

Revisions to Policy GOV-002-036 Flag and Lighting Protocol**Report Purpose**

To seek Council approval on revisions to policy GOV-002-036 Flag and Lighting Protocol that include installing the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations and the Métis Nation of Alberta flags at key locations in Strathcona County.

Recommendation

THAT the addition of two flagpoles for the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations and the Métis Nation of Alberta flags in Council Chambers, be approved; and

THAT the addition of two flagpoles for the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations and the Métis Nation of Alberta flags at the County Hall Cenotaph park, be approved; and

THAT amendments to policy GOV-002-036 Flag and Lighting Protocol, as set out in Enclosure 2 of the April 27, 2021 Facility Services report, be approved.

Our Prioritized Strategic Goals

Goal 1 - Build strong communities to support the diverse needs of residents

Goal 5 - Foster collaboration through regional, community and governmental partnerships

Report

Administration recommends amending policy GOV-002-036 Flag and Lighting Protocol to add the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations and the Métis Nation of Alberta flags to key locations in Strathcona County, namely Council Chambers and County Hall Cenotaph park. Flying these flags would be in the spirit of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations and aligns with Strathcona County's values and mission.

The *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* (TRC) report outlined ninety-four recommendations in the spirit of reconciliation, including ones in which municipalities can move forward. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities highlighted Calls to Action applying to municipalities and published *Pathways to Reconciliation: Cities respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action*, which outlines three pathways for municipal governments to act. Pathway 1 is particularly relevant to Strathcona County, which can fit well with our corporate vision, mission and values:

- Pathway 1 – Fostering Communities, Alliances and Hope captures actions that demonstrate municipal government commitment to reconciliation. These build bridges with local Indigenous leadership and strengthen decision-making to better incorporate reconciliation into local government policies and practice.

In a step towards reconciliation, Council passed policy GOV-001-036 Acknowledgement of Treaty Six in 2017 that honours the land encompassed in the historical treaties that were signed to create Canada. Strathcona County is located on many nations' traditional lands, including the Blackfoot, Cree, Dene Gros Ventres, Nakota Sioux, and Saulteaux. The County also includes lands where the Métis people settled during the fur trade in the 1800s. Many of these peoples lost their land due to the British and Canadian governments' unfair policies and the practices of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Considering this and the spirit of the findings of the TRC, Strathcona County has the opportunity to acknowledge its history by permanently flying the flags that represent Indigenous peoples – The Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations flag and the flag of the Métis Nation of Alberta. Flying the flags representing Indigenous nations is not unprecedented in the region - Edmonton permanently raised the flags in 2017, and Devon began flying them in 2020.

In 2019 Council passed GOV-002-040 Diversity and Inclusion Policy (Enclosure 3), which provides a framework for the County to integrate diversity and inclusion values. Specifically, the justification for these changes to the Flag and Lighting Protocol are the Diversity and Inclusion Policy Guidelines 1 and 4:

1. Planning, policies, and evaluation – Create and implement municipal programs and services that reflect a commitment to Diversity and Inclusion, with measurable and achievable strategic outcomes.
4. Community partnerships – Develop and maintain positive and respectful internal and external partnerships that contribute to inclusive decision-making. Work in collaboration with partners to be part of the community.

The County prides itself on being a welcoming place to live and work, and we recognize our uniqueness as a specialized municipality. Striving to be a welcoming community for people of all walks of life, the County includes approximately 4,000 Indigenous residents. We also want to welcome those who identify as Indigenous from surrounding communities. Growing our relationship with local Indigenous peoples, the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations, and the Métis Nation of Alberta, will contribute to the County being the most livable community in Canada for everyone.

At a minimum, Administration recommends two locations of significance for the two flags: Council Chambers and the County Hall Cenotaph park. Further research may determine additional locations in the future. This work is planned to be completed in phases.

Phase 1: Review and revise GOV-002-036 Flag and Lighting Protocol

Phase 2: Raise two flags in Council Chambers in spring 2021;
Create a business case for Budget 2022 for the overall redevelopment of the County Hall Cenotaph park, which would include two additional flag poles;

Phase 3: If approved, overall redevelopment of the County Hall Cenotaph park would occur in 2022 – 2024.

A red-line version of the revised policy is provided in Enclosure 1. In addition to amendments relative to the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations and the Métis Nation of Alberta flags, there are also a number of housekeeping updates. This policy will correspond with proposed updates to the County's current policy GOV-001-036 Acknowledgement of Treaty Six, which is expected to be provided to Council for consideration in June 2021. Flying the flags would show Strathcona County is taking steps to implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations and the Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

Council and Committee History

Feb. 6, 2018 GOV-002-036 Flag and Lighting Protocol was approved by Council

Other Impacts

Policy: GOV-002-036 Flag and Lighting Protocol Policy; GOV-002-040 Diversity and Inclusion Policy; and GOV-001-036 Treaty Six Acknowledgement Policy

Legislative/Legal: Revision update of the policy.

Interdepartmental: Intergovernmental Affairs; Facility Services; Legislative and Legal Services

Master Plan/Framework: n/a

Communication Plan

All County policies are published on the County's public website.

Enclosures

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| 1 | Suggested revisions to Policy GOV-002-036 Flag and Lighting Protocol |
| 2 | Policy GOV-002-036 Flag and Lighting Protocol – Proposed |
| 3 | Policy GOV-002-040 Diversity and Inclusion |