Council Referred Items

Wascana Parkway to Prince of Wales Extension

Description

At the June 7, 2018 meeting of the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee, a motion was brought forward and approved that a plan to accelerate the land acquisition for the Wascana Parkway/ Prince of Wales extension be referred to the 2019 budget process.

Summary

The 2019 Budget includes funding of $2.3 million to proceed with the land acquisition for the Wascana Parkway extension in 2019 for the following reasons:

- Undertaking this project is an important step that is in the best interest of the City of Regina
- Determining a specific route and conducting initial land acquisitions will identify any challenges and allow for time to address these challenges as transportation projects in the southeast are planned
- This work will inform the future design and construction of the Wascana Parkway to Prince of Wales Drive extension
- This work will inform the future Arcola Corridor Study in terms of timing and scope

In addition to the above-mentioned reasons, changing the timing of this project has minimal impact on the Servicing Agreement Fee rates or the cash flow in the Servicing Agreement Fee (SAF) model. Funding included in the capital plan is needed for land acquisition for right-of-way for road and bridge construction, engagement of a consultant to produce functional two-line drawings of future right-of-way of a preferred option and engagement of resources for negotiation and acquisition of lands, appraisals and stakeholder consultations. The 2019 budget amount of $2.3 million is to complete this work. Including this project in the 2019 Capital Plan does not impact the property tax, as it is funded by SAFs.

Background

The City of Regina *Design Regina: The Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2013-48 (OCP*) and the *Transportation Master Plan (TMP)* identify the extension of Prince of Wales Drive to Wascana Parkway as a future roadway. This project supports growth of the city and maintains service levels at an acceptable level; therefore, as previously identified, it will be funded from Servicing Agreement Fees (SAFs) in approximately 2036.

Prince of Wales Drive is currently constructed up to Wascana Gate South and right-of-way has been preserved up to Wascana Creek. The proposed extension is situated outside of current city limits in the Rural Municipality of Sherwood No. 159 (RM), but is within the joint planning area and the collaborative planning area.

In 2012, the City completed the Prince of Wales Drive Extension Functional Planning Study (Study). The Study identified six alignment options for the extension and provided an evaluation of the different options based on a number of factors. The Study did not recommend a specific

alignment option due to the uncertainty in the availability of lands for the future right-of-way. The Study alignment options consisted of single-line functional alignment options, but did not include cost estimates and property plans for a preferred right-of-way.

The 2019 budget of $2.3 million does not include funding for design detail and construction of the future roadway extension. The SAF model identifies approximately $9 million for this extension in 2036 but is subject to change based upon more detailed information.

Arcola Corridor Study

Description

At the June 7, 2018 meeting of the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee, a motion was brought forward and approved that the Arcola Avenue Corridor Study be advanced to start in 2021 with a return to Council in 2022.

Summary

The 2019 Budget includes funding of $300,000 in 2021 as part of the 2019-2023 General Capital Plan to proceed with the Arcola Avenue Corridor Study subsequent to the commencement of the land acquisition for Wascana Parkway to Prince of Wales Drive extension, advancing it from 2024. This project is funded through Servicing Agreement Fees and does not have property tax implications.

Background

Arcola Avenue expressway has traffic volumes ranging from 19,400 vehicles per day east of Prince of Wales Drive to 45,000 vehicles per day between Ring Road and University Park Drive. Other roads in the city that receive similar traffic volumes are Ring Road, Lewvan Drive, Pasqua Street north of Ring Road and Victoria Avenue east of Ring Road. Due to development in the east, traffic volumes on Arcola Avenue are increasing, resulting in traffic congestion at many intersections during peak hours. During the peak hours, the majority of traffic will have passed along this corridor in a 40 minute period.

The Arcola Avenue Corridor Study will focus on improvements at the Arcola Avenue and Ring Road bridge. Potential improvements examined through a study may include bridge widening, alternative lane configurations (e.g. diverging diamond interchange) or modifications to the ramps. Costing and construction staging will be reviewed in consideration of the Wascana Parkway to Prince of Wales Drive extension. Improvements along the Arcola Avenue corridor have recently been identified and it is not anticipated to require further study, including double left turn lanes at University Park Drive and Prince of Wales Drive.

Arcola Intersection Improvement

Description

At the June 7, 2018 meeting of the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee, a motion was brought forward and approved that the improvements to Arcola Avenue and University Park Drive be referred to the 2019 budget development process.

Summary

The 2019 Budget does not included funding for the Arcola Intersection Improvement project. Administration will be working to prioritize the various broad network improvements identified in the Transportation Master Plan to implement the improvements that will maintain a sustainable and acceptable level of service of the entire transportation system. This will ensure improvements to that corridor are made in an efficient and coordinated manner.

The Arcola Intersection Improvement project should continue to be identified to advance in 2024 as currently scheduled upon completion of the Arcola Avenue Corridor Study. The Arcola Intersection Improvement should be informed by the broader Arcola Corridor study to ensure improvement to that corridor is made in an efficient and coordinated manner. The project timing should be updated at that time, if needed. This project will be funded through Servicing Agreement Fees at an estimated cost of $1 million.

Background

From the June 7, 2018 report to the Public Works & Infrastructure Committee, identified improvements are:

1. Add a third eastbound lane from the overpass at Ring Road to Pilot Butte Creek.
2. Install dual, eastbound left turn lanes at the intersection of University Park Drive and Arcola Avenue.

The Arcola Intersection Improvement project consists of detailed design and construction work for providing additional intersection capacity at Arcola Avenue and University Park Drive, as well as Arcola Avenue and Prince of Wales Drive.

Community Investment Grants Program

Description

At the June 25, 2018 meeting of City Council a motion was approved that Administration review the Community Investment Grants Program budget for it to be increased to meet growing demand and subsequently indexed to inflation and that this be considered in the 2019 budget development process.

Summary

Administration has reviewed this matter and an increase to the Community Investment Grants Program is not included in the 2019 Budget. In order to achieve meaningful, impactful investment in the community it is estimated that the City would need to spend an additional $1 million.

The purpose of this program is to fund and partner with community non-profit organizations to deliver programs, projects and services that align with the City of Regina's priorities, have a clear community impact and respond to community need. An incremental $1 million investment in this program equates to a 0.42% increase to the mill rate.

Background

The City offers a range of grants and funding opportunities each year in the areas of culture, social development, and sport and recreation. Through the Community Investment Grant Program, the City funds and partners with community non-profit organizations to deliver programs and services to Regina residents that align with city priorities, have a clear community impact and respond to community needs.

In 2017, the program provided approximately $3.37 million to 196 non-profit organizations within our community. Through this funding, these organizations were able to provide 232,936 hours of programming to our residents, which allowed 2,183,404 participants to enjoy a variety of events, initiatives and programs throughout the community.

Many organizations have received funding cuts in recent years from other provincial funders and would like to receive an inflationary and/or a general increase in core operational funding from the City of Regina. Administration conducted a review and determined that an increase of $1 million would be required to have impactful changes in the community.

Detailed Design for Parking Improvements Downtown

Description

At the June 14, 2018 meeting of the Community and Protective Services Committee, a motion was brought forward and approved that the detailed design to upgrade paid parking infrastructure in the downtown core with consideration of design, phasing and funding options be included in the development of the 2019 proposed budget.

Summary

The paid parking infrastructure project proposes to engage a transportation and parking consultant to develop a detailed design for on-street parking payment options in the downtown core. A detailed parking design will provide full life cycle costs of the infrastructure. The plan will consider phasing and financing options, including consideration of a parking reserve. This project is included in the General Capital Plan at a cost of $50,000 funded through the Downtown Deferred Revenue Account (DDRA) and does not have a property tax implication.

Background

This project would contemplate the installation of infrastructure (parking meters, pay stations, etc.) to modernize the experience for drivers parking downtown. This work would outline a large scale replacement of current parking meters.

This recommendation does not have implications for the 2019 mill rate as this funding is recommended to come from the DDRA. Projects drawing funds from this source are required to benefit the downtown community. The Regina Downtown Business Improvement District group which represents the downtown business members will be engaged in this project.

The design work in and of itself will not change the service levels for the public. The primary benefit of this work would be a detailed design that would consider the engineering implications in replacing the parking infrastructure. The preliminary estimates of replacing all downtown parking infrastructure (parking meters) is between $1 million and $1.5 million in capital and an increased operating cost of $20,000 to $100,000. The design work would also include a phasing plan which would contemplate multi-year replacement.

Snow Angels

Description

At the April 30, 2018 City Council meeting a motion was brought forward and approved to:

1. Research "Snow Angels" or similar programs in other municipalities, and propose a program in consultation with community serving organizations, in which organizations own and drive the delivery of a program in the community to support Regina becoming a more accessible winter city;
2. Research and consider options to incent community organizations to participate;
3. Develop options to support community organizations to educate and promote any such program;
4. Prepare a report for consideration by City Council as part of the 2019 Budget development process

Summary

An investment of $50,000 is included in the 2019 Budget for the implementation and evaluation of a pilot volunteer-based snow removal program in partnership with one or more community organizations. Administration will manage the program through the Community Investment Grant Program and will begin accepting proposals for neighbourhood-level snow removal initiatives from community organizations in 2019. Depending on the scope of the proposals received, more than one may be funded in the pilot year.

Background

In 2006, the last year for which data is available, there were 25,430 households in Regina where at least one person reported experiencing a disability. 2016 numbers are expected to be available at the end of November 2018. Among other challenges, a lack of means to clear snowfall from sidewalks and entryways can prevent people from accessing employment, healthcare, food and other personal care needs, cultural and recreational activities, and can increase isolation.

The pilot is anticipated to target one or more neighbourhoods. Research the City commissioned in 2011 identified that almost a third of the population who identified as experiencing disability lived in four neighbourhoods: Arcola East, Dewdney East, North Central, and Albert Park. The call for proposals is anticipated to result in a focus on one or more neighbourhoods where the proponent knows there is a larger number of households that meet the criteria, to facilitate an efficient pilot and rich source of data to support evaluation and design of a permanent program.

Administration reviewed nine municipalities that currently operate a Snow Angels program: Vancouver, Ottawa, Hamilton, Calgary, Edmonton, Medicine Hat, Winnipeg, Halifax and Saskatoon. Administration has also noted two local snow removal programs led by the North Central Community Association and the Senior Citizens Centre.

A volunteer match program being recommended is typically led by municipality or non-profit; funded by municipality. This type of program is found in Vancouver, Windsor, Hamilton, Edmonton, Winnipeg.

The basis of this model is to develop a roster of volunteers who can be assigned to clear snow for seniors, people experiencing disability, or others identified as needing assistance through individual requests, referrals or nominations.

Recruitment of volunteers is done through a call out to the community, or through establishing partnerships with local schools whose students require volunteer hours. Incentives for community volunteers in other municipalities include tablets, gift cards, and hockey or football tickets.

The program can be administered by a non-profit organization, as in the case of Take Pride Winnipeg's Snow Angels program, or by the municipality. The City of Edmonton administered a program like this in the past but has since transitioned to an awareness campaign. Feedback from the City of Edmonton suggested that the City-led volunteer match program was resource-intensive and not sustainable for that organization over the long term. Administration's recommendation leverages existing expertise and volunteer engagement in community non-profits rather than administering the program internally.

Advantages:

- Leverages the expertise and community-building capacity of local non-profit organizations; may have already identified residents in need, or have a source of volunteers in place
- May take advantage of other similar programs to be able to find efficiencies and keep costs low
- A non-profit administrator may have more success identifying additional partners to support the program financially or with incentives for volunteers

Disadvantages

- Administration may have less control over the day to day management of the program, but the progress will be evaluated at key milestones and at the conclusion of the season.

Mobile Food Vending Permit Fees

Description

At the June 25, 2018 City Council meeting, a motion was brought forward and approved that Administration reassess the Temporary Street Use Permit fees for Mobile Food Vendors with recommendations for change to be brought forward as part of the proposed 2019 Budget.

Summary

The 2019 Budget includes an amendment to the Temporary Street Use Permit that enables Mobile Food Vendors to chose one of two annual permits. The standard permit, which is unchanged from previous years, will remain at a cost of $1,680 per year and a reduced permit that does not include a parking meter bag will have a fee of $1,300 per year.

The report presented to City Council (CM18-9) compared Mobile Food Vending Permit Fee structures of both Saskatoon and Regina. Administration subsequently conducted a short survey of 34 current and former mobile food vending operators in Regina to gather feedback on the Mobile Food Vending Program (program) with a response rate of approximately 68 per cent. Many respondents indicated that they did not have a 2018 permit or plan to purchase a permit in 2019 due to cost. Survey results indicated that the majority of the respondents did not utilize the parking meter bag.

For vendors that choose to opt out of a parking meter bag, their annual permit fee will be reduced by $380 or 22.6%, without impacting their access to the City Square Plaza.

Background

In 2012-2013, the City piloted a mobile food vending program to support activities which create a vibrant downtown. In 2014, the City adopted a permanent mobile food vending program and at that time the fees for obtaining a mobile vending permit were set at $1,400 per year. This fee was embedded into the Traffic Bylaw since mobile vending is a type of street-use permit.

In April of 2017, City Council considered recommendations to amend the 2017 General Operating Budget to compensate for the effects of the Saskatchewan provincial budget for 2017-2018. One of the decisions made by City Council was to increase Mobile Food Vending Permit Fees by 20% to support an increase to the overall budget. The 20% increase in permit fees increased the Mobile Food Vending Permit to $1,680 per year.

The fee for obtaining the standard permit covered the City's costs for:

- Power consumption when operating on the plaza
- Loss in parking revenue since each permit holder has a marking meter bag that would allow them to use a parking stall for their vending operation with no cost for the parking stall
- The cost of administering the program.

Since its inception as a pilot project in 2012, 29 mobile food vending businesses have accessed the program. The average number of permits issued each year under the program has been 9.

Year	Number of Permits Issued
2012	11
2013	11
2014	6
2015	11
2016	9
2017	10
2018	6
Average	**9**

Vendors who choose to purchase an annual permit without a meter bag, will have reduced opportunity to vend in the Downtown from the road right-of-way. These vendors will be limited to parking in the Downtown in accordance with the posted parking restrictions (typically limited to 2 hours per meter), which are in place for all parking meter users. Vendors with an annual permit that incudes a meter bag will be allowed to stay at a parking meter for up to 19 hours at a time. All permit holders will be allowed to vend from the Downtown Plaza.

Condominium Waste Rebate Program

Description

At the May 28, 2018, City Council meeting a motion was brought forward and approved that the Condominium Waste Rebate program be referred to Administration to look at it as part of the waste management review, including what other similar-sized cities across Canada are doing, and that Administration engage the Canadian Condominium Institute, Southern Saskatchewan Chapter, and any other interested parties, for public input.

Summary

The 2019 Budget has no provision for the reinstatement, in whole or in part, of a waste rebate for condominium properties. While the motion was to have this reviewed as part of the waste management review, it is presented here because the Solid Waste Curbside Collection Services Funding Policy has been deferred until Q1 of 2019.

The Solid Waste Curbside Collection Services Funding Policy report addresses the opportunities of introducing a user fee for waste services that are currently funded through property tax. The public policy work highlights the need to determine the funding source for the waste management system and within that the appropriate debate and decision on the condo waste rebate program.

The deferral of a decision to reinstate the condo rebate without consideration within the 2019 Budget may be seen by condo owners as the City not acknowledging the concerns that they have brought forward since the elimination of the program in 2017. Conversely, reinstatement of the program to provide a rebate for certain households as a result of those residents not receiving a particular service may generate a more significant debate about the linkage of taxes and services.

Background

The condo rebate was established in 2002 as a response to condo property owners representing that they were being taxed unfairly as they contributed to garbage service as part of their property tax but were denied service due to their property configuration. The City provides residential garbage collection using curbside roll out carts which is not conducive to multi-family properties, particularly high density, multi-storied properties. In 2002, the anticipated annual cost of the rebate was $150,000. The annual rebate provided $40 per owner-occupied condominium unit to offset costs paid to private waste haulers.

As part of the 2017 Amended Operating Budget, the condo rebate program was eliminated as an ongoing cost savings measure. Based on the previous year's rebate, savings were calculated at approximately $250,000 annually.

Identified as an on-gong cost savings, the condo rebate was not reinstated in the 2018 budget. During Council's 2018 budget discussion, reinstatement of the condo rebate was brought forward as an amendment to the proposed budget but was unsuccessful. In May 2018, Council Motion (MN18-6) directed Administration to look at the condo rebate as part of the waste management review. This review, originally scheduled to be brought before City Council in Fall, 2018 has been deferred to Q1 of 2019.

Stakeholder meetings were held in August, 2018 as part of the information gathering for the comprehensive review of the condo rebate. In general, the feedback indicated the following:

- Condominiums pay property tax, but do not receive all the services available to single-family households, garbage collection being the example
- Condominium owners feel they are paying "twice for garbage collection, once through property taxes and again directly to a private contractor
- Condominium owners feel that they are treated unfairly by the City
- Condominium owners desire equity with other homeowners as they are taxed the same as single-family households
- A user fee for garbage, charged only to those that receive the service would eliminate the problem, but condominium owners are not convinced there would be an appropriate reduction in overall property tax
- The condo rebate has not been adjusted since its introduction in 2002 and condo owners have stated that the rebate is inadequate to cover the costs of garbage collection at the condominium properties. Condo owners would like to see the rebate reinstated at a higher amount

OPTIONS

Because the Solid Waste Curbside Collection Services Funding Policy has been delayed until after the development of the 2019 Budget, analysis of the options and recommendations included in this report are based on the previous experience with the rebate and assumptions noted below. Any variation in the assumptions will impact the cost of the program.

- The previous guideline of the program will remain in place, including that the unit must be "owner occupied", the rebate value remains at $40 per unit and that they do not have solid waste services provided by the City
- The number of eligible units are assumed to be 7,750
- The cost to administer the program is estimated at $25,000

Option 1 – No reinstatement of rebate, pending outcome of Solid Waste Curbside Collection Services Funding Policy report (Recommended)

Advantages:

- No impact to waste services or service levels
- Allows for appropriate discussion of City services funding policy

Disadvantages:

- May be viewed as the City is not listening to the concerns brought forward by condo owners

Financial Implications:

- No impact to the proposed 2019 Operating Budget

Option 2 – Reinstatement of rebate for 2018 taxation year only, payable in 2019, based on the guidelines of the previous program, pending outcome of waste management review

Advantages:

- No impact to waste services or service levels

- Condo owners may acknowledge that the City is listening to their concerns brought forward at City Council and through public consultation meetings
- Provides the City with appropriate time to present a comprehensive review that will provide better context to waste services funding and public policy regarding funding for City provided services
- Provides condo owners with financial supplement for private garbage service for the 2018 taxation year

Disadvantages:

- Other property owners may see this as their property taxes supporting condo owners
- Will require establishing administrative support that has been eliminated as a cost saving measure
- Being a one-time reinstatement, it may raise expectations of condo owners

Financial Implications:

- Reinstatement of 2018 rebate based on $40 per unit, adjusted for the additional units that could apply that may not have in the past, would require approximately $335,000 (including administration costs) in the general operating budget. This equates to a 0.14% mill rate increase that will need to be offset by reductions in other areas or by an increase to the recommended mill rate

Option 3 – Retroactive reinstatement of the rebate for 2017 and reinstatement of rebate for 2018 taxation year only, payable in 2019, based on the guidelines of the previous program, pending outcome of waste management review

Advantages:

- No impact to waste services or service levels
- Allows for appropriate discussion of City services funding policy
- Provides condo owners with financial supplement for private garbage service for the 2018 taxation year and retroactive payment against 2017 garbage collection costs

Disadvantages:

- Retroactive reinstatement of the 2017 rebate may be seen as a reversal of the City's decision to implement cost saving measures to meet the provincial impact to the 2017 Operating Budget
- Retroactive reinstatement may give the impression that permanent reinstatement of the rebate has been decided

Financial Implications:

- Retroactive reinstatement of 2017 rebate and reinstatement of the rebate for the 2018 taxation year would add approximately $653,000 including administration costs to the general operating budget. This equates to a 0.26% mill rate impact that will need to be offset by reductions in other areas or by an increase to the recommended mill rate

Open Space Pathway Snow Clearing Service

Description

At the October 29, 2018 City Council meeting, a resolution was approved that an option to snow clear all open space pathways, city-wide, be refer to the 2019 budget process for consideration.

Summary

Clearing all pathways of snow would result in an additional $49,000 in annual operating expenses (labour and equipment) and would require a further additional $136,000 capital investment in fleet. This equates to a 0.08% mill rate increase that will need to be offset by reductions in other areas or by an increase to the recommended mill rate.

The 2019 proposed budget does not include the additional funding noted above to snow clear all open space paved pathways.

Advantages:

- An increase in resident satisfaction due to more open pathways
- Improved mobility and recreational opportunities offered to residents in the winter season

Disadvantages:

- Some parks were not designed to receive winter maintenance. Narrow paths, curbs and bridges prevent equipment from clearing pathways
- There is the potential for damage to turf, which would require additional funding dollars to repair
- Some portions of the pathway network are alternatives or end without a destination

Background

The City of Regina has 88 kilometers of asphalt and concrete pathways throughout the open space network. This includes the 41 kilometres of multi-use pathway and 47 kilometers of neighbourhood pathway segments.

A survey with our Municipal Benchmarking Network Canada (MBN Canada) partners in 2018 indicates that Regina clears more pathways (69%) than most other Canadian municipalities in the network. Table 1.1 shows the percentage of pathway that each municipality clears.

Table 1.1 MBN Canada partner municipal snow clearing percentage comparison

Municipality	Per Cent of Pathways Cleared
Regina	**69%**
Saskatoon	69%
London	59%
Calgary	47%
Winnipeg	20%
Sudbury	2%

Currently 61.1 kilometres of the 88 kilometres of paved pathways are cleared by the City of Regina. To help determine options, an analysis was done on the 26.9 kilometres of pathway currently not cleared. Table 1.2 shows the results of this analysis.

Reason Pathway Segments Are Not Cleared	Total Kilometres	Percentage
Bridges (Not built or designed to withstand heavy snow clearing equipment)	0.5	1.9%
Paths that end without a destination (Path joins a park field, joins crusher dust path, is a path to a closed amenity like a tennis court)	2.6	9.7%
Alternate path or exit already cleared in the same open space (A path that splits, or has separate exits may only have one route cleared, providing a throughway connection)	6.1	22.7%
Narrow concrete paths (Pocket park pathways) *	2.6	9.7%
Pathway does not meet transportation criteria to be cleared	15.1	56.1%
Total Pathways Not Cleared	**26.9**	**100%**

***** *This does not include the concrete street to street connector path segments which are the responsibility of Winter Road Maintenance.*

At the October 29, 2018 City Council meeting, Council referred consideration of snow clearing an additional 26.9 kilometers of paved pathways to the 2019 budget development process. This would mean all pathways in open space, including duplicate pathways, narrow concrete paths in pocket parks and paths that end without a destination would be cleared.