

Decorative Lighting Replacement Program – 2020 - 2021 Budget Considerations

ISSUE

The purpose of this report is to allow City Council to consider this item prior to the Administration including it in the list of budget options in the 2020/2021 business plan and budget process.

RECOMMENDATION

That the matter of an allocation of Reserve for Capital Expenditure funding of \$200,000 for the Decorative Lighting Replacement Program be considered with the budget options for the 2020/2021 Business Plan and Budget.

BACKGROUND

At its meeting on June 10, 2019, the Standing Policy Committee on Environment, Utilities and Corporate Services was presented with the attached report (Appendix 1) which provided an overview of the service level for the City of Saskatoon's decorative lighting program, including information about the implications of shutting off decorative lighting during the middle of the night. The program is currently managed by Saskatoon Light and Power with assistance from Urban Design in selecting new decorations.

The June 10, 2019 report also included an overview the City's current winter lighting program made up of approximately 306 illuminated seasonal and 116 non-illuminated decorations. In a recent condition assessment, Saskatoon Light and Power found that 182 of the current stock of decorations were in very poor condition. Some of the decorations could not be installed in the 2018/2019 season. Based on the current operating funding for this program, it will take 6 or more years to replace the existing decorations that are in either poor or very poor condition. In order to accelerate this replacement schedule, additional capital funding from the Reserve for Capital Expenditures would be needed in the amount of \$200,000. This funding allocation could either be accomplished over a period of one year or multiple years. The Standing Policy Committee on Environment, Utilities and Corporate Services resolved that the following recommendation be forwarded to the Governance and Priorities Committee's business plan and budget options discussion on August 19, 2019:

“That the matter of an allocation of Reserve for Capital Expenditure funding of \$200,000 for Decorative Lighting Replacement be considered with the budget options for the 2020/2021 Business Plan and Budget”.

At the Governance and Priorities Committee meeting on August 19, 2019, the Administration withdrew the report believing at that time that it made more sense for City Council to consider this report instead. In hindsight Governance and Priorities

Committee could have considered the report. In the interest of consistency, the Administration has brought all Standing Policy budget inputs through Governance and Priorities Committee or City Council, so forwarding this item to City Council will allow timelines to be met as well as giving all of City Council the opportunity to consider the item prior to the Administration developing their preliminary budget.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

Given the direction from Governance and Priorities Committee on August 19, 2019 regarding the prioritization process for Reserve for Capital Expenditures, the Administration is recommending that consideration for an allocation of funding for the Decorative Lighting Replacement Program be included in that same prioritization process. Approval of this recommendation will mean that the Administration will include this budget increase as an option for Councillors to consider when providing their priorities to the Administration.

IMPLICATIONS

The financial implications of this report is a request for \$200,000 in capital funding to accelerate the replacement of existing decorations that are in either poor or very poor condition. The funding could be provided over one or more years.

NEXT STEPS

Should City Council approve the recommendation of this report, Administration will undertake to include this funding request as one of the options within the Reserve for Capital Expenditures prioritization process. The results of which will subsequently be presented to the Governance and Priorities Committee at its October 21, 2019 meeting.

APPENDICES

1. Decorative Lighting Rate Bylaw Change (dated June 10, 2019)

Report Approval

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