



TOWN POLICY

POLICY NUMBER: 1109

REFERENCE:

Resolution No. 047.03.24

ADOPTED BY:

Town Council

PREPARED BY: Legislative Services

DATE: March 6, 2024

TITLE: Letters of Support Policy

Policy Statement

As a part of normal operations for the Town of Strathmore, letters to fulfill obligations or express support are regularly sent from the Mayor's office. Often there is urgency in being prompt with a response. Expectation remains that official items of this nature are sanctioned by Council. Once initial support has been given for a matter it can be redundant and delay delivery—or cause Special Council meetings to be called—if each subsequent related message requires re-approval during future Council meetings. To streamline the process, the mayor will be responsible for correspondence (in accordance with the *Municipal Government Act*), provided the documents are consistent with a Council approved plan, policy, bylaw, or previous resolution.

Purpose

This policy is intended to ensure an aligned approach to expedite review and approval of letters meant to provide endorsement or appreciation on behalf of the Town of Strathmore. It will outline the process for when correspondence will need to be reviewed by Council prior to signing and distribution and indicate when letters can be signed by the mayor without an additional vote by Council, ultimately providing consistency and efficiency.

1.0 DEFINITIONS

- 1.1 "Chief Administrative Officer" or "CAO" means the person appointed by the Council under section 4 and under section 205 of the Act to be Chief Administrative Officer for the Town, along with any designate appointed by the Chief Administrative Officer;
- 1.2 "Deputy Mayor" means the Councillor appointed by Council pursuant to the Municipal Government Act and the Council Procedure Bylaw 23-17, to act as the Mayor in the absence or incapacity of the Mayor or in the case where the Mayor chooses to step down.

- 1.3 "Letter of Support" means a written correspondence from the Town of Strathmore that supports a Community Group's proposal or request. Organizations often seek local government support, either because it is a requirement of the grant application, or simply seeking to demonstrate to the decisionmaker that there is buy-in beyond their organization.
- 1.4 "Manager of Communications, Marketing, and Legislative Services" means the individual in the leadership role that directly oversees the Legislative Services division for the Town of Strathmore.
- 1.5 "Mayor" means the individual elected to the position of Chief Elected Official for the Town of Strathmore.
- 1.6 "Town" means the Town of Strathmore, a municipal corporation in the Province of Alberta, and where the context so requires, means the area of land within the corporate boundaries thereof.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 Mayor – signs correspondence in accordance with this policy.
- 2.2 Council – remain informed of the correspondence outlined below originating from the mayor's office. Council is responsible for approving this policy and any amendments to it.
- 2.3 CAO – may sign letters of support and thanks in lieu of the mayor in situations where the mayor and deputy mayor are unable to do so.
- 2.4 Legislative Services – oversees the drafting, approvals and delivery of letters of support, letters of thanks, letters of recognition and internal requests.

3.0 LETTERS OF SUPPORT

- 3.1 The mayor and/or CAO may issue and sign a letter of support without revisiting the item at a Council meeting, if Council has previously approved the initial item by resolution or if the item aligns with the Town's policies, bylaws, or previously approved plans (e.g. Council's Strategic Plan). The letter of support must not include:
- a. changes to Council's approved position (as confirmed by the mayor),
 - b. commitments for additional funding, or
 - c. approval of additional requests.
- 3.2 New requests for letters of support for items that have not previously been considered by Council, must go to a future Council meeting for consideration as per the procedure outlined in 7.1.

4.0 LETTERS OF THANKS

- 4.1 Mayor and/or CAO may issue and sign a letter expressing gratitude for a previously held event or support offered by another organization or level of government without revisiting

the item with Council, if it requires no additional funding or requests and it aligns with the Town's strategic priorities.

5.0 LETTERS OF RECOGNITION

- 5.1 If a letter expressing recognition towards an occasion or individual is required the mayor may issue and sign without revisiting the occurrence at a Council meeting, if
- a. the request fits the criteria for resident recognition being that the individual or group has:
 - i. achieved excellence in their field,
 - ii. reached a milestone birthday,
 - iii. has received recognition from another level of government.
- 5.2 The letter must not include commitments for funding.
- 5.3 New requests for letters of recognition are required to go to Council as per the procedure outlined in 7.2.

6.0 INTERNAL REQUESTS

- 6.1 If a mayoral letter furthering project fulfillment or support action (i.e., a grant application by the Town) is required the mayor may issue and sign without revisiting the item at a Council meeting, if Council has previously approved the initial item by resolution and/or the item aligns with the Town's policies, bylaws, or previously approved plans (e.g. Council's Strategic Plan). The letter must not include:
- a. changes to Council's approved position (as confirmed by the Mayor),
 - b. commitments for additional funding, or
 - c. approval of additional requests.
- 6.2 New mayoral support requests for internal projects are required to go to Council as per the procedure outlined in 7.3.

7.0 PROCEDURE

- 7.1 Letters of Support
- a. Requests for Letters of Support will be reviewed by Legislative Services for completeness and compliance with this policy and forwarded to the Responsible Department review (alternatively, requests received by a department will be sent to Legislative Service for review). A request for a Letter of Support does not obligate or bind the Town in any way to financial support or assistance at any time.

- b. In order to adequately assess a request, those seeking a Letter of Support from the Town will be required to provide the following information with their request in the prescribed form:
 - i. Identify the group's status (a not-for-profit organization and/or other organization) as defined in this policy;
 - ii. Identify the proposed program, project or initiative;
 - iii. Describe the program, project or initiative and identify how the program, project or initiative is of benefit to the Town and its residents;
 - iv. Specify whether the proposed program, project or initiative may require future financial contribution(s) from the Town; and
 - v. Identify contact information and address for the appropriate grant organization.
 - vi. Non-Profit Organizations and other organizations must provide a draft letter of support with their request—the letter may be edited by Legislative Services prior to being sent to Council.
- c. If a new request does not fall within any previously approved initiative or falls outside of the Town's strategic vision then Legislative Services will bring forth to the next available Regular Council Meeting for Council consideration.
- d. If the request is a part of a larger initiative already reviewed by Council then Legislative Services will electronically provide Council with copies of the letter and members will be availed two (2) business days to respond with any concerns.
 - i. If any concerns or objections are raised than Legislative Services will bring the letter to the next available council meeting for review.
 - ii. If there are no objections after the prescribed period then Legislative Services will proceed with signatures and provide the final letter as information during the next available Council meeting, to keep Council apprised.

7.2 Letters of Thanks

- a. Requests for Letters of Thanks may be drafted as:
 - i. a follow-up on a meeting or event occurrence
 - ii. a response to an invitation

- b. If a new request that does not fall within any previously approved project Legislative Services will bring the item to the next available Regular Council Meeting for Council consideration.
- c. If the request is a part of a larger initiative already reviewed by Council then Legislative Services will electronically provide Council with copies of the letter and members will be availed two (2) business days to respond with any concerns.
 - i. If any concerns or objections are raised than Legislative Services will bring the letter to the next available council meeting for review.
 - ii. If there are no objections after the prescribed period then Legislative Services will proceed with signatures and provide the final letter as information during the next available Council meeting, to keep Council apprised.

7.3 Letters of Recognition

- a. Requests for Letters of Recognition will be reviewed by Legislative Services for completeness and compliance with this policy and, if required, forwarded to the Responsible Department (alternatively, requests received by a department will be sent to Legislative Service for review). A request for a Letter of Recognition does not obligate or bind the Town in any way to financial support or assistance at any time.
- b. In order to adequately assess a request, those seeking a Letter of Recognition from the Town will be required to provide the following information with their request in the prescribed form:
 - i. Identify the individual or group
 - ii. Describe and identify what the achievement has been and how it relates to the Town and its residents;
 - iii. Identify contact information and address
 - iv. Provide a draft letter of recognition with their request.
- c. If a new request does not fall within any previously approved initiative or falls outside of the Town's strategic vision then Legislative Services will bring the item to the next available Regular Council Meeting for Council consideration.
- d. If the request is a part of an initiative already reviewed by Council then Legislative Services will electronically provide Council with copies of the letter and members will be availed two (2) business days to respond with any concerns.

- i. If any concerns or objections are raised than Legislative Services will bring the letter to the next available council meeting for review.
- ii. If there are no objections after the prescribed period then Legislative Services will proceed with signatures and provide the final letter as information during the next available Council meeting, to keep Council apprised.

7.4 Internal Requests

- a. Requests for Internal Letters of Support will be reviewed by Legislative Services for completeness and compliance with this policy and forwarded to the Responsible Department review (alternatively, requests initiated by a department will be sent to Legislative Service for review).
- b. The Responsible Department will provide the following information with their request:
 - i. Identify the proposed program, project or initiative;
 - ii. Describe the program, project or initiative and identify how the program, project or initiative is of benefit to the Town and its residents;
 - iii. Specify whether the proposed program, project or initiative may require future financial contribution(s);
 - iv. Identify contact information and address for the appropriate grant organization; and
 - v. A draft letter of support.
- c. If a new request does not fall within any previously approved project, Legislative Services will bring the item to the next available Regular Council Meeting for Council consideration.
- d. If the request is a part of a larger initiative already reviewed by Council then Legislative Services will electronically provide Council with copies of the letter and members will be availed two (2) business days to respond with any concerns.
 - i. If any concerns or objections are raised than Legislative Services will bring the letter to the next available council meeting for review.
 - ii. If there are no objections after the prescribed period then Legislative Services will proceed with signatures and provide the final letter as information during the next available Council meeting, to keep Council apprised.

8.0 DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

8.1 The Chief Administration Officer and the Manager of Communications, Marketing and Legislative Services may delegate any power, duty or function assigned to them under this Bylaw to another position within the Town Administration.

9.0 SEVERABILITY

9.1 If any section or part of this Policy is found to be illegal, or beyond the power of Council to enact, such section or parts shall be deemed to be severable from all other sections or parts of this Policy.

10.0 REVIEW

10.1 This policy shall be available for public inspection and will be posted on the Town of Strathmore's website.

10.2 This policy shall be reviewed at least once every four years. Next review date being: March 2028

END OF POLICY

APPROVAL



Mayor



Director of Strategic, Administrative
and Financial Services