

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF NELSON

REQUEST FOR COUNCIL DECISION

DATE: September 3, 2019 Regular
TOPIC: Letter of Support Policy
PROPOSAL: To adopt a formal policy addressing letters of support
PROPOSED BY: Staff

ANALYSIS SUMMARY:

Staff is recommending that a Letter of Support Policy be adopted in order to streamline how requests for such letters are processed by the City. Council is requested to pass a resolution adopting the proposed policy.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Nelson frequently receives requests for letters of support from various non-profit and community organizations. The requests usually seek a simple statement that the City supports the organization and/or the project at issue. The letter is normally given to the organization requesting the letter to be used as part of a grant or funding application. Often times the requests for such letters are received only shortly before they are needed by the requester which puts staff in a difficult position due to how the requests are handled.

Currently, when such requests are received, staff proceeds by adding them as an agenda item on the next regularly scheduled Council meeting. Staff includes a Request for Decision (RFD) describing the request and the organization making the request, and recommending that Council approve the request and that staff prepare the letter. Often times, an agenda might contain three to four letter of support requests. Following Council approval, staff prepares a standard two to three sentence letter on City letterhead with the Mayor's signature and provides it to the organization.

Staff is recommending that Council adopt a policy to streamline how letters of support are handled. In essence, staff is proposing that it be given the discretion to provide letters of support on behalf of Council to non-profit community organizations that are requesting such letters and are also not requesting any in-kind or financial assistance from the City. A copy of letters that are processed would then be included on Council's Regular Meeting Agendas as part of the Council Information Items RFD.

Letters requesting any in-kind or financial assistance would still require a Council decision and would not be handled per the proposed policy.

BENEFITS OR DISADVANTAGES AND NEGATIVE IMPACTS:

The policy would allow staff to quickly and efficiently process routine requests for letters of support without Council approval. Such a policy would also help reduce the amount of items on Regular Meeting agendas requiring individual RFDs and Council decisions, but also ensure that Council is regularly apprised of which organizations have received letters of support through the Information Items agenda item. It would also provide staff with more flexibility in accommodating last minute requests.

LEGISLATIVE IMPACTS, PRECEDENTS, POLICIES:

It is within Council's authority to adopt the policy.

COSTS AND BUDGET IMPACT - REVENUE GENERATION:

Adopting the policy would not have any budgetary impact.

IMPACT ON SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES AND STAFF RESOURCES:

The policy would allow staff to process letters of support without completing an RFD for each request. This would free up staff resources to focus on RFDs that truly require research and analysis.

COMMUNICATION:

If adopted, the policy will be posted on the City's website

OPTIONS AND ALTERNATIVES:

1. Adopt the policy
2. Direct staff to make changes before adopting the policy
3. Refer the policy back to staff with other direction

ATTACHMENTS:

Proposed Letter of Support Policy

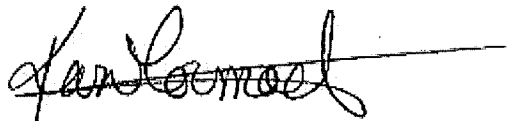
RECOMMENDATION:

That Council passes the following resolution:

THAT The Corporation of the City of Nelson Letter of Support Policy No. 0550.00.017 be adopted.

AUTHOR:

DEPUTY CORPORATE OFFICER

REVIEWED BY:

CITY MANAGER

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF NELSON

POLICY TITLE: Council - Letters of Support	POLICY NO: 0550.00.017
EFFECTIVE DATE: September 3, 2019	SUPERSEDES: NA
APPROVAL: Council	PAGE: 1 of 1

POLICY:

Council authorizes staff to provide letters of support to local non-profit organizations and other local governments who request such letters to include along with their grant or funding applications if the following criteria are satisfied:

- there is no financial contribution requested from the City; and
- there is no in-kind contribution (facility space or staff time) requested from the City; and
- the letter is not sought in connection with a grant or other opportunity that is also being applied for by the City of Nelson.

PURPOSE:

To provide efficiency in responding to requests received from local non-profit organizations and other local governments for letters of support for grants and funding applications.

PROCEDURE:

All request for letters of support shall be submitted to the Corporate Officer or designate for processing. If the request for a letter of support satisfies the required criteria, staff will prepare the letter and it shall be signed by the Mayor, Acting Mayor or City Manager. A copy of letters that are processed by staff shall be placed on Council's Regular Meeting Agendas as part of the Council Information Items Request for Decision.