



AGENDA ITEM

Policy RC(10) Operating Support of Historical, Cultural, Tourism & Visitor Information Facilities & Services 2022 Applications

November 30, 2021

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 six organizations receiving funding under this program.

The 2022 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 COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on the operations of most applicants in 2020 and again in 2021. Despite this level of uncertainty, most applicants have proposed no change to their funding for 2022.

2021 Applications:

Mirror and District Museum Association

- 2022 Funding Request - \$16,500
- 2021 Funding Approved - \$16,500
- 2021 Funding Request - \$16,500
- 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
 - Funding request is the same as 2021. Group's requests vary depending on plan for upcoming year.
 - The Association operates a museum and provides tourist information but is not a registered Visitor Information Centre.

Alix Wagon Wheel Museum Association

- 2022 Funding Request - \$4,300
- 2021 Funding Received - \$3,847
- 2021 Funding Request - \$4,300
- 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 would match the increase received from the Village of Alix in 2020 and 2021.

Bentley Museum Society

- 2022 Funding Request - \$10,000
- 2021 Funding Received - \$10,000
- 2021 Funding Request - \$10,000
- Support Provided by Town of Bentley (proposed) - \$14,624 comprised of property tax exemption of \$4,200, waiver of utility fees of \$1,000, insurance of \$1,000 and \$2,855 for museum and tourism staff and \$5,569 for summer jobs program (\$12,454 in 2021).
- 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

- 2022 Funding Request - \$10,000
- 2021 Funding Received - \$10,000
- 2021 Funding Request - \$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 \$17,250 annual grant (\$17,255 was provided in 2021)
- Staff Comments
 - The organization satisfies policy requirements

Lacombe & District Historical Society

- 2022 Funding Request - \$41,900
- 2021 Funding Received - \$35,158



- 2021 Funding Request - \$35,158
- Support Provided by City of Lacombe - \$48,000 in 2021 (\$55,900 requested for 2022).
- 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 Society's Flatiron Museum does provide tourism information on a as needed basis.
 - The City increased its funding in 2018 from \$32,500 to \$42,500 and now exceeds the 50% funding requirement. The City granted a further \$7,500 in 2020 to the current \$48,000.

Lacombe Regional Tourism & Marketing Association

- 2022 Funding Request - \$61,556
- 2021 Funding Received - \$44,756
- 2021 Funding Request - \$44,756
- Support Provided by City of Lacombe in 2021 - \$55,960 (\$50,960 in operating funding as well as an additional \$5,000 for the Culture and Harvest Festival). The group is seeking \$61,556 from the City in 2022.
- Staff Comments
 - The organization satisfies policy requirements as it promotes tourism within the City and County.

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 annual cost for the Flatiron Building has typically been \$32,000 with the County's share being \$16,000. In 2021, Regional Tourism vacated their space in the building

ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve the applications as presented: a \$23,994.45 increase for organizations located within urban municipalities for a total increase of \$23,994.45 compared to 2021.



Policy RC(10) Funding Requests				
	2021 Approved	2022 Request	2021/2022 \$ Variance	2021/2022 % Variance
Mirror & District Museum Assoc.	\$16,500.00	\$16,500.00	\$0.00	n/a
Alix Wagon Wheel Museum	\$3,847.50	\$4,300.00	\$452.50	11.76%
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 Historical Society	\$35,158.05	\$41,900.00	\$6,741.95	19.18%
Lacombe Regional Tourism & Marketing Assoc.	\$44,756.00	\$61,556.00	\$16,800.00	37.54%
Total	\$120,261.55	\$144,256.00	\$23,994.45	19.95%

The County has not kept pace with funding from urban partners over the last several years. The proposed increases would move the County further towards the contributions made by the corresponding municipality. The Lacombe Regional Tourism group highlighted the additional work taking place in the County and demonstrated that County businesses are now on equal footing with City businesses in terms of the group's time and effort.

2. Cap funding increases at the 2.75% approved by Council for recreation and community grants. This is consistent with proposed funding changes to other recreation and cultural facilities for 2022.

Policy RC(10) Funding Requests					
	2021 Approved	2022 Request	2022 @2.75% Increase	2021/2022 \$ Variance	2021/2022 % Variance
Mirror & District Museum Assoc.	\$16,500.00	\$16,500.00	\$16,500.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Alix Wagon Wheel Museum	\$3,847.50	\$4,300.00	\$3,953.31	\$105.81	2.75%
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 Historical Society	\$35,158.05	\$41,900.00	\$36,124.90	\$966.85	2.75%
Lacombe Regional Tourism & Marketing Assoc.	\$44,756.00	\$61,556.00	\$45,986.79	\$1,230.79	2.75%
Total	\$120,261.55	\$144,256.00	\$122,564.99	\$2,303.44	1.92%

3. Approve funding at 2021 levels for all applicants.

Policy RC(10) Funding Requests					
	2021 Approved	2022 Request	2022 - No Change	2021/2022 \$ Variance	2021/2022 % Variance
Mirror & District Museum Assoc.	\$16,500.00	\$16,500.00	\$16,500.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Alix Wagon Wheel Museum	\$3,847.50	\$4,300.00	\$3,847.50	\$0.00	0.00%
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 Historical Society	\$35,158.05	\$41,900.00	\$35,158.05	\$0.00	0.00%
Lacombe Regional Tourism & Marketing Assoc.	\$44,756.00	\$61,556.00	\$44,756.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Total	\$120,261.55	\$144,256.00	\$120,261.55	\$0.00	0.00%



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

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

The County's 2022 operating budget includes an allowance for funding provided pursuant to Policy RC(10). Administration has increased funding in the 2022 budget to meet the additional requests put forward by the applicants.

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.



RECOMMENDATION

That Council approve the 2022 Policy RC(10) funding applications as follows (Alternative 1):

<u>Policy RC(10) Funding Requests</u>	
	Recommended
	With Top Up Funding
Mirror & District Museum Assoc.	\$16,500.00
Alix Wagon Wheel Museum	\$4,300.00
Bentley Museum Society	\$10,000.00
Blackfalds & Area Historical Society	\$10,000.00
Lacombe & District Historical Society	\$41,900.00
Lacombe Regional Tourism & Marketing Assoc.	\$61,556.00
Total	\$144,256.00

PREPARED BY: Michael Minchin, Director of Corporate Services

REVIEWED BY: Tim Timmons, County Manager