REQUEST FOR DECISION

Subject:	**Pandemic Operations Update**
Meeting Date:	Tuesday, June 22, 2021
Prepared By:	Mike Haugen, CAO
Presented By:	Mike Haugen, CAO
Link to Strat Plan:	Level of Service

Recommended Motion:	That Council accept the Pandemic Operations Update for information, as presented.

Background/ Proposal	Previously, Administration updated Council regarding municipal operations during the COVID pandemic. As some time has passed since this update, Administration once again wishes to provide Council with an update.
Discussion/ Options/ Benefits/ Disadvantages:	Overall, the organization has been able to maintain service levels. Health and safety protocols, as well as staff commitment, have kept the impacts have been able to minimize the impact of COVID. Some department specific items of note include: **Legislative Services** Legislative Services created or helped to create the forms and workflow processes to increase efficiencies in a number of areas including: • Evacuation Registration Form • Complete revision of Burn Permit process. • Go Paperless for Taxes, Utilities, and AR • Peace Officer Ride Along • New Council Timesheet (pending) Just working on some code as we did not receive the update. • Peace Officer Bulletin (and workflow) • Record or Non-record Determination • Vacation Request Form • Gravel Blitz (development assistance) • Utilities Pre-Authorized Payments • COVID Contact Tracing (pending approval) • Workplace Inspection (and related workflows) • Corrective Actions Form • Horseshoe Canyon Focus Group • Utilities Application • Records Transfer • Business Satisfaction Survey • Temporary Remote Working Agreement • TIPP Registration • Fire Ban • Work from Home -safe Work Practices • Work from Home – Hazard ID • Field Level Assessment (February 2020)

- Banked Overtime Agreement (January - February 2020)
- Flex Time Agreement (January - February 2020)

In addition to maintaining support for Council and virtual meetings, 49,961 documents have been entered into Laserfiche (the County's electronic filing system) since March 2020. The number of pages contained in these entries is 697,342. FOIP requests and standard Statistics Canada & Canada Revenue Agency requests. Various information and historical requests have also been processed.

Corporate Services
- Budget process overhaul, implementation of the budget book and submission of the 2021 Budget to the GFOA for their Distinguished Budget Award.
- Re-work of quarterly variance reports to improve information value and timeliness of reporting.
- Implementation of e-send capabilities and roll-out for AR, taxes and utilities. Approximately 20% of residential households have signed up to date.
- Coordination of numerous linear tax agreements to recover outstanding taxes previously tagged as potentially uncollectable. Only one major account remains at risk.
- Implementation of integration suite which has allowed for improved efficiencies in processing bulk water data; future objective to implement the module in other finance functions as well.
- Implementation of new processes to track financial audit information during the year and streamlining of audit supporting information. Increased involvement in the audit across the finance department and increased awareness departmentally of the process of the financial audit.
- Continued all core functions without service interruption i.e. payroll, payment to suppliers, ratepayer inquiries, utility and other transaction based data.
- Update computer networks to enhance security related to cyber issues and potential threats.
- Mirrored all business systems to provide real time remote access. This was not only the computer network but also included the phone system which is critical for customer support.
- Provided and supported information to staff and the public on work at home protocols, coping skills and resources available to address ongoing concerns and issues during the pandemic.
- Updated policies and processes to improve efficiency and control costs.
- Completed and updated numerous business continuity plans and documentation.

Transportation
During the covid shutdown the Transportation Dept. separated staff to limit risk with having units within the department start at various locations while still maintaining a level of service. There was little change within the crews to get routine job tasks completed and staff were able to still meet with ratepayers while limiting risk. This was the same for contractors while they completed work for the municipality. These steps allowed the Transportation department to continue operations.

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Communications

Website
- Created project pages on website to provide more information on annual projects to the public
- Created a new Election section on the website for 2021
- Created an e-services section on the website for residents during COVID
- Created a COVID-19 section on the website for COVID specific updates and information
- Performed a website refresh for increased user-friendliness
- Implemented digital, linkable Council agendas for the website

Projects
- Completed a 2021 budget video
- Completed highway sign project and Fire Ban insert creation
- Working to create a citizen satisfaction survey, nearly complete
- Working on an Assessment video, nearly complete
- Rebranding is nearly complete, with some signage left to update

Advertising
- Managed a considerable increase in online advertising compared to the beginning of 2020
- Started advertising a full page weekly ad in the Three Hills Capital newspaper, coordinating ads with all departments
- Ran multiple advertising campaigns for Gravel Blitz, Lead Management, etc.
- Continued coordinating, creating content, and mailing ratepayer newsletters throughout COVID to advertise County news and events and introduced a new digital version for online reading
- Ran Oil and Gas Assessment campaign, both online and in print, including full page ads, News Releases, power-point and webpage

General
- Council communications continued, including Live tweets, You Tube time-stamping, Council Notes and Follow-ups, News Releases, etc. for each Council meeting
- Worked with all departments to meet their communications needs throughout, ex. advertisements, email headers, graphic creation, external signage, website updates including job ads, RFP's and calendar events, speech writing, picture taking, Tax and Utility Bill Inserts, survey mailing, etc.
- Internal Communications continued, including digital staff newsletters following every Council meeting, formatting/editing COVID employee guides, creating posters, etc.
- Daily monitoring of social media accounts for comments/questions needing response, directing messages received to appropriate departments.
- Performed crisis communications throughout COVID

ASB/Parks

- The ASB / Parks department was able to bring all of our smaller satellite campgrounds online for camping reservation bookings and re-book all of our group site campers into new sites for the delayed start of the 2020 season

- We found a solution to maintain safety of our staff and the public and increase efficiency by using online forms for our 2% Strychnine sales both in 2020 and 2021.
- In 2021, we have maintained a number of the processes and systems that we implemented in 2020 due to COVID as part of finding new efficiencies and streamlining, including smaller seasonal team with more cross-over between roles to maximize crew efficiency, and leveraging more technology in the field.
- Have identified new areas of crossover with our full-time department members which will lead to increased capacity and efficiency, as staff have been transitioning into new roles over the past few months in 2021.
- We were able to maintain service levels throughout COVID-19 and still complete Parks projects in the 2020 field season.
- Transition of Environmental Farm Plan to a virtual delivery package, which saved time for both ASB staff and producers, streamlining processes and leading to increased efficiencies / service levels.
- 2020 - eliminating hard copy records for our parks maintenance crews and using digital sheets so that everyone can stay updated at all times and enter data from the field to maximize service provision (streamlining processes and increasing efficiency through digital transformation) – this has carried on into 2021.

Planning and Development
- Number of development permits issued almost doubled in 2020 (97) vs. 2019 (51)
- We dropped a bit in subdivisions and redesignations, but stayed fairly close to previous years.
- Land Use Bylaw review
- Completed 9 IDPs in early 2020
- Have started tracking our "Days to Decision" our average turnaround time for permitted uses is 3 days. Our average for discretionary uses is 40-days. Our subdivision average is 33 days which is a reduction of 8 days since 2018.
- Handled an 11% increase in Safety Code Permits issued. In 2019 we issued 257 and in 2020 we issued 287.
- We also were dealing with 10 enforcement files during this time period.
- Started a review of the MDP

Economic Development

- Implemented the Regional Tourism Initiative targeted at "local" visitors to accommodate COVID Restrictions. "Explore Kneehill" went live on May 14th.
- Created a collaborative training program with Community Futures Wild Rose and Travel Drumheller to provide support to the hard-hit tourism sector
  - o April 21 – Summer-Ready Training with Travel Drumheller and the Drumheller Chamber
  - o May 27 – Alberta Tourism Information System (ATIS) training with Travel Alberta
  - o June 10 – Visitor Covid Safety and Travel Confidence with Alberta Health Services and Travel Drumheller
  - o TBA – User-generated content creation

- Strengthened relationships with organizations and agencies to provide COVID supports to business promptly:
    o Community Futures Wild Rose
    o GOA Jobs, Innovation and Trade
    o GOA Labour and Immigration
    o Central Alberta Economic Partnership (CAEP)
    o Central Alberta Economic Development Officers
- Updated the Local Foods Directory and developed marketing materials to promote those businesses as alternate shopping options during supply chain disruptions
- Increased web and social media content to make information readily accessible to business
    o Business Web Tools
    o Employment Grants and Supports
    o Covid Information for business
- Provided financial and administrative support to Community Futures Wild Rose to implement the "Mastering Recovery" business program

WEBSITE:

Things-to-do (Now Explore Kneehill Landing Page):
January 1 – May 31, 2021: 1232 views ***due to the new format, visitors can skip the main page and jump directly to the activity. Stats will be more accurate when we can compare 2021 quarterly.
January 1 – May 31, 2020: 2428 views

Visitors:
January 1 – May 31, 2021: 408 views
January 1 – May 31, 2020: 174 views

Agripreneur Business Spotlight:
January 1 – May 31, 2021: 294 views
January 1 – May 31, 2020: NA

Economic Development:
January 1 – May 31, 2021: 121 views
January 1 – May 31, 2020: NA

Local Foods:
January 1 – May 31, 2021: 102 views
January 1 – May 31, 2020: 10 views

Economic Profile:
January 1 – May 31, 2021: 103 views
January 1 – J May 31, 2020: NA

SOCIAL MEDIA:

Kneehill County Facebook (Since January 1, 2021):
Business Support Posts (Programs, Grants, COVID info): 29
Ag Spotlights: 6
Tourism Promo's (Explore Kneehill, Directories, Campgrounds etc): 8

Explore Kneehill (May 14 – May 31):

Facebook: 17 posts, 7146 Reach (times the content showed up on someone's feed), 139 Page Views, 64 Page Likes, 67 Followers, 903 Engagements (clicks, likes and shares)
Instagram: 18 posts, 208 followers, Reach 474 (the number of accounts seeing the content), 322 interactions (likes, comments, shares)

Protective Services

Emergency Management
- Activated Business Continuity Plan for COVID Pandemic
- Ministerial Order received for Kneehill Regional Emergency Management Agency
- Work out challenge with other municipalities
- Organized ICS200 and ICS300 within the region, with 8 KC employees in attendance (building the ER Team)
- ICS 200 Train the trainer achievements for Dan and Nat. We can now teach ICS200 internally/regionally.
- Assisted Village of Acme rain event with DEM and Fire Ops supports.
- Assisted Three Hills Fire dangerous goods spill with DEM and Fire Ops supports.
- Organized 3 regional training webinars spring 2021 on Finance Admin, Incident Command, Liaison/Safety Officer
- Assisted RCMP with search and rescue, CPO's, Fire, and Emergency Management Teams from Red Deer, Kneehill County, Trochu
- Project 1 and 2 reporting completed with Disaster Recovery Program, Project 3 (washouts) and Project 4 (Dunphy road) finishing summer 21
- Setting up Emergency Management files on 365 Teams for access to Regional Er Mngt Team
- Emergency Operations Centre Virtual Support Initiative through Central Regional All Hazards Incident Management Team (CRAHIMT), all three of our members (Deb, Natalie, Dan) worked on development of this.

Fire Services

- Applied for and received truck full of batteries for Fire Departments from Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs
- Collaborated and delivered 4 new fire engines for Kneehill County area: Acme, Trochu, Torrington and Carbon
- Collaborated and ordered 2 new fire tenders for Kneehill County area: Torrington and Three Hills
- Completed 9 Structure Fire Inspections, 8 Vehicle Inspections, 12+ Occupancy Loads as part of Fire Safety Codes throughout region
- Work with contractor to complete Tower Assessment, changing Radio Project, collaboration with other Municipalities… AFRRCS project
- Council donated fire trucks to Paraguay, PS organized
- Changed over / set up the old Acme Fire Engine for spare and training purposes
- Met with Wheatland County's new rural chief
- Provincial Fire grant approved in spring 2020, training has proceeded in spring (News Release issued in May 2021)
- Dan completed Fireworks and Pyrotechnics course, AFRRCS Technician course

	- Region gained 12 Level 1 fire instructors through collaborative training, Trochu fire grant - Formed committee for Standard Operating Guidelines review, 2 meetings held virtually - Team attended Flags of Remembrance in Sylvan Lake to honor veterans and those serving our Country. **Enforcement Services** - Tracking in Report Exec of Positive Interaction with farmers/ratepayers - Went from 1 x Level 1 Officer to 3 x Level 1 Officers by April 2021, enabling all officers to enforce moving traffic on rural roads - Set up traffic speed trailer through Alberta Traffic Grant with Shop and IT help, touring to different municipalities and rural roads for reports - Officer Chubala completed National American Standard Inspection Training, working with Commercial Vehicles in our area completing 42 inspections to date - Changed CPO monitoring system to Lacombe Police Service for Safety / Check In's and better communication with CPO's in our area (with help of IT). - Organized 2 Regional Peace Officer meetings at HS Canyon (Drumheller, Red Deer County, Wheatland County, Starland County, KC, Beiseker) - Traffic Calendar Communications Blitz, working with Communications - Met in spring 2020 and 2021 with Transportation Department to review infrastructure protection reporting, report to Council in April. - Google presentation created for Schools on enforcement officers - Worked with Lethbridge College for Legal Studies practicum student for 5 days in April/May
Financial Implications:	NA
Council Options:	1. Council may accept the report for information, as presented.
Recommended Engagement:	☒ **Directive Decision (Information Sharing-One way communication)** Goal: To educate and inform citizens Tools: ☐ Individual Notification or ☒ Public Notification ☐ **Consultative Decision (Consulting the Public – Two way communication)** Goal: To seek feedback, test ideas, develop concepts and collaborative solutions Tools: ☐ Public Hearing ☐ Open House ☐ Focus Group ☐ Other- ☐ **Collaborative Decision (Active Participation- Share or delegate decision making)** Goal: To share or delegate decision making Tools: ☐ Participatory Decision Making ☐ Inter-Municipal Agreement ☐ Other-
Attachments:	NA

Follow-up Actions:	NA

CAO Approval:
Mike Haugen, Chief Administrative Officer