

THE CORPORATION OF THE
CITY OF WHITE ROCK
CORPORATE REPORT



DATE: October 25, 2021

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Greg Newman, Acting Director, Planning and Development Services

SUBJECT: Staff Feedback on 2021-2022 Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) Work Plan

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council receive the corporate report dated October 25, 2021, from the Acting Director of Planning & Development Services, titled “Staff Feedback on 2021-2022 Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) Work Plan” providing staff feedback as it relates to the Economic Development Advisory Committee’s proposed work plan, for Council’s consideration.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents staff feedback on the proposed 2021-2022 Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) Work Plan considering the availability of resourcing needed to support objectives. Generally, most of the tasks outlined in the committee’s work plan can be advanced within the context of existing projects, executed by city staff, or by the efforts of EDAC members themselves. There are several tasks, however, that would require greater staff involvement, or the involvement of a consultant, and with resources being limited the task may not be feasible at this time. These tasks are recognized in the report for consideration by Council prior to the adoption of the 2021-2022 EDAC Work Plan.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION

| Motion # & Meeting Date | Motion Details |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 2021-366 October 4, 2021 | THAT Council refer the proposed 2021-2022 Economic Development Advisory Committee Work Plan, comprised of the following task/activities, to staff to ensure it coincides with current staff work plans and Council Priorities: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Explore all grant opportunities related to economic development.2. Review, provide input on and approve draft versions of the Economic Development Strategic Plan.3. Recommend appropriate report card metrics for the updated Economic Development Strategic Plan. |

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| | <ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Create a permanent Tourism position in the city for an experienced individual who can accomplish increasing day and overnight visits to White Rock.5. Encourage more festivals, for example, birding, kite boarding and vegan food (off season events).6. Attract more tourism to White Rock by installing digital kiosks (one Uptown, one on Marine Drive and one at Memorial Park).7. Review zoning and bylaws related to different accommodation needs.8. Re-open Martin Street to two-way traffic from Marine Drive to Victoria Avenue. (Council requested removal of this item as it has already been dealt with).9. Create a multi-use plaza from Vidal Street to Martin Street on Marine Drive to facilitate more patio space for businesses, traffic calming and a larger special event space.10. Recommend that City Council consider a request that allows the Economic Development Advisory Committee to form a sub-committee/working group to review options for re-establishing a publicly accessible west wharf float facility for the summer of 2022.11. Open discussions with TransLink to review the frequency and effectiveness of public transport options, specifically focusing on routes from Uptown to Marine Drive.12. Initiate a review of walking/cycling off-street corridors in uptown White Rock with a focus on completing a walking/cycling pathway from Centennial Park to Miramar Plaza.13. Focus on small retail in the town centre.14. Invite a higher education institution to open a White Rock campus, for example, Emily Carr White Rock Fine Arts Campus, Tech BC White Rock Institute of Science or Kwantlen University College.15. Establish tax break incentives to attract more businesses, for example, the first year is discounted for property tax for building owners or rentals (rebates given to building owners for their renters).16. Develop a working plan to create a tech friendly environment.17. Actively seek and reclaim underutilized, undervalued or distressed City land, such as back alleys, former industrial, or land that is subject to easements or rights of ways.18. Develop a future plan to repurpose mini commercial economic zones throughout the city, for example, a back alley brewery row, art clubs or pop-up theater station, or city business zones.19. Develop an exposure plan for corporate sponsorships of City Initiatives. |
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INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

White Rock Council has established several committees to assist in the advancement of their strategic priorities while also pursuing other matters of local interest. Each year select committees prepare a work plan which identifies key objectives and the tasks / activities that will support such objectives. In response to Council Motion No. 2021-366, Planning and Development staff have reviewed the Economic Development Advisory Committee's proposed work plan considering current workload and other Council priorities. Appendix A summarizes the tasks outlined in the work plan and offers feedback on the capacity of staff to support the work. The table also recognizes other on-going work which may aid in fulfilling the objectives of the Committee.

Overall, several tasks identified by committee can be incorporated into on-going Council priority projects. Others will require additional resources, if intended to be undertaken by City staff, or it may be that the task is undertaken by the Committee members themselves. The following points summarize where the Task/Activity identified by EDAC may require additional resources; number references relate to those provided in Appendix A:

- [Task 1: explore grant opportunities]
This would require leadership amongst EDAC members; staff do not have capacity to satisfy this task but can support;
- [Task 4: create tourism position]
The draft Economic Development Strategic Plan (EDSP) recommends the evaluation of funding and resources needed to support tourism in White Rock. This evaluation may, or may not, find that a new position is required. Staff suggest that this task be considered within the context of the EDSP;
- [Task 6: digital kiosks]
This will require capital expenditures and may not be feasible given current commitments;
- [Task 9: multi-use plaza between Vidal and Martin Streets along Marine Drive]
This task would require special study. Staff do not have capacity to lead this initiative and funds have not been set aside to retain a consultant for this review;
- [Task 10: formation of sub-committee for re-establishing publicly-accessible west wharf float facility]
Staff defer to Council on this task. Assigning a staff liaison to this sub-committee would not be feasible due to capacity limits. Any capital expenditure coming out of this would require available financial resource consideration;
- [Task 12: initiate review of walking/cycling in Uptown White Rock – connecting Miramar Plaza to Centennial Park]
The objective of this task is incorporated into the policies of the Official Community Plan, which propose a “greenway” between the Town Centre and Centennial Park. The objective is supported by current policy unless the committee is asking Council to more proactively identify missing links to establish future connections;
- [Task 15: tax break to attract business]
There are legal limitations applicable to taxation which may render this task unfeasible. As an alternative, EDAC could explore grant funding opportunities [Task 1] available to support business;

- [Task 16: prepare work plan for tech friendly environment]
Staff would defer this to EDAC members and provide support during meetings. If the work plan identifies actions to be undertaken by the city consideration will need to be given to resourcing availability;
- [Task 17 & 18 – support back-alley, pop-up theatre and other business “zones”]
This initiative would require proactive efforts to define “theme” areas and establish implementing controls to realize / promote certain desired outcomes;
- [Task 19 – develop exposure plan for corporate sponsorship of City initiatives]
This would need to be led by EDAC.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Council is committed to supporting actions which will support the financial well-being of local business and continued investment in the City. One of the key objectives of Council is to prepare an updated Economic Development Strategic Plan (EDSP). This plan will define local economic development goals as well as the actions and strategies that may be employed to realize such goals. The Economic Development Advisory Committee has been, and will continue to be, a key resource in the evaluation of the EDSP and the implementation of the plan’s strategies.

OPTIONS / RISKS / ALTERNATIVES

Based on a review of the staff feedback presented in Appendix A Council may wish to refine the scope of EDAC’s 2021-2022 Work Plan.

CONCLUSION

This report presents staff input on the draft 2021-2022 Work Plan prepared by the City’s Economic Development Advisory Committee in consideration of the current resources available which may be required to support identified tasks as well as concurrent projects which relate to specific tasks / actions identified by EDAC members.

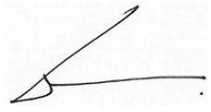
Respectfully submitted,



Greg Newman, MCIP, RPP
Acting Director, Planning and Development Services

Comments from the Chief Administrative Officer

This corporate report is provided for information purposes and consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of connected strokes that form a stylized name.

Guillermo Ferrero
Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix A: Staff Feedback pertaining to 2021-2022 Economic Development Advisory
Committee Work Plan