

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

Highlights from the City of
Nelson Council Meeting

October 9, 2018



Community Building

Council approved the following:

- Waived fees for the Food Cupboard to establish a community garden plot on City boulevard lands on Josephine Street adjacent to the United Church.
- Funded a new plaque to identify and commemorate I.O.D.E. Park
- Continued support for the 2018/19 RDCK woodstove exchange program.
- Permissive tax exemptions approved for the Civic Theatre, Glacier Gymnastics and the Nelson Soccer Association.
- Funded \$10,000 - \$12,000 for new holiday lighting for the 400 block of Baker Street as a pilot project as part of improvements for the downtown core.
- Flag and banner policies amended to permit the raising of community flags on the City's flag pole at City Hall.
- Process for Sustainability Leadership Awards has been streamlined commencing in 2019.

Emergency Management Appointment

Council identified Emergency Management as a priority in the 2015-18 Strategic Plan and is working to improve the emergency management capabilities of the City of Nelson. Council adopted the Emergency Management Program Bylaw and has appointed Fire Chief Len MacCharles as the Director of Emergency Management. Chief MacCharles is a Certified Emergency Manager as designated by the International Association of Emergency Managers. He has extensive incident and emergency management training and experience that includes the 2011 Slave Lake wildfire and his emergency management role for the City of Calgary where he oversaw numerous emergency operations, including the 2013 flooding in Calgary.

Assisted Living Facility

Council approved two variances which will allow the private sector development of a 125 suite assisted living facility at 611 Vernon Street (the Vernon Street hole). The building will be four stories (13m) at Vernon Street level which will include one level of commercial. There will also be two stories below grade, which will include one level of residential and one level of parking.

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The facility plans to offer a variety of amenities and lifestyle opportunities for its residents. Nursing care will be available around the clock for residents who may require these services.

RecycleBC Agreement

Council approved a new agreement with RecycleBC to act as the collection agent for the provincial recycling program for packaging and printed paper (“PPP”). Under this agreement, the City of Nelson receives \$37.00 per household to collect recycling materials at the curb. The products collected are established by RecycleBC and there are strict contamination limits. Under the agreement the City will have to transition from blue bags to an acceptable container program by July 2020.

Recreational (Non-Medical) Cannabis Retail Sales Regulations

Council has approved first three readings of amendments to the Business Licensing bylaw to establish regulations for the retail sale of recreational cannabis. These regulations are consistent with the provincial and federal regulations and include additional provisions on security, odour, and advertising. The business license fee is set at \$2,500, which is consistent with other municipalities in the province. Medical dispensaries are not permitted under federal and provincial regulations and the Province has established a Community Safety Unit that will target illegal retail operations, and seize the product and records without a warrant. A fine will also be imposed based on the value of the product seized. Current medical dispensaries will be able to apply for a provincial license to become a retail sales outlet for recreational cannabis.

Financial Plan Amendments

Council passed first three readings of an amendment to the City’s Five-Year Financial Plan bylaw to incorporate the following:

- Additional \$90,000 to the budget for the City’s Co-Location facility (total budget \$287,000), which houses computer equipment for various businesses and organizations. The City’s current facility has reached capacity and the City has received a number of requests to expand the facility. The City charges a fee for this service and the payback is estimated to be less than 5 years.
- To draw approximately \$1.0M for the City’s sanitary sewer reserve in 2019 to fund the City’s portion of a \$3.9M upgrade project to the Sewage Treatment Plant. The City has applied for grant funding for the balance of the funds needed to complete these upgrades.
- \$20,000 from the downtown waterfront reserve fund to support downtown improvements, including the holiday lighting. This brings the total budget for downtown improvements to \$65,000 which includes the Sculpture program, Mural Festival, ceramic tile work along Hall Street and the downtown holiday lighting.