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Social Policy Framework Interim Update

April 30, 2019

Background

- Purpose: An Information Report was developed to provide an interim update for Council on work currently underway and includes:
  - Description of social policy;
  - Results of a jurisdictional scan;
  - Overview of some existing social policy activity in HRM;
  - Initial ideas on an approach for dealing with social policy issues going forward.

- A recommendation report will be provided to Regional Council in the Fall, which will provide Council with a proposed social policy framework.

What is Social Policy?

- Definition from Province of Alberta's Social Policy Framework:
  - "What is social policy?" Social policy determines the kind of society that Albertans want for themselves, their families, and their communities. It expresses how we care for (and about) one another, and it influences our development as people and a society. As a result, social policy extends beyond a narrow definition of social services and supports: it is about how we work, live, and spend our time, and it helps determine how we come together to meet human needs like housing, employment, education, recreation, leisure, health, safety, and the care of children."

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Why Do We Need a Framework?

- To guide decision making, set future direction, identify important connections, and support the alignment of policies and practices both inside and outside the municipality.

- To help formalize the way the municipality thinks about and responds to the social impact of changes in a community.

- To define the role of the municipality in responding to current and future social issues.
  - There are a number of social policy programs and initiatives already underway at HRM.

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Jurisdictional Scan

- Across Canada, different governments have varying rules and customs about what they do or don't do with respect to social policy and important social issues.

- The field changes regularly as citizens press their governments for action on issues considered important.

- There are examples provided in the Info Report of various levels of government implementing social policy frameworks, including the Province of Alberta, as well as the UK and New Zealand.

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Next Steps

Activity	Date
Internal network will be developed to advise on the social policy framework. This group will help to encourage horizontal collaboration across business units on social issues.	March- April, 2019
Finalize list of external community stakeholders for targeted consultation, and prepare all necessary material.	March- April, 2019
Work collaboratively with Public Safety Advisor on the development of measures and indicators as part of the community well-being index to ensure this information can be used as part of the measures for the social policy framework.	April, 2019
Submit interim report on proposed approach to social policy framework to Regional Council.	April, 2019
Develop advisory committee for the development and implementation of the social policy framework. This committee membership may include the provincial government, senior management from HRM, and the university, non-profit, and business sector.	May, 2019
Targeted consultation with external stakeholders will occur. A summary of this consultation will be prepared as part of the development of the social policy framework.	May- June, 2019
Final social policy framework will be submitted to Community Planning and Economic Development for review (CPED). Proceed to Regional Council after feedback has been received from CPED.	August- September, 2019
Begin implementation and subsequent monitoring of social policy framework after Council approval.	October, 2019
Hold information sessions for HRM staff on what the social policy framework will mean for them.	October, 2019

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