
Admin Report - Saskatoon Transportation Strategy - Infrastructure Plan.docx

ISSUE

Applying the set of specific prioritization criteria, a prioritized transportation infrastructure project list has been developed and approval is requested from City Council. A discussion of funding scenarios over a ten-year period is also included.

RECOMMENDATION

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

1. That the list of prioritized transportation projects be approved in principle; and
2. That the information within this report be included in the next multi-year budget cycle.

BACKGROUND

City Council, at its Regular Business meeting held on March 23, 2020 considered criteria for prioritizing transportation projects and resolved:

“That the criteria for prioritizing transportation projects, as provided in the report of the General Manager, Transportation & Construction Department, dated March 2, 2020, be approved.”

The prioritization criteria were derived from the Strategic Plan 2018–2021, and are as follows:

1. Improves equity
2. Improves accessibility
3. Improves safety
4. Optimizes traffic flow
5. Addresses network gaps
6. Optimizes parking
7. Facilitates infill development

Currently, base transportation funding is provided through various reserves. A summary of these reserves is provided in Appendix 1. Historical funding provided for transportation projects is summarized below:

Reserve	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Active Transportation	\$ 470,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 575,000	\$ 575,000	\$ 575,000
Traffic Noise Attenuation	\$2,866,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 0	\$ 0
Traffic Safety	\$1,440,000	\$1,419,000	\$1,095,000	\$1,050,000	\$1,050,000
Transportation Infrastructure Expansion	\$ 702,000	\$2,308,000	\$2,065,000	\$2,095,000	\$2,050,000
Transportation Infrastructure	\$1,264,000	\$1,768,000	\$1,205,000	\$1,440,000	\$1,440,000

The Saskatoon Transportation Strategy (STS) for the City is under development and will unite all existing transportation policies and plans including the prioritized transportation infrastructure project list. It will be consistent with the redesigned Official Community Plan, Strategic Plan, and Growth Plan. The STS will be used to guide the implementation of the infrastructure projects, annual budgeting, program development, long-range financial planning, area and corridor transportation studies, and design and practice guidelines.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

An important component of the STS is to generate the prioritized transportation infrastructure project list. The initial step was to compile a list of transportation projects and programs including new infrastructure and re-design of existing infrastructure. The list was then converted to a map (aka 'Big Picture') and is shown in Appendix 2. The projects were then classified by their stage, either planning, design, or construction.

The second step was scoring the projects and programs using the seven prioritization criteria, and re-listing in order from highest to lowest priority. The criteria were weighed on a scale of 0 to 3 where:

- 0 indicates no change
- 1 indicates minor improvement
- 2 indicates improvement
- 3 indicates significant improvement

A Triple Bottom Line (TBL) analysis was not included as part of the prioritization process as currently the TBL tool compares options within a specific project and does not compare different projects.

The resultant list of prioritized transportation infrastructure projects is provided in Appendix 3. A brief background on each project is provided in Appendix 4. Internal stakeholders identified that the Bus Rapid Transit and Corridor Growth Projects will have significant impacts to the transportation system; however, both projects have project funding plans independent of the STS and have not been included in the list. Also, many transportation infrastructure projects for new neighbourhoods have not been included as they are typically not funded or managed by Transportation, but rather by the Land Development group.

Management of the prioritized transportation infrastructure project list will be as follows:

- The plan assumes implementation begins in 2022 to coincide with the next budget cycle.
- For the next multi-year budget cycle, the Administration will propose funding based on direction received through this report.
- Early 2023, the prioritized transportation infrastructure project list will be updated and provided again to City Council for deliberation.

Implementation and management of the prioritized transportation infrastructure project list ensures City Council receives early indication of prioritized projects, followed by receiving the funding request through the budgeting process in the next year. This process can then be repeated every two years if that is the budget cycle.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Most, if not all, projects and programs on the prioritized transportation infrastructure project list are not funded. Historically, large infrastructure projects have had individual funding plans. For example, the North Commuter Parkway (Chief Mistawasis Bridge, McOrmond Drive, and Traffic Bridge), the College Drive/McOrmond Drive and Boychuk Drive/Highway 16 interchanges were funded through contributions received from the Government of Canada, the Province of Saskatchewan, the City of Saskatoon, and private developers.

As the City matures and emphasis is placed on infill development, reducing urban sprawl, and developing the Downtown, transportation priorities have shifted to transportation equity, accessibility, and providing alternate ways to move. This shift has resulted in the identification of a number of transportation projects that are multi-modal in nature and are in built-out areas of the city.

In the past, a large component of funding for large infrastructure projects has been development levies or developer contributions easily calculated and understood for Greenfield projects that promote vehicle use.

Mill-rate funding for transportation infrastructure projects in built-out areas is limited. The Administration attempts to use other level of government funding initiatives when available, but these funding programs are sporadic, and typically do require some amount of municipal funding contribution match as well.

Annual baseline funding for transportation infrastructure has not seen large increases over the last several years, and is used for less expensive projects such as Neighbourhood Traffic Reviews, traffic signals, pedestrian crossing infrastructure, and so on. For discussion purposes, three funding streams to pay for the transportation infrastructure projects listed that currently have no funding source are presented below:

1. Sidewalk Infill Fund
 - There is currently no dedicated funding for sidewalk infill projects.
 - The Active Transportation Plan (2016) identified that \$31 million in funding was required to address all possible missing sidewalks on major roads. The database on missing sidewalks on local and collector streets is being finalized, therefore, an updated comprehensive financial value of missing sidewalks is unknown.
 - Dedicated funding of 1.0% mill rate increase would provide \$2.4 million a year for a total of \$24 million over the 10 years.

2. Intersection Improvements Fund
 - The current two priorities for intersection improvements are Miller Avenue and 51st Street intersection and the 22nd Street and Fairlight Drive intersection.
 - The high level estimate to complete this work is \$4.0 million
 - Dedicated funding of 0.17% mill rate increase would provide the \$4.0 million over ten years to complete the projects.
3. Major Transportation Infrastructure Fund
 - For discussion purposes, three scenarios have been generated and are shown below.
 - City Council may re-prioritize individual projects.

Scenario 1		Scenario 2		Scenario 3	
1% mill rate increase		3.2% mill rate increase		7.6% mill rate increase	
Funds available over 10 years =	\$24.00	Funds available over 10 years =	\$76.80	Funds available over 10 years =	\$182.4
Proposed Projects:		Proposed Projects:		Proposed Projects:	
Downtown AT Network	\$4.93	Downtown AT Network	\$4.93	Downtown AT Network	\$4.93
Imagine Idylwyld	\$15.75	Imagine Idylwyld	\$15.75	Imagine Idylwyld	\$15.75
West-Central Multi-Use Corridor	\$2.50	West-Central Multi-Use Corridor	\$2.50	West-Central Multi-Use Corridor	\$2.50
		17 th Street Extension	\$10.07	17 th Street Extension	\$10.07
		Assiniboine Rail Crossing	\$0.50	Assiniboine Rail Crossing	\$0.50
		33 rd Street River Crossing	\$42.02	33 rd Street River Crossing	\$42.02
				Circle Drive between Clancy Drive and Laurier Drive	\$105.00
Cost =	\$23.18	Cost =	\$75.59	Cost =	\$180.59

NOTE: All dollar values shown are in millions.

For clarity:

- The mill rate increases listed above are for discussion purposes only.
- The scheme of providing three different funding sources is also for discussion.
- If City Council wishes to fast-track certain projects, or increase the construction rate of sidewalk infill, this can be accommodated through additional funding.
- If no funding is provided, most projects on the prioritized transportation infrastructure list will not move forward.
- The Administration will continue to apply for alternate sources of funding if and when applicable.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

The north combined utility/active transportation bridge is not highly prioritized and therefore well past 2022 for consideration to construct. Approval of the prioritized list of transportation projects as presented will result in not pursuing the combined utility/active transportation bridge opportunity further. If the project is desired, City Council would

need to provide a funding source to fast track this project in order to begin detailed design later in 2020 and begin construction in 2022.

Other implications have not been assessed at this time.

NEXT STEPS

Based on City Council endorsement of the premise provided in this report the following next steps are envisioned:

1. Continue to develop the STS document with the intent to present a draft to City Council in early 2021.
2. Based on the direction given by City Council through this report, include a funding plan for transportation infrastructure in late 2021 for the next budget cycle.
3. Between now and the end of 2022, add any new transportation infrastructure projects to the list.
4. In the first half of 2023 provide an update to the prioritized transportation infrastructure project list.

APPENDICES

1. Capital Reserve Summary
2. Transportation Projects and Programs (Big Picture Map)
3. Prioritized Transportation Infrastructure Projects List
4. Project Backgrounds

Report Approval

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