

# 2021 Report on Service, Savings and Sustainability

## ISSUE

The City of Saskatoon (City) strives to become the best-managed city in Canada. The purpose of this report is to provide information to City Council on the accomplishments the City achieved in 2021 related to improved service, increased savings, and realized sustainability initiatives in supporting the Strategic Goal of Continuous Improvement.

## BACKGROUND

City Council, at its meeting held on February 7, 2005, resolved:

1. That City Council confirm its commitment to continually attempt to increase the corporation's productivity and efficiency, and
2. That City Council instruct Administration to prepare a report annually on efficiencies implemented in the previous year.

## CURRENT STATUS

The City's annual Service, Savings, and Sustainability (SSS) Report seeks to highlight the innovative and creative ways staff foster a culture of continuous improvement in all aspects of civic operations.

- Service improvements focus on how staff are working hard to continually enhance the quality and reliability of current civic services as well as adapt to changing and new needs of residents and visitors.
- Savings highlight the power of thinking differently and adopting new processes to use human and financial resources as effectively as possible.
- Sustainability speaks to efforts to ensure Saskatoon grows in harmony with nature outlining initiatives that reduce the City's environmental footprint, mitigate the risks posed by climate change, and create a more equitable and socially responsible community.

## DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

In early 2022, all Divisions responded to the call to make impactful contributions to the categories outlined in the 2021 SSS Report. Despite extraordinary circumstances and resulting challenges brought on by the global pandemic in 2021, City employees found innovative ways to improve service, increase savings, and realize sustainability initiatives.

The 2021 SSS Report reflects the City's ability to continue to meet the demands and challenges of doing business during a global pandemic with resilience and readiness.

A few highlights from each report section are presented below. The full 2021 SSS Report can be viewed in Appendix 1.

### *Service*

- The lobby at City Hall underwent a minor facelift to improve the customer service experience. There is now a highly visible Customer Care Kiosk, which faces the front doors to promote easier interaction with the public. Lobby space was also reorganized to make way for additional space for residents to meet with employees on the first floor.
- Saskatoon Transit launched a new mobile ticketing platform on the TGo and Transit apps which enables Transit riders to purchase their single fare or transit passes on their mobile devices, anytime, anywhere. This touchless form of payment was quickly adopted by riders and has also resulted in savings for Saskatoon Transit.

### *Savings*

- As part of improvements to our information technology assets, the City replaced the aging Enterprise Storage Area Network (SAN) with solid-state technology. Not only does this initiative provide significant annual savings, but it also provides 100% geo-redundancy, higher speeds, and is less complex to manage. It also takes up less physical space and consumes approximately 80% less power. The project is expected to save \$292,000 over 5 years.
- Continuous improvement projects are making civic facilities more energy-efficient and more cost-effective. Projects, such as upgrading boilers in six civic buildings and updating City Hall ventilation systems, in 2021 led to \$235,000 in annual savings.

### *Sustainability*

- Saskatoon Light & Power finished a city-wide project in 2021 to replace over 17,000 existing street and park light fixtures with energy-efficient LED technology. The new fixtures last longer and use 60-70% less energy, reducing annual greenhouse gas emissions by 5,787 tonnes. The investment will pay off within four years and provide ongoing annual savings of \$849,000.
- In 2021, after the discovery of a Dutch Elm Disease (DED)-positive tree in Leif Erickson Park, Parks staff followed established DED protocol to quickly remove the positive trees and canvas the area for infected elm material. Over 12,000 kg of illegal elm material was removed and disposed of. The City also developed an online submission option to enable residents to report and submit photos of suspected DED trees. This will help improve City response time and help protect the City's elm trees, which are valued at over \$100M.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The following financial implications are highlighted within the 2021 SSS Report:

- An estimated \$820K in operational savings were identified through a combination of one-time overall and annual savings.
- Saskatoon Land generated \$67.2M in sales and leasing revenues. Financial returns from Land Development operations stay in Saskatoon and are allocated

for use in capital projects that would otherwise be funded through property taxes or borrowing.

- Grant funding approvals totaled \$76.5M through a combination of federal and provincial programs.

### **NEXT STEPS**

The 2021 SSS Report will be made available on the City's website, saskatoon.ca. The report's release and content will be promoted through social media channels and a PSA.

In line with the City's commitment to a digital-first strategy, similar to last year, printed copies of the 2021 SSS Report will not be produced.

### **APPENDIX**

1. 2021 Service, Savings and Sustainability Report

#### Report Approval

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