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## Strategic and Long Range Planning. Discussion Paper.

### Strategic and Long Range Planning

Mayor, Council and Senior Staff,

I would like to submit this discussion paper and proposal, to help provide a path and method for our Municipality, to plan and schedule our business, not only for the next three years, but out as far as ten to fifteen years. It would allow us to assume the position of Council as directors of the Municipality and remove us from the day to day running of the business. It consists of a three tier approach that rolls up the lower, more detailed levels into the higher overviews. By doing this we would hope to allow better planning, both in the short and the long term. We would be able to level out our budgetary and manpower requirements and to see potential problem areas, out on the horizon, rather than directly in front of us.

It would show a sound planning and budgetary structure that can be proven and will put us on a more confident footing when discussing large projects and issues. It will also show us to be accountable to the public, with our ability to show graphically, whether we can or cannot fund various projects and exactly where this community and Municipality are headed.

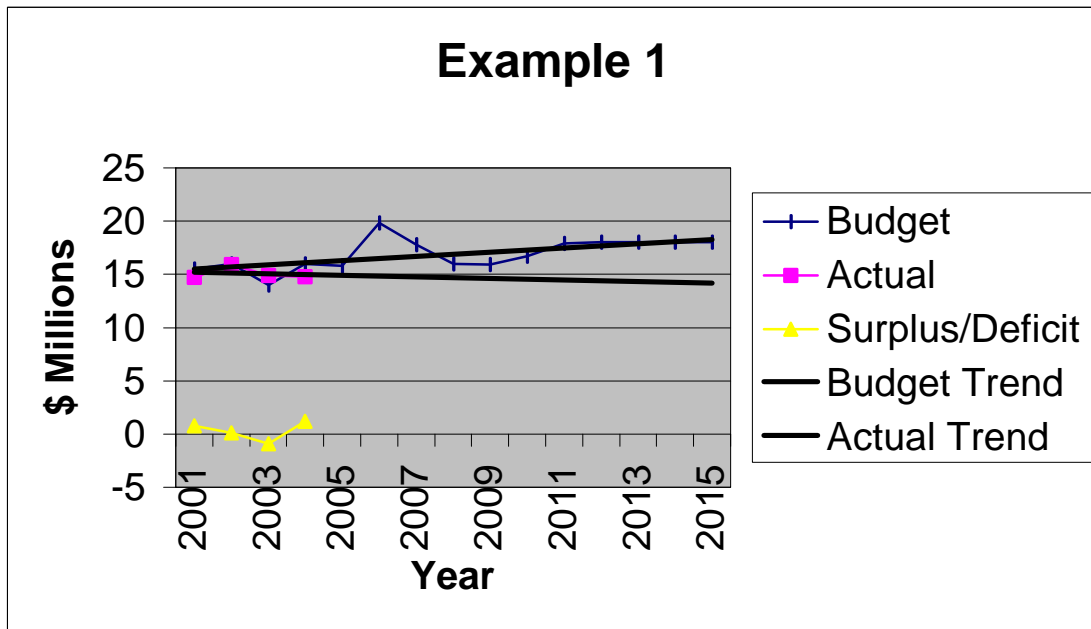
I believe this would also have the added benefit of being able to show to incoming businesses, that we are a business minded community, ready and willing to be able to meet the demands placed on us, as a Council and Municipality and that we can show where we expect the Municipality to be in the long term, giving businesses the confidence to set up their business here.

**Level One Plan.**

This is the highest level overview.

This overview would show graphs out a minimum of 10 years and would be reviewed every 3 to 6 months at Council to see changes and to see if we are generally on track. It would be a major graph for the Municipality as a whole, but would also include the level two department 10 year graphs for reference. This would be used as a long range planning tool and guide. This level would be used when we have some major upcoming or long term projects, that Council is aware of but is unsure of the capital costs. It would allow us to view our overall financial health in a graphical manner looking into the future. By using the trends and having the overall financial surplus or deficit along the bottom of the graph, we would be able to plan out major expenditures to the Municipality. Council would use this in conjunction with the department heads and their level two plans to try and plan the project into the proper time frame. This level should include our total overall financial projections. It would allow us to look at the requirements to raise or the ability to lower taxes etc.

Please see example 1 below:



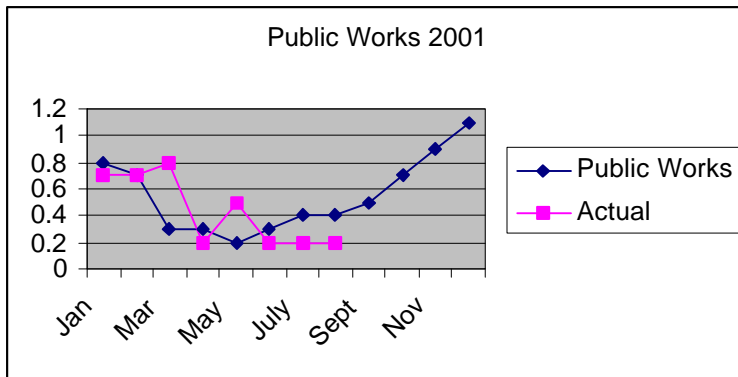
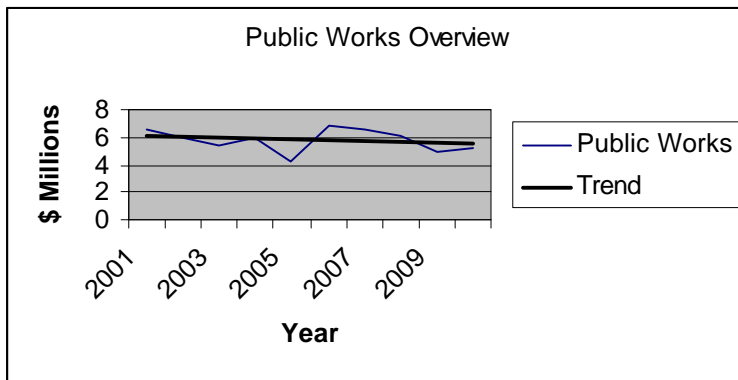
Numbers would also be included with the graph

**Level Two Plan.**

The next planning tier would be more detailed.

This plan shows the budget and overview by each of the department heads, for the next ten years, divided by year. From this we would graph out the budget expected and budget actual, on a yearly basis and on the year to date by month. This would be the discussion paper (probably two or three pages) reviewed each month at Council. The first page would show all the department graphs and the second or third page (depending on how many graphs we can get on a page) would be an executive summary of any anomalies within the graph page. Any anomalies above the graph, would have the department head present to explain them. I would expect these to be in the form of an Excel graph, perhaps 4 or 6 to a sheet.

Please see example 2 below.



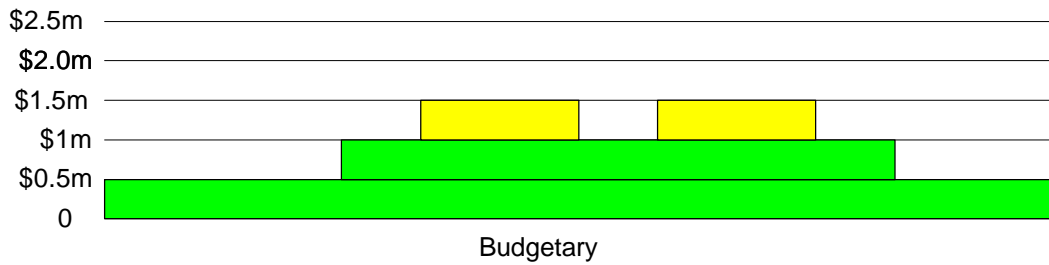
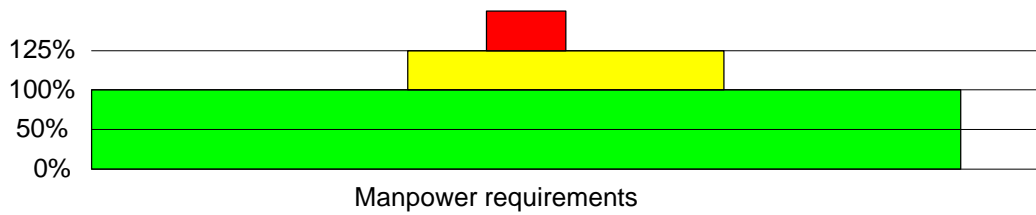
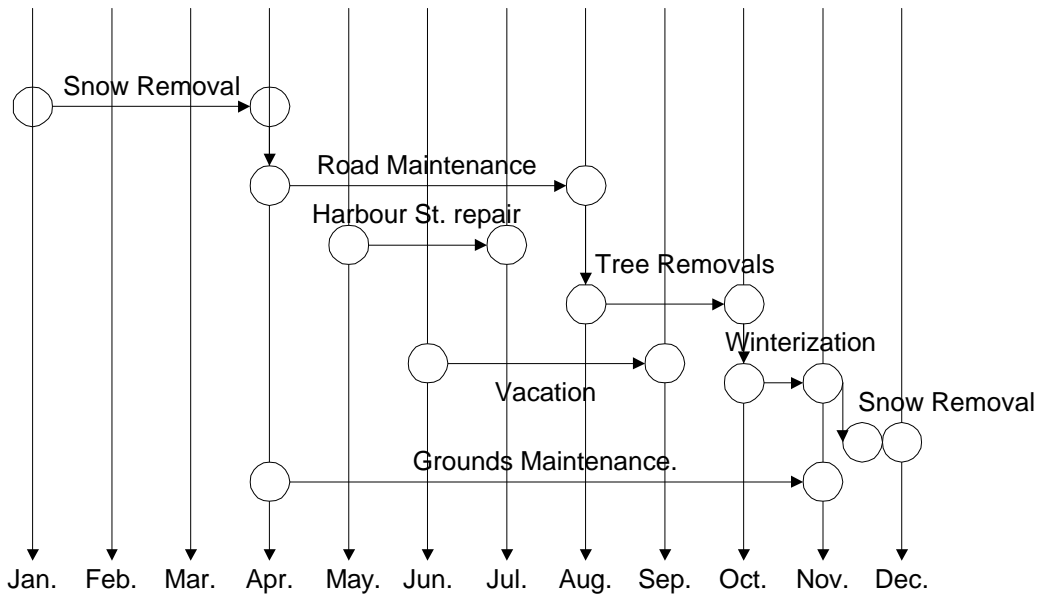
Numbers would also be included with the graphs.

**Level Three Plan.**

The next planning tier would be called a level three plan, in which each department has all its individual major projects laid out in more detail over the next five years, with less detail over the following ten years. Allowing the department heads to keep on top of all their own department issues. It is expected that these projects would be logically tied to each other to ensure that slippage and over budgets would show up. This level would allow the department heads to look at “peaks and valleys” with regards to not only budget, but also manpower. This would allow the department heads to plan effectively and level out as much as possible their departmental demands for money and manpower. This would be the meat and potatoes of the individual departments. All of the projects within the department will roll up into one bar for their department and that bar would be the one produced in the level one and two plans for discussion at the Council meeting. I would expect the level three plan to be in the form of a scheduling and planning tool output, such as Microsoft Project or such, so that we can link the data electronically to the higher level plans.

Please see example 3 on the next page:

Public Works Level 3 Plan 2001



**General Comments:**

1. It is not expected that initiating this would be seamless or trouble free to start out with and we may have to have a category such as “other” to account for the remainder of the budget within the various department, but we would move aggressively to eliminate this as much as possible.
2. We will have to employ some help with interfacing our computer software.
3. We would have to train two members of staff to be able to run the software to produce the type of document we would require.
4. We should expect some errors and problems as we started to produce standard reports and charts, the way Council and the Department Heads would be comfortable with.
5. I would expect that the budget graphs to be published in our proposed quarterly newsletter and published to the web site each month after Council accepting them.
6. The web site also holds the key for any Councilors requiring in depth knowledge of the data. To this end, we would set up a secure area for them to review the raw data.
7. Historical reviews would be able to be done of all our past projects once this is implemented, allowing us to estimate similar projects, producing better budgets and timelines for new projects.
8. As we get better organized, a member of Council might be assigned to work with each of the department heads, somewhat matching the new committee structure.
9. It is expected that the farther out the time line forecast goes, the grayer it will become and we must remember that we will have to modify the plan as we go along. This will be a living document.
10. In the long term I see this becoming part of a larger Data Knowledge Network, allowing us to mine the myriads of data we have, to better serve the public of the Municipality.

**Conclusion:**

Implementation of this proposal would allow Council and Senior Staff the ability to plan ahead, both in the short and long term, allowing us to move the Municipality forward in a proactive fashion. We would be able to support our decisions, both financially and morally, giving the people of Municipality the confidence and trust, that their elected officials and staff are following a plan viewed out to the foreseeable horizon, rather than reacting to problems on our doorstep.

Yours Faithfully,

Councillor Sandy Donald.