



## AGENDA ITEM

### Policy RC(10) Operating Support of Historical, Cultural, Tourism & Visitor Information Facilities & Services 2020 Applications

November 28, 2019

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#### BACKGROUND

Policy RC(10) was developed and approved by Council in early 2013 as a means of providing financial support to community organizations that preserve and promote the history and heritage of our area as well as promote tourism through provision of information regarding area attractions, lodging, maps and other items relevant to tourism. There are currently seven organizations receiving funding under this program.

The 2020 Policy RC(10) applications and a copy of the policy are attached. Action requested of Council regarding this matter is consideration of approval of the funding applications.

#### ANALYSIS

The most recent provincial budget for 2019-2020 as well as its 3-year operating plan has included reductions to funding sources used by a number of groups applying for funding. Funding from the Alberta Museum Association, Community Initiatives Program (CIP) and the Summer Temporary Employment Program will be reduced or eliminated in the coming months. The changes could increase the demand for other funding such as the Federal summer student program and casino funding. The exact implications of the Provincial budget are not completely known yet. The funding requests from the applicants do not reflect these changes.

#### **2020 Applications:**

##### **Mirror and District Museum Association**

- 2020 Funding Request - \$17,700
- 2019 Funding Request - \$19,000
- Lacombe County has exempted the Mirror Museum from property taxes and provides utilities services at a 50% reduced rate
- Support Provided by Other Municipalities - not applicable
- Staff Comments

- The Board did not request funding for 2018 as they indicated that they would have sufficient funds for 2018. The Board has used casino proceeds in the past to fund operations. The 2020 request is less than the amount requested in 2019.
- The Association operates a museum and provides tourist information but is not a registered Visitor Information Centre.

**Alix Wagon Wheel Museum Association**

- 2020 Funding Request - \$4,300
- 2019 Funding Received - \$3,800
- Support Provided by Village of Alix - \$2,500 in cash funding and an exemption on their property taxes (approx. \$1,800)
- Staff Comments
  - The organization satisfies policy requirements
  - The Association owns and operates the museum
  - The Association uses casino funds to support its operations
  - The Association is a member of the Alberta Museums Association, the Alberta Visitor Information Providers Program, and Lacombe Regional Tourism
  - The increase requested from the County matches the increase received from the Village of Alix in 2019.

**Bentley Museum Society**

- 2020 Funding Request - \$10,000
- 2019 Funding Received - \$10,000
- Support Provided by Town of Bentley - \$12,178 comprised of property tax exemption of \$4,200, waiver of utility fees of \$1,000, insurance of \$1,000 and \$5,978 for museum and tourism staff (\$11,545 in 2019).
- Staff Comments
  - The organization satisfies policy requirements
  - Society provides tourism information for area in conjunction with Town.
  - The Society operates three buildings in the Town of Bentley

**Blackfalds & Area Historical Society**

- 2020 Funding Request - \$10,000
- 2019 Funding Received - \$10,000
- Support Provided by Town of Blackfalds - the Blackfalds & Area Historical Society is housed in the Blackfalds Library Building. The Town of Blackfalds does not charge rent, utilities or property taxes. The Town also provides the Society with a \$17,000 annual grant (\$17,000 was also provided in 2019)
- Staff Comments
  - The organization satisfies policy requirements



### **Lacombe & District Chamber of Commerce (Visitor Information Centre)**

- 2020 Funding Request - \$0
- 2019 Funding Received - \$12,966
- Support Provided by City of Lacombe - \$13,000 in 2019 (\$0 in 2020)
- Staff Comments
  - The City has decided to concentrate Visitor Information Centre resources at the Flat Iron Building (Lacombe Interpretive Center).
  - The Chamber has decided to withdraw the service and is no longer seeking funding from the County.

### **Lacombe & District Historical Society**

- 2020 Funding Request - \$50,000
- 2019 Funding Received - \$34,724
- Support Provided by City of Lacombe - \$42,500 in 2019 (\$48,000 recommended by staff in 2020).
- Staff Comments
  - The organization satisfies policy requirements
  - The Society operates three museums in Lacombe being the Michener House Museum, the Flatiron Museum and the Blacksmith Shop
  - The City increased its funding in 2018 from \$32,500 to \$42,500 and now exceeds the 50% funding requirement. The City's Administration is recommending a further increase of \$5,500 for 2020 versus a request of \$7,500).

### **Lacombe Regional Tourism & Marketing Association**

- 2020 Funding Request - \$44,756
- 2019 Funding Received - \$44,756
- Support Provided by City of Lacombe in 2019 - \$55,960 (\$50,960 in operating funding as well as an additional \$5,000 for the Culture and Harvest Festival)
- Staff Comments
  - The organization satisfies policy requirements as it promotes tourism within the City and County.
  - The organization also provides visitor information services
  - The Association's staff work out of the Flatiron Building

In addition to providing operational funding to the Lacombe Regional Tourism and Marketing Association and the Lacombe & District Historical Society, the City



of Lacombe and Lacombe County cost-share the operation (rent, utilities, insurance, telephone/fax, etc.) of the Flatiron Building on a 50/50 basis.

The Lacombe Regional Tourism and Marketing Association staff work out of the Flatiron Building. As well, a number of Lacombe & District Historical Society's exhibits are on display at the Flatiron Building. The total projected 2020 costs of the Flatiron Building are \$32,00 with the County's share being \$16,000, a decrease of 1.8% from 2019.

## ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve the applications as presented: a \$1,300 decrease for organizations located in the County and a \$2,810 increase for organizations located within urban municipalities for a total increase of \$1,510 compared to 2019.

	2019 Approved	2020 Request	2019/2020 \$ Variance	2019/2020 % Variance
Mirror & District Museum Assoc.	\$19,000.00	\$17,700.00	-\$1,300.00	n/a
Alix Wagon Wheel Museum	\$3,800.00	\$4,300.00	\$500.00	13.16%
Bentley Museum Society	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Blackfalds & Area Historical Society	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Lacombe & District Chamber of Commerce	\$12,966.00	\$0.00	-\$12,966.00	-100.00%
Lacombe & District Historical Society	\$34,724.00	\$50,000.00	\$15,276.00	43.99%
Lacombe Regional Tourism & Marketing Assoc.	\$44,756.00	\$44,756.00	\$0.00	0.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$135,246.00</b>	<b>\$136,756.00</b>	<b>\$1,510.00</b>	<b>1.12%</b>

2. For those applications requesting increases, approve funding at 2019 levels plus a 1.25% COLA increase except for those requesting the same funding as 2019, or less. This would result in the following: \$1,300 decrease for county-based organizations as requested and a \$12,484 decrease for urban based organizations from 2019 for a total decrease of \$13,784 compared to 2019.

	2019 Approved	2020 Request	2020 Recommendation	2019 Approved/ 2020 Variance	2019/2020 % Variance
Mirror & District Museum Assoc.	\$19,000.00	\$17,700.00	\$17,700.00	-\$1,300.00	-6.84%
Alix Wagon Wheel Museum	\$3,800.00	\$4,300.00	\$3,847.50	\$47.50	1.25%
Bentley Museum Society	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Blackfalds & Area Historical Society	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Lacombe & District Chamber of Commerce	\$12,966.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	-\$12,966.00	-100.00%
Lacombe & District Historical Society	\$34,724.00	\$50,000.00	\$35,158.05	\$434.05	1.25%
Lacombe Regional Tourism & Marketing Assoc.	\$44,756.00	\$44,756.00	\$44,756.00	\$0.00	0.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$135,246.00</b>	<b>\$136,756.00</b>	<b>\$121,461.55</b>	<b>-\$13,784.45</b>	<b>-10.19%</b>



3. Increase funding for those organizations who have received additional funding from the urban municipality. This would result in the following: \$1,300 decrease for county-based organizations as requested and a \$6,966 decrease for urban based organizations from 2019 for a total decrease of \$8,266 compared to 2019.

	2019 Approved	2020 Request	2020 Recommended	2019 Approved/ 2020 Recommended	2019/2020 % Variance
Mirror & District Museum Assoc.	\$19,000.00	\$17,700.00	\$17,700.00	-\$1,300.00	-6.84%
Alix Wagon Wheel Museum	\$3,800.00	\$4,300.00	\$4,300.00	\$500.00	13.16%
Bentley Museum Society	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Blackfalds & Area Historical Society	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Lacombe & District Chamber of Commerce	\$12,966.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	-\$12,966.00	-100.00%
Lacombe & District Historical Society	\$34,724.00	\$50,000.00	\$40,224.00	\$5,500.00	15.84%
Lacombe Regional Tourism & Marketing Assoc.	\$44,756.00	\$44,756.00	\$44,756.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Total	\$135,246.00	\$136,756.00	\$126,980.00	-\$8,266.00	-6.11%

4. Approve the applications in amounts as determined by Council.

Administration recommends option 2 as the option is consistent with past practices of Council is consistent with previous year's funding.

## BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

The County's 2020 operating budget includes an allowance for funding provided pursuant to Policy RC(10).

## LEGISLATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

- Lacombe County Policy RC(10) - Operating Support of Historical, Cultural, Tourism & Visitor Information Facilities and Services provides the direction on eligibility for funding.
- Section 3 of the Municipal Government Act (MGA) states the purposes of a municipality are:
  - to provide good government,
  - to provide services, facilities or other things that, in the opinion of Council, are necessary or desirable for all or part of the municipality, and
  - to develop and maintain safe and viable communities
- Section 180(1) of the MGA states that Council may act only by resolution or bylaw.



- Section 248(1)(a) of the MGA states that a municipality may only make an expenditure that is included in an operating budget, interim operating budget or capital budget unless otherwise authorized by Council.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

As the Community group has already undertaken a consultation process with its other stakeholders, including other funding groups, the County's public engagement will be limited to informing the public of Council's decision on this matter as well as communicating Council's decision to the applicants.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN**

The following elements of the County's Strategic Plan are relevant to this issue:

Our Vision: "An attractive, balanced and progressive community".

Our Mission: "To build a safe and vibrant community through leadership, innovation and the development of healthy relationships".

Key Principles: 1) "Fair and Objective in our decisions and in how we treat individuals", and 2) "Accountability for our decisions and for our actions".

Recreation Strategy: A. Pursue more recreational opportunities

Key Success Measures:

- Sustainability: "Current services are maintainable and provide benefits for the future, while minimizing negative impacts on the community",
- Stakeholder Satisfaction: "Healthy relationships with neighbouring municipalities, communities and our citizens."



**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council approve the 2019 Policy RC(10) funding applications as follows (Alternative 2)

	Recommended
	1.25% Maximum Increase
Mirror & District Museum Assoc.	\$17,700.00
Alix Wagon Wheel Museum	\$3,847.50
Bentley Museum Society	\$10,000.00
Blackfalds & Area Historical Society	\$10,000.00
Lacombe & District Chamber of Commerce	\$0.00
Lacombe & District Historical Society	\$35,158.05
Lacombe Regional Tourism & Marketing Assoc.	\$44,756.00
Total	\$121,461.55

**PREPARED BY: Michael Minchin, Director of Corporate Services**

**REVIEWED BY: Tim Timmons, County Manager**


