



REQUEST FOR DECISION

To: ACRD Board of Directors

From: Alex Dyer, MCIP, RPP, Planner

Meeting Date: April 22, 2020

Subject: Burning Regulation Public Engagement Plan

Recommendation:

THAT the Board of Directors instruct staff to direct the burning regulation public engagement plan as outlined in the report.

Summary:

At their April 8, 2020 meeting, the Board of Directors considered two burning bylaws that would regulate the emission of smoke from burning in the ACRD: the Solid-Fuel Burning Appliance Emission Regulation Bylaw No. R1030 and the Outdoor Burning Smoke Control Regulation Bylaw No. R1032.

The Board deferred adoption of Bylaw R1030 and instructed staff to bring back an amended bylaw for consideration by the Board that would provide exemptions for wood burning appliances used for agricultural purposes. The Board also deferred adoption of Bylaw R1032 and instructed staff to engage in a public information campaign prior to the Board considering the bylaw for adoption.

Public Engagement Plan:

Staff propose the following public engagement plan for open burning regulations in the ACRD. The plan is focused on digital engagement reflecting the challenges faced during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

1. Create a webpage dedicated to burning regulations in the ACRD that would share resources and information, detail the two proposed burning bylaws and provide an opportunity for public feedback. The webpage would be highlighted on the ACRD home page during the engagement process.

2. Develop an online survey to gather public feedback on burning regulations. Questions would focus on the public sentiment for increased burning regulation and highlight specific provisions within the bylaws. A PDF copy of the survey would be linked to the webpage for those who wish to print a hard copy.
3. Send a newsletter to all households in the ACRD by bulk mail detailing the proposed burning regulations and highlighting the opportunity for public feedback.
4. Refer the bylaws to the Agricultural Development Committee members for their consideration regarding the impact to agriculture.
5. Refer the bylaws by email to the Advisory Planning Commission members to gather their individual feedback.
6. Refer to the Port Alberni Air Quality Council and ask that the group share the bylaws with stakeholder groups that have an interest in air quality and public health.
7. Send formal referral of the two bylaws to the Ministry of Environment and Island Health.
8. Share details of the public engagement process through ACRD social media and share with local media outlets.

Staff anticipate that the public engagement program can be conducted over a two-month time period allowing the public at least one month to respond to the online survey or provide feedback by email, phone or mail. At the end of the public engagement program, staff would compile feedback and report to the Board.

Time Requirements – Staff & Elected Officials:

Significant staff time will be required to develop the resources required for the webpage, online survey and newsletter and to engage with the public and report on feedback received. Staff time will also be required to refer the bylaws to the Ministry of Environment, Island Health, Air Quality Council and Advisory Planning Commissions.

Financial:


The Board included 0.5 FTE staff resourcing in the 2020-2024 Financial Plan to implement, monitor and enforce the burning bylaws. The public engagement campaign would form part of the bylaw implementation process.

Options Considered:

1. Engaging in a more limited public information campaign to reduce staff time required to manage the project.

Submitted by: 

Alex Dyer MCIP, RPP, Planner

Reviewed by: 

Mike Irg MCIP, RPP, General Manager of Planning and Development

Approved by: 

Douglas Holmes BBA, CPA, CA, Chief Administrative Officer