



# 2021 Service Review Council Questions

**SERVICE AREA:** Budget Summary

**PAGE NUMBER:** Pg. 3

**ELECTED OFFICIAL:** Christensen

## QUESTION:

Do the assumptions consider a reduction in assessed value that may be presented by the tax assessor?

## ANSWER:

No, as there is no direct correlation between assessed values and total tax revenue. The operating budget will determine the total level of tax revenue required. The tax rate bylaw and each property's relative change in assessed value determines how much tax revenue is collected from each individual property.



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**ELECTED OFFICIAL:** Christensen

## QUESTION:

Is it appropriate to consider new service level requests related to legislation, policy and strategic priorities during the current uncertain financial conditions other than for required maintenance; just because they were initiated during past budget reviews?

## ANSWER:

The direction of Council during the review of the 2021 Financial Plan was that Council may be interested in considering New Service Level Requests which are:

- a) third party or grant funded
- b) related to health or safety
- c) related to addressing legislative requirements, policy, strategic priorities, or
- d) related to COVID.

The level of service contained in the Service Review, Operating Budget and Capital Budget is based upon the level of service approved by the majority of Council. Council can at any time adjust the level of service through a vote of the majority.



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**ELECTED OFFICIAL:** Christensen

## QUESTION:

What is the current projection for revenue earned from paid parking and the cost to implement and maintain the initiative?

## ANSWER:

The estimate for capital costs, revenues and expenses can be found on page 14 of 57 of the Engineering service review document.

[https://banff.ca/DocumentCenter/View/11780/10\\_Engineering](https://banff.ca/DocumentCenter/View/11780/10_Engineering)



# 2021 Service Review Council Questions

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**ELECTED OFFICIAL:** Christensen

## QUESTION:

Is the plan for the LED upgrade based on a full replacement program done at one time or on a replacement plan based on replacing current fixtures as they fail?

## ANSWER:

The plan for the LED upgrade is based on a full replacement in 2021. The support for this recommendation can be found on pages 27 and 28 of the Planning & Development service review document found here:

[https://banff.ca/DocumentCenter/View/11783/12 Planning and Development](https://banff.ca/DocumentCenter/View/11783/12_Planning_and_Development)



# 2021 Service Review Council Questions

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**ELECTED OFFICIAL:** Christensen

## QUESTION:

Is it appropriate to waive banner fees especially when we are acutely aware of the financial constraints in the immediate future budget years? One of the success's mentioned on page 7 of our budget section on governance is that we have consistent consideration of cost recovery.

## ANSWER:

Organizations approved to have banners placed on Town street poles may apply to have the fees associated with application and installation waived. The policy states the decision to waive fees can only be made by council, and only at budget deliberations. If the majority of Council votes against an application for the waiver of fees, then non-waiver would be appropriate.

It is administration's assumption that if Council declines the waiver of fees, some organizations would likely opt not to put up banners, and therefore, the rejection may not lead to increased revenue.

In the past decade, Council has rejected fee waiver applications from for-profit organizations. Consequently, the Town has not received applications in the past few years from for-profit organizations. Current organizations identified in the request for 2021 include the destination marketing organization, a learning organization, a volunteer organization and a veterans and community services organization.



# 2021 Service Review Council Questions

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**ELECTED OFFICIAL:** Christensen

## QUESTION:

Regarding BLLT marketing, what is the relationship and the projected outcome of negotiations between BLLT, Town of Banff and Parks Canada's proposed "expert Panel"? In kind support is appropriate pending on the goals.

## ANSWER:

The expert panel will advise Parks Canada on the development of a long-term framework for the sustainable movement of visitors in the Bow Valley in Banff National Park. As part of their work, the panel will be asked to consider transportation modes and networks, as well as other strategies and tools relating to how people access, move about and use the park – including new technologies, infrastructure changes, and systems for communication and access. The panel will consider ways to ensure that ecological integrity and conservation of habitat and biodiversity are priorities. It will explore and advise on the use of alternative and renewable energy while reducing waste. And it will provide insights on how to provide diverse mobility options to visitors and residents, giving people more choices on how they meet their access needs. Parks Canada is currently seeking feedback on the Terms of Reference for this project.

The Town of Banff is working with Parks Canada to better understand the panel's mandate and how the community and municipality will be involved.



# 2021 Service Review Council Questions

**SERVICE AREA:** Budget Summary

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**ELECTED OFFICIAL:** Christensen

## QUESTION:

Do the assumptions the current financial plan is built on consider a loss of tax revenue related to the commercial tax base for 2021,2022 and 2023?

## ANSWER:

No, as there is no direct correlation between assessed values of property and tax revenue. The financial plan provides guidance on the development of the service review, operating and capital budgets and the mill rate split. It is the tax rate bylaw which then determines how much of the required tax revenue will be collected from each property.



# 2021 Service Review Council Questions

**SERVICE AREA:** Service Review and Summary Doc

**PAGE NUMBER:** 1 - 3

**ELECTED OFFICIAL:** Sorensen

## QUESTION:

- 1) what amount will a 1% tax increase be in 2021 (assume will be part of the initial budget chat)
- 2) assuming a 1.4% salary increase across the organization, what total amount is that?
- 3) please confirm start dates for new positions previously budgeted - this question can be moved to the appropriate section in S.R. I'm particularly confused on HR/HS - looks like HR is getting no new help in 2021 and .6 in 2022 and HS is getting almost a .4 in 2021 and then a .4 in 2022
- 4) Since we did not have the Economic Recovery Operating Reserve in summer 2020 - did costs for Banff Ave and Bear St. pedestrianization just come out of general operating ?

## ANSWER:

- 1) A 1% municipal tax increase from 2019 will be \$206,578.
- 2) The cost of living increase included in the proposed 2021 budget is set at 1.4%. This represents a dollar amount of \$199,000 which is broken down as follows (\$152,000 tax funded, \$40,500 utility funded, \$3,000 grant funded & \$3,500 reserve funded).
- 3) Legislative Advisor - this position is scheduled to start in Q2 of 2021.  
Communications Coordinator - this position is scheduled to start in Q3 of 2021.  
HR/HS Position. This position has been rethought since it's initial proposal in 2018:



- Initially, 1 FT equivalent position (0.4 to H&S, 0.6 to HR) was added to operating budget in the 2019 budget presentation to start in July 2021.
- The 2020 budget presentation showed the first full year of the position for 2022 and onward.
- In 2021, it is recognized that the COVID-19 situation will continue to have an impact on services and internally on wages and benefits opportunities.
- HR and H&S had a number of meetings to determine the “need” and contribution to efficiencies and potential cost savings, while still delivering on internal legislative and operational requirements.
- HR has re-designed the existing Advisor position to take on additional scope by re-grading the position to recognize higher accountabilities starting in 2021
- H&S, continues to struggle with workload demanded of changes to OHS legislation since 2019 and in light of requirements specific to COVID-19
- HR & H&S have re-assessed the biggest needs and are proposing that H&S be provided with administrative support in 2021 to catch-up on reporting and procedure documentation to keep pace with the H&S workload due to the issues in the above bullet.
- HR will scale back services in training and development and employee relations (internal employee motivation events and activities) in order to keep pace with workload in 2021.
- From 2022, it is proposed that the original FT position will be in place with the shared distribution between departments. The position will be an internal career development opportunity, with recruitment of a shared administrative support position. In this version, the long-term outcome results in a lower wages and benefits expense than the original operating budget approved (savings of \$17K in 2021 and \$5K in 2022).

4) During 2020 prior to the creation of the Economic Recovery Reserve, costs for Banff Ave and Bear St. pedestrianization were initially approved to be funded through the budget stabilization reserve, \$175K through COU20-143. When the MOST (Municipal Operating Stimulus Transfer) grant was received, council passed motion COU20-285 to move \$256K of the MOST funding back into the Budget stabilization reserve to replace any funds approved related to COVID. In addition to the \$175K approved from the budget stabilization reserve for the ped zones, there was also \$53K approved through COU20-173 for COVID Ambassadors, \$13,600 approved through COU20-194 for mask bylaw communications, and \$15K approved through COU20-146 for Outdoor seating on Wolf Street.



# 2021 Service Review Council Questions

**SERVICE AREA:** General

**PAGE NUMBER:** General

**ELECTED OFFICIAL:** DiManno

## QUESTION:

What prior year would Administration compare our service levels and staffing levels to?

## ANSWER:

In terms of an overall tax requisition, administration is using 2019 as a base and applying a 1.4% inflation. However, when drilling down into details of different service areas the level of service and staffing will vary.

For example, for staffing comparisons, corporate services, health & safety, and communications have new positions starting in 2021 based on the previously approved budget. Fenlands, RR, BanffLIFE, seniors have reductions in several levels for either a portion of the year or the full year based on anticipated COVID impacts.

Levels of service also vary, with Banff Local Transit routes having lower service hours than originally budgeted for in the 2021 previously approved operating budget, but other areas such as streets and municipal parks have higher levels of service due to the pedestrian zones created to assist with the closure of Bear st and the Banff ave pedestrian zones.

# 2021 Service Review Council Questions

**SERVICE AREA:** Budget Summary

**PAGE NUMBER:** 3-7

**ELECTED OFFICIAL:** Poole

## QUESTION:

Please discuss and clarify the assumptions around tax revenue given the drop in business and likely drop in business taxes.  
What are the two or three bigger assumptions which could change? (for example, the commercial tax assessment)

## ANSWER:

The tax revenue included in the draft operating budget was determined by the guidance provided by the Governance and Finance Committee in the Financial Plan in July and reconfirmed in December of 2020. It is largely driven by the service set by Council through the Service Review and Strategic Plan with partial offsets coming from other sources of revenue.

Service levels and activity vary between service areas based on assumptions made on the impact that the pandemic will have on those services over the next three years. These assumptions could change based on the trajectory of the pandemic, the efficiency of the vaccine roll out and the return of international travel.

There is not a direct correlation between assessed values and tax revenue. The operating budget will determine the total level of tax revenue required. The tax rate bylaw and each property's relative change in assessed value determines how much tax revenue will be collected from each individual property.