

WintercityYXE Strategy – Implementation Plan

ISSUE

The [WintercityYXE Strategy](#) (Strategy) is an intentional effort by the City of Saskatoon (City) and the community to celebrate what makes Saskatoon an inviting, vibrant, safe and prosperous place during the winter, while also recognizing the challenges vulnerable populations face during winter months. The Strategy was presented to the Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development and Community Services at its September 14, 2020 meeting. This report presents the Strategy's Implementation Plan (Plan) and explains next steps for implementation.

BACKGROUND

The concept of designing a Winter City is about drawing focus and access to the wonderful things winter brings, while reducing the barriers. The outcome can be a more accessible, inclusive, active, prosperous and livable community during the coldest months of the year.

In 2016 the City, in partnership with the community, began developing a Winter City Strategy for Saskatoon. During the development of the Strategy, community members shared their winter experiences and made recommendations on how to achieve a shared vision.

The Strategy was developed based on broad community engagement. Administration also provided input during Strategy development. It identifies 25 actions necessary to help residents, businesses, organizations and visitors embrace winter with as much enthusiasm as they have for the summer season, while recognizing challenges the winter months present for some residents of Saskatoon. The Strategy was presented to the Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development and Community Services at its September 14, 2020 meeting.

DISCUSSION

Moving Forward to Implementation

The Plan (see Appendix 1) is intended to provide guidance on applying the Strategy and is built on existing strengths and feedback from engagement activities. The Plan outlines for each action:

- What support is currently in place to implement the action;
- Which partners are best positioned to support implementation of the action;
- How success will be measured;
- Expected timeline for implementing the action; and
- Funding needs, including both existing and future needs.

During engagement for the Plan, community members were asked to prioritize each action. The Plan includes this prioritization.

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Engagement Activities

In Q1 of 2021, the draft Plan was shared with the WintercityYXE Working Group, key stakeholders, the public, as well as Administration through online surveys to ensure the Plan had captured all relevant information. The “What We Heard Report” is provided on the WintercityYXE website (www.saskatoon.ca/wintercityYXE).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications resulting from completion of the Plan.

Since 2016, \$685,000 has been allocated to the WintercityYXE capital project (P2519), with \$60,000 of that amount moved to the Take It Outside Grant program, leaving \$625,000 in capital funding available. In 2019, City Council approved an annual \$25,000 contribution from the operating budget toward the WintercityYXE Grant program.

The Project funding has been used for the following:

- 1) to support the implementation of quick wins;
- 2) communications and engagement activities;
- 3) the WintercityYXE Grant program prior to 2019 and the 2020/2021 Take It Outside Grant;
- 4) to support lighting initiatives; and
- 5) development of the Strategy and Plan.

Approximately \$150,000 of the Project Budget is remaining. These funds will be used for:

- Implementation of actions including, but not limited to, the development of “how to winter” materials, an Emergency Response Guide and initiatives that address the needs of vulnerable citizens;
- Staffing resources allocated to supporting implementation of the Strategy; and
- Promotion and communications support for future WintercityYXE events and activities.

For the actions identified in the Strategy which require funding and for required staffing resources to support on-going implementation of the Strategy, funding requirements will be brought forward through the typical future budget processes.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Implementation of the actions will require collaboration from community partners and the City.

NEXT STEPS

Administration will continue implementation of actions identified in the Plan using existing project funding, where possible.

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For implementation of individual actions requiring budget allocation or policy/program approval, approval by Committee and/or City Council will be sought, as required.

APPENDICES

1. WintercityYXE Strategy – Implementation Plan

REPORT APPROVAL

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