

Motion Memorandum

To: Committee of the Whole

From: Mayor Marianne Meed Ward

Date to Committee: July 7, 2025

Date to Council: July 15, 2025

CIP date: N/A

Motion for Council to Consider:

Endorse the attached Mayoral Decisions on the 2026 budget, directing staff to prepare a budget and eliminating the veto period.

Reason:

Under the *Municipal Act, 2001* (“Municipal Act”) the Mayor, as head of Council, is required to prepare a budget to Council for consideration. In past years, the Mayor has issued a Mayoral Decision directing staff to prepare the budget. The attached Mayoral Decision in Appendix A is in service to that legislated requirement, directing staff to prepare the 2026 budget for public and Council review.

Further, provincial legislation provides that the Mayor can veto Council budget amendments within 10 days of the passing of a budget, and Council may override that veto by a two-thirds majority vote. The Mayor has the ability to issue a Mayoral Decision ending the veto period on the day Council votes on amendments, and has done so each budget year since the Municipal Act was amended to require heads of Council to prepare budgets. By electing not to exercise the veto, and ending the veto period following council voting on any amendments, the budget is deemed approved. The attached Mayoral Decision in Appendix B confirms that there is no intention of exercising veto power, ending the veto period on the day Council votes on the final budget amendments, effectively passing the final budget. This Mayoral Decision will be issued after Council budget deliberations are concluded.

To ensure maximum Council participation in the budget process, the Mayor is seeking Council endorsement of this Mayoral Decision and welcomes any amendments to both Mayoral Decisions in advance of issuing them.

Outcome Sought:

To enhance community and Council collaboration while adhering to provincial legislation outlining budget responsibilities assigned to Heads of Council.

Bringing the Mayoral Decision on the budget to Council for endorsement provides Council the full ability to modify the 2026 budget directions by majority vote while adhering to the provincial legislation. This follows the same process as last year, where the Mayor sought and received Council endorsement on the Mayoral Decision related to the 2025 budget.

Bringing this Mayoral Decision through Council prior to issuance provides opportunity for community input, and gives Council the opportunity they have historically had to set budget directions and influence the formation of the budget. After Council deliberations, the Mayor will modify the Mayoral Decision based on any amendments that achieve majority support.

The Municipal Act provides Mayors with veto power over budget amendments made by Council. The Mayor's veto can be overridden by a two-thirds majority vote of Council. The Mayor has not and will not use this veto power, and each year has issued an additional Mayoral Decision expressing intent to not exercise a veto, shortening the veto period (10 days under provincial legislation) to zero, to coincide with Council's final day of budget deliberations and amendments. That Mayoral Decision will have the effect of the budget being "deemed approved" following Council's final votes on the amendments.

By not exercising a veto, this in effect upholds the ability that Council has historically had to shape the budget, with input from community members, by bringing and voting on amendments, leading to a collaborative approach to budget formation.

Regarding budget process and timelines, Council has previously voted in favour of the timeline associated with the 2026 Community Budget, identified in report: [insert]

Staff have also prepared reports on budget pressures and multiyear forecast, which they provide council each year for review. That report is on this committee's agenda for Council's consideration, and will help to inform Council's deliberations on the budget directions.

All of these efforts ensure Council is fully involved in the preparation and vote on the budget.

Implications:

That Council provides the resources to staff to deliver services the community depend on for quality of life.

Strategic Alignment

- Designing and delivering complete communities
 - Providing the best services and experiences
 - Protecting and improving the natural environment and taking action on climate change
 - Driving organizational performance
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Approved as per form by the City Clerk