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**TO:** Regional District of Nanaimo Board    **MEETING:** April 28, 2020  
**FROM:** Lisa Moilanen  
Engagement Coordinator    **FILE:** Not applicable  
**SUBJECT:** Virtual Public Engagement

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### RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Board approve virtual public engagement for collecting input for projects and initiatives during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.

### SUMMARY

To move forward with current Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) projects and initiatives, two-way input is proposed to be collected from the public through virtual means due to the Provincial Health Orders for physical distancing.

### BACKGROUND

Public engagement is an important aspect of all RDN projects and initiatives and during the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a need to encourage public engagement online so the RDN can continue to share information and gather input from the public. This form of engagement will allow projects and initiatives to move forward, with public awareness and the needed public input provided.

Informing, educating and communicating about projects will continue by using a variety of tools such as the website, newspaper ads, social media and the online engagement platform, Get Involved RDN. The collection of all input for projects, during the public health emergency, will be formally done by using Get Involved RDN. Written submissions will continue to be encouraged via email or regular mail, as in the past.

These varied engagement tools were used as part of the engagement strategy at the RDN prior to the pandemic, but focusing on receiving input virtually will be the only safe way to engage the public until physical distancing instructions are lifted. In-person public engagement cannot currently continue given the physical distancing recommendations from the Provincial Health Officer.

A list of current RDN projects or initiatives that are slated for 2020 public engagement is attached for information (Attachment 1). Each proposed project will be carefully reviewed internally to determine the appropriate time to proceed in light of the COVID-19 restrictions and its impacts on our operations.

The change to virtual public engagement currently excludes projects that have a legislated requirement to consult (i.e. public hearings), as further direction is to be received from the Provincial government regarding these requirements.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

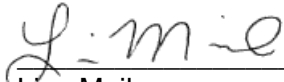
1. That the Board approve virtual public engagement for collecting input for projects and initiatives during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.
2. Other direction as provided by the Board.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

People and Partnerships - Develop a Communications Strategy to improve and enhance community engagement and public outreach.



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April 16, 2020

Reviewed by:

- D. Wells, General Manager, Corporate Service
- P. Carlyle, Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment:

- 2020 RDN Public Engagement Projects