



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Council Chambers, Irricana Centennial Centre, 222 2 Street

Date: June 8, 2026 Time: 7:00PM

A. ATTENDANCE

B. CALL TO ORDER

C. AGENDA

D. PRESENTATIONS

E. MINUTES

Item E1: Minutes from March 9, 2026 Committee of the Whole

F. CORRESPONDENCE FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

G. COMMITTEE REPORTS

H. OLD BUSINESS

I. NEW BUSINESS

Item I1: Strategic Relationship with Pioneer Acres

Item I2: Supporting Local Business Success

J. COMMUNICATION / INFORMATION

K. CLOSED SESSION

L. ADJOURN

Item E1

Minutes from March 9, 2026 Committee of the Whole

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Council Chambers, Irricana Centennial Centre, 222 2 Street

Date: March 9, 2026 Time: 7:00PM

A. ATTENDANCE

Chairperson: Dawna Polson
Mayor: Colleen MacLeod
Deputy Mayor: Julie Sim
Councillors: Megan Hoefnagels, Nathaniel Fleming
CAO: Doug Hafichuk

B. CALL TO ORDER

(i) The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Polson at 7:00 pm.

C. AGENDA

(i) Adopt Agenda

Moved by Mayor MacLeod to adopt the Agenda, as presented.
CARRIED

D. PRESENTATIONS

(i) None

E. MINUTES

(i) Minutes of the September 8, 2025 Committee of the Whole

Moved by Deputy Mayor Sim to accept the Minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting for September 8, 2025, as presented.
CARRIED

F. CORRESPONDENCE FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

(i) None

G. COMMITTEE REPORTS

(i) None

H. OLD BUSINESS

- (i) None

I. NEW BUSINESS

- (i) Item I1: Municipal Penalty Structure – Governance Review

Moved by Councillor Hoefnagels that the Committee of the Whole direct Administration to incorporate the feedback provided and prepare draft amendments to establish a standardized municipal penalty framework embedded within the Master Rates Bylaw for Council's consideration.
CARRIED

- (ii) Item I2: Animal Control Bylaw Review & Discussion

Moved by Mayor MacLeod to Table Item I2 upon return of Deputy Mayor Sim to the meeting.

Deputy Mayor Sim left the meeting at 7:47 pm

Chairperson Polson called for a 5-minute recess at 7:49 pm
Chairperson Polson reconvened the meeting at 8:01 pm

- (iii) Item I3: Council Public Engagement Practices & Protocols

Moved by Mayor MacLeod that the Committee receive Administration's report for information.
CARRIED

Deputy Mayor Sim returned to the meeting at 8:13 pm

Reopened Tabled Item I2: Animal Control Bylaw Review & Discussion

Moved by Councillor Fleming that the Committee of the Whole defer consideration of amendments to the Animal Control Bylaw to the 2027 work plan.
CARRIED

- (iv) Item I4: Financial Controls & Reporting – 2026 Work Plan Update

Moved by Mayor MacLeod that Administration be directed to prepare a policy framework for establishing an Operating Stabilization Reserve.
CARRIED

Moved by Deputy Mayor Sim that Administration be directed to develop a structured banking architecture separating operating funds, restricted funds, reserves, and trust accounts.
CARRIED

J. COMMUNICATION / INFORMATION

(i) None

K. COUNCILLOR UPDATE

L. CLOSED SESSION

(i) None

M. ADJOURN

(i) Adjournment

Moved by Mayor MacLeod to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 pm.

Dawna Polson
Chairperson

Doug Hafichuk
Chief Administrative Officer



Committee of the Whole Report

To: Chairperson and Committee Members
From: Chief Administrative Officer
Date: June 8, 2026
Purpose: **Provided For Information**
Subject: Strategic Relationship with Pioneer Acres

Summary:

The purpose of this report is to facilitate a strategic discussion regarding the relationship between the Town of Irricana and Pioneer Acres. Both organizations have recently adopted strategic plans that place significant emphasis on community engagement, public outreach, volunteer development, heritage preservation, and promotion of the region.

This presents an opportunity for the Committee to consider whether there may be value in becoming more intentional about the relationship between the two organizations and, if so, what form future collaboration might take.

Background

Pioneer Acres presented its 2026–2029 Strategic Plan to Council during the May 4, 2026 Regular Meeting. Representatives included Bob Anderson, President of Pioneer Acres, and Chris Wood, Executive Director.

The presentation highlighted the organization's vision for the coming years, including increased public engagement, expanded outreach efforts, stronger volunteer participation, and greater collaboration with surrounding communities and organizations.

Following that presentation, a number of informal conversations have occurred between members of Council and representatives of Pioneer Acres. These discussions have generated several ideas and opportunities for potential collaboration and have prompted broader consideration regarding the future relationship between the two organizations.

Historically, the Town of Irricana and Pioneer Acres have maintained a positive and supportive relationship. While that relationship has generally been informal and opportunity-driven in nature, both organizations have periodically worked together where interests aligned and opportunities emerged. This approach has served both organizations well and has allowed for cooperation without the need for formal agreements or ongoing commitments.

Recent discussions, however, raise a broader question. As both organizations look toward the future through their respective strategic planning efforts, *is there value in becoming more intentional about the relationship* and identifying opportunities where collaboration may advance the objectives of both organizations and the broader community?

Strategic Context

Although developed independently, the strategic plans adopted by the Town of Irricana and Pioneer Acres contain several areas of broad alignment.

Pioneer Acres has identified increasing public outreach, strengthening community awareness, expanding volunteer engagement, enhancing communications, increasing attendance, and collaborating with other organizations as key strategic priorities. Similarly, the Town's Strategic Plan places emphasis on community culture, volunteerism, economic development, marketing the community, preserving local heritage, and fostering meaningful collaboration.

Administration does not suggest that this alignment necessarily requires a formal partnership, nor does it presume that any specific projects should be pursued. However, the presence of complementary objectives provides a reasonable basis for discussing whether a more intentional relationship may create value for both organizations.

Analysis

The Town and Pioneer Acres are both community-focused organizations that seek to strengthen the region through different but complementary means. While the Town provides municipal services and long-term community planning, Pioneer Acres plays an important role in preserving local heritage, attracting visitors, supporting volunteers, and promoting the agricultural history that helped shape the region.

Should Council determine that a more intentional relationship is desirable, opportunities for future collaboration could take many forms, including:

- coordinated event promotion
- volunteer recruitment initiatives

- tourism and visitor attraction efforts
- educational programming and heritage interpretation
- community engagement activities
- economic development initiatives

These examples are provided only as discussion starters and are not intended to represent specific recommendations from Administration.

Similarly, any future relationship could exist at a variety of levels.

At one end of the spectrum, the organizations may simply choose to maintain the existing informal relationship while improving communication and information sharing. Alternatively, the organizations could pursue more coordinated activities, joint initiatives, or strategic projects where mutual interests exist. At the most formal end of the spectrum, Council may ultimately determine that a structured partnership framework or formal agreement warrants consideration.

Administration notes that each level of collaboration carries different expectations regarding staff time, organizational resources, funding commitments, governance structures, and long-term accountability. Understanding Council's comfort level with these considerations will be important should future opportunities emerge.

Ultimately, *the purpose of this discussion is not to determine what specific projects should be pursued.* Rather, it is to better understand Council's perspective regarding the relationship itself and whether there is value in becoming more intentional about how the Town engages with Pioneer Acres moving forward.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

To assist with the discussion, the Committee may wish to consider the following questions:

1. Does Council believe there is value in pursuing a more intentional relationship with Pioneer Acres?
2. What outcomes would Council hope to achieve through closer collaboration?
3. What types of opportunities or initiatives would Council be most interested in exploring?
4. What level of collaboration is appropriate between the organizations?
5. Are there specific considerations regarding municipal resources, staff support, funding, or governance that should guide future discussions

Recommendation(s)

That the Committee discuss opportunities for future collaboration between the Town of Irricana and Pioneer Acres and provide any direction deemed appropriate.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Recommendation Motion(s):

Option #1:

Motion #1: **THAT** the Committee receive Administration's report, for information.

Option #2:

As determined by the Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

"Doug Hafichuk"

Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS:

N/A



Committee of the Whole Report

To: Chairperson and Committee Members
From: Chief Administrative Officer
Date: June 8, 2026
Purpose: **Provided For Information**
Subject: Supporting Local Business Success

Summary:

The purpose of this report is to facilitate a strategic discussion regarding the Town's role in supporting small business success and local economic development. Over the past several years, the Town has invested considerable effort into creating the conditions necessary for growth through infrastructure planning, development readiness, streamlined approvals, competitive taxation, and initiatives designed to encourage investment and development.

As those efforts begin to mature and growth continues to occur, Administration believes there may be value in broadening the discussion beyond physical infrastructure and development readiness. While buildings, services, and land availability remain important, successful local economies also depend on the people who choose to start, expand, and invest in businesses.

This raises a broader question: what role, if any, should the Town play in supporting small business success once the foundational conditions for growth have been established?

Background

Economic development has existed in various forms within the Town of Irricana over many years. However, changing circumstances and organizational challenges often limited the municipality's ability to pursue sustained or strategic economic development initiatives.

More recently, significant effort has been directed toward restoring organizational capacity, improving financial stability, modernizing governance, rebuilding

development readiness, and creating the foundational conditions necessary for future growth.

These efforts have included initiatives such as development incentives, streamlined approvals, infrastructure planning, industrial and commercial development support, and maintaining a stable and competitive tax environment. Collectively, these efforts have focused on ensuring that businesses have an environment in which they can succeed.

As these foundational efforts mature, Administration believes the Town is increasingly well-positioned to begin considering what role it may play in supporting the people and businesses that ultimately occupy those spaces.

While the municipality is not positioned to provide direct business advisory services, financing programs, or specialized entrepreneurial support, there may be opportunities to leverage existing regional expertise and resources in a manner that benefits local businesses and entrepreneurs.

Strategic Context

Council's 2024–2028 Strategic Plan identifies Diverse Economic Growth as a key area of focus. Specific objectives include encouraging new business, supporting investment, promoting the community, and creating conditions that make Irricana an attractive place to live, work, and do business.

Over the past several years, Administration has pursued a number of initiatives intended to support these objectives. Development incentives, streamlined development processes, infrastructure planning, industrial land development, and efforts to maintain a stable and competitive tax environment have all been intended to strengthen the Town's ability to attract investment and support growth.

Many of these initiatives have focused on creating the physical and regulatory conditions necessary for economic development. As those efforts begin to mature and development activity increases, Administration believes there may be value in considering how the Town can support success within that growth.

While economic development is often associated with land, buildings, infrastructure, and taxation, successful local economies also depend upon entrepreneurs, business owners, and community organizations having access to the knowledge, resources, and support necessary to succeed.

This discussion represents a natural extension of Council's existing strategic priorities and explores whether there are opportunities to build upon the foundation that has already been established.

Analysis

Small businesses play a critical role in communities such as Irricana. They create employment opportunities, provide local services, contribute to the municipal tax base, and help create vibrant commercial areas.

At the same time, starting and operating a small business can be challenging. Many entrepreneurs possess the passion, skills, and willingness to pursue an idea but may lack access to mentorship, business planning resources, financing, professional advice, or simply the confidence that comes from discussing an idea with an experienced advisor.

Administration recognizes that the Town is neither equipped nor resourced to directly provide these services. However, several organizations already exist to provide exactly these types of supports.

One such organization is Community Futures Wild Rose, a regional economic development organization that provides business planning assistance, mentorship, financing programs, training opportunities, and advisory services to entrepreneurs and small businesses throughout the region.

While Community Futures Wild Rose serves Irricana and surrounding communities, Administration believes there may be value in exploring whether the Town could be more intentional in promoting and leveraging these existing resources.

Importantly, this discussion is not intended to focus solely on Community Futures Wild Rose. Rather, Community Futures serves as an example of how the municipality may be able to support local business success through partnerships and existing third-party expertise, rather than by creating new municipal programs or services.

One potential first step could be the exploration of a simple pilot initiative between the Town and Community Futures Wild Rose. Such an initiative might focus on increasing awareness of available business supports, encouraging participation in mentorship or business planning programs, recognizing entrepreneurs who engage with available resources, or identifying other opportunities to connect local businesses with existing expertise.

The intent would not be to create a significant municipal program, nor would it necessarily involve direct financial support. Rather, the objective would be to test

whether a more intentional approach to business support provides value to local entrepreneurs and the broader community.

Administration views this as an opportunity to explore how Council's economic growth objectives may continue to evolve. Having spent several years improving development readiness, infrastructure planning, and investment conditions, the discussion may now shift toward how the municipality can support success within that growth through partnerships, capacity building, and strategic use of existing resources.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

To assist with the discussion, the Committee may wish to consider the following questions:

1. What role, if any, should the Town play in supporting small business success?
2. As the Town transitions from creating conditions for growth to supporting success within that growth, what priorities should guide future economic development efforts?
3. Are there opportunities to better leverage existing organizations, programs, and regional partnerships to support local entrepreneurs and businesses?
4. Would Council support exploring a simple pilot initiative with Community Futures Wild Rose, or a similar organization, as a potential first step?
5. What level of municipal involvement is appropriate when supporting local business development?

Recommendation(s)

That the Committee discuss opportunities to support small business success and local economic development and provide any direction deemed appropriate.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Recommendation Motion(s):

Option #1:

Motion #1: **THAT** the Committee receive Administration's report, for information.

Option #2:

As determined by the Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

"Doug Hafichuk"

Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS:

N/A