

# Request for Decision



To: Regular Meeting

From: **Corporate Services / Development, Engineering, and Planning**

Date: January 27, 2020

Subject: Early Budget Approval – Official Community Plan and Real Estate Strategy

Recommendation: **THAT Council gives Early Budget Approval to the “Official Community Plan Update” and the “Development and Implementation of a City-owned Real Estate Strategy” projects with a combined value of up to \$250,000; AND THAT the amount be included in the 2020 Financial Plan Bylaw to be funded from the general operating budget.**

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## Background

### Update – January 27, 2020:

Council deferred deliberation on this item from the January 13, 2020 meeting.

### Update – January 13, 2020:

Council asked staff to consider the “options for feasibility and benefits of both projects, the 'Official Community Plan Update' and the 'City-owned Real Estate Strategy', as a combined Request For Proposals or separate Request For Proposals, whichever is best.”

Staff contacted consultants before the winter break, and as a result staff anticipates that there is indeed a potential for some cost savings.

As an outcome, at this point it would be appropriate for Council to allow for a total budget up to \$250,000 and combine both items into a single strategic budget line item. This would allow for staff to initiate the Request for Proposal (RFP) processes, while maximizing the potential cost savings of combining certain aspects of both items where feasible.

### Previous COTW from December 16, 2019 report is below:

Council introduced the “City of Grand Forks Strategic Plan 2019” at the November 12, 2019 meeting.

During the preparation for the Strategic Plan, Council ranked the individual projects to provide staff with a clear set of goals and objectives.

Updating the “Official Community Plan” (OCP) and “Developing and Implementing a City-owned Real Estate Strategy” (RES) were both within the top five list of Council.

OCP Update:

The OCP update will directly link into various other strategic objectives of Council, such as, but not limited to:

- Rewrite the zoning bylaw
- Active Transportation / Consider installation of bike friendly flood mitigation works
- Development of the West End
- Strategy for various forms of housing (will allow to define areas)
- Public Safety and Crime Prevention
- Mitigate Future Flooding / Disaster Risk Reduction / Resilience

The OCP is **the** guiding document as shown in the below illustration:



The OCP sets the vision of the community which then guides Council with their strategic plan. After the OCP is updated, Council may choose to update their Strategic Plan to ensure that all goals are still aligned with the OCP. Staff would then adjust departmental workplans to implement any changes. If necessary, the Financial Plan would need to be updated. Finally, the Annual report will be used to report back on any of the strategic priorities that were previously set

As the OCP update is a lengthy process (at least 1 year) it is rather urgent for staff to begin this process. The estimated cost for this is \$150,000.

#### Development and Implementation of a City-owned Real Estate Strategy (RES):

Another urgent item is the development of a RES. The RES is intended to work in conjunction with some of the outcomes of the West End Sector Plan and the OCP process on pin-pointing the best locations for developing City-owned land or for strategic acquisitions.

The RES will also help with in-kind support options Council is considering for the buyout residents. Once the RES is created, the report may ask for Council to consider creating a development corporation for example to facilitate the land purchases and sales for the residents in need. Another outcome may also show that it would be beneficial for the City to service certain lands and offer the serviced parcels for sale, either for residential, commercial, or industrial where necessary.

The cost for the initial phase of developing a real estate strategy is estimated at \$100,000.

#### Financials:

Annually the City budgets approximately \$1.5 - \$2 Mil towards infrastructure renewal. During the budget cycles staff presents various capital projects based on that amount.

Staff is recommending that for the 2020 budget cycle, the transfers into the infrastructure renewal reserves would be reduced to fund these long-range strategic projects. This reduction would allow the City to budget with similar taxation levels as in prior years.

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## **Benefits or Impacts**

### **General**

The Official Community Plan update will cost roughly \$150,000.

The development of a Real Estate Strategy will cost roughly \$100,000.

Potential cost savings by combining both budgets into a single stream

### **Strategic Impact**

#### **Public Service**

- A Real Estate Strategy will allow the City to provide outstanding service and best value to the community

#### **Emerging City**

- An updated Official Community Plan will allow for new and amazing development opportunities within Grand Forks while also providing a community plan towards solving challenging social issues, disaster resiliency, active transportation, and various forms of housing.

### **Policy/Legislation**

2020 Financial Plan

## Attachments

The City of Grand Forks Strategic Plan 2019

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## Recommendation

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## Options

1. THAT Council accepts the report.
2. THAT Council does not accept the report.
3. THAT Council refers the matter back to staff for further information.