

## Admin Report - Bus Rapid Transit Pilot Station Budget Adjustment.docx

### ISSUE

This report is to seek approval for a budget adjustment of \$350,000 to Capital Project #2328 – Transit Implementation Plan for the construction of a Bus Rapid Transit Pilot Station.

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation recommend to City Council:

1. That Capital Project #2328 - Transit Implementation Plan be increased by \$300,000 in 2020 funded through the Bus Rapid Transit funding plan and decreasing the 2021 capital allocation to this project; and
2. That Capital Project #2328 - Transit Implementation Plan be increased by \$50,000 through a transfer from previously approved funding in Capital Project #2541 - Growth Plan to Half a Million Implementation.

### BACKGROUND

#### History

In 2016, City Council approved The Growth Plan to Half a Million (Growth Plan). The plan charts a course for long-term growth and revitalization that balances and promotes quality of life, sustainability, and economic development.

A key element of the Growth Plan is rethinking the way in which the City of Saskatoon (City) provides transportation options to existing and future residents. As Saskatoon grows to 500,000 people, it will require a variety of transportation options to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people and goods throughout the city. Given this objective, the Growth Plan includes a specific Transit Plan that aims to redefine public transit in Saskatoon. The proposed Transit Plan primarily focuses on building a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system, and identifies changes needed to the current system to support high-frequency, direct service along the major corridors.

The BRT system is intended to form the backbone of the future transit system and is seen to be a catalyst for the corridor growth component of the Growth Plan. In order to have a successful BRT system, Saskatoon needs to reconfigure its transit system around the BRT lines, and this means fundamental changes in how the transit system operates.

In November 2017, City Council approved a “preferred configuration and conceptual network” for the BRT system. The preferred configuration included “runningways” or dedicated lanes along select short road sections. At its meeting held on June 20, 2018, the Governance and Priorities Committee entertained public comment on the proposed BRT configuration. During that meeting, several questions were asked and the Administration committed to responding to the technical questions and conducting

further stakeholder and public engagement prior to bringing a decision report forward to confirm the BRT and Downtown Active Transportation Networks.

During its October 15, 2018 meeting, the Governance and Priorities Committee received a report and a presentation from the Administration providing responses to the majority of technical questions raised in June, and a summary of the stakeholder/community engagement activities completed to date to support the Transit Plan/BRT Plan and the Downtown Active Transportation Network.

During its April 29, 2019 meeting, City Council endorsed the proposed network and location of 38 kilometres of BRT, which consists of 35.3 kilometres running in mixed traffic and 2.7 kilometres in dedicated transit-only lanes on 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue through Downtown and on College Drive, six bus-only queue jump locations along with 38 kilometres of fibre optic communication cable, 14 upgraded traffic signal controllers, and transit signal priority at 90 intersections.

### **Current Status**

The BRT Project Team is completing detailed design for most components of the network and system, and undertaking implementation planning. The implementation planning work on the BRT project includes construction of a pilot station prototype to provide an opportunity for live-testing implementation and operation of station components.

### **DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS**

The construction of a BRT pilot station would allow for a test location so components of the BRT stations could be tested in Saskatoon ahead of the procurement and implementation of components across the entire proposed network. This approach would help mitigate risk arising from station component performance through testing under local conditions. Risk exposure of unsuitable components would be limited by testing their performance at a single station location prior to procuring and installing components at 85 locations. The proposed BRT pilot station would be constructed near the Civic Operations Centre providing the opportunity for the project to gather Saskatoon Transit staff feedback during testing.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The work detailed in this report is estimated to be \$500,000 and would be funded as follows:

- \$150,000 would be funded from the already approved funds within the 2020 Capital Budget for Capital Project #2328 – Transit Implementation Plan.
- \$300,000 would be funded from the available funding in the BRT Funding Plan. Capital Project #2328 would be reduced by \$300,000 in 2021.
- \$50,000 is available in approved Capital Project #2541 - Growth Plan to Half a Million Implementation and would be transferred into Capital Project #2328.

There are no 2020 mill rate implications as a result of this adjustment as the BRT Funding Plan had available funds for 2020.

## **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

There are no privacy, legal, social, policy, or environmental implications identified.

## **NEXT STEPS**

Following the approval of funding, components to be included at the test site will be confirmed, the testing methodology will be finalized, a stakeholder engagement and communication plan will be created, and a tender will be issued for construction.

### Report Approval

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