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ASSET MANAGEMENT GOVERNANCE STRATEGY

OVERVIEW

This document is one in a series for implementing a successful corporate asset management program within the County of Oxford. A corporate governance strategy documents and clarifies the roles and responsibilities of corporate stakeholders involved in the management of assets.

Why is this governance strategy important?

Individuals need to understand what their roles and responsibilities are in order to ensure the success of the County's asset management program. This governance strategy defines asset management roles and responsibilities and enables participants to manage assets in an informed manner using reliable and consistent practices. Proper governance of the asset management program ensures efficiency in asset management practices across the County.

What's in it for us?

- A reliable asset management program will foster an atmosphere of trust and confidence.
- Create the necessary autonomy and flexibility to manage assets.
- Understand our asset management roles and responsibilities.
- A defined governance strategy will help us successfully deliver the program and manage the workload.
- We will know what to expect and what is expected of us, so we can focus on meeting our goals.

What does the future look like?

Staff will better understand how they fit into the big picture and what is expected of them regarding the County's asset management program. Enhanced asset management practices will become ingrained in the County's culture at all levels.

PURPOSE

In order to implement a successful asset management program, the County needs to put in place an appropriate governance strategy. The governance strategy includes a combination of policies, systems, position roles and accountabilities built upon a strategic/operational framework, which together will ensure that appropriate decisions are made and actions carried out.

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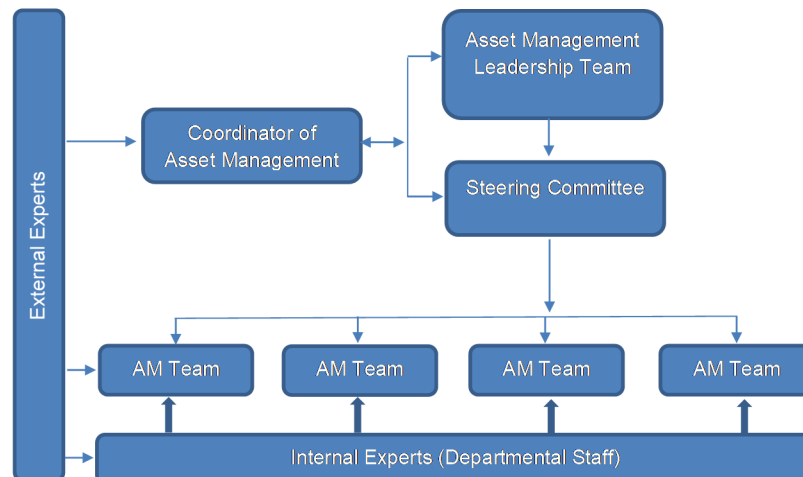
The asset management governance strategy will need to take into account both the short term project delivery and the longer term program sustainability. The key objectives can best be described as follows:

- Provide an organizational design to ensure successful implementation of all phases of the County’s asset management program
- Provide an organizational design that operationalizes integrated and comprehensive asset management practices across the County
- Provide clear roles and responsibilities for staff to enable changes needed for the program to progress
- Ensure consistency in asset management concepts and practices at a corporate level but also provide the flexibility for implementation and management at the tactical and operations levels
- Allow for strategic planning and understanding of future challenges and business drivers that may require changes to existing asset management concepts and practices to ensure effectiveness and sustainability.

APPROACH

A number of organizational design models were reviewed by the Asset Management Leadership Team and recommended the use of a centralized asset management resource and a decentralized asset management network as the best fit for the County’s environment.

Figure 1 – Asset Management Governance Model



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A centralized asset management resource and decentralized asset management network is intended to provide both guidance and support to all divisions, through providing common standards (including tools and templates), consistency in delivery and reporting and ongoing support to division managers enabling the County's asset management concepts and practices to be operationalized and instilled in the County's culture at all levels.

The Steering Committee is responsible for sponsoring the overall asset management program, approving changes to key principles/documents and ensuring that adequate resources are being made available. The responsibility for developing and implementing asset management initiatives and embedding asset management practices and concepts in the County's culture belongs to the centralized asset management resource, the Coordinator of Asset Management. The Coordinator works closely with the asset management network to operationalize asset management practices and concepts.

Following completion of the initial asset management project, asset management initiatives/improvements will continue to be developed and rolled out. The County encourages continual improvement in the management of its assets. Therefore, while the Steering Committee role and membership may change as the project becomes a routine of doing business, it is likely that some form of Steering Committee will continue to be required in order to facilitate continuous improvements.

This model ensures consistency in asset management practices across the County through policies, frameworks, templates and standard tools (e.g. Level of Service, Asset Management Plan frameworks and Risk Management Tools). The model also allows departments the necessary autonomy and flexibility to interpret and implement asset management practices at the asset level. The Coordinator will assist in monitoring the program to ensure the principles are adhered to and that common formats are in use across the County.

Council and the Asset Management Leadership Team are committed to this project providing the support necessary to drive the County's asset management program.

The Coordinator of Asset Management reports within the Finance division of the County. However, due to the corporate perspective of the program, the Coordinator functionally reports through the Steering Committee to the Asset Management Leadership Team. This is a logical outcome due to the need to satisfy all of the stakeholders involved in asset management including those outside of the Finance division. The Coordinator is involved directly and indirectly (through the budget process) with all aspects of asset management across the asset life cycle.

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A successful asset management program will require a number of roles. The Coordinator of Asset Management will have the lead on the roles outlined below, drawing on expertise from various internal staff or external resources as required:

- **Asset Strategy** – responsible for the Asset Management Policy & Strategy development, guidance and support on Level of Service development, as well as other supporting policies and strategies
- **Asset Planning** – provides overall direction and guidance on decision making models, and how to continuously improve and create value from asset management data
- **Capital Planning and Coordination** – provides overall guidance and direction for enabling the capital investment prioritization process across the organization.
- **Asset Management Performance Management** – provides direction and guidance for developing, documenting, managing and reporting for the various asset classes across the organization.
- **Information Management** – develops the Asset Management Plan, and external report support as necessary (e.g. PSAB).

KEY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The governance strategy includes a combination of policies, systems, and structures built on a strategic/operational framework, which together will ensure the appropriate decisions are made and actions carried out. The key roles and responsibilities required for an effective asset management program in the County are set out as follows:

Role	Responsibilities
Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the Strategic Asset Management Policy and Asset Management Plan • Approve Levels of Service Targets and acceptable risk levels • Approve capital & operational programs and budgets • Serve as representatives of stakeholder and community needs
Asset Management Leadership Team¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Propose budget recommendations to Council based on capital project selection criteria and prudent financial planning • Communicate vision and provide leadership in incorporating Asset Management into every-day decisions • Provide overall guidance and direction for development, application, review, approval and improvement of the Strategic Asset Management Policy, Asset Management Plan and other related documents, to aid in alignment with organizational strategies and objectives

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Role	Responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure adequate resources are available for development and implementation of the Policy and Plan • Encourage information sharing and collaboration across all departments
Asset Management Steering Committee²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure resources are deployed in a manner that benefits the projects, including asset management policies and plans, and the County • Review and endorse asset management policies, practices, plans and other related documents • Play an active role in key decision-making, stakeholder management, risk management and issue resolution • Provide support and direction for integration of asset management processes at the County • Provide input and direction to asset management work plans to ensure consistency with other County initiatives • Provide direction on the implementation of technologies and competencies needed to support asset management at the County • Monitor and review the overall work plan for the County's Asset Management Program
Coordinator of Asset Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair the asset management steering committee • Ensure consistency in the application of asset management practices • Development and maintenance of the Strategic Asset Management Policy and Asset Management Plan • Development and maintenance of other asset management related policies and strategies (i.e. Asset Information Strategy) • Assist in the development of capital and operational budgets to ensure alignment with asset management practices • Conduct training and presentations • Lead development of complete and accurate asset inventories, condition assessments, risk assessments and related asset management initiatives in line with industry best practices • Provide support for asset management practices at the division level • Participate in and convene regular asset management network coordination and planning meetings • Participate in asset management implementation teams • Research external benchmarking for asset management • Participate in asset management research projects • Prepares reports and presentations for council as directed by the

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Role	Responsibilities
	Asset Management Leadership Team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track, analyze and report on program benefits to the steering committee
Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide sponsorship for incorporating Asset Management into every-day decisions Provide adequate resources to support the implementation of the Policy and Plan at the division level Champion the asset management processes within respective divisions Participate in asset management implementation teams
All Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embrace the processes and tools necessary to be effective in gathering, recording, monitoring and reporting asset management data Assist in maintaining a complete and accurate asset inventory by capturing asset data as part of daily operations Provide input on needs of department, current status of assets and current levels of service Make best use of asset data in order to make evidence-based decisions Seek to be innovative with respect to service delivery Adopt a culture of continuous improvement Participate in asset management implementation teams Provide support in the development / update of asset management processes and documents
Residents, Stakeholders and Customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in public information sessions, and stakeholder engagement initiatives Provide feedback related to current levels of service and service expectations

Notes:

¹ Asset Management Leadership Team is comprised of the CAO and Directors of Corporate Services and Public Works

² Asset Management Steering Committee is comprised of Managers from Corporate Services and Public Works