

# Downtown Active Transportation Network – June 2021 Update

## ISSUE

This report outlines the previous reporting and Council resolutions regarding the Downtown Active Transportation Network and outlines the next steps for the project.

## BACKGROUND

At its Regular Business Meeting held on April 29, 2019, City Council considered the Downtown Active Transportation Network report and resolved, in part:

“That Option 1 (3rd Avenue, 23rd Street and 19th Street) be endorsed as the future active transportation network in the Downtown, but that implementation decisions (including capital or detailed design expenses) be deferred until the administration has completed engagement based on the following criteria:

- That the active transportation network be designed for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, and those with accessibility needs.
- That design and configuration options for the network should be drawn from collaborative engagement with all affected stakeholders (including Downtown Saskatoon), and that these options be focused on enhancing the public realm for all users.
- That engagement include outstanding concerns, including parking, design standards, streetscaping and construction.
- In 2021 after engagement, that Administration report back with opportunities to reduce costs by completing active transportation work in conjunction with future streetscaping improvements.”

## CURRENT STATUS

In preparation for the next steps on the Downtown Active Transportation (AT) Network, the Administration retained Urban Systems, with the support of 8 80 Cities, to conduct an audit of the study’s past process and outcomes to inform a revised approach for future engagement and delivery of the downtown network.

The Administration is utilizing the results of that audit to prepare for the next round of engagement and design work on the Downtown AT Network. It is anticipated that the work will begin in the third quarter of 2021.

## DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The development of the Downtown AT Network has undergone significant study and engagement efforts since the Protected Bike Lane Pilot Project was first implemented in the Downtown in 2015. A summary of the past reports and key City Council resolutions beginning with the evaluation report of the Protected Bike Lane Pilot Project are listed in Appendix 1.

Key decisions, such as a provision for protected bike lanes to be included in the Downtown AT network and the endorsement of 3rd Avenue, 23rd Street and 19th Street as the future active transportation network in the Downtown, have established the viability of an all ages and abilities AT network and confirmed the streets that will provide a connected AT network in Saskatoon's Downtown.

Previous engagement with the public and stakeholders has highlighted the importance of balancing the needs of all users, including the provision of a cycling network that connects at key intersections and to the wider network, and ensuring the design enhances the public realm experience of Saskatoon's Downtown.

The next phase of the project will build on the previous decisions to achieve the following goals:

- Create a downtown all ages and abilities AT network that will best address the transportation, economic, and social needs of Saskatoon residents;
- Enhance the public realm and overall downtown experience;
- Improve safety and comfort across all user groups, including people walking, biking, taking transit, and driving;
- Support social and mobility equity for groups that currently face distinct barriers to accessing and enjoying active transportation in the Downtown; and
- Communicate about the project in clear and compelling ways.

Future engagement will be focussed on the following topics:

- Priorities regarding public realm enhancement and streetscaping elements;
- Specific stakeholder concerns and mitigation strategies regarding the active transportation network design including parking, accessibility and operations-related needs, streetscaping and construction; and
- Feedback that will help inform strategies for increasing social and mobility equity.

The Administration will hire a consulting firm to deliver the next phase of the Downtown AT Network. It is anticipated that project work would begin in Quarter Three with engagement occurring in Quarter Four of 2021.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

This project is funded through Capital Project #2468 – Active Transportation Plan Implementation.

### **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

The privacy, legal, social, and environmental implications have not been assessed at this time.

**NEXT STEPS**

1. Issue Request for Quotations and hire a consulting firm to develop and deliver the engagement for the Downtown AT network.
2. In conjunction with the consulting firm and internal stakeholders, undertake engagement.
3. After engagement, report back with opportunities to complete the implementation of the Downtown AT Network in conjunction with future streetscaping improvements.

**APPENDICES**

1. Summary of Previous Reports and City Council Resolutions on the Downtown Active Transportation Network

**Report Approval**

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