



STAFF REPORT

Title: Destination Marketing Membership

Meeting Date: October 15, 2019

Executive Summary:

Administration has reviewed a number of tourism related memberships to ensure that they continue to align with the city's marketing and advertising goals, and that they continue to provide value.

In the case of the Lakeland DMO (which has rebranded to Travel Lakeland), administration is recommending that the membership not be renewed. The City of Cold Lake joined the DMO six years ago after partnering for several years to recoup a significant amount of its costs for attending tradeshow. At the time, the money saved by partnering far exceeded the cost even of the membership.

Travel Alberta has since changed its grant structure such that and we have not been able to access partnership funding for tradeshow or the billboard campaign. Assistance with booking trade shows has also ceased and much of the DMO's special campaigns are focused on the northwest area of the Lakeland region.

Administration feels that while it may partner with the DMO on special projects from time to time, or take advantage of advertising on an as-needed basis, the membership is no longer required.

Background:

Chamber of Commerce – Tourism Guide

The City of Cold Lake works with the Cold Lake Regional Chamber of Commerce to produce an annual tourism guide for distribution to Visitor Information Centres, at trade shows as well as to visitors of the city at special events, tournaments etc. The City of Cold Lake covers the cost of printing the guides at \$13,500, and also oversees their distribution to Visitor Information Centres.

Go East RTO

The City of Cold Lake also recently joined the Go East Regional Tourism Organization, which has gained in popularity over recent years. This year, the Go East RTO is being considered for a Provincial ALTO Award for its 2018 digital marketing campaign. It also produces a print tourism guide and is active on radio and television. Go East Regional Tourism Organization membership fee = \$1,500 (population 5,000 and up). The RTO



also offers additional advertising packages for both print and digital marketing to its members.

Northern Woods and Water Highway

The City has maintained a membership with the Northern Woods and Water Highway Association, which is attempting to re-establish a northern highway corridor as a popular tourist route. The corridor runs from Winnipeg, Man., in the east, through Cold Lake to Dowson Creek, BC in the west. Northern Woods and Water membership fee = \$3,000 (population 10,000 and up). The association also offers extended advertising packages to its members.

Lakeland DMO membership fee = 30 cents per capita @ 13,294 for a total of \$3,988.20
The DMO also offers additional advertising packages for its print product.

Alternatives:

- The committee may recommend to council that council renew its membership to the Lakeland Destination Marketing Organization.
- The committee may recommend that council not renew its membership to the Lakeland Destination Marketing Organization.

Recommended Action:

Administration recommends the City to allow the membership to the Lakeland Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) to lapse and further review marketing opportunities.

Budget Implications (Yes or No):

No

Submitted by:

Kevin Nagoya, Chief Administrative Officer