

DATE OF MEETING MAY 11, 2020

AUTHORED BY SHEILA GURRIE, DIRECTOR, LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

SUBJECT **ADVOCACY FRAMEWORK**

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report:

To provide Council with an Advocacy Framework document in order to offer Council a tool that can be used to clearly and succinctly outline an advocacy strategy for the topic(s) of their choosing.

BACKGROUND

At the 2020-FEB-24 Governance and Priorities Committee meeting, Council workshopped through what an Advocacy Strategy would look like and what their expectations were in the development of a framework to support this strategy. Council had a round table discussion on the projects and initiatives that mattered to them as individual councillors and what advocacy meant to each of them. Background information was provided to Council that included the criteria that should be considered when deciding on a matter that would be advocated for, such as the “what”; “why”; “who”; “how”; and, next steps moving forward. Council discussed how the outcome of what success looks like to them would be a crucial aspect of this framework and future advocacy strategies.

Council determined treatment centres and affordable housing strategies as the topic(s) to work through at their next meeting, as they are linked to one another and support current Council initiatives as well as the community’s needs. It was decided that Staff would provide Council with an outline of an advocacy framework to be filled in at this future meeting and Council could determine the appropriate criteria had been identified.]

DISCUSSION

Advocacy, when done effectively, can help a council to achieve funding or policy changes from other levels of government in an effort to bring value to the city and community. In order for advocacy to be effective, a cohesive advocacy strategy is important. Council should have a framework that includes clear messaging, including what the project or initiative is; why they are advocating for this project and this includes the benefits to the city and community as a whole; who the spokesperson is for Council on this matter; what stakeholder groups and partners support this project or initiative; what success looks like in this particular endeavour; and, what methods of advocacy would work best to leverage other levels of government to come through. Advocacy can be achieved in a variety of methods: letters, meetings, formal requests, word of mouth, grassroots methods, etc.

Messaging for each project/initiative should be clear and concise. Three key points should be enough to clearly convey the “ask” and can be cited by any member of Council at any time. This messaging should include the “what” and the “why” of the project/initiative and Council should be able to use their position to advocate when opportunities present themselves outside of the regular advocacy means.

When developing criteria for projects/initiatives that Council should advocate for, Council should think of how the project ties back to Council’s Strategic Plan. Does the project fit under one of the 4 themes of the plan: Governance Excellence, Environmental Responsibility, Liveability, or Economic Health? Other considerations that would support the advocacy efforts are:

- Is there supporting plans and City documents that support this project/initiative?
- Is there common interests with stakeholders and community partners?
- Is there support from and inclusion with Snuneymuxw First Nation?
- What are the benefits to Nanaimo taxpayers, or the community as a whole?

Traditional advocacy means would include resolutions to AVICC, UBCM, FCM; meetings with ministers; letter writing; partnerships with key stakeholders and the community to unite in a singular ask; or other similar methods. If Council has a clear strategy on a number of topics/issues, when these and other opportunities arise, the message is clear and united. Leveraging your position to other levels of government with the organized and unified message is a more effective way to advocate. A framework, similar to what is being provided today, would be used to structure advocacy strategies for Council moving forward. |

CONCLUSION

Advocacy is an important tool for local governments to use to achieve successes that benefit the entire community. These benefits can be in the form of grants, other funding for City capital projects, or projects in the community, policy changes, partnerships, etc. An effective advocacy strategy that the whole of Council is in support of, will increase the chances of being successful when seeking these assistances from other levels of government. Council could use the attached framework as a guide to develop a strategy that is focused and cohesive in order to effectively advocate for treatment centres and further funding for various types of affordable housing Nanaimo as well as other projects and initiatives they choose to move forward with. |

SUMMARY POINTS

- At the 2020-FEB-24 Governance and Priorities Committee meeting, Council workshopped through what an Advocacy Strategy would look like and what their expectations were in the development of a framework to support this strategy.
- Advocacy, when done effectively, can help a council to achieve funding or policy changes from other levels of government in an effort to bring value to the city and community.
- An effective advocacy strategy that the whole of Council is in support of, will increase the chances of being successful when seeking these assistances from other levels of government.

ATTACHMENTS

ADVOCACY FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT |

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Concurrence by:

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