

Saskatoon Fire Department Strategic Facilities Plan- Resource Deployment Priorities

ISSUE

Administration requires City Council to approve, in principle, the Resource Deployment Priorities chart within the Saskatoon Fire Department (SFD) Strategic Facilities Plan (the Plan). The purpose is to maintain current service level objectives. The development of the priority chart focuses on minimizing response time while maximizing citizen and firefighter health and safety.

Having Council approve a strategy in principle provides the Administration with clear direction regarding which priorities to focus on, for a given business area, when presenting options during the Business Plan & Budget process.

RECOMMENDATION

That the report be submitted to City Council recommending:

1. That City Council approve, in principle, the Saskatoon Fire Department's proposed Resource Deployment Priorities.

BACKGROUND

At the August 16, 2021 Standing Policy Committee on Planning Development and Community Services, an information report was considered regarding the status of the SFD Strategic Facilities Plan.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The SFD's deployment strategy, based on continuous data analysis, identifies the improvements and changes needed in deployment priorities. This is used as a basis to align with community risk and strategic and master planning. Immediate priorities have been identified, for station location and apparatus deployment, and updated to include additional resource requirements to maintain current emergency service levels. (Appendix 1 – SFD Resource Deployment Priorities Financial Impacts). Additional resource requirements include an estimate of capital requirements and operating budget impacts.

District 2, consisting of neighborhoods in the westernmost part of the city, remains the number one priority based on out of range and/or exceeded travel time incident data (Appendix 2 - SFD Fire Districts). Data and modelling indicate service level deficits in both the North (Engine 22) and South (Engine 21) portions.

The SFD continually monitors data internally and throughout the country. To provide a clear perspective on increased service, in 2018, Vancouver Fire Rescue Services (VFRS) being one of the busiest fire services in the country, saw 82 incidents per 1,000

residents. VFRS responded to an average of 2,794 incidents per station, while most other Canadian metro cities were in the 1,500 range. The Canadian fire service average ranged between 26 and 53 incidents per 1,000 residents. In 2021, SFD responded to 66 incidents per 1,000 residents - an average of 2,050 incidents per station.

In developing the Plan, performance data, and Geographical Information Systems (GIS) mapping is analyzed to determine priorities. Also monitored are the effects of various factors that reduce the ability to achieve the recommended four-minute travel time such as:

- simultaneous calls for service,
- out of district range,
- high call frequency,
- road construction,
- traffic calming measures,
- railway,
- weather conditions, and
- traffic congestion.

The Plan is meant to be a living document that is regularly assessed to minimize response time while maximizing citizen and firefighter health and safety. As the City grows, the SFD must re-evaluate the distribution and concentration of contributing fixed and mobile resources to ensuring a safe and effective response force for fire suppression, emergency medical services, and specialty response.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost for proposed new facilities will need to be incorporated into the Civic Facilities Funding Plan which utilizes a variety of funding sources such as mill rate phase ins, debt financing, and the Canada Community-Building Fund (formally known as the Gas Tax Fund). The Administration will be tabling an update on the City's funding plans later in 2022, which if approved, will include the funding options for the Fire Resource plan. Individual projects will be included as a capital budget submission, along with identified operating impacts, at the appropriate time.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

At this time, there are no legal, social, or environmental implications. Each of these will be considered in future stages.

NEXT STEPS

The SFD will continue to analyze incident data to make data-based resource deployment decisions that align with the growth plan and the corporate strategic plan. We will conduct a community risk assessment to create the following plans for approval:

- 2022 – 2025 SFD Strategic Plan
- SFD Master Plan

APPENDICES

1. SFD Resource Deployment Priorities Financial Impacts
2. SFD Fire Districts

Report Approval

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