

## **Recognitions by Council Policy**

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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Council recognition of citizens is an important component of a democratic government, demonstrating a link between Council and Calgarians and providing opportunities to showcase achievement. While Council has long recognized citizens in a variety of ways, there is currently no policy governing the parameters of such recognitions. Rather, recognitions are currently conducted based on general guidelines and expertise in the City Clerk's Office (Protocol). The proposed policy seeks to capture these practices in policy, while also providing additional procedural guidance. The proposed policy also seeks to provide clarity on expenses, outline the Calgary Awards Program, and provide recognition options for Council.

#### **ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Priorities and Finance Committee recommend that Council:

- 1) Approve the 'Recognitions by Council' policy; and,
- 2) Direct Administration to prepare any necessary amendments to the Procedure Bylaw to align with the 'Recognitions by Council' policy.

### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY**

When considering a funding request for the Calgary Stampeders Grey Cup Rally in November 2015, Council directed that Administration continue to develop a policy to provide 'greater clarity to the process for recognizing significant events, including amateur and professional sports.' (C2015-0882).

### **BACKGROUND**

Recognitions in a variety of forms have been conducted by Council for many years. In most cases, the recognitions were individually approved by the Priorities and Finance Committee (PFC), or were deemed 'standard' recognitions in accordance with the Procedure Bylaw. Currently, there is no policy governing the process or criteria for such recognitions.

The recognitions performed by Council in recent years include such events as the recognition of Calgary's Olympic and Paralympic athletes, acknowledgement of awards or achievement by City Business Units, rallies for professional sports teams, as well as several regularly occurring events such as the United Way cheque presentation and National Poetry Month.

In addition, the annual Calgary Awards Program was established in 1994, with the W.O. Mitchell Book Prize being added to the Program by Council in 1996. Council did not, at the time, provide detailed expectations with respect to criteria, process or format for the Calgary Awards Program. Instead, the Calgary Awards Program that was first implemented in 1995 has largely remained the same, with some minor changes implemented over the years.

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### **INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS**

#### **Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication**

Since 2015, City Clerk's Office has reviewed the nature and frequency of recognitions conducted by Council. Combined with existing practices and guidelines, this review has helped establish general criteria for recognitions by Council.

City Clerk's Office has also conducted a review of practices in other jurisdictions, notably Edmonton, Toronto and Ottawa. This review has demonstrated that other jurisdictions tend to provide more avenues for recognition by Council, for a wider variety and breadth of service or achievement.

In combination with this jurisdictional scan, the Calgary Awards were reviewed in 2016. This review concluded that the Calgary Awards Program is widely seen as The City's premier citizen achievement awards. The review similarly included feedback from key stakeholders, including several members of Council and the Mayor. Through this feedback, several members suggested that there were too few avenues to recognize a full range of service or achievement, other than the Calgary Awards.

Finally, in keeping with the direction provided by Council in 2015, Administration recommends Council simplify the process for approving recognition of significant events.

Therefore, the proposed policy is intended to: capture existing practices while providing greater clarity and flexibility on process and criteria; confirm Council's direction with respect to the Calgary Awards; provide clarity with respect to expenses and budgets; provide greater opportunity for recognition of a wider range of service and achievement; and provide a framework of authority within which Administration can operate.

### **OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED POLICY**

#### **Capturing Existing Practices:**

Sections 5.1 through 5.4 largely articulate what has been the operating guidelines of City Clerk's Office for some time. However, these sections also seek to streamline the approval processes and clarify the role of Administration, through the City Clerk's Office, in receiving and assessing nominations for recognition by Council. The policy also provides that there be no more than 3 recognitions at a Council meeting, each lasting no more than 5 minutes. The City Clerk's Office would work with the Mayor to determine the recognitions, the agenda date, and order of presentation at Council.

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Section 5.6 identifies the exclusions to the policy, including recognitions of individual City staff (except senior personnel at the Mayor's discretion), private business or corporate accomplishments, and milestones or anniversaries of individual citizens.

### **Formalizing Council direction on the Calgary Awards:**

Section 5.7 is intended to reflect the current practice for the Calgary Awards Program as well as minor program adjustments that resulted from the program review. While these sections detail Council's direction on the general award categories and eligibility, they also ensure that Administration, through the City Clerk's Office, has the authority for Program implementation.

### **Clarity on Expenses and Budgets:**

Section 5.10 is intended to ensure that expenditures made to implement the various recognition events in this policy are guided by existing amounts and standards used historically. Any reasonable increases to expenditures could be approved by the respective General Manager without requiring Council's approval. To use the example of the Calgary Stampeders Grey Cup Rally, a future rally would take a similar format as the one in 2015, based on amounts approved or incurred at that time.

In addition, the Policy makes clear that a Business Unit could access funds through the Chief Financial Officer in the event that the funding required to implement a recognition event is not available. This mechanism would likely only be used for larger events, and only where existing budgets were insufficient.

### **Wider Range of Recognition:**

This policy allows members of Council and the Administrative Leadership Team to nominate recipients through the process outlined for Council Recognitions, beyond the Calgary Awards Program.

In addition, the policy introduces two new avenues for recognition (Sections 5.4 and 5.5): The Mayor's special commendation and the Mayor's Civic Spirit Award. The special commendation is intended to allow for the Mayor, on behalf of Council, to issue a recognition for outstanding service outside of a Council meeting. This mechanism is intended to be rarely used, and would apply for instances where a recognition is warranted but would otherwise not be appropriate or practicable at a Council meeting. The Mayor's Civic Spirit Award would allow the Mayor, or Council members working through the Mayor, to identify deserving citizens worthy of recognition who may not meet the criteria of either the recognition of achievement by Council or the Calgary Awards Program.

The policy also allows for exceptions (Section 5.9), in the event a worthy recipient of recognition is identified that does not fit in any of the existing categories.

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### **Strategic Alignment**

This proposed policy supports the Administration's commitment to 'continue to transform the organization to be more citizen-focussed in its approach and delivery of service' (W.7). Specifically, the policy addresses the commitment to 'provide citizen recognition advice and support to The Corporation and provide leadership in administering The City's Protocol functions' (W7.3).

### **Social, Environmental, Economic (External)**

Recognizing citizens for exceptional achievement helps build a sense of community and encourages further achievement by citizens. It is also a way for Members of Council as a whole to express their appreciation for the numerous exceptional citizens and the work they do to contribute to life in Calgary (and beyond). This policy acknowledges that good deeds, commitment, and service can lead to achievement both large and small, all of which may warrant recognition from Council.

### **Financial Capacity**

#### ***Current and Future Operating Budget:***

There are minimal impacts to current and future operating budgets. While the policy does provide clarity on the nature of expenses and approvals required, generally the recognitions provided for exist already. Some small costs may be incurred relating to administration of the recognitions in the Chamber, where City Clerk's Office may gather recipients prior to a meeting and provide coffee / tea.

#### ***Current and Future Capital Budget:***

No impacts on current or future capital budgets.

### **Risk Assessment**

There are no known risks with proceeding with this policy. By not proceeding, The City will continue to lack a current policy governing recognitions by Council and will continue to operate without clear and consistent Council direction.

### **REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

Recognition of citizens demonstrates a link between Council and Calgarians and provides opportunities to showcase achievement. The policy provides a framework of authority within which Administration can ensure such recognitions occur consistently and in keeping with Council's direction.

### **ATTACHMENT**

Attachment – Draft Council Policy: Recognitions by Council (CC-xxx)