

## Administrative Backgrounder

<b>Title</b>	<b>County Connections Newsletter (Mayor Hnatiw)</b>
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	This Administrative Backgrounder has been prepared in response to a motion proposed by Mayor Hnatiw regarding a request to restart publication of the County Connections Newsletter.
<b>Proposed Motion(s)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Council direct Administration to restart the bi-annual publication of the County Connections Newsletter.</li> <li>2. That Council allocate \$35,000 from the General Operating Reserve to publish one edition of the County Connections Newsletter in the Fall/Winter of 2023.</li> </ol>
<b>Previous Council / Committee Direction</b>	None.
<b>Report</b>	<p><u>Background Information</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On June 21, 2023, Mayor Hnatiw advised the Chief Administrative Officer of her intent to advance a motion to restart the publication of the bi-annual County Connections Newsletter.</li> <li>• Section 82.1 of the Procedure Bylaw 1301/13 provides that a member of Council may initiate items by submitting them to the Chief Administrative Officer in writing at least 7 business days prior to a regularly scheduled Council Meeting.</li> <li>• The Procedure Bylaw states that the Council member must provide background information and identify what decision is requested of Council in the form of a proposed motion. Such items must be urgent in nature that they must be addressed by Council earlier than the notice of motion timelines in the Procedure Bylaw, with the Mayor deciding if an item should be considered.</li> <li>• Given that the next Regular Council Meeting is scheduled for August 22, 2023 and that delaying a Council decision to that date would provide too short of notice to publish a Fall/Winter 2023 edition of the County Connections Newsletter, the matter is being presented directly to Council at the July 18, 2023 Council Meeting for Council decision.</li> </ul>

	<p><u>County Connections Newsletter</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County Connections is a newsletter publication that was mailed directly to residents twice a year (Spring and Fall) starting in 2011 to the end of 2017.</li> <li>• In 2018, only one issue was distributed, which was a special “newspaper” edition to celebrate the Sturgeon County Centennial. In 2019, the newsletter was discontinued.</li> <li>• The newsletter was designed using in-house resources and was printed in a magazine style (8”x10”, 20 pages).</li> <li>• Content was submitted from County departments and included a Mayor’s Message and a Councillor’s Message, which were an opportunity to directly address specific topics or issues with constituents.</li> <li>• The target audience for the newsletter was residents and was sent directly to residential property owners through addressed mail.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strategic Alignment</b></p>	<p><b>Collaborative Governance</b> – Ongoing community consultation and engagement.</p>
<p><b>Statutory Requirement Considerations</b></p>	<p>None.</p>
<p><b>Alignment to Levels of Service Delivery</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The County Connections Newsletter would supplement existing methods of communicating County information (website, social media, County app, newspaper advertising, road signage, direct letter), as appropriate.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Anticipated Human Resource Requirements</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparation of newsletter content could be completed using existing staff resources.</li> <li>• External graphic design support would be required.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Anticipated Financial Resource Requirements</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Previous budget allocations for bi-annual publication were as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Print: \$17,700</li> <li>• Postage \$11,900</li> </ul> </li> <li>• It is anticipated that costs have increased since 2018. Therefore, Administration recommends that Council approve an allocation of \$35,000 from the General Operating Reserve to publish one edition of the County Connections Newsletter in the Fall/Winter of 2023.</li> <li>• Once the costs of this edition are validated, Administration would include the cost of two editions per year</li> </ul>

	(approximately \$70,000) in the 2024 operating budget for Council’s consideration.
<b>Additional Background Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administration is including a Communications Audit as a Service Enhancement in the 2024 Budget process to gauge communication preferences of the community, including preferred content and methods of communication.</li> <li>• If publication of the County Connections Newsletter is restarted in 2023, its effectiveness could be validated as part of the proposed Communications Audit.</li> </ul>
<b>Attachment(s)</b>	None.
<b>Report Reviewed by:</b>	<p>Jackie Sargent, Manager, Corporate Communications</p> <p>Jesse Sopko, General Manager, Corporate Services</p> <p>Reegan McCullough, County Commissioner – CAO</p>