

REQUEST FOR DECISION

DATE: September 04, 2015

Report No. DEV-15-044

TO: Laurie Hurst, Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: Bill Brown, Director of Development Services

SUBJECT:

Request for funding to feature Esquimalt on the 2016 edition of the "Victoria BC Official Destination Map"

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council allocate \$8,400.00 from the 2015 contingency to pay to have Esquimalt featured on the 2016 edition of the "Victoria BC Official Destination Map".

RELEVANT POLICY:

Official Community Plan policy 8.1.2 (e) states, "Working with other organizations, the Township will continue to promote Esquimalt's visitor attractions, including waterfront parks, the Gorge Waterway, West Bay and Esquimalt Harbour, the Navy Base/Museum and military history and related recreational activities."

Economic Development Strategy actions:

- "Promote marine recreational opportunities and events in the Township."
- "Support development of tourism opportunities in West Bay."
- "Promote recreational and sporting opportunities for visitors from around the CRD."
- "Promote Esquimalt as a "place to visit" using online channels."

STRATEGIC RELEVANCE:

This program supports the "Implementation of the Economic Development Strategy".

BACKGROUND:

On October 27, 2014, Council passed the following resolution:

[14-147](#) Map on the Attractions Victoria Map Illustrating Esquimalt's Tourist Attractions, Staff Report DEV-14-071

Moved by Councillor Brame, seconded by Councillor McKie that Council authorize staff to use \$4000.00 that was allocated in the 2014 budget for printing walking tour maps and \$4400.00 from the contingency budget to pay for having a map of Esquimalt's tourism attractions inserted on the Tourism Victoria "Attractions" map for a one year trial period.

Carried Unanimously.

Although staff cannot provide Council with a statistically valid cost-benefit analysis to prove that the "one year trial period" was successful, anecdotal evidence from municipal staff suggests that the map was quite popular – in fact more had to be ordered.

Over 500,000 copies of the map were distributed throughout Greater Victoria in 2015. In addition to municipal facilities (e.g. Municipal Hall, Municipal Archives, Public Safety Building, and the Esquimalt Library), the maps were distributed by Attractions Victoria to the tourist information centres, major hotels, the cruise ship terminal, and many of the most popular tourist attractions in the region. The Victoria BC Official Destination Map is also the only map that partners with Tourism Victoria, Clef D'ors, the Victoria Guest Services Network, and the Greater Victoria Harbour Authority. In addition to its regional distribution, the map is used by Tourism Victoria and Attractions Victoria in its global sales missions to the United States, China, and elsewhere. Finally, the 2016 edition of the map will be published on the Attractions Victoria web site giving potential tourists and travelers from around the world access to a digital map that prominently features Esquimalt's tourism assets.

The 2016 edition of the map will incorporate several new features including:

- The use of photographic images to help bring the reader's attention to some of Esquimalt's most iconic features such as Saxe Point Park, the Japanese Gardens, and the Graving Dock.
- Adding more labels and icons to promote the wide variety of activities available in Esquimalt such as scuba diving at Saxe Point Park, non-motorized boating in the George, and rock climbing at Macaulay Point Park.
- The 2016 edition of the map will be printed on glossy paper.

This initiative represents an investment in Esquimalt's tourism sector which is an important component of its economic base. With the rejuvenation of the English Inn, the emergence of First Nations' Tourism, and the potential of West Bay to become more of a tourist destination, it is imperative that tourists and travelers to the region have an easily accessible tool to guide them to Esquimalt's many attractions. The Attractions Victoria tourism map represents a synergistic investment that allows Esquimalt to spread its brand to the 500,000 tourists and travelers who pick up a copy of the map via the distribution network that has been developed by Attractions Victoria. It would be

cost prohibitive for Esquimalt to try to duplicate the work that Attractions Victoria has done to promote the region to tourists and travelers.

This year, Attractions Victoria is visiting other municipalities and First Nations in the region to promote the map and is using Esquimalt as a great example of the benefits of entering into a mutually beneficial partnership to promote tourism.

ISSUES:

1. Rationale for Selected Option

This partnership represents a manifestation of Official Community Plan policy 8.1.2 (e) that encourages Council to promote Esquimalt's tourist attractions through working with other organizations.

2. Organizational Implications

Staff has spent about three hours (three staff at one hour each) with officials from Attractions Victoria to discuss ways of improving the map for 2016.

3. Financial Implications

The cost of participation is \$8400.00 tax included.

4. Sustainability & Environmental Implications

Tourism provides jobs for Esquimalt residents which contributes to a sustainable economy.

5. Communication & Engagement

Over 500,000 tourists and travelers will see this map. It represents a very powerful communications tool. In addition, the Township has unlimited access to the map.

ALTERNATIVES:

1) That Council allocate \$8,400.00 from the 2015 contingency to pay to have Esquimalt featured on the 2016 edition of the "Victoria BC Official Destination Map".

2) That Council respectfully declines the invitation to partner with Attractions Victoria with the understanding that Esquimalt, in whole or in part, may be removed from the 2016 edition of the map.