



EXTERNAL FUNDING REQUESTS

Issue

Foothills Country Hospice Society and École Percy Pegler School have requested funding support from 2025 budget.

Motion Proposed by Administration

Due to the requested budgetary increases not already included in the approved multi year budget, Council's direction is required.

Report, Analysis and Financial Implications

At the November 12 regular meeting of Council, delegations from the Foothills Country Hospice and École Percy Pegler School each requested additional funding support for Council consideration.

The Foothills Country Hospice is undertaking an expansion of their facility, from 8 beds to 16, and requested Council consider a one dollar per capita contribution, which Administration suggests the amount be considered at \$0.035k.

A second delegation from École Percy Pegler School, in Wylie Park adjacent the Okotoks Recreation Centre, is planning a full replacement of the school's aging playground, to create a fully inclusive playground. As Wylie Park doesn't have a playground itself, they have requested Council consider a contribution to the project. In a previous meeting with Administration, the playground representatives have indicated a contribution of \$0.005M in each of 2025 and 2026 (for a total of \$0.010M) plus assistance with removal of the existing playground.

Within Okotoks' boundaries, there are 72 playgrounds. Of these, 53 (74%) are owned and maintained by the Town, while the remaining 19 (26%) are owned and maintained by local school divisions. The Town and school divisions currently cover the cost for asset renewal for their respective playgrounds. This year, the Town spent \$0.218M on playground asset renewal work.

For background information, Town Council has supported the past endeavours:

- In 2006, Council supported the original hospice developing with a \$0.050M contribution.
- In 2019, Council approved the contribution of \$0.010M towards the upgrade to an inclusive playground at Dr. Morris Gibson School.

The letters of request including additional detail are attached for reference.

Strategic Plan Goals

<input type="checkbox"/>	Responsibly Managed Growth
<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong Local Economy
<input type="checkbox"/>	Organizational Excellence

<input type="checkbox"/>	Demonstrated Environmental Leadership
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Enhanced Culture & Community Health

Equity/Diversity/Inclusivity Impacts and Strategy

Both requests for funding support services that are accessible to the local community.

Environmental Impacts

n/a

Governing Policies/Bylaws/Legislation or Agreements

n/a

Community Engagement Strategy

n/a

Alternatives for Consideration

n/a

CAO Comments

These two requests for funding, came after the on ramp/off ramp process for the 2025 budget was completed, thus they are now being presented for Council consideration. Council has the option to fund/not fund/partially fund these asks. Council traditionally wants to operate from a policy perspective. In the case of the hospice, the Town is being asked to fund assets of the provincial health system. Previous Councils have weighted the community benefit of the hospice as important and provided taxpayer funding to the facility. Council direction is required on if a contribution is appropriate, the actual amount and the proposed timing.

In relation to the playground request, The Town currently bears the greatest cost burden on playground maintenance and renewal. Of the 72 playgrounds in Town, the Town is already repairing and maintaining 53 of them. If the Town were to begin funding asset renewal for school playgrounds, this may be precedent setting and further compromise municipal budgets. It is important to note that in provincial budget 2023, the Province has indicated full funding for playgrounds at all new schools, highlighting another order of government's responsibility for those assets. Council direction is required regarding if a contribution is appropriate, the actual amount and the proposed timing.

If Council chooses to proceed with funding, Council could approve out of the current 2024 operating budget which would then not require further amendments to the 2025 budget.

Attachment(s)

1. Hospice Letter of Request
2. School Letter of Request

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November 13, 2024