

DATE OF MEETING APRIL 19, 2021

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SUBJECT CIRCULAR CITIES AND REGIONS INITIATIVE

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To inform Council of a joint application with the Regional District of Nanaimo to the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative's Peer to Peer Network. |

Recommendation

That Council endorse a joint application with the Regional District of Nanaimo to join the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative's Peer to Peer Network.

BACKGROUND

The Circular Cities & Regions Initiative (CCRI) recently launched through partnership of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the National Zero Waste Council, RECYC-QUÉBEC and the Recycling Council of Alberta. The purpose of CCRI is to advance knowledge sharing and capacity building on circular economic principles among local governments in Canada.

The CCRI is currently accepting applications from local governments for the pilot Peer to Peer (P2P) Network. Fifteen local governments will be chosen to participate in the P2P Network, running from this May to next February in three key phases: knowledge sharing; opportunity identification and mapping; wrap-up and evaluation. Local governments selected for the P2P Network will receive one-on-one mentoring from circular economy experts, accessing key resources from the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, to develop a local circular strategy roadmap.

The Ellen MacArthur Foundation defines the circular economy as:

a systemic approach to economic development designed to benefit businesses, society, and the environment. In contrast to the 'take-make-waste' linear model, a circular economy is regenerative by design and aims to gradually decouple growth from the consumption of finite resources.

The Ellen MacArthur Foundation defines a circular economy vision on a local level is for thriving, liveable, and resilient cities and regions by designing out waste and pollution, keeping products and materials in use, and regenerating natural systems. This vision is coherent with the doughnut economics model. The City of Nanaimo is already on the CCRI's radar with the development of the Doughnut Economics Model. The social foundation and ecological ceiling of the doughnut economy illustrate the confines of how to integrate circular

economy principles on a local scale. The P2P Network would create an actionable roadmap to integrate the circular economy and doughnut economy. The potential for our City and region to transition to a circular economy is rooted in a number of programs, plans and initiatives at the City and RDN, with some key efforts listed below.

- City of Nanaimo:
 - Residential curbside collection service (Public Works)
 - Checkout Bag Regulation Bylaw (Public Works)
 - Sustainable Procurement Policy (Finance)
 - Reimagine Nanaimo (Community Development)
 - Doughnut Economics Model, Nanaimo City Portrait (Community Development)
 - Active Transportation Plan (Engineering)
 - Environmental Framework (Community Development)
 - Climate Resiliency Strategy (Community Development)
- Regional District of Nanaimo:
 - Residential Curbside Collection Service
 - Solid Waste Management Plan: Road to 90% Waste Diversion
 - Mandatory waste source separation program
 - Waste hauler licensing
 - Construction and demolition waste management
 - Zero Waste Recycling funding opportunities
 - Solid Waste Disposal Facility Management
 - Drinking Water and Watershed Protection
 - Community Energy and Emissions Plan

DISCUSSION

Staff propose to submit a joint application with the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) to participate in the Peer to Peer (P2P) Network. Collaborative governance approaches are best practice in local circular economies, thus a joint application will result in a stronger proposal and a greater benefit for the entire region.

The application requires a letter of support demonstrating commitment to participation, signed by Mayor and Council, CAO or equivalent. The resources needed to participate in P2P Network are to:

- Dedicate a primary contact for participation in P2P Network Meetings and engage additional staff as required.
- Participate in 1-3 meetings per month from June to January (less group meetings anticipated in August and during the fall when the focus will be on workshop and roadmap development).
- Promote and facilitate staff participation in the National Webinar Series and other learning offerings that may be made available.
- Convene a virtual workshop for key staff across the RDN and City (to take place October to December), providing any requested data and information to CCRI to inform the workshop development and key outputs.
- Dedicate staff and resources to the development of the Roadmap to be completed as part of the wrap up.
- Provide feedback throughout the project and possibly participate in a CCRI Wrap-Up Webinar.

The Ellen MacArthur Foundation notes a collaborative governance approach while transitioning to a local circular economy, and is shown to double the actions of a traditional segmented approach. A joint partnership with RDN in the P2P Network will ensure the most efficient utilization of resources to create an integrated, innovative and inclusive circular strategy roadmap with greatest benefit to our city and region.

OPTIONS

1. That Council endorse a joint application with the Regional District of Nanaimo to join the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative's Peer to Peer Network.
 - The advantage of this option is the opportunity to collaborate with the nation's leaders in circular economy and receive one-on-one mentorship to create an integrated circular economy roadmap.
 - The disadvantages of this option is the additional staff time to collaborate with Regional District of Nanaimo staff.
 - The only financial implications for participating in the Peer to Peer Network are staff time resources.
2. That Council provide alternate direction. |

SUMMARY POINTS

- The Circular Cities and Regions Initiative's Peer to Peer Network is an opportunity for the City of Nanaimo and Regional District of Nanaimo to participate in a nation-wide collaborative learning opportunity.
- This initiative will help the region access innovative best practices and identify key opportunities to strategically advance the circular economy.
- Co-participating with the RDN will ensure the most efficient utilization of resources to create an integrated, innovative and inclusive circular strategy roadmap with greatest benefit to our city and region.

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