

### Strategic Options to Reduce Expenditures 2022/2023

#### ISSUE

City Council has approved various service level reports that impact the expenditures that are required to provide that service. This report provides service level reports that have been previously presented to City Council for consideration on whether there are service levels that could be adjusted to reduce expenditures in 2022 and 2023.

#### BACKGROUND

At the August 31, 2021 Special Standing Policy Committee on Finance meeting, it was resolved, in part:

- “1. That the Administration bring a report with strategic options to reduce expenditures for 2022 & 2023 to bring expenditures more in line with the current revenue increase.”

#### CURRENT STATUS

As presented in [Item 5.1](#) at the Special Standing Policy Committee on Finance meeting, despite City Council and the Administration’s efforts to keep operating expenditure increases to a minimum, the City of Saskatoon’s (City) non-tax revenues, most strikingly user fees and government transfers, have failed to grow in step with the economy as measured by population growth and inflation. As a result, the municipal property tax is picking up the fiscal slack so that the City can deliver the necessary programs and services effectively to residents and businesses.

To help address the ongoing issues and keep the indicative rate lower, the Administration deferred expected budgetary increases in the amount of \$961,500 to 2023 or future years and made pre-budget expenditure and revenue adjustments totalling \$7.54 million in 2022 and \$223,900 in 2023 before presenting the indicative budget.

#### DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The Administration reports to City Council periodically on the service levels and the expenditures required to ensure the service levels can be obtained. Many of these reports are included as appendices for City Council consideration. The dollar values used in these appendices would be the costs at the time the report was written and may be higher depending on the current cost of the service. Appendices 1-9 are past reports to City Council that provided information on service levels for Parks’ programs, Road Maintenance, Saskatoon Transit, Snow and Ice Management, Street Cleaning, Graffiti Management, and Decorative Lighting, as well as previous options for reductions due to COVID-19 or prior budgets.

If City Council wishes to explore reductions in any of the areas for the 2022/23 budgets on items presented in the appendices, the Administration could report further on that specific item(s), which would include updated costing, to the 2022/23 Business Plan

and Budget Review meeting for consideration when determining the final budget and associated property tax impact.

There are additional service level reports for Utility programs, but they have not been included within this report as a change in the service level for utilities does not impact the property tax rates. This report also does not include any items brought forward through the 2022/23 Budget Options as they would not currently be funded.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The financial implications are included within the appendices for the service levels and the Administration. These costs and implications can be updated if City Council wishes to explore any reductions to service levels.

### **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

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

### **NEXT STEPS**

City Council will consider and debate the 2022/23 Business Plan and Budget at its Business Plan and Budget Review meeting scheduled from November 29 to December 1, 2021.

### **APPENDICES**

1. [Financial and Operational Implications of COVID-19](#) (City Council – April 27, 2020)
2. [2018 Business Plan and Budget Update](#) (Governance and Priorities Committee – October 16, 2017; CK1700-1)
3. Parks Service Level
  - a) [Berm Mowing and Tree Planting Service Levels](#) (Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development, and Community Services – September 14, 2020; CK116-2 x 4200-2)
  - b) [Urban Forestry – Civic Service Review](#) (Standing Policy Committee on Environment, Utilities, and Corporate Services – June 12, 2017; CK4200-1)
  - c) [Parks Maintenance and Design Service Level – Supplemental Information](#) (City Council – 2018 Business Plan and Budget – November 27, 2017; CK116-2 x 4205-1)
4. [Road Maintenance Service Levels](#) (Standing Policy Committee on Transportation, September 21, 2017; CK116-2)
5. [Saskatoon Transit Annual Report](#) (Standing Policy Committee on Transportation – May 3, 2021; CK430-17)
6. [Snow and Ice Management Service Level](#) (Standing Policy Committee on Transportation – August 15, 2017; CK116-2 x 6290-1)
7. [Street Cleaning Service Level](#) (Standing Policy Committee on Transportation – June 12, 2017; CK 116-2 x 6315-3)

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8. [Graffiti Management Program Service Level](#) (2019 Preliminary Business Plan and Budget Review CK5000-3 x 1700-1)
9. [Decorative Lighting Service Level](#) (Standing Policy Committee on Environment, Utilities and Corporate Services – June 10, 2019; CK1905-3 x 6300-1)

### REPORT APPROVAL

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