

Regional Economic Development Committee (REDC) - Participation

Date	May 27, 2020
To	City Council
From	Mayor's Office
Service Area	Office of the Mayor
Item No.	MR20-3

RECOMMENDATION

That City Council authorize its participation in the restructured Regional Economic Development Committee (REDC), comprised of the Moose Jaw - Regina Corridor members, the former White Butte Regional Planning Committee (WBRPC) members and surrounding First Nation communities.

ISSUE

The former White Butte Regional Planning Committee (WBRPC) is undergoing a significant review of its structure, mandate, purpose and scope which will result in a new platform or model that will enable and facilitate greater regional collaboration. Members of the Moose Jaw – Regina Corridor have expressed an interest in participating in a newly-structured, broader platform, which, for the purposes of this report, will be known as the Regional Economic Development Committee (REDC). In addition, to further expand partnerships with surrounding First Nations, the invitation to participate in the visioning session will be expanded to include Sakimay, Cowessess and Ochapawace First Nation., The creation of the REDC is important in terms of growing the economy and Saskatchewan, as a whole.

Praxis Consulting, as the WBRPC Secretariat, will lead this work through a virtual visioning session, tentatively planned for June 18, 2020.

This report seeks Council approval to participate in the newly-created Regional Economic Development Committee, comprised of former WBRPC members, the Moose Jaw – Regina Corridor members and the above mentioned First Nations.

IMPACTS

Regional collaboration is important in achieving economic development success and growth of the province, overall. A goal of the WBRPC is to be recognized as the premier model for urban-rural partnerships and to create a healthy, well-planned, sustainable region in which all partners share joint principles in planning, orderly growth and service delivery through structures that are fair and cost efficient.

A successful platform or regional model reflects strong relationships in which each partner provides a unique, essential and valued contribution, resulting in managed, sustainable growth and the maximization of benefits and value for citizens of the region. In addition, regional cooperation proactively promotes and attracts economic development opportunities.

OTHER OPTIONS

Not to participate in the REDC, which could result in uncoordinated planning and development, increased costs due to duplicated services, and a loss of opportunities in terms of attracting business and economic development to the region.

COMMUNICATIONS

No communications strategy is necessary for this report; however, if the participating stakeholders that comprise the REDC agree to any joint communications, the City's Communications division will be consulted and involved.

DISCUSSION

Praxis Consulting has invited the following stakeholders to the June 18, 2020 "Regional Leaders' Visioning Discussion – New Platform for Regional Collaboration":

- City of Regina
- Rural Municipality (RM) of Sherwood
- RM of Edenwold
- Village of Edenwold
- Town of White City
- Town of Balgonie
- Town of Pilot Butte
- City of Moose Jaw
- RM of Moose Jaw
- Town of Pense
- RM of Pense
- Town of Grand Coulee
- Village of Belle Plaine
- Cowessess First Nation

- Ochapowace First Nation
- Sakimay First Nation

Although the agenda is not finalized for the vision session, the session goal is to bring leadership together to help re-imagine a new platform, vision, governance structure, mandate and purpose for successful regional planning.

The draft objectives of the visioning session include:

- Examine opportunities in terms of how the partners can work together better at a regional level.
- Bring together political and administrative leaders from each partner.
- Find common ground regarding regional collaboration and cooperation.
- Provide an open forum and venue for all partners to express their views and suggestions.
- Explore ideas and advice on how to improve regional collaboration, regional partnership and cooperation.

DECISION HISTORY

The WBRPC was created to address regional issues affecting its member municipalities, which included: the RM of Sherwood No. 159, the RM of Edenwold No. 158, the Town of White City, the Town of Pilot Butte, the Town of Balgonie, the Village of Edenwold and the City of Regina. The City has been a member of the WBRPC since 2013.

Since its inception, the WBRPC has established an informal agreement to work together, a Vision, Mandate, Terms of Reference, Goals and Budget, as well as sub-committees. Opportunities to partner with the City of Regina have been explored and identified, information sharing has improved, and new priorities have been identified.

Despite the progress made, for various reasons, on January 28, 2018, the Administration was notified that three of the member municipalities – the Town of Pilot Butte, the Town of Balgonie and the RM of Edenwold No. 158) had decided to withdraw participation in the WBRPC.

The remaining member municipalities committed to continued participation in the WBRPC, and a decision was made to update the Terms of Reference and to create a jointly developed and approved conflict resolution process.

Separate meetings were held in 2018 and 2019 between the City and the three municipalities that withdrew from the Committee. The purpose of these meetings was to:

- Listen to the concerns and discuss how to better meet the needs of the members.
- Determine potential opportunities in terms of a forum on regional issues.
- Identify a format that would be of interest to former members.
- Share municipal goals, focussing and prioritizing on the next five years.
- Confirm the City's commitment to continue to build positive regional partnerships with surrounding municipalities.

Subsequently, both the RM of Sherwood No. 159 and the Village of Edenwold No. 158 provided their notice to withdraw from the WBRPC on June 19th and September 10, 2019, respectively.

The City of Regina (lead by Mayor Fougere as Chair) and the Town of White City, as the two remaining member municipalities of the WBRPC, met early in 2020 to discuss re-engagement with member municipalities due to the strategic importance of regional collaboration and the progress of the WBRPC. In addition, members of the Moose Jaw – Regina Corridor indicated an interest in becoming part of a broader-based regional platform. Several First Nations will also be invited to attend the visioning session, due to the successful past collaborations.

The result of these discussions was to engage Praxis Consulting to invite former and potential new members to a REDC visioning session to discuss a new or updated structure, mandate, scope and purpose for the Committee.

Respectfully submitted,



Sheila Harmatiuk, Chief of Staff

Respectfully submitted,



Michael Fougere, Mayor

Prepared by: S. Harmatiuk