



COMMITTEE INFORMATION REPORT

Committee of the Whole

Date: June 24, 2025
To: Mayor Milligan and Members of Council
From: Derek Cimolini, Manager of Planning
Subject: Official Community Plan – Communication and Engagement Plan

PURPOSE

Relating to the City of Fernie Official Community Plan project, the purpose of this report is to present the Communication and Engagement Plan. The plan will be presented in greater detail by the project consultant as part of the Committee of the Whole portion of the Regular Meeting on June 24, 2025.

BACKGROUND

On February 25, 2025, Council made a resolution to proceed with V3 Companies of Canada Ltd. as its primary consultant to complete a Housing Needs Report (HNR) and Official Community Plan (OCP) update for the City of Fernie. This was the result of a Request for Proposals (RFP) process that began with the issuance of the RFP on November 25, 2024. (Note: Staff have received a draft copy of the Housing Needs Report and have begun review; however, the focus of this report will be on the OCP phase of the project).

Working with the consultant and their communications subcontractor, Table Talk Communications and Engagement, Staff have reviewed and refined the Communications and Engagement plan that is presented in Schedule A, attached to this report. As noted above, the consultant will be presenting the plan to Council at the Committee of the Whole meeting on June 24, 2025.

DISCUSSION

The Communications and Engagement Plan (CEP) was developed by V3 Companies of Canada, Table Talk Communications and Engagement, and City of Fernie Staff. The CEP is structured on the proposed timeline of the project, including both the Housing Needs Report and OCP phases of the project; the engagement timeline notes such deliverables as “What We Heard” reports.

Reviewed by:			
Chief Administrative Officer 	Corporate Officer 	Director of Finance 	Other:

Among other topics, the CEP covers several important aspects:

- Principles
- First Nations Engagement
- Objectives and Goals
- Level of Engagement
- Stakeholders
- Responsibilities

Taking the above-noted topics into account, the plan schedule looks at milestones of the project and proposes how the City will engage with the stakeholders, the community, and Council through a series of presentations, meetings, promotions, and public open house / workshop events. At a glance, the plan, which is consistent with the project budget, contains:

- Six Council presentations (including the one that is the subject of this Staff Report),
- Five OCP Advisory Committee meetings that will include the consultant,
- Three public open house / workshop activities including the consultant,
- Multiple promotions, and
- A series of pop-up engagement activities.

Overall, Staff feel that the Communications and Engagement plan, once finalized and executed, will provide a depth of information from stakeholders with a wide range of perspectives. This will guide the OCP in a direction that will represent the entire community.

COMPLIANCE WITH CORPORATE STRATEGIES & POLICIES

Updating the OCP is part of Council's Strategic Plan to provide Quality Services, a Liveable Community, and achieve Organizational Excellence. The OCP is an overarching document that will guide the manner in which we can achieve the goals set out in Council's Strategic Plan.

The OCP is included in Staff's workplan.

IMPLICATIONS

The Communications and Engagement Plan was written to follow the contractual budget. While some "give-and-take" within the plan can likely be done within the budget, it is important to note that any additions to the plan, such as additional Council presentations or open houses and workshops, would likely require a change order to increase the project budget.

The OCP process will be occurring at the same time as the Fernie Fire and Emergency Services building referendum process. To ensure that the community does not suffer from "engagement fatigue" from both projects, Staff will ensure sufficient time between engagement events for both projects.

The project will span the 2026 civic election. To ensure project continuity amid any changes in Council, Staff plan to schedule a project update with both outgoing and incoming Councils. If project timing allows, these project updates can be scheduled concurrently with the Council Presentations included in the report to include the consultant. Otherwise, Staff can report

without the consultant, or a change order can be discussed with the consultant to include additional Council Presentation events.

CONCLUSION

Staff are happy to present the Communications and Engagement Plan as a foundational piece of the OCP project. We feel that executing the plan will gather information from the entire community, ensuring fair and equal representation throughout the OCP document.

Respectfully submitted,

Derek Cimolini, Manager of Planning

Attachments:

- City of Fernie Housing Needs Report and Official Community Plan Amendments and Update Communication and Engagement Plan