

DATE OF MEETING APRIL 11, 2018

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SUBJECT SMART CITIES CHALLENGE

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To receive Council endorsement for one of two projects presented to apply for under the Smart Cities Challenge program. |

Recommendation

That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council endorse the application for the project proposal addressing Nanaimo's housing crisis for the Smart Cities Challenge.

BACKGROUND

The Smart Cities Challenge is a competition open to Canadian municipalities, local or regional governments, and Indigenous communities, which is aimed to inspire communities to define their future through the use of data and connected technology.

Infrastructure Canada will be awarding the following prizes:

- One prize of \$50 million open to all communities;
- Two prizes of up to \$10 million each for communities under 500,000; and,
- One prize of up to \$5 million for communities under 30,000.

The future outcome to be achieved through data and connected technology must be defined, measureable, ambitious, and achievable. These parameters are used to create what the program defines as a "Challenge Statement".

Applications defining the "Challenge Statement" and preliminary project information are due April 24, 2018. Communities will be notified during the Summer 2018 whether they have been chosen as a finalist. Finalists will receive \$250,000 to develop their final proposal. Final proposals are due during the Winter 2019 with selection of winners in Spring 2020. Implementation is expected to span 2 – 5 years. |

The City put out a request for ideas to the public to gather community input on what they visualize as an improvement to our City in the future and proposed solutions. Two dominant themes emerged and City staff narrowed them down to two options: addressing Nanaimo's housing crisis and supporting Nanaimo's active transportation involvement.

PROJECT PROPOSALS

1. Nanaimo's Housing Crisis:

This project is aimed at addressing the lack of affordable housing and social issues in the Nanaimo region.

Challenge Statement:

Increases citizen safety and security by combining innovative collaborative solutions and supporting partnerships with new service delivery models.

Project Summary:

Affordable housing, mental illness, and other social issues are evident struggles the City of Nanaimo is facing. There are many organizations whose mandate is to address these issues; however, their resources are limited and there is a growing demand for their services.

We are proposing that we submit an application for funding to provide the technical infrastructure to remove barriers to information for both organizations and those that depend on them. This would involve an application where organizations can share information with other, and with vulnerable individuals in real time. This would also involve installing kiosks in strategic locations where those without resources can also have access to this information.

This project is in line with the City's Strategic Priority of Community Building Projects which aims to build action partnerships around complex issues that demand a cooperative and coordinated response. This priority nurtures a caring, inclusive, safe environment providing the basics required for life with dignity and empowers all of its citizens to realize their aspiration.

2. Active Transportation:

This project is aimed at supporting an active lifestyle by encouraging active transportation and healthy living in the City of Nanaimo.

Challenge Statement:

Double active transportation trips (bike, walk and transit) by 2041.

The Nanaimo Transportation Master Plan was developed through a public consultation process and established the goal of doubling annual active transportation trips by 2041. This goal promotes a healthy and sustainable community, but highlights the challenge of documenting where people are walking and cycling. To support this goal, the Smarter Cities Challenge will be to use smart technology to develop a data collection system to track active transportation movements throughout the City. This will be a system, not a one off count, and will provide staff with the tools to make better decisions when planning infrastructure upgrades.

This project is in line with the City's Strategic Priority of Transportation and Mobility which aims to reduce dependency on vehicle, to integrate land use, and for mobility planning. This priority also accepts the visionary challenge of positioning Nanaimo as the

transportation and services hub for Vancouver Island, and is willing to work with partners to enhance multi-modal transportation.

OPTIONS

1. That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council endorse the application for the project proposal addressing Nanaimo's housing crisis for the Smart Cities Challenge.
2. That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council endorse the application for the project proposal addressing Active Transportation for the Smart Cities Challenge.
3. That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council does not endorse an application for the Smart Cities Challenge.

SUMMARY POINTS

- The City of Nanaimo wishes to submit an application to Smart Cities to qualify for \$10 million in funding towards affordable housing or active transportation.
- Staff require Council to endorse a project they would like the City to pursue.
- Staff recommend Council endorse the project addressing affordable housing.

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