

Youth Motion Proposal**Report Purpose**

To provide Council with a proposed response to the Youth Motion (2018/142) for consideration and approval.

Recommendation

THAT option 4, as set out in the June 19, 2018 Family and Community Services report, be approved.

Council History

April 24, 2018 – Council carries motion 2018/142 that Administration work with the Community Living Advisory Committee to prepare a report on how Strathcona County is currently serving the needs of resident youth, ages 14-29, and identifies potential gaps in these services; and that this report be provided to Council by the end of 2018

Strategic Plan Priority Areas

Economy: Involving youth in innovation and entrepreneurship enriches the overall living standard and economy of Strathcona County. Fostering youth inclusion in society fosters favourable conditions for youth entrepreneurship in terms of engagement, empowerment and equipping youth to create jobs, develop skills and resilience; and inspires other young people to do similar things.

Governance: n/a

Social: A strong community is inclusive and fosters a positive lifestyle for Strathcona County residents. Inclusion of youth through opportunities for meaningful connections and opportunities to be healthy and active contributes to a sense of belonging. Opportunities for youth engagement support youth to help shape the future of Strathcona County.

Culture: Promoting youth inclusion in activities that integrate the arts into community life contributes diverse perspectives and improves the quality of life and wellbeing of youth and the broader community.

Environment: n/a

Other Impacts

Policy: *2013-2030 Strategic Plan: Becoming Canada's Most Livable Community*, priority goal 1: build strong communities to support the diverse needs of residents and goal 7: provide opportunities for public engagement and communication.

Social Framework: A platform to unlock the ingenuity of the community, May 2017

Legislative/Legal: n/a

Interdepartmental: Family and Community Services (FCS) will work with Recreation, Parks and Culture

Summary

The importance of youth inclusion in society cannot be overstated. Anecdotal evidence suggests that youth in Strathcona County may not be highly engaged in the community, and may experience affordability and housing challenges. The April 24, 2018 Council motion provides an opportunity to examine the needs and assets of youth in Strathcona County.

According to the 2016 Federal Census, the youth categories in Strathcona County within the age range of 15 to 29 made up 18.1% (17,675) of the population of Strathcona County. This compares with 19% (17,590) in the 2011 Federal Census. About two out of ten

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residents in Strathcona County are between the ages of 15 to 29. The percentage of youth demographic in Strathcona County is similar to the percentage in Edmonton, St. Albert, and Alberta overall. The age range categories reported here are the Federal Census categories that most closely represent the youth age range in which Council has expressed interest.

Foundational to this work is an understanding that youth outcomes are complex and are impacted by many factors, one of which is access to services. Brain science has shown the importance of early childhood experience in influencing youth/young adult behaviour. Research evidence shows that trusting relationships with caring, encouraging and competent adults help youth to positively meet challenges and manage adversities. There is increasing evidence that experiences that provide constructive engagement in their family and community, that encourage youth voice and personal responsibility, and that promote the development of self-reflection and self-confidence all contribute to building youth/young adults' ability to manage stress and function well when faced with challenges.

Key assumptions of this work are that:

- Positive youth outcomes are influenced by many factors of which services are but one.
- The focus is to understand whether there is a problem and the nature and root contributors of the problem; it will not include recommendations for solutions.
- It will inform the mandate of the new Council committee to be established to provide strategic advice to Council on youth.
- Over the summer, Youth Council will explore opportunities to increase youth engagement and prototype strategies that bring youth together. This will also contribute insights to inform the needs and assets exploration.
- In order to complete this work, additional in-year funds are required.

It is proposed that the Needs and Assets Assessment scope of work include the following:

1. Environmental scan to include Strathcona County specific data and relevant comparator community data as well as a high level literature scan pointing to root contributors to youth experiencing problems and challenges finding their way
2. Services audit to include current services and supports for youth/young adults, and current opportunities for youth/young adults in Strathcona County
3. Engagement to include focus groups to test and make sense of the information that has been gathered, conduct a root cause analysis for issues youth are experiencing, and assess youth opportunities and assets in Strathcona County
4. Final report to include an analysis of what was learned through the data, services audit and focus groups and prepare a final report and presentation to present to Council.

The Council motion also directs Administration to work with the Community Living Advisory Council (CLAC). Administration discussed this with CLAC at its May 10, 2018 meeting where it was suggested that CLAC work with Administration on vendor selection (pending approval by Council), contributing to focus group work, and serving as a sounding board to test information gathered and review the final report and presentation to Council.

Given the short timeframe for this work, the broad scope of the assignment, and the limited capacity of administration to carry out this work, it is proposed that an external vendor be engaged to complete this Needs and Assets Assessment. Options for this are as follows:

Option	Contracting Cost Range	Timeline	Contract Deliverables
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Option	Contracting Cost Range	Timeline	Contract Deliverables
1.	\$10,000 - \$20,000	Dec 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existing census and FCS program data - Limited opportunity to examine two distinct age cohorts (i.e. 14-18; 19-29) - Superficial environmental scan with limited comparator data and limited research reports - Superficial services audit limited to current services and supports provided by FCS - No opportunity for engagement - Little understanding of current reality
2.	\$20,000 - \$50,000	Mar 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existing census and all Strathcona County program data - Limited opportunity to examine two distinct age cohorts (i.e. 14-18; 19-29) - Limited environmental scan with some Alberta comparator data and some review of research - Limited services audit would include services and supports and opportunities provided by Strathcona County departments and other social services organizations in Strathcona County - Limited engagement, some focus groups to test and make sense of information gathered - Surface level understanding of current reality
3.	\$20,000 - \$50,000	Mar 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Potential to examine data for a narrower age cohort (i.e. 14-18) in more depth including Strathcona County data, census data, other community services, education, volunteerism and utilization of services by Strathcona County youth in Edmonton such as the Youth Empowerment and Support Services (YESS) Emergency Shelter - Deeper environmental scan including comparator data from similar size communities, Alberta, and more in depth review of research to understand root contributors to youth experiencing problems - More detailed services audit exploring services and opportunities provided not only by Strathcona County but other Strathcona County community organizations, faith community, education system, and potentially identifying the degree to which Strathcona County youth/young adults access services and supports in Edmonton - Greater engagement including interviews, focus groups, workshops and other

Option	Contracting Cost Range	Timeline	Contract Deliverables
			mechanisms to engage youth in testing the information that has been gathered and dig deeper to understand root causes of problems being experienced by youth - Deeper understanding of current reality
4.	\$50,000 - \$100,000	May 2019	- Deliverables would be the same as in option 3 above for both age cohorts (i.e. 14-18 and 19-29) providing a deeper understanding of current realities for youth and young adults in Strathcona County - The services and opportunities audit would necessarily be more extensive and cover a broader range of programs and services; as youth age out of youth services they access adult programs and services - More engagement may also be required considering the issues would be quite different for 14-18 year olds and 19-29 year olds

Option 4 is recommended:

- While narrowing the scope to the 14-18 year old age cohort could provide an in depth picture of youth needs and assets in Strathcona County, it would not help to understand the realities of young adults aged 19-29 in Strathcona County.
- Given the scope of the topic of youth needs and assets in the 14-29 year age cohort, it is proposed that expenditure in the range of \$50,000 to \$100,000 be approved from R4 Municipal Project Reserve with work to be completed by end of May 2019.
- This will provide a more in-depth analysis and more meaningful and relevant information to guide future directions related to youth and young adult opportunities in Strathcona County.

Communication Plan

A communication plan will be developed pending approval of expenditure. Once the scope of the project is confirmed, the stakeholders and communication tactics can be identified.

Enclosure

- 1 Youth Motion presentation