



CAO OFFICE

TO: Council

DATE: July 26, 2022 **DIVISION:** N/A

FILE: N/A **APPLICATION:** N/A

SUBJECT: Chief Administrative Officer Report – Council Priorities

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In June of 2022, Council underwent a process to identify and agree on strategic priorities commencing in 2022. From that work, eight significant projects have been identified that reflect those strategic priorities and have been supported with sound project management practices and processes. This report gives Council the opportunity to reflect on and commit to the projects and outcomes and allocate sufficient resources to ensure their success.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:

Administration recommends that Council approve a budget adjustment of \$1,038,800 to advance the identified strategic priorities in accordance with Option #1.

BACKGROUND:

In early 2022, the newly elected County Council began the process of reviewing their strategic priorities and aligning their governance practices. A facilitator was hired to guide Council through this process and create alignment around short-term priorities.

Council was taken through a two-day facilitated process to review their current governance practices and processes, as well as create a focused priority list of activities to direct attention and resources towards.

Following this two-day process with Council, the County's management staff participated in a full-day workshop to begin putting administrative actions around these priorities defined by Council.

HISTORY:

In 2019, Council adopted the County's strategic plan. This plan laid out the County's vision, mission and values, as well as strategic themes of Service Excellence, Financial Health, and Responsible Growth. Within these themes there were eight strategic objectives defined as:

- Create a culture of customer service
- Enhance transparency and communication
- Expand community service delivery
- Embrace partnerships
- Strengthen our financial resiliency
- Increase awareness of the County's financial risk tolerance
- Ensure competitive engineering standards
- Guide the County's growth pattern



Taken together, these themes and objectives define the County's long-term goals for the community over the next 15 to 20 years.

As part of the facilitated workshop, Council confirmed that the three strategic themes above continued to be relevant and aspirational for the County. The identified priority areas fit within the following strategic themes:

Service Excellence

- Governance improvement
- Strategy refresh
- Service capacity review
- Organizational excellence strategy

Financial Health

- Long-term financial forecast
- "Soft" levies bylaw

Responsible Growth

- Solar farms on agricultural land strategy
- Area structure plan updates
- Economic development strategy

In addition to the direct actions and initiatives noted, Council discussed other areas of focus regarding advocacy efforts such as:

- CMRB relations
- First Nations relations

Additionally, other projects were identified as priorities for Council, but not necessarily with an immediate timeframe. These "next" items have been captured and will be incorporated into a broader strategic framework where Council can consider their priorities as a whole and determine where these items fall amongst the range of strategic issues facing the County. These "next" Items are:

- Asset management plan/policy
- Agriculture land use strategy
- MDP/LUB review
- Area structure plan updates
- Potable water strategy
- Utility model
- CMRB Growth Plan implications
- Virtual County Hall
- Recreation cost sharing
- Recreation business plans
- Development application analysis checklist
- Subtrade services review
- Advocacy strategy



To provide an appropriate amount of focus around these nine significant priorities, Administration has begun taking steps to introduce sufficient project management and strategy execution rigor to both give Council confidence that these initiatives are being actioned, as well as provide the internal resources to achieve the results expected by Council.

Project charters have been created for each of the nine priority projects that define key dimensions such as:

- Project objectives
- Project milestones and activities

Attachment A contains a summary of the charter information for each of the nine priority projects. Attachment B contains a schedule with the timing over which the projects are expected to occur based on the individual charter development.

The charter plans are based on the best information that we have at this time. Once approved, detailed project plans will be created to improve the accuracy of the estimates and the timing of completion of each project. Council will be updated of priority project status through regular reporting.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

Collectively, these nine identified priority projects are anticipated to consume 4,845 hours of staff time as well as \$1,345,000 required for external consulting support.

Administratively, the County has identified \$306,200 of internal reallocation opportunities to fund these initiatives. These reallocations have been sourced through identified salary lag (i.e. allocated salary budgets with unfilled positions) as well as through relevant approved consulting budgets.

In total, an additional \$1,038,800 of resources are required to be approved by Council.

The source of funds is recommended to be the Tax Stabilization Reserve.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

Becoming a strategy-focused organization requires more than simply adding tasks to a workplan. These nine priority projects will begin to build an internal culture of execution and ultimately work to support a strategy-focused organization. By creating the tools to allow County Administration to identify and align resources across the organization and focus their work towards a unified outcome, Council can begin to create an organization that is greater than 'the sum of its parts'.

A key outcome of the strategy refresh priority area will be to create a sharper focus on the outcomes of the Strategic Plan. To truly align resources and make impactful decisions, the County strategy will be further defined with clear metrics and realistic targets that will allow Council to view the progress of the strategy towards the desired end goal.



OPTIONS:

- Option #1: THAT Council approve a budget adjustment of \$1,038,800 in accordance with Attachment 'C' to advance the identified Strategic Priorities.
- Option #2: THAT Council revisit the identified Strategic Priorities and remove some initiatives to reduce the resources required.
- Option #3: THAT Council revisit the identified Strategic Priorities and expand the initiatives and increase the resources required.

Respectfully submitted,

"Dorian Wandzura"

Chief Administrative Officer

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ATTACHMENTS:

- ATTACHMENT 'A': Project Charter Summaries and Deliverables
ATTACHMENT 'B': Project Schedules
ATTACHMENT 'C': Budget Adjustments