



CITY OF WILLIAMS LAKE COUNCIL REPORT

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| DATE OF REPORT: | April 12, 2024 |
| DATE & TYPE OF MEETING: | April 24, 2024 Joint Committee Meeting |
| AUTHOR: | R. Coupé, Corporate Officer |
| SUBJECT: | HISTORY OF AIRSHED COMMITTEE |
| FILE: | 2-1-5 |

Recommendation

That this report be received for information.

Purpose

This report provides a history of the City's Airshed Quality Management Committee and its predecessor which was administered by the BC Ministry of Environment, and give suggestions for next steps as requested by the Central Cariboo Joint Committee.

Discussion

Background

The City of Williams Lake has minimal records on the early days of the Airshed Quality Management Committee, but a brief history, based on these limited records and staff recollection, is included below.

In the early 2000's, the BC Ministry of Environment administered the Williams Lake Air Quality Roundtable as a community stakeholder group that met approximately two to four times per year at City Hall. The City typically sent one to three staff members to attend these meetings.

Based on a [Ministry memo dated January 2001](#): A multi-stakeholder committee known as the Williams Lake Air Quality Roundtable oversaw the Airshed Management Planning process, and was chaired by the City of Williams Lake. Included in the Roundtable were the following organizations:

- Williams Lake Environmental Society
- Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks – Cariboo Region
- City of Williams Lake
- Cariboo Regional District
- Cariboo Community Health Services Society
- Weldwood of Canada Ltd.
- Riverside Forest Products
- Williams Lake Construction Association
- Ministry of Forests
- Williams Lake & District Chamber of Commerce
- West Fraser Mills Ltd.
- Caribou Road Services Ltd.
- Ministry of Transportation and Highways
- Lignum Ltd.
- TransCanada Williams Lake Power Plant

In 2006, the Roundtable, chaired by a representative of the Williams Lake Environmental Society, produced an Air Quality Management Plan (Attachment 'A'), which expired in 2016. City records are somewhat unclear on the timeframe, but at some point the Ministry of Environment stopped administering the group.

In 2019, after receiving a report from the "Rail Ties Be Wise" group, the Central Cariboo Joint Committee resolved to initiate the formation of a new Airshed Committee for the Central Cariboo community at large, consisting of the current committee membership (plus local First Nations). The group continued to meet with a goal of the creation of a Regional Clean Air Strategy and/or Local Air Share Plan. Based on the work of this group and the recommendation of a City Councillor, in 2021 the City formally [re-established the Williams Lake Air Quality Roundtable](#) as a select committee of Council composed of 12 representatives from different sectors, with in-kind support to be provided by the City. Terms of Reference developed for the new Roundtable were adopted and are included as Attachment 'B' of this report. The membership of the Roundtable is similar, but distinct, to its former iteration:

1. Youth/student
2. Elder/senior
3. Community at Large
4. City of Williams Lake
5. Cariboo Regional District
6. First Nations Government representative
7. Ministry of Environment
8. Industry representative
9. Environment representative
10. Health Authority
11. Forest Sector/Fire Centre
12. Education

Since its formal adoption as a City select committee in 2021, the Roundtable has met twice. Much of the information relevant to the committee is online at: [BreatheEasyWilliamsLake](#).

At its January 24, 2024 meeting, the Central Cariboo Joint Committee requested that staff investigate the background of the Williams Lake Air Quality Roundtable, and bring back a report to the Central Cariboo Joint Committee as to next steps and key targets.

Analysis

From staff's perspective, the current structure of the Roundtable as a City select committee has provided at most one meeting per year for a broad range of local groups to share information about air quality issues. While a good forum for information sharing, staff do not believe it is an effective vehicle to develop future action plans. Given that air quality management is a provincial responsibility as well that the Roundtable has only met infrequently, a more effective model to develop desired plans may be a group (still with the broad input available under the current or similar membership) administered by the Ministry of Environment (as occurred in the past) and/or guided by consultants. Prior to any changes, staff recommend consulting with all existing committee representatives.

City staff have no guidance on air quality key targets requested by the Central Cariboo Joint Committee, given that the goals of the Roundtable as included in its current Terms of Reference are generally outside the expertise of local government staff. Without additional resources for administration and

technical expertise (i.e. consultants) to steer the work of this group, should the Roundtable continue under the existing structure and mandate, additional support will be required.

Financial Considerations (Cost and Resource Allocation)

- ☐ Yes
☒ N/A

Legislative Considerations (Applicable Policies and/or Bylaws)

- ☒ Yes – An existing City committee exists under section 142 of the *Community Charter*.
☐ N/A

This project aligns with the following Focus Areas of Council's Strategic Plan:

- ☒ Collaboration and Partnerships
☐ Indigenous Relations
☒ Livability / Positive Atmosphere
☐ Housing
☐ Infrastructure
☐ Organizational Effectiveness
OR
☐ *Core Service (not identified in Focus Areas, but necessary local government function)

This report has been prepared in consultation with:

- Deputy Corporate Officer, City of Williams Lake
- Manager of Administrative Services, City of Williams Lake

Approved for Agenda by:

Chief Administrative Officer

Respectfully submitted,

Ross Coupé
Corporate Officer

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – 2006 Air Quality Management Plan

Attachment B – Current Terms of Reference for Williams Lake Air Quality Roundtable

Attachment C – Airshed Plan & Ambient Monitoring Modification Agreement b/w Province, City WL, City of Quesnel, Interior Health (expired 2016)

Attachment D – Williams Lake Particulate Monitoring Participation Agreement 2013-2018

Other useful links:

- [2003 Williams Lake Air Quality Management Plan Background Report](#)
- [Williams Lake Airshed Map](#)
- [2017 Tribune Article re WL Air Quality Roundtable](#)
- [2004 Guide to Airshed Planning in BC](#)