



## COUNCIL REPORT

Report No. PDS 031-2016

**Executive Committee**

March 2, 2016

File No: 6520-20

To: Mayor and Council  
From: Amy Anaka, Planner  
Subject: AgRefresh Project Introduction

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### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. THAT Council receive the AgRefresh work plan and engagement strategy as contained in Report No. PDS 031-2016;
2. THAT Council endorse the AgRefresh guiding principles as contained in Report No. PDS 031-2016; and
3. THAT Council direct staff to begin AgRefresh Stage 1 Background Research engagement as contained in Report No. PDS 031-2016.

### **SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE**

AgRefresh, formally known as the Agricultural Lands Review, has a Project Team comprised of City staff and consultants who have developed a project name, brand identity, guiding principles, a work plan, and an engagement strategy. This report is being brought to Council to formally introduce the project process.

### **BACKGROUND**

On June 22, 2015 at Committee of the Whole, Council received an introduction to the Agricultural Lands Review project and authorized staff to proceed with a Request for Proposals, as outlined in Report No. PDS 096-2015. Staff have since engaged an experienced consultant team comprised of Agri-Saki Consulting and Urban Food Strategies. The next steps were to develop project guiding principles, a work plan, and an engagement strategy.

The Project Team also developed a project name, AgRefresh, and created a brand identity that supports the name. The brand identity establishes the overall appearance for AgRefresh including a logo, tagline, and colours.

### **DISCUSSION**

Since awarding the AgRefresh contract to Agri-Saki Consulting and Urban Food Strategies, the Project Team has developed project guiding principles, a work plan and an engagement strategy. A project name and identity were also established. The work plan and engagement strategy are organized according to the four stages of the AgRefresh Project.

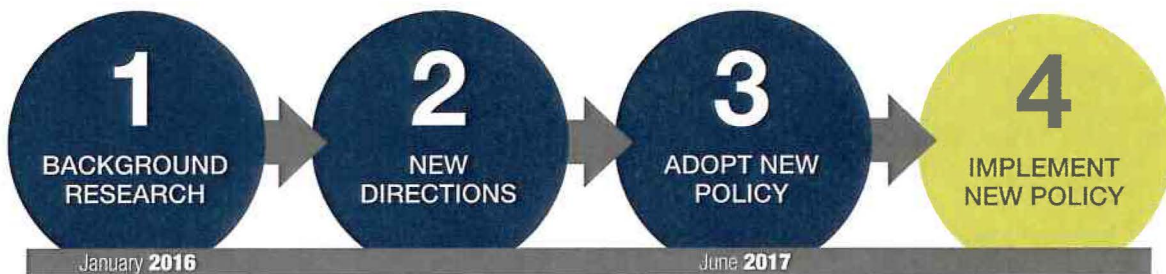
### Guiding principles

A set of guiding principles were created by the Project Team to guide the AgRefresh project, which were referred to the Agriculture, Dyking, Drainage and Irrigation Advisory Committee (ADDIAC) for input. The guiding principles are as follows:

1. Use an understandable and transparent process inclusive of the City's agricultural community and citizens.
2. Ensure Abbotsford is surrounded and sustained by a thriving and diverse agricultural sector in the future.
3. Clarify and define the City's role with respect to agriculture.
4. Enhance agricultural integrity by preserving, protecting and sustaining agriculture and food within the context of broader City objectives.
5. Develop clear and concise bylaws and policies that are practical, workable and consistent.

### Work plan

AgRefresh will be completed between approximately January 2016 and June 2017 over the following three stages, which will include background research, policy development, and policy adoption. The fourth stage will be an on-going implementation stage that will occur after the policy is adopted.



Each stage is organized around a list of tasks and key engagement activities, and completion of each stage will be finalized with a summary report presented to Council.

1. **Stage 1** will focus on background research that will be consolidated into a report including information on agricultural trends in Abbotsford, inventory of existing conditions and an outline of existing legislation and municipal plans/strategies. The purpose of the Background Research Report is to recognize the current state of agriculture in Abbotsford, understand the trends taking place, and identify the existing use of the land.
2. **Stage 2** will focus on preparing new directions that will refine the Official Community Plan (OCP) policy and Zoning Bylaw regulation, and establish a framework for a Bylaw Compliance Strategy.
3. **Stage 3** will focus on preparing the updated OCP policy, Zoning Bylaw regulation, and a Bylaw Compliance Strategy using the findings from Stage 1 and 2, including obtaining necessary approvals from external government agencies and adoption by Council.
4. **Stage 4** will implement the on-going Bylaw Compliance Strategy.



Staff are expected to bring the Stage 1 Background Research Report and engagement results to Council for their consideration in September 2016, which will mark the completion of Stage 1.

### Engagement strategy

AgRefresh engagement is intended to effectively and collaboratively engage the Abbotsford community and stakeholders. Consultation will obtain broad and representative input from City committees and project working groups, the agricultural industry, government agencies, community partners, and the public.

Engagement will be inclusive and incorporate various methods to reach out to groups such as:

- **Agricultural industry** representatives, categorized into the following groups: field horticulture, intensive horticulture, supply management, livestock, processors, specialty, and the service sector.
- **Community partners:** community associations (Bradner, Clayburn Village, Matsqui Prairie, Mt. Lehman), business groups (Chamber of Commerce, Fraser Valley Real Estate Board), schools and universities (School District No. 34, University of the Fraser Valley), and local First Nations (Matsqui, Sumas, Leq'á:mel).
- **Government agencies:** Provincial (Agricultural Land Commission, Ministry of Agriculture), Regional (Fraser Valley Regional District, Metro Vancouver), and neighbouring municipalities (Chilliwack, Mission, Township of Langley, Sumas, Washington).
- **Abbotsford residents:** focus on rural residents, but anyone from the public will be invited to attend scheduled public events.

Throughout the process, engagement has been scheduled around the busy season for the agricultural community with no engagement occurring in the summer or September. Workshops and other events will be scheduled during times and days of the week that work well for the majority of the agricultural community. Each stage of the project will include a series of meetings, workshops and a public open house.

Stage 1 engagement is planned between March and April 2016. It will include meetings with City committees and government agencies, two City hosted workshops in April with the agricultural industry and community partners, and a public open house for Abbotsford residents.

### Brand identity

The Project Team collaborated to develop the project name and brand identity, which is AgRefresh: Enhancing Agriculture in Abbotsford.

**AgRefresh**  
Enhancing Agriculture in Abbotsford

The project name and identity were introduced to the Agriculture, Dyking, Drainage and Irrigation Advisory Committee in February, and was well received. The Project Team is confident the project name and identity will help generate interest and investment in this important planning process.

Next steps

A gradual launch of AgRefresh will begin in March with the creation of a project webpage on the City's website, and meetings and presentations to various stakeholders. The majority of Stage 1 engagement activities will occur in April, which will include meetings and presentations, workshops and a public open house. Public events will be advertised in the local newspaper, on the City's website, and other social media to increase project awareness and gain input.

The Project Team will continue working on the agricultural inventory and identifying trends, as part of Stage 1 Background Research engagement. This information will form the basis of the Stage 1 Background Research Report which is expected to be presented to Council in September 2016.

**FINANCIAL PLAN IMPLICATION**

The 2015-2019 Financial Plan includes funds for Planning and Development Services consulting work to complete the AgRefresh project. Staff do not anticipate further financial plan implications.

  
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Reviewed and approved by the:  
Chief Financial Officer

**IMPACTS ON COUNCIL POLICIES, STRATEGIC PLAN AND/OR COUNCIL DIRECTION**

None.

**SUBSTANTIATION OF RECOMMENDATION**

The AgRefresh Project Team is comprised of City staff and consultants who have developed a project name, brand identity, guiding principles, a work plan, and an engagement strategy. A summary of this material is provided for Council's information. Stage 1 engagement is scheduled between March and April 2016, followed by a summary Background Research Report presented to Council in the fall.



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