategy.

4th Quarter of 2019

Initiation of the development of a Communication Strategy and initiation of a comprehensive stakeholder and the public consultation process.

2nd Quarter of 2019 preliminary findings at status report to Committee of the Whole

3rd Quarter of 2020

1st draft of the Communication Strategy considered by the Communication Advisory Committee and Council.

3rd Quarter of 2020

Communication Strategy approved by Council

Budget

Description	Total	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Expenditures						
Materials	\$30,000	\$30,000				
Advertisements	\$5,000	\$5,000				
Consulting	\$8,000	\$8,000				
Contract Services	\$52,000	\$52,000				
Additional Equipment	\$5,000	\$5,000				
Expenditures Total	\$100,000	\$100,000				
Funding						
Municipal Grants	\$2,500	\$2,500				
Taxation	\$30,000	\$30,000				
Non-Growth Reserve	\$22,500	\$22,500				
Development Charges	\$45,000	\$45,000				
Funding Total	\$100,000	\$100,000				

Materials - include Public Engagement Materials as well as final publication of a Communication Strategy and aligned with the Economic Development and Sustainable Path project engagement materials where appropriate.

Advertisement – includes funding for a very robust public engagement advertisement campaign over the duration of the project and aligned with the Economic Development and Sustainable Path project.

Consulting – includes funding for specific expertise in public facilitation and graphic design

Contract Services – this allows for the town to hire a Contract Staff that will provide shared project management for the Communications Strategy and the Economic Development Strategic Plan. The contract staff person will also be the liaison with the Communications Committee for Project Specific tasks. This proposed project direction provides for in-house expertise and reduces the need for a consultant managed project.

Additional Equipment – funding is provision in the case of project specific equipment for facilitation and or engagement including computer and other IT equipment. This funding can be considered a contingency that is dependent on the successful candidate’s needs.