



INFORMATION ONLY COUNCIL REPORT
Office of the CAO
For the April 7, 2020 Council Meeting

DATE: April 3, 2020
TO: Mayor and Council
FROM: Paul Gipps, CAO
RE: CAO COVID-19 Status Update

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

At the March 24, 2020 regular Council meeting, Council passed the following resolution: “THAT in recognition of the hardships, financial and otherwise, created by COVID-19, Council direct staff to explore measures to help support local residents and businesses in the immediate future and the longer term, with a report coming back to Council.”

In the last 2 weeks, the Federal and Provincial Governments have introduced significant programs related to financial support for businesses and individuals that are impacted by COVID-19. The Province has also introduced changes to the way local government conducts its business and is looking at additional changes to our taxation laws that govern us. We anticipate that these additional changes will be announced in the coming days or within the next week. Since the last Council meeting on March 24, staff has identified a number of areas where financial relief could be given to the community and we are preparing those options for Council in the weeks ahead. Listed below are strategic areas we are working on to assist with the hardship of COVID-19 as it relates to city business

Staff are looking at reducing the financial burden through cost savings, penalty deferrals and tax reductions. The 5-Year Financial Plan Water Rates Bylaw will be circulated at the next regular Council meeting on April 7, 2020, as staff would like to ensure that announcements by the Province between when our April 7 Council Agenda is posted and the Report to Council on April 7 doesn't impact the options we are preparing for Council's consideration.

The full impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is unknown and continues to change daily, therefore staff recommends remaining vigilant and flexible in the timing and recommendations to Council. At this time, staff has slowed some of the more complex major projects as we change our focus to maintain our core services where we can support the community strategize how to lessen the impact this current situation is putting our community through and look forward to what is next. We will continue to move forward with priority projects such as the Rose Valley Water Treatment Plant, Glenrosa Road upgrades, health and social housing files, and continuing to move forward some of our long overdue infrastructure files.

The strategy staff are working on is focused on three key areas:

- 1 - 3 months; What we can do immediately.
 - a. This strategy is focused on delivering services where we can maintain Provincial and Federal guidelines and orders.
 - b. Planning for essential services, including potential flooding and wildfire.
 - c. Reducing costs and identifying areas to defer financial impacts.
 - d. Supporting the residents and implementing new communication conduits.
 - e. Working with the Province to identify legislative changes to support the Community; Tax penalty deferrals, support for residents and local businesses.
 - f. Support local economic opportunities, such as ensuring development services continues and supporting Greater Westside businesses sustainability efforts.

- 2 - 4-6 months; What is coming.
 - a. This strategy is about looking forward and identifying areas to return services to the public where possible.
 - b. Work with local business to help stabilize and restart economic recovery strategies that integrate with regional efforts.
 - c. Continued local Greater Westside business support initiatives that fosters local-to-regional awareness and sustainability, including a Spotlight On Business initiative with sub-business campaigns such as "It's Time For Take-out."
 - d. Launching shelf ready projects that can qualify for provincial and federal funding to support local economic opportunities.

- 3 - Beyond 6 months; Supporting and restarting the economy and returning services to anticipated levels.
 - a. Work with the Province and Federal governments to roll out stimulus packages.
 - b. Opening recreation and expanding access to parks and facilities.
 - c. Continue to advance Council Priorities and day-to-day operations.

These are very uncertain times and the course we are on is changing daily during COVID-19. Staff will remain as flexible as we understand that the services we currently provide, how they are provided and the extent they are provided are subject to change on a moments notice. Staff remain at Council and the public's service and we are adapting our processes to help lessen the hardship to our community. More information about those measures will be brought forward to Council in stages beginning with the final recommendations that will be presented at the April 7, 2020 regular Council meeting.

Paul Gipps, CAO

Powerpoint: Yes No