

Central Avenue Streetscaping Project – Update and Request for Capital Budget Funding

ISSUE

The purpose of this report is to respond to a request from City Council to provide an update on Central Avenue Streetscape Project, and advise that a request for funding to support Phase 3 has been included in the 2020 Capital Budget requests, as part of the options included within the prioritization process for the 2020/21 budget deliberations.

BACKGROUND

The Central Avenue Master Plan (Master Plan) was approved by City Council in 2009. The Master Plan report called for streetscape improvements on Central Avenue between 107th Street and 115th Street. Due to the scope of the project, it was divided into four phases. As part of the former Urban Design – City-wide Program, with funding from the Land Sales Administration Fee, Phase 1 construction (south side of the 109th Street intersection to the north side of the 110th Street) was completed in 2012, and Phase 2 (improvements north along the east and west side of Central Avenue through to the north side of the 113th Street) was completed in 2015. The Urban Design - City Wide Program and its funding source for streetscape construction concluded in 2016, and a new funding source is required before construction of Phase 3 of the streetscape plan can proceed.

At the November 26, 2018 meeting to discuss the Preliminary Business Plan and Budget, City Council requested that:

“Administration report back about Capital Budget 2166 (Urban Design – City Wide: Central Avenue Streetscaping) with details about the scope of the project, potential partnerships to fund the project (e.g. working with other Departments to identify shared work/costs for upgrades), and funding options. The report should be delivered in time for 2020 Corporate Business Plan and Budget deliberations.”

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

Phase 3 Construction Will Conclude South Portion of Project

Phase 3 of the Central Avenue Streetscape Project will continue the existing design improvements south to 107th Street and will conclude the south portion of the construction project. Phase 3 involves continuation of the multi-use pathway, new pavers, street furniture and some driveway realignments along Central Avenue. The design will also include a gateway feature at 108th Street that will identify and celebrate this historic business district. The Urban Design team will work with the Sutherland Business Improvement District (Sutherland BID) to design a unique gateway feature.

Central Avenue Streetscaping Project – Update and Request for Capital Budget Funding

Project Stakeholders Include Internal and External Partners

Streetscape improvement projects are comprehensive plans involving multiple civic departments and private stakeholders, including the Business Improvements Districts (BID) and property owners within the study area.

External stakeholders will include the Sutherland BID, who will be directly involved in designing the gateway feature. The Urban Design Team will also work with area businesses to keep them apprised of the proposed design and timing of construction to help minimize impacts on their businesses. The Sutherland BID will assist with the communication efforts to ensure area businesses and property owners are involved throughout the project.

The Urban Design team will work with internal departments to coordinate streetscape construction with any planned improvements in the area. Some of the internal partnerships include Transportation, Construction and Design, Parks, Saskatoon Water, Saskatoon Transit and Saskatoon Light and Power. These internal stakeholders will help comprise an internal steering committee to assist in guiding the project from design through construction. Any opportunities to provide further enhancements to the project will also be explored. Although funding for the streetscape project is not available through these internal Divisions, the team will search for opportunities for improvements beyond the urban design efforts, such as potentially enhanced bus stops.

Potential Sources of Funding

Based on the preliminary design, Administration estimates that \$900,000 is required to complete Phase 3 of the construction project. There is currently \$100,000 available in the City Wide Streetscape Reserve for the project, which are residual funds from the construction of the first two phases of the project. A total of \$100,000 will also be redirected from pedestrian amenities to the Central Avenue Streetscape budget. Another \$100,000 was approved for the design work in 2019, leaving a funding shortfall of \$600,000.

The first two phases of the Central Avenue Streetscape Project were funded from the Land Bank Sales Administration Fee (collected from the sale of city-owned parcels of land). To date, \$2.1 million has been dedicated from this funding source to the Central Avenue Streetscape Project. Other priorities have meant this funding source is no longer available for Phase 3 of the Central Avenue Streetscape Project.

Although parking meters were installed as part of the streetscape work along Central Avenue, the revenue forms part of the general Parking Meter revenues, which is distributed according to a set formula. Some of this funding is allocated to the BID Streetscape Reserve which is committed to the three core BIDs (Broadway, Riversdale and Downtown YXE); therefore, parking meter revenue is not a funding option for this project.

Internal discussions have occurred with all relevant groups to identify if potential funding exists in other areas to partner on this project. Other existing sources of funding have

Central Avenue Streetscaping Project – Update and Request for Capital Budget Funding

not been found; therefore, the Administration is requesting that \$600,000 be dedicated to the project from the Reserve for Capital Expenditures (RCE). A submission has been included as part of the 2020/21 RCE prioritization process for consideration during the 2020/21 budget deliberations.

Timing of Phase 4

Phase 4 of the Central Avenue Streetscape Project includes the area from 113th Street to the CP rail line, and would include a pedestrian crossing. Completion of the fourth phase will depend on funding availability, the future plan for the rail crossing and negotiations with CP Rail. There is no estimated timeline for this work to be completed.

Future of Streetscaping and Urban Design in the Sutherland BID

Although some work is required at the north end of Central Avenue, Phase 3 will conclude the majority of construction work for the Central Avenue Streetscape Project. Upon completion of Phase 3, the Administration, in consultation with all BIDs, will explore the possibility of the Sutherland BID moving into the Urban Design – BID program. This would help support the flowerpot and banner programs, public art installations, pedestrian amenities, facade grants and funding for maintenance of urban design assets in the Sutherland BID area. A report to City Council detailing the implications of this request would be provided before any action is taken.

IMPLICATIONS

The financial implications of this report include the request for \$600,000 of reserve for capital expenditures (RCE) funding to support Phase 3 construction of the Central Avenue Streetscape Project. There are no legal, social, or environmental implications identified.

NEXT STEPS

The next step in this project is for the funding request to be considered during the 2020/21 Capital Budget deliberations.

Report Approval

Written by:	Paul Whitenect, Manager, Neighbourhood Planning Section
Reviewed by:	Lesley Anderson, Director, Planning and Development Division
Approved by:	Lynne Lacroix, General Manager, Community Services Department

SP/Central Avenue Streetscaping Project – Update and Request for Capital Budget Funding/gs