



Town of Oliver

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Community Engagement Strategy

The Town of Oliver is updating the Official Community Plan (OCP) in two phases: firstly, in 2025, to align with the Housing Needs Report and Provincial legislation; and secondly, in 2026, to revise policies related to the economy, parks and recreation, transportation, reconciliation, infrastructure, and climate resilience. An integral component of this project is engagement with community members.

The Community Engagement Strategy provides a framework for communicating and engaging with key stakeholders, the public, local First Nations, and Council throughout the process of updating the OCP. This Strategy:

- Defines the goals and focus of engagement for the project;
- Presents an overall approach to engagement including activity breakdown by project phase;
- Estimates the level of involvement of participating groups;
- Describes the communication and engagement tools and strategies to be used;
- Suggests an approach for engagement with local First Nations;
- Provides discussion questions and key messages; and
- Displays the program in the overall project schedule.

This Strategy will be provided to Town staff for review and to Council for final approval.

Engagement Foundations

Engagement efforts will reflect the International Association of Public Participation's (IAP2) Core Values, Code of Ethics, and Spectrum of Public Participation throughout the project (as described on the IAP2 website). Our efforts will determine the level of engagement required to benefit the project considering the decisions to be made, budget, timeline, and community interest. A strong sense of visual communication will translate complex project aspects into understandable and relatable information for participants.

Goals and Focus

The goals of this Strategy are:

1. To establish a clear, cohesive approach to communicate and engage with identified groups and the wider community in Oliver; and
2. To see participants' input reflected in the final documents.

The focus of the Strategy is the following four groups:

- **Internal Stakeholders**, specifically Council and staff;

- **External Stakeholders** as identified by Town staff and including representatives from local interest groups and businesses in the area, government agencies and neighbouring municipalities;
- Members of the **public** living, working or otherwise with an interest in Oliver. This may include seasonal residents or visitors; and
- Local **First Nations**, specifically Osoyoos Indian Band (OIB).

Level of Engagement

Using the five steps of the IAP2's Spectrum of Public Participation, we propose the following levels of engagement will apply to the participating groups:

1. Inform – External stakeholders such as neighbouring municipalities and electoral areas.
2. Consult – Local First Nations; External stakeholders such as government agencies.
3. Involve – Members of the public; External stakeholders such as local interest groups.
4. Collaborate – Internal stakeholders: Town staff.
5. Empower – Internal stakeholders: Council.

Note that these are preliminary suggestions and are open to change as the project progresses. The level of engagement with stakeholders will vary depending on Council and Staff expectations as well as the level of interest of each group.

Communication Methods

This Strategy aims to effectively reach out to as many people as possible within scope and ensure they are informed of the project and aware of the opportunities to get involved. To achieve this, WSP proposes the following communication methods be used throughout the project as applicable:

- **Project web page:** WSP will provide content to Town staff for a project web page on the Town of Oliver website that describes the project, timeframes and opportunities for people to get involved. This web page will be updated by Town staff as the project proceeds with new documentation, key milestones and engagement events.
- **Mailout/Notice:** WSP will provide content to Town staff for inclusion in a utility bill mailout or community facility notice with a QR code to the project web page so recipients can keep up to date with the latest information.
- **Social media:** WSP recommends that Town staff provide regular updates on the social media pages about project events and progress.
- **Formal notification:** Amendments to Town bylaws such as the OCP require formal notification that meets timelines and standards outlined in the Local

Government Act. This will be led by Town staff, with support from WSP as required.

Identifying key stakeholders: WSP will look to the Town of Oliver to provide guidance about who the key stakeholders are – community leaders such as local business owners, developers, and members of various interest groups. We will seek Town staff support to provide those contacts and undertake initial outreach to engage them.

Communications with First Nations: In partnership with the Town, WSP will contact OIB to inform them of the project and invite them to participate in engagement activities. All communications following the initial outreach will be as per the First Nations' expressed preference. We will endeavour to engage with OIB early in the process to ensure time for sufficient input.

Engagement Implementation

The Engagement Program features a mix of in-person and virtual activities across the two project phases.

In Phase 1, the focus will be on updating the OCP to be compliant with Provincial legislation related to housing. WSP will meet with Council to discuss the housing related revisions. Early engagement with the public will be via an online survey developed by Town staff. Once the housing related revisions are developed, the first draft of the OCP will be presented to Council during a Committee of the Whole and to the public at an open house. WSP will also present the second draft of the document to Council at a Committee of the Whole and the final version of the document at First Reading.

While the first phase will focus on housing, we will take note of any commentary or findings about the OCP not related to housing for consideration during Phase 2.

WSP will also offer to meet with OIB to inquire about any topics they may want to discuss. While some topics raised may not be housing focused, it will be important to begin this dialogue concurrently with Phase 1 to ensure there is adequate time to incorporate input into the OCP prior to adoption in 2026.

In Phase 2, engagement activities for all other topics (parks & recreation, transportation, climate resilience, etc) will begin. Engagement activities in early 2026 may include a launch event, pop-up booth at a community event, walking tour, meetings with stakeholders, and a second online survey.

WSP will also continue to engage with OIB to gather input on any topics of importance to them.

Following engagement activities, a "What We Heard" document summarizing feedback will be created. Town staff will provide the document to Council.

The feedback from Council, the public, stakeholders, and First Nations will then be used to draft revisions to the OCP document. In late Spring 2026, the draft will be presented to Council at a Committee of the Whole and to the public at an open house.

Details of the engagement activities are presented by phase below.

Engagement Activities: Phase 1

Activity	Audience	Schedule	Purpose / Topics Description
1. Committee of the Whole Presentation	Council	Task 1.6 August 5, 2025	Present this Community Engagement Strategy to Council for input.
Description	WSP will attend (in-person) a Committee of the Whole meeting with Council to introduce the project and present this engagement strategy for input.		
Responsibilities	WSP: Provide content and present Town staff: Liaison support		
Deliverables	Presentation		
Communications	Community Engagement Strategy to be published by Town staff on Town website.		

Activity	Audience	Schedule	Purpose / Topics Description
2. Meetings with First Nations	First Nations	Task 4.3 August 2025 to March 2026	Meet with OIB as desired to gather input on topics important to them.
Description	WSP will consult OIB (in-person/ virtual, as desired) to discuss topics that are important to them.		
Responsibilities	WSP: Facilitate Town staff: Organise meetings		
Deliverables	Consultation		
Communications	OIB will be contacted by Town staff to arrange meeting format and timing.		

Activity	Audience	Schedule	Purpose / Topics
3. Open House	Public	Task 2.2 Week of August 25, 2025	Present the proposed housing related revisions to the document by way of illustrated boards at a public open house.

Description	In conjunction with Town staff, WSP will host a two-hour public open house to present the proposed housing-related amendments to the OCP.
Responsibilities	WSP: Provide content and facilitate; provide promotional flyer to staff Town staff: Organize facility booking; provide refreshments; attend the session; assist with set up/take down.
Deliverables	Presentation boards
Communications	Event will be advertised by Town staff on project website and social media. Staff will also promote the event at the Station Street Market.

Activity	Audience	Schedule	Purpose / Topics
4. Committee of the Whole Presentation	Council	Task 2.3 Week of August 25 2025	Present the draft housing-related amendments to Council.
Description	WSP will attend (in-person) a Committee of the Whole meeting with Council to present the proposed housing-related amendments to the OCP for input.		
Responsibilities	WSP: Provide content and present Town staff: Liaison support		
Deliverables	Presentation		
Communications	The draft revisions will be published by Town staff on the Town's project website.		

Activity	Audience	Schedule	Purpose / Topics
5. Survey – Online	Public	Late August to mid September 2025	Town staff will develop and publish an online survey that has a housing focus.
Description	Town staff will create a brief survey with questions focused on the Housing Needs Report, Small Scale Multi Unit Housing (SSMUH) legislation requirements, and the future of housing in Oliver. The survey will be made available online. If funds are available, the survey may also be printed and distributed to key locations such as the library or community centre.		
Responsibilities	WSP: Review collated survey data Town staff: Develop and publish survey; Collate responses		
Deliverables	Survey data analysis		
Communications	Town staff will promote the survey via social media.		

Activity	Audience	Schedule	Purpose / Topics
6. Committee of the Whole Presentation	Public	September 15 2025	Present summary of engagement feedback to Council.
Description	At the September Committee of the Whole meeting, staff will present a summary of feedback received from the public and confirm the desired Council revisions discussed at the previous meeting. WSP won't attend this session.		
Responsibilities	WSP: Provide short summary of engagement input Town staff: Council report/presentation; provide meeting summary to WSP		
Deliverables	Presentation		
Communications	Town staff will publish the engagement summary to the Town's project website.		

Activity	Audience	Schedule	Purpose / Topics
7. Committee of the Whole Presentation	Public	Task 3.3 October 2025	Present the draft housing-related amendments to Council.
Description	WSP will attend (in-person) a Committee of the Whole meeting with Council to present the second draft of the proposed housing-related amendments to the OCP for input, after incorporating feedback from Council and the public. Note: as a Public Hearing is not permitted for the adoption of SSMUH legislation, this meeting will replace the Public Hearing that was budgeted in the WSP proposal.		
Responsibilities	WSP: Provide content and present Town staff: Liaison support		
Deliverables	Presentation		
Communications	Town staff will publish the second draft to the Town's project website.		

Engagement Activities: Phase 2

Activity	Audience	Schedule	Purpose / Topics
8. Stakeholder Meetings – Active Transportation	Stakeholders	November 2025 or February 2026 (subject to grant report deadline)	Meet with stakeholders to obtain input on active transportation.
Description	While Phase 2 of the project won't officially begin until early 2026, it will be important to conduct active transportation related meetings prior to the end of 2025 to utilise the grant funds that were awarded to the Town.		

	These two meetings will be a mix of virtual and in-person meetings with community groups that have an interest in walking, cycling, accessibility, and other active transportation related issues. The groups will include high school and elementary school children.
Responsibilities	WSP: Preparation and facilitation. Town staff: Coordination of stakeholders; facility booking; refreshments.
Communications	Town staff will send email invites to stakeholders.

Activity	Audience	Schedule	Purpose / Topics
9. Launch Event	All	Task 4.2 February 2026	Introduce Phase 2 of the project to the community.
Description	This event will be the official kick off of Phase 2 of the project. WSP will host a two hour workshop to receive feedback on important topics for the community. This event will be promoted as a “date night” to attract the 30s/40s demographic, with local art, a musician, and refreshments. Activities will include Oliver themed trivia and a mapping exercise.		
Responsibilities	WSP: Session design and facilitation Town staff: Provide venue; assist with booking musician and artists; invitations/notifications; facilitation support; refreshments.		
Communications	Advertise event on Town website, newspaper ad, social media.		

Activity	Audience	Schedule	Purpose / Topics
10. Pop-up Booth	Public	Task 4.2 February 2026	Discuss the project with residents at an existing community event.
Description	WSP and Town staff will attend an existing event where we will set up a booth to interact with event attendees. We will include mapping and other interactive elements to engage the public.		
Responsibilities	WSP: Material creation; booth attendance Town staff: Coordinate attendance at event; attendance; refreshments.		
Communications	Advertise attendance on social media.		

Activity	Audience	Schedule	Purpose / Topics
11. Walking Tour	Public, Stakeholders, Council	Task 4.2 February 2026	Walk with a group of 15-20 residents, stakeholders, and Council members to identify key concerns in the community.
Description	WSP and Town staff will conduct a one hour walking tour of the core areas of the community to identify potential improvements to street design, facades, walkability, amenities, etc.		

	Note: the Walking Tour is subject to weather; in the case of inclement weather, it may be replaced with an indoor activity.
Responsibilities	WSP: Facilitation Town staff: Identify walking route; attendance.
Communications	Email invites to Council and stakeholders. Advertise on social media for public.

Activity	Audience	Schedule	Purpose / Topics
12. Stakeholder Meetings	Stakeholders	Task 4.2 February 2026	Meet with stakeholders to discuss specific topics.
Description	WSP will meet with stakeholders in two separate sessions of one hour each to discuss topics that are important to the community. Potential topics could include parks and recreation, climate resilience, transportation, infrastructure, or other topics.		
Responsibilities	WSP: Facilitation Town staff: Determine topics; invite stakeholders.		
Communications	Email invites to stakeholders.		

Activity	Audience	Schedule	Purpose / Topics
13. Online Survey	Public, Stakeholders, First Nations, Council	Task 4.2 February to March 2026	Survey to gather input on key topics.
Description	WSP will develop a survey that will include questions on a range of topics. Input from the survey will be organised and utilised to inform policy updates.		
Responsibilities	WSP: Survey development; analysis of data Town staff: Publish and promote.		
Communications	The survey link will be published on the Town's project web page and promoted on social media.		

Activity	Audience	Schedule	Purpose / Topics
14. Committee of the Whole Presentation	Council	Task 4.6 March 2026	Present What We Heard Report to Council for feedback.
Description	Following the engagement activities in February/ March, WSP will compile all of the engagement feedback into a What We Heard Report and present it to Council virtually.		
Responsibilities	WSP: What We Heard Report development; Presentation Town staff: Review of draft report.		
Communications	The What We Heard Report will be published on the Town's project web page.		

Activity	Audience	Schedule	Purpose / Topics
15. Meetings with Provincial Ministries	Provincial Ministry Staff	March to May 2026	Discussions with key provincial staff to ensure legislative compliance.
Description	Town staff will meet with various Provincial ministries (MOTT, ALC, Interior Health, etc) to ensure the OCP document is in compliance with legislative requirements and incorporating best practices.		
Responsibilities	WSP: Incorporate feedback into OCP document Town staff: Organise and facilitate meetings.		
Communications	Town staff will send email invitations to Provincial ministries.		

Activity	Audience	Schedule	Purpose / Topics
16. Committee of the Whole Presentation	Council	April 2026	Provide project status update to Council.
Description	Staff will present a project status update to Council.		
Responsibilities	WSP: Brief update on meetings with Ministries Town staff: Council report/presentation		
Communications	N/A.		

Activity	Audience	Schedule	Purpose / Topics
17. Open House	Public, Stakeholders, First Nations, Council	Task 5.2 May 2026	Unveil the draft document for feedback.
Description	Following the drafting of the OCP document, WSP will facilitate an open house to gather feedback from the community.		
Responsibilities	WSP: Boards to illustrate OCP topic areas; Facilitation Town staff: Facility booking; attendance; refreshments.		
Communications	Town staff will be publish the draft document on the Town's project web page and promote the open house on social media.		

Activity	Audience	Schedule	Purpose / Topics
18. Committee of the Whole Presentation	Council	Task 5.3 May 2026	Present draft document to Council for feedback.
Description	WSP will present (in-person) the draft OCP to Council for feedback.		
Responsibilities	WSP: Draft OCP; Presentation Town staff: Review of draft OCP		
Communications	The draft OCP will be published on the Town's project web page.		

Activity	Audience	Schedule	Purpose / Topics
19. Public Hearing	Public, Stakeholders, First Nations, Council	Task 6.3 June/July 2026	WSP will attend the Public Hearing to answer any questions.
Description	WSP will attend (virtually) the Public Hearing to deliver a short presentation and be available to answer any questions from Council.		
Responsibilities	WSP: Final OCP; Presentation Town staff: Assistance in responding to questions		
Communications	Town staff will publish the final OCP on the Town's project web page and advertise the Public Hearing as per legislative requirements.		

The above-described approach follows the details provided in WSP's proposal. The proposed timeline is provided on page 11 of this document.

Reporting

What We Heard Report: Following engagement activities in Phase 2, WSP will compile information collected into a "What We Heard" Report. This report will consist of a summary of the events, the methods used to engage people and to solicit feedback, an analysis of the feedback received and recommendations for how it may or may not be incorporated into the amending bylaw. Verbatim comments will be included as an appendix. We will provide the report to Town staff for one round of feedback before finalisation.

Assumptions

- This Strategy focuses on internal and external stakeholders identified, Town Council and staff, members of the public residing or working in Oliver or with other interests in the area, and Osoyoos Indian Band.

- Costs related to engagement events and communication (e.g., facility rentals, refreshments, advertising costs, mailing costs, etc.) are not included in the consultant's fee.
- WSP will look to Town staff to help with booking venues for all engagement activities, as well as distributing advertising / communication materials, collecting RSVPs, and providing refreshments at all engagement events.
- Town staff will be available to assist with project engagement events.

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