



REQUEST FOR DECISION

MEETING DATE: May 15, 2023

TITLE: Social Sustainability Plan Update

DIVISION: Community & Protective Services

SUMMARY:

The Social Sustainability Plan Refresh 2023 is shared with Council and Administration for information purposes.

PROPOSED MOTION:

A motion is not required.

BACKGROUND / ANALYSIS:

The original Social Sustainability Plan was created to ensure the needs of residents were met by fostering healthy communities and balancing social wellbeing. As identified in 2016, as the City of Spruce Grove grows and needs become complex, there will be a need to take proactive steps to ensure it continues to be a great place to live, work, and play. The original plan was to provide direction for effort and resource allocation to address increasingly complex social issues and existing root causes, as well as build resiliency as the community changes.

Eight key areas for action were identified:

1. homeless population;
2. family and domestic violence;
3. public transportation;
4. housing;
5. access to programs, services, and supports;
6. community engagement;
7. Spruce Grove as an inclusive city; and
8. civic governance and administrative practices.

Coming out of COVID-19 it was strongly expressed by the community partners and further substantiated by identified needs and emerging trends that a more direct, flexible, and customer driven service delivery model was recommended. In the latter part of 2022, an intentional effort was made to make programs and services more accessible, robust, and engaged, which resulted in several changes within the Community Social Development (CSD) department. As part of this process, it was recommended that a consultant be engaged to help facilitate a refresh of the Social Sustainability Plan as it aligned to various other documents, including Council Strategic Plan.

Council unanimously approved:

RCM-186-12

That the City proceed with procurement to secure a consultant to update the City's Social Sustainability Plan funded from the City Managers Contingency.

Three community engagement sessions were held over a two-day period in November 2022 and an additional session was held in December 2022. Participants from both City Administration and the community were engaged in facilitated exercises to review past community plans and identify new objectives and actions to continue building momentum on issues important to the community.

A number of smaller conversations followed the three larger engagement sessions with various community partners to determine more action orientated objectives and actions. The work of the various formal and informal sessions identified five key foundational approaches:

1. generating awareness;
2. engaging community;
3. mobilizing capacity;
4. collaboration; and
5. advocacy.

These are key approaches and as well, desired outcomes; furthermore, they are aimed at impacting two primary themes:

1. Supporting the Health, Happiness, and Well-being of residents; and
2. Working collectively to meet basic needs.

These themes work to address complex social issues such as community connection and belonging, domestic violence, mental health, addiction, basic needs and living without shelter.

The refreshed Social Sustainability Plan builds on many existing community strengths and strategies. It provides action-focused strategies and identifies the City's role in addressing social issues over the next five years, specifically focusing on collective efforts to support basic needs and the health, happiness, and wellbeing of all residents.

This document is designed to highlight the themes, goals, objectives, and actions based on the detailed information gathered. Operational plans prepared by the CSD department, and other City departments will reflect further details, thoughts and ideas shared by participants over and above the objectives and actions captured here.

The timeframe for the actions within this plan have been reflected as short term (within the next year), medium-term (within the next two to four years), long-term (five or more years), or ongoing (reflects areas where some work has been completed and will continue to be built upon). Actions will be prioritized based on immediate community needs, operational capacity, strategic efficiencies, and emerging trends.

While the intent of this refresh is to build upon the City's 2016 Social Sustainability Plan, other reports that have contributed to the development of this update include:

- *New Beginnings: An Indigenous Engagement Strategy (2017-2018)*
- *Pathways Home: Spruce Grove's 5-year Strategy to Reduce Poverty and Homelessness (2019); and*
- *2022-2025 Strategic Plan.*

The final document identifies two key themes, seven primary goals and sixteen objectives; this document shall remain robust and actionable which will allow for additional goals, objectives and outcomes to be determined as needed.

OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES:

n/a

CONSULTATION / ENGAGEMENT:

Conversations, intentional engagement sessions, and collaborative efforts continue to occur to further action and report on the various themes, goals, objectives and actions. Both formal and informal activities will occur each annum to ensure the community partners and residents are actively engaged.

IMPLEMENTATION / COMMUNICATION:

CSD will work with Communications to consider formal communication to the community as appropriate and equally of importance, design additional engagement communication to ensure the process is ongoing and robust.

IMPACTS:

The Social Sustainability Plan Refresh 2023 aligns well to support Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2025.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

n/a