

## Saskatoon Forestry Farm Park and Zoo – Zebra Facility Post-Budget Capital Project

### ISSUE

Since July 2023, the Saskatoon Forestry Farm Park and Zoo, on behalf of the Province of Saskatchewan, has been providing care and boarding, for five zebras (*Equus quagga*), under Canada's Accredited Zoos and Aquariums guidelines. This report details the capital project required to develop a facility to house the zebras during the winter, and beyond if required, to be funded by the Province of Saskatchewan.

### RECOMMENDATION

1. That the post-budget capital project for a Zebra Facility, as described in this report, with a budget of \$100,000, be approved, to be fully funded by the Province of Saskatchewan.
2. That the Saskatoon Zoo Foundation be awarded the project management of the project, and
3. That the City Solicitor be requested to review and prepare the appropriate agreement(s) related to funding and project management for the Zebra Facility, and the City Manager and the City Clerk be authorized to execute the agreement under the Corporate Seal.

### BACKGROUND

On July 13, 2023, the Province of Saskatchewan (Province) confiscated five zebras (*Equus quagga*) and brought them to the Saskatoon Forestry Farm Park and Zoo (SFFPZ) for care under Canada's Accredited Zoos and Aquariums (CAZA) guidelines. The zebras are currently under the ownership of the Province, so the daily cost of care and boarding are being reimbursed by the Province to the SFFPZ. The zebras have been housed at the SFFPZ and on display for residents and patrons to view. As the housing of the zebras is anticipated to continue throughout the upcoming winter months, a suitable winter habitat is required at SFFPZ to support the care and housing of these animals.

### DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

Administration has been in regular communication with the Province and has received confirmation of \$100,000 in provincial funding to cover the construction costs for a suitable winter enclosure to house the zebras. The Province has proposed an agreement for the continued reimbursement of the care and husbandry costs of the five zebras and to pay for the capital costs to construct a suitable enclosure required to house the zebras during winter 2023-2024. This proposed shelter will meet CAZA requirements for size and space and allow for the safe care and handling of the zebras by the SFFPZ. In order to expedite the construction of the structure, the structure will

provide at least 750 sq ft of additional space and be comprised of a 4 ft cement block pony wall, with a fabric topper.

Administration and the City Solicitors Office have reviewed the key terms that would form an agreement with the Province for this project and are in support of proceeding. The signing of any agreement between the City and the Province and work beginning on the Zebra Facility requires City Council approval and the creation of a post budget capital project to be funded by the Province. Some of the key terms of the agreement would be:

- Under the agreement, the Province is retaining the City to provide for the short-term care of the zebras.
- The term of the agreement is from October 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024.
- The Province has committed to provide the City with \$100,000 for the construction of Zebra Facility to serve as a suitable winter housing structure.
- The Province would reimburse the City based on submission of invoices and supporting documentation, both for the development of facility and ongoing care and sustenance of the zebras.
- The City can subcontract construction and project management to the Saskatoon Zoo Foundation.
- In any advertising, if requested to do so, the Province will receive the appropriate public recognition of the contribution.
- The structure will become property of the City upon completion of construction.

With the cost being in excess of \$50,000, this is considered a capital project. In order for the project to construct a Zebra Facility to proceed, approval of a post-budget capital project is required, with the funding source identified as the Province. In addition, Administration is recommending that the Saskatoon Zoo Foundation (SZF) be awarded the role of project manager for the Zebra Facility. The SZF has a successful history of managing projects at the SFFPZ, most recently the Prairie Butterfly House, and has agreed to take on this role.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications to the City, as the project is to be fully funded by the Province. A preliminary project budget of \$100,000 to construct a suitable Zebra Facility has been developed. The responsibility for ongoing operating costs for the facility will also continue to be the responsibility of the Province, as long as they retain ownership of the zebras and they continue to be housed at the SFFPZ. Any future operating implications for the facility will be addressed during the applicable budget cycle.

### **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

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

**NEXT STEPS**

Subject to City Council approval, Administration would conclude the negotiations with the Province with respect to the terms of the agreement and City Solicitors will review and prepare the necessary agreements for execution related to funding and project management. Construction of the Zebra Facility would proceed this fall.

**REPORT APPROVAL**

Written by: Andrew Roberts, Director of Recreation and Community Development

Approved by: Lynne Lacroix, General Manager, Community Services

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