



CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 13, 2023

Report No. ADM-23-012

TO: Committee of the Whole

FROM: Dan Horan, Chief Administrative Officer

SUBJECT:

2022-2026 Council Priorities Development - Next Steps

INFORMATION:

Council's priority development process began with two strategic planning sessions facilitated by the Holloway Group on December 2nd and 3rd, 2022. A workshop to further develop Council's priorities, facilitated by the CAO, was held on February 27, 2023. The workshop provided Council with the opportunity to explore some key ideas, build on the initial discussions held in December, and develop consensus about some key areas. Council defined updated descriptions of the organization's vision, mission and values. The updated definitions are included at Attachment 1. Council also achieved a broad consensus about the high-level areas of focus for their term. These areas of focus are listed below:

- Strong Relationships and Partnerships
- Diversified, Thriving Economy
- Good Governance and Organizational Excellence
- Climate Resilience and Environmental Stewardship
- Housing
- Engaged, Healthy Community

Some further workshop activity remains for Council to further define some of these areas of focus. The goal in the next 1-2 months will be to work with Council to confirm the areas of focus and how they are defined. A suggested approach will be to identify a sentence or two for each area of focus that captures the meaning and intent, which will guide further identification and development of Council priorities for these areas. In addition, some of the focus areas (such as Housing, Economy and Healthy/Engaged Community) will require specific workshop sessions that will allow Council to better identify desired outcomes in these areas. Attachment 2 is a summary of the areas of focus identified by Council. The document also includes some potential ideas about how the outcomes related to these areas of focus could be defined and clarified.

The focus of the workshop session planned for March 13th is to address the potential urgency about any Council priorities which are not currently included in the proposed 2023 budget. As discussed previously, Council and staff face a challenge in the first few months of a Council term as we try to complete an orientation program, begin a strategic planning process, select Council priorities, and deliver a first municipal budget within the first six months. Because of these tight timelines, Council is limited in its short-term ability to initiate new projects or programs that address any new strategic outcomes.

Staff are currently updating the Council Priorities Process. A completed and up-to-date process will likely include the following:

- An updated Mission, Vision and Values, endorsed by Council
- A group of 4-6 Areas of Focus - also known as Council Priorities - with a short description of what each of these priorities is about
- A group of about 8-12 projects/programs/initiatives per year that have been identified by Council as priority projects related to the Council Priorities
- A well-understood process where Council can identify new ideas for priority projects. New priority project ideas would come with a staff impact analysis that allows Council to assess a potential project's cost, complexity, impact to current commitments, and so on. With this knowledge, Council can activate a new priority project and can take the necessary action to address the impacts identified during the project assessment. Some of these actions include de-prioritizing previous commitments, adjusting deadlines for other priorities, increasing resources to accelerate timelines, etc.

A Council Priority Project is a special project or initiative that is assigned to staff that falls outside of their day-to-day operational or service level commitments. A rough model to understand staff work plans (in general) is that approximately 90% of staff effort is devoted to delivering on service level commitments, which leaves approximately 10% of staff's workplan capacity for Council priority projects.

Attachment 3 is a summary of staff's current commitments. The list includes Council-directed projects or initiatives, projects that exist due to Council resolutions, and a few initiatives that have been discussed and are included for Council consideration. Staff are requesting that Council indicate if there are any projects or initiatives which have not yet been identified or incorporated into the 2023 budget that should be added to this list of potential projects. The workshop discussion is intended to provide a first opportunity for Council to assess the full complement of staff's current commitments and identify potential new priorities that would address Council's areas of focus.

An additional purpose of the workshop is for Council to assess the list of potential projects and indicate whether any projects should be prioritized immediately (to become “now” projects). Council will also be able to identify any projects that should be considered as future possibilities (i.e. “next” or “later” projects). The idea is to identify any urgent issues that can be assessed quickly and incorporated into the 2023 budget, should that be Council’s desire. Additionally, the aim is to give Council the opportunity to provide some initial direction about desired priorities for staff’s work. The current list represents much more than staff can complete in a single year. Work plans for 2023 have not yet been finalized, but staff will be better able to complete these plans once Council’s direction on potential priority projects is better understood. A more detailed discussion for Council will need to occur in the coming weeks to further discuss the Council priorities, potential scheduling and sequencing, and staff’s capacity to deliver on these aims.