

Priorities Committee Meeting_Nov22_2016

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE AND UPDATE

Community Halls Sustainability Strategy Update

Report Purpose

To provide the Priorities Committee with an update and proposed recommendations from Administration on the Community Hall Sustainability strategy.

Council History

July 14, 2015 – Council directed administration to bring forward a report on the utilization and overall physical condition of Community Halls and Senior Centres after a public consultation has been completed with the community and licensed hall operators.

May 17, 2016 – Council requested an update on the public consultation and community hall condition assessments completed in Q1 of 2016.

Strategic Plan Priority Areas

Economy: Community halls support the communities in which they reside including rural agriculture business, farmers markets and small business.

Governance: n/a

Social: The community associations provide a place for connectedness and collaboration for residents. The community hall network supports program delivery for community development.

Culture: Community halls support our history and the rural lifestyle. They are places where our residents gather for support and to participate in social and cultural pursuits.

Environment: Community hall associations provide a place for training and collaboration on issues relating to our environment.

Other Impacts

Policy: n/a

Legislative/Legal: n/a

Interdepartmental: The community hall associations are supported by Facility Services, Family and Community Services, Information and Technology Services, Recreation Parks and Culture, Transportation and Agriculture Services and other departments throughout the year. The community halls provide a venue for the delivery of services including the Strathcona County Public Library, Family and Community Services and various community based programs.

Summary

The community halls and senior centers within Strathcona County are important community hubs. Over time their various associations have experienced challenges with managing the infrastructure costs, attracting new board members and the needed volunteers to support community programs.

To gain a better understanding of the challenges facing the community hall associations, a public engagement process was undertaken in early 2016 where Calder Bateman Communications was used to engage the community hall associations, their users and the general public through a series of meetings, surveys and follow up group sessions.

Through this engagement process, a "What We Heard" report was developed by Calder Bateman Communications that identified the challenges and opportunities that affect the continued sustainability of these important community groups and the County owned facility assets.

Using the findings from the "What We Heard" report including the suggestions for improvement made by the community hall associations, Administration has developed a series of proposed service changes to address the key themes of Governance and Community Development, Communications and Facility Asset Management that emerged from the public consultation. In review of these themes, Administration will implement a support program for the community hall associations by providing the following:

A. Governance and Community Development

Family and Community Services will provide training through their existing programs and support for the community associations in developing board governance and aid objective setting for programs and community development. Their services will be delivered based on community hall association interest and needs. The Information and Volunteer Centre will work with Family and Community Services to support program delivery as well as assisting the community hall associations with program planning, grant identification and applications and the development of an online web site for the sharing of best practise information between the community hall associations.

B. Communications

Transportation and Agriculture Services will become a single point of contact for the associations through the rural contact offices where all requests made by the associations can be received, tracked and forwarded to the appropriate department to address concerns and respond accordingly. Through follow up sessions, the contact offices will verify that the information or services received are timely and are of benefit.

Information Technology Services will continue to install and maintain wireless internet access to each community hall to support programs and communications.

C. Facility Asset Management

Facility Services will be responsible to provide all building specific maintenance services and facility life cycle projects. In order to do this, a budget funding request will be made through the 2017 annual budget approval process. The funding request will be for additional resources to provide the same level of maintenance services provided to other County owned public facilities.

Facility lifecycle funding for the community halls will also align with all other facility lifecycle projects. The funding for the required work for the community halls and senior centers will be part of the annual facility lifecycle program, where funding is approved annually to support the ongoing renewal of facility elements.

Community hall and senior centre replacement or expansion will be addressed through short and long range facility planning where the community halls will be reviewed as to their overall condition and community use. Commencing in 2017, a review of the Josephburg Community Hall and senior centre will be undertaken as part of the Recreation Parks and Culture's Open Space and Facilities Recreation Strategy (OSFRS) update for the Moyer Recreation Centre.

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Director(s): Bree Claude, Director Family and Community Services, David Churchill Director, Transportation and Agriculture Services, Diehl Townsley Director, Facility Services, Russ Avery, Information and Technology Services, Russ Pawlyk, Director, Recreation Parks and Culture

Associate Commissioner: Lori Cooper, Associate Commissioner Corporate Services, Kevin Glebe, Associate Commissioner, Infrastructure and Planning, Gord Johnston, Associate Commissioner, Community Services

Lead Department: Facility Services

D. Oversight Committee

To ensure the service and support programs are meeting the needs of the community hall associations, a review will be conducted every six months by an oversight committee comprising of the directors from Family and Community Services, Transportation and Agriculture Services, Facility Services and Recreation, Parks and Culture. Input from the community hall associations will be gathered through routine meetings, tracking of service requests and any concerns brought forward by the associations. The oversight committee will review the program and make adjustments where necessary to provide the required level of support. Updates to Council will be made during a priorities committee meeting where the program's successes and challenges will be presented.

Communication Plan

Transportation and Agriculture Services will provide formal communication of the available support programs and how to access these services by the community hall associations through their rural contact offices.

Enclosure

- 1 Community Hall Sustainability Strategy (Doc: 9386985)