



## Staff Report

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**Report To:** Owen Sound Downtown Improvement Area Board

**Report From:** Brent Fisher, Manager of Community Development & Marketing  
Viveca Gravel, Community Development Coordinator

**Meeting Date:** November 10, 2021

**Report Code:** CS-21-142

**Subject:** River District Website Update

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### Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report CS-21-142 respecting River District Website Update, the Owen Sound Downtown Improvement Area Board of Management:

1. Approves the staging site of the River District Website as presented by VS Marketing Group; and
2. Approves the launch of the River District Website to the public with a launch date of November 19, 2021.

### Highlights:

- A high priority of the River District Action Plan is to build a stand-alone content-based website.
- VS Marketing Group were selected to create a new website at a cost of \$20,724.00, excluding HST.
- On September 8, 2021, the prototype site was approved by the River District Board of Management.

## River District Action Plan Alignment:

### River District Promotion

- Strategic Objective: Attract People to the River District.
  - o Recommendation: Follow a strategic, multi-layered collaborative and bold promotions plan for the River District.
  - o Tactics
    - 1. Create a River District Consumer website
      - a. Register a River District Domain.
      - b. Design and Program a River District content-based consumer website.
      - c. Create and post content regarding River District business owners, events, and activities.

### Background:

In addition to the actions identified in the River District Action Plan, the joint operating agreement (as recently amended) between the city and the River District Board of Management provides direction with respect to the website:

#### 2.0 Administration

2.7 The City will work with the OSDIA Board to create, develop, and implement a website and work with the OSDIA Board to maintain the site and work with the OSDIA Board as approved to retain services for content development. The site will be developed to allow business owners to edit business profiles with approval of content by the City.

As approved by the [River District Board of Management on July 14, 2021](#), the River District website RFP was awarded to VS Marketing Group.

#### **RESOLUTION:** DIA-210714-004

*"THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-21-075 respecting Award of RFP-21-070 River District Website Design, the River District Board of Management awards the above noted request for proposal to VS Group at the price of \$20,724.00, excluding HST."*

The [River District Board of Management on September 8, 2021](#), approved the River District 'prototype' website presented by VS Marketing Group.

## **RESOLUTION:** DIA-210908-003

*"THAT in consideration of Staff Report CS-21-123 respecting River District Website & Communication Update, the Owen Sound Downtown Improvement Area Board of Management (OSDIA Board):*

- 1. Approves the prototype of the draft River District Website as presented by VS Marketing Group;*
- 2. Approves the River District website content development creation plan and allocates \$7,321.58 excluding HST to development of videos; and*
- 3. Approves the layout, content, and distribution schedule of the River District newsletter.*

The purpose of this report is to:

Present the staging site for the River District website for Board consideration and approval.

If approved by the Board with no changes, the website would go live November 19, 2021.

## **Analysis:**

### **River District Website**

The River District website staging site has been designed based on the approved prototype approved by the Board on September 8, 2021. The website is easy to navigate, provides a clean and updated look, aligns with the goals and objectives of the River District Action Plan and is in line with the River District Brand Style Guide.

The website is constructed around four pillars.

#### **1. River District Live:**

- River District News
- Upcoming events
- Socialize

#### **2. Explore the River District:**

- Explore by category from the business directory
- Explore by season from the business directory

### **3. Visit the River District**

- First-time Visitor
- Free Parking
- Getting Around
- Photo Gallery
- River District Reviews
- Visitor Map

### **4. About the River District**

- About the River District
- Business Directory
- Business Programs & Incentives
- History of the River District
- River District Board of Management

Informational and intuitive, the River District website will be a destination for locals and visitors.

As requested by the Board, the business directory can be edited and updated by businesses and approved by staff before any change is made live.

### **Financial Implications:**

Budget allocation in 2021 for the creation of a website and content was \$40,000, supported from the DIA Reserves.

The River District website RFP was awarded to VS Marketing Group at a total cost of \$20,724.00.

Of the \$40,000 allocated for website and content, \$28,045.58 is recommended, leaving a surplus of \$11,954.33.

### **Communication Strategy:**

This report to the River District Board of Management.

The River District Review Newsletter to all subscribers.

Social media posts for the public.

### **Attachments:**

None

**Consultation:**

Brent Fisher, Manager of Community Development & Marketing

**Recommended by:**

Viveca Gravel, Community Development Coordinator

**Reviewed by:**

Brent Fisher, Manager of Community Development & Marketing

Pam Coulter, Director of Community Services

**Submission approved by:**

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Viveca Gravel, Community Development Coordinator at [vgravel@owensound.ca](mailto:vgravel@owensound.ca) or 519-376-4440 ext. 1209.