

Staff Report for Decision

DATE OF MEETING April 25, 2022

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SUBJECT NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION SUPPORTS POLICY

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To present a Council Policy which establishes organizational criteria for City of Nanaimo recognition of neighbourhood associations, and formalizes the City supports that will be provided to these associations.

Recommendations

That Council:

1. adopt the Neighbourhood Association Supports Policy; and,
2. approve the creation of a Neighbourhood Grant Program with a \$10,000 annual budget for inclusion in the 2023 – 2027 Draft Financial Plan for Council consideration.

BACKGROUND

At its Regular Meeting held on 2021-DEC-20, Council passed a motion directing Staff to:

1. Continue to support active neighbourhood associations that meet and maintain the following organizational criteria:
 - Have an elected executive that meets on a regular basis (at least once a year);
 - Have a membership structure (not necessarily fee paying);
 - Hold an annual general meeting, and provide a copy of the minutes to the City with updated membership numbers;
 - Keep minutes for executive and general membership meetings;
 - Engage with its members for input prior to responding to City development referrals, such as rezoning and Official Community Plan amendments; and
 - Provide periodic updates to members related to the activities of the group.
2. Prepare a policy for Council consideration on neighbourhood association recognition and supports as identified in the report “Neighbourhood Association – Governance Options” received on 2021-DEC-13.

DISCUSSION

Further to Council’s direction, a Neighbourhood Association Supports Policy has been prepared for Council’s consideration based on the 2021-DEC-13 Governance and Priorities Committee (GPC) report. The policy is in Attachment A – Neighbourhood Association Supports Policy.

The path to the proposed policy began with an information report to GPC on the status of neighbourhood associations in February 2020. Based on Council direction, Staff conducted an additional survey and research work with the associations throughout 2020 and 2021, with a follow up report to Council in April 2021 providing organizational criteria for consideration. This meeting was then followed by additional engagement with the associations in the summer of 2021, leading to a final report on neighbourhood association governance in December 2021 with regard to neighbourhood association recognition criteria and supports. For reference, a detailed timeline of key milestones in the process can be found in Attachment B – Neighbourhood Association Supports Project Timeline.

In the 2021-DEC-13 GPC report, an amount of \$10,000 was suggested for a future 'Neighbourhood Grant Program', and it was suggested this commitment be considered for the 2023 – 2027 Financial Plan.

Staff is recommending that Council endorse the proposed Neighbourhood Association Supports Policy.

OPTIONS

1. That Council:
 1. adopt the Neighbourhood Association Supports Policy; and,
 2. approve the creation of a Neighbourhood Grant Program with a \$10,000 annual budget for inclusion in the 2023 – 2027 Draft Financial Plan for Council consideration.
 - The advantages of this option: Adoption of the policy would formalize the City's current engagement approach with neighbourhood associations. The policy could help to ensure grant funds are provided to neighbourhood organizations with registered society status.
 - The disadvantages of this option: Staff time will be required for ongoing neighbourhood engagement commitments as outlined in the policy.
 - Financial Implications: The \$10,000 annual Neighbourhood Grants Program will be included as a decision point in the 2023 – 2027 Financial Plan deliberations. The program would be funded from property taxation and would have approx. a 0.008% impact on the 2023 property tax rate.
2. That Council:
 1. not adopt the Neighbourhood Association Supports Policy; and
 2. not approve the creation of a Neighbourhood Grant Program with a \$10,000 annual budget for inclusion in the 2023 – 2027 Draft Financial Plan for Council consideration.
 - The advantages of this option: This will retain the existing neighbourhood association engagement approach, which may make it difficult to evaluate the merits of feedback provided by neighbourhood associations as organizational criteria would not be required.

- The disadvantages of this option: Not adopting the policy may create uncertainty about the City's approach to recognizing and supporting neighbourhood associations.
- Financial Implications: If the policy is not adopted, creation of a Neighbourhood Grants Program is not recommended.

3. That Council provide alternate direction. |

SUMMARY POINTS

- At its regular meeting held 2021-DEC-20, Council directed Staff to prepare a Neighbourhood Association Supports Policy for consideration and formal adoption based on the criteria and supports identified in the 2021-DEC-13 GPC "Neighbourhood Association – Governance Options" report.
- The Neighbourhood Association Supports Policy is presented in this report for Council's consideration and adoption.
- Council may wish to also consider allocating \$10,000 annually to a Neighbourhood Grant Program in the 2023 – 2027 Financial Plan.

ATTACHMENTS:

ATTACHMENT A: Neighbourhood Association Supports Policy

ATTACHMENT B: Neighbourhood Association Supports Project Timeline

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