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REPORT TITLE: Urban Centre Redevelopment Plan – What We Heard Report (Phase 2)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The What We Heard Report for the Urban Centre Redevelopment Plan (UCRP) project presents the findings of the second phase of public engagement undertaken by the project team, including whom we engaged with, the feedback gathered and how this will be used, as well as the next steps of this project.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of the UCRP project is to develop a long-range, statutory land use plan that will guide the revitalization and redevelopment of the Urban Centre, as required by the 2020 Municipal Development Plan.

The UCRP project was initiated in February 2023 with phase 1 of the public engagement process completed in July 2023. Phase 2 of public engagement commenced in March 2024 and is now concluded.

The public engagement initiatives were undertaken in accordance with the UCRP Engagement Plan and alignment with the City of Leduc Public Engagement Framework. The objectives of the second phase of engagement were to:

- Confirm the vision, goals and objectives guided by the Visioning Phase, and create policies that will help achieve these goals and objectives;
- Identify and evaluate feedback and alternatives on major themes that will influence policy direction;
- Gather input on the draft plan components including the draft policy framework; and
- Ensure existing and future users of the area are provided with opportunities to influence the outcome of the plan.

Public engagement communication and activities included the following:

- Online public survey (March 4 to April 1);
- Social media posts (March 5 to 26);
- Project updates and survey link sent to email subscribers (March 5);
- 3,143 postcard mailouts advising of the survey (during March 11-15);
- External stakeholders engagement email referral (Leduc County, the business community, non-profit groups, Youth Council, developers, and industry partners, etc.)

The project team received a total of 18,539 social media impressions (frequency of posts displayed, searched, and seen by a user), collected survey responses from 256 respondents, and increased in 35 new email subscribers to the project with a total of 65 subscribers.

As a result of Phase 2 engagement, priorities have been identified to provide the direction needed to ensure the policy framework supports the future redevelopment of the Urban Centre. Phase 2 engagement was a key step to understanding the direction of the vision, guiding principles, objectives, and key themes to inform policy and land use decisions.

The few key takeaways from Phase 2 are identified below:

- 65% strongly and somewhat agree with the draft vision which sets the direction for the UCRP; 19% somewhat and strongly disagree; and 16% neutral/uncertain.
- Top 3 guiding principles identified include:
 - Recognize, respect, and prioritize character, culture, and history.
 - Attract a variety of businesses, services, and uses.
 - Provide opportunities for appropriate redevelopment and infill development.
- There is a desire to keep the historical charm of Main Street but also support flexibility in redevelopment by ensuring new development fits within the context of the area through innovative design.
- Some respondents support gentle growth, while some support higher growth, therefore there should be a spectrum of density based on appropriate locations for consideration.
- Respondents desire diverse businesses including entertainment hubs that can liven up the area and arts and recreation uses that foster social connections. Larger footprints and big box stores oriented around parking are less desirable.
- There is a consensus that events and gathering spaces are desired ranging from formal to informal spaces and temporary street closures for events to more City-owned facilities.

The project team will apply input from external studies, policy assessments, and research, along with input from the public to support policy development and implementation.

Overall, this project continues to be received positively and with optimism, as reflected by the level of participation in the various public engagement activities, conversations and feedback received to date.

NEXT STEPS

The project team will continue to inform Council to support the continuous updates of the project as it proceeds. Phase 3 (Confirming Phase) of engagement will commence in late Q3 of 2024. This will include gathering input from the public and stakeholders on the final draft plan.

It is anticipated that the final draft plan will be presented to City Council for first reading in Q4 of 2024.

ATTACHMENTS

Urban Centre Redevelopment Plan: What We Heard Report (Phase 2)