



RPT 20-478

TITLE: Marketing Prince Albert

DATE: December 9, 2020

TO: Budget Committee

PUBLIC: X

INCAMERA:

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City's Communications Office work within existing budgets and with community partners to further promote positive storytelling on digital platforms in 2021.

TOPIC & PURPOSE:

To address the correspondence from Capstone Community Marketing for a positive story telling campaign on social media that was referred to budget deliberations for consideration.

BACKGROUND:

At the November 30, 2020 Executive Committee meeting, Capstone Community Marketing made a presentation to City Council requesting \$50,000 to promote positive stories about Prince Albert on the City's social media platforms.

As noted in their correspondence:

"We are proposing that for five (5) posts a week including photography, research, writing and editing and drone capabilities, Capstone Community Marketing will charge \$50,000 for a 52 week contract. Included in the weekly postings will be interviews of local business, photography of the natural beauty and interesting stories of arts, culture, sport and people."

At this meeting, City Council expressed support for the concept to promote positive storytelling to counter negative messaging about the community of Prince Albert and approved that this matter be forwarded to budget with a corresponding report from the Communications Office for more information addressing the items in Capstone's Proposal.

PROPOSED APPROACH AND RATIONALE:

The City's Communications office balances the need for communication on behalf of City operations, and marketing on behalf of Economic Development and Tourism. The primary purpose is operations, but it has always been acknowledged that the City has a role in the celebration and promotion of the community. Please see appendix A for more detail on the initiatives undertaken in this regard and the projects the City has been involved in and Appendix B for a snapshot of the strong performance of the City's Facebook page including recent examples of posts that have driven likes and shares.

The Prince Albert Regional Economic Development Alliance (PAREDA) was created in 2019 with a mandate to pursue economic development and tourism through a cooperative and coordinated approach. The PAREDA is funded by the City of Prince Albert and regional partners. A CEO was appointed by the Board of Directors in early 2020 and since that time, the CEO has been working to establish the fundamental building blocks of the organization. This year, the organization applied for a grant with the Federal Government for an Investment Attraction study. A response is expected early in the New Year. In 2021 there will be a new website which includes an online marketplace, similar to the one launched in Moose Jaw, that provides an online platform for local businesses to sell their goods. The CEO has also successfully applied for a \$37,400 grant from Sask Tourism to promote positive stories in Prince Albert. The grant will cover blogs, video and pictures of the stories of their choice, according to two themes: what do you love about Prince Albert and who makes Prince Albert a great place to live.

Heading into 2021, City Council has expressed a desire to see more positive storytelling about Prince Albert. This priority is consistent with those established in the Communications Master Plan and the Municipal Cultural Action Plan. In addition to the work that PAREDA is doing with Sask Tourism, the Communications Office believes it is possible to align existing internal resources and partners in 2021 to tell more of these stories without an increase to the City's 2021 Budget.

Many community groups have long expressed a desire to change the negative view of Prince Albert and with leadership from the City, they would be eager to contribute to a campaign of this nature. By working with the City's already established relationships with community partners, it will be possible for these groups to not only assist in content creation, but also in identifying the stories that should be told. The result will be a body of work that belongs not just to the City, but the people of the community as well.

The City's Communications Coordinator position was hired in late July 2020 and has extensive experience in social media, graphic design and photography. With this full time position, and support of the PAREDA and local partner organizations, it will be possible to prioritize this initiative while maintaining communication support for the City's other operational areas. In

particular, attention will be paid to growing the Livingpa Instagram account and leveraging the strong audience on Facebook to generate exposure for these positive stories.

CONSULTATIONS:

In preparation for this report, the Communications Office consulted internally with the Arts and Cultural Coordinator, the Marketing and Sponsorship Coordinator and Economic Development Coordinator. Externally, the Prince Albert Regional Economic Development Alliance CEO, Prince Albert Downtown Business Improvement District Executive Director, Prince Albert Chamber CEO and Community Building Youth Futures Prince Albert Coordinator were consulted. All have expressed support for a campaign of this nature and a willingness to contribute to its success.

COMMUNICATION AND/OR ANNOUNCEMENT PLAN:

In consultation with community partners, a marketing plan will be developed to define goals of the marketing strategy including target audiences, stories to tell, mediums to be used, frequency of postings and any corresponding expenses. The plan will be carried out throughout 2021.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The Communications Office budgets annually to support advertising and communication initiatives each year. This includes budgeted funds for video production, graphic design, print production and photography. Existing budgeted funds would be used to contract out these elements of the work as needed.

PRIVACY IMPLICATIONS:

Storytelling will require the participation of people from the community. This will require that multimedia consent forms be signed in advance to grant the City permission to use their photo and story to promote Prince Albert.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS:

There are no other policy implication or OCP considerations.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

In the City's Strategic Plan it states, under sustainable growth, "development of a marketing strategy". In the Communications Master Plan under the Goal Strengthen the City Image and Establish a City brand it states "promote the positive attributes of the City which will support our economic development efforts and workforce attraction and retention." In the Municipal Cultural Action Plan it states as a goal "Ensure that all nations, communities, newcomers, and individuals are welcomed and celebrated in the community."

OPTIONS TO RECOMMENDATION:**1. Contracting out Marketing Services**

Under this option, the Communication's office would invite proposals from marketing consultants to create a positive storytelling marketing plan and strategy and complete the content creation for the program. This work would be undertaken under the direction and guidance of the Communications Office.

This option is not recommended because it is possible to achieve more storytelling without an increase to the City's budget. Additionally, while a consultant can take on some of the story telling work, the project will still require that the Communications Office be responsible for ensuring the consultant delivers on the goals identified for the project. To ensure a successful outcome, a project of this scope will require the full participation and engagement of the Communications Office.

It should be noted that the proposal from Capstone Community Marketing suggests an annual contract in the amount of \$50,000. Before awarding a contract to this company, or any other, bidders would need to be prepared to demonstrate their abilities with evidence of prior work including a portfolio of images or videography work they have completed and their own demonstrated social media presence as a company. The Capstone website, <https://www.capstonecommunity.ca> does not include a portfolio of work and the social media icons are dead links that do not go anywhere.

PUBLIC NOTICE:

Public Notice pursuant to the Public Notice Bylaw No. 24 of 2015 is not required.

PRESENTATION: N/A**ATTACHMENTS:**

Appendix A – Positive Promotion Initiatives

Appendix B – City of PA Facebook Performance

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