



UTILITY CUTS

CIVIC SERVICE REVIEW

The civic service review focused on: documenting the current state of utility cuts processes, creating clarity around roles and responsibilities across work groups, drafting information to update the City of Saskatoon’s website, and drafting an action plan to move from the current state to a desired future state.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Utility Cuts Civic Service Review (CSR) was conducted October 26th to January 15th, 2018. The review aimed to:

- Document the current state of utility cuts processes,
- Create clarity around roles and responsibilities across work groups,
- Draft information to update the City of Saskatoon's website, and
- Draft an action plan to move from the current state to a desired future state.

The review involved approximately 35 employees from five divisions. The review identified options for improved management of the utility cuts program, streamlined data entry and tracking, and clarity around the service level. Quantified benefits from the recommended improvements will save more than \$50,000 in (*staff time, materials, and claims costs*) and 650 hours of collective citizen time annually. Major action items include:

- Moving to a single data tracking system (*that organizes information spatially*),
- Creating a defined level of service for both private and public utility cuts processes,
- Moving to City managed/completed paving for all cut repairs, and
- Engaging contractors in conversations regarding proposed program changes for feedback and idea iteration.

The next steps for the project are:

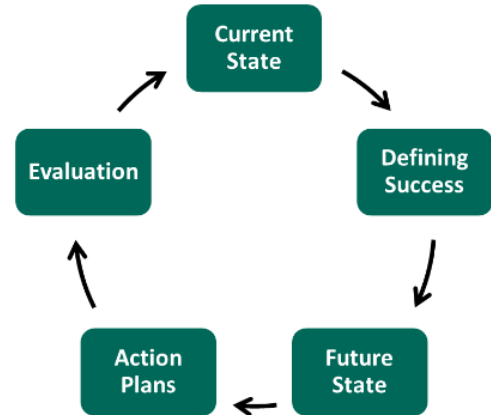
- Decision making around large scale program changes, and
- Developing the action plan resourcing and schedule plans.

INTRODUCTION

REVIEWS

Reviews involve inter-division groups working together to create positive change in the organization through increased communication, efficiency, and innovation.

There are two types of reviews conducted at the City the Saskatoon: Civic Service Reviews (CSRs) and Internal Process Reviews (IPRs). Both reviews follow the same five-stage process highlighted in the graphic to the right. The main difference between the types of review is the scope and estimated time to complete. IPRs generally have a narrower focus and as a result take less time to complete.



PURPOSE AND SCOPE OVERVIEW

The purpose of the Utility Cuts CSR was improving and documenting the processes related to underground utility access, repair/replacement, and surface rehabilitation. The review supports the City of Saskatoon’s Strategic Goals of A Culture of Continuous Improvement and Moving Around.

The scope of the Utility Cuts CSR included:

- The starting point where external contractors or internal contractors/crews must cut into the City of Saskatoon’s surface infrastructure to access underground utilities for repair, replacement, or expansion to the ending point that a permanent repair/rehabilitation of the disturbed surface is complete using proper quality control/quality assurance has occurred.

The project excluded: the implementation of the action plan created by the team and work related to Construction & Design’s capital projects.

THE REVIEW TEAM

Members	Division	Position
Dunni Harriman	Employee Experience & Performance	Facilitator/PIC
Kristin Bruce	Employee Experience & Performance	Facilitator/PIC
Brodie Thompson	Construction & Design	Team Lead
Celene Anger	Construction & Design	Executive Sponsor
Russ Munro	Water & Waste Stream	Executive Sponsor
Brandon Harris	Roadways & Operations	Executive Sponsor
Drew Bell	Information Technology	IT BRM Manager
Kim Matheson	Employee Experience & Performance	Executive Sponsor
Amber Neuls	Information Technology	BRM
Riwaj Adhikari	Construction & Design	Contributor
Evan Sears	Construction & Design	Contributor
Rob Dudiak	Construction & Design	Contributor
Roxane Vilness	Construction & Design	Contributor
Patti Chartier	Construction & Design	Contributor
Tracey Loewen	Construction & Design	Contributor
Wayne Balion	Information Technology	Contributor
Albert Leduc	Information Technology	Contributor

Caleb Ripley	Construction & Design	Contributor
Katelyn Bonokoski	Major Projects & Preservation	Contributor
Rob Frank	Major Projects & Preservation	Contributor
Derrick Francis	Construction & Design	Contributor
Mackenzie Wacker	Construction & Design	Contributor
Eric Quail	Roadways & Operations	Contributor
Lana Dodds	Roadways & Operations	Contributor
Greg Hippe	Roadways & Operations	Contributor
Reg Thompson	Roadways & Operations	Contributor
Jim Gray	Roadways & Operations	Contributor
Trent Schmidt	Water & Waste Stream	Contributor
Cam LeClaire	Water & Waste Stream	Contributor
Glen Boos	Information Technology	Contributor
Andrea Charlie	City Solicitors	Contributor
Alan Rankine	City Solicitors	Contributor
Vica Rus	TU – Business Administration	Contributor
Rob Berk	Water & Waste Stream	Contributor
Lisa Beres	City Solicitors	Contributor

CURRENT STATE ANALYSIS

The review team held more than ten hours of meetings to dig into the current state of the utility cuts processes. Meetings were facilitated using a number of activities including: brainstorming, process mapping, value analysis, and MEAT analyses.

- Highlights from the “What is Working/What is Not Working” brainstorming exercise revealed:
 - Not Working: (Themes – Level of Service, Quality Standards, Process Ownership, Permit System, Contractors, Technology)
 - There is no defined level of service in place for the process
 - Complaints are not always forwarded to the appropriate project manager
 - Citizen expectations for service are not being met
 - Contractors are not following the current permit process and are not held responsible when City expectations are not met
 - Lack of accountability for “bad” quality repairs
 - Lack of enforcement for city processes and bylaws
 - Lack of inspectors at contractor sites
 - Two databases exist for utility cut information and they do not “speak” to each other and data is often re-entered from one to the other
 - Mixed process and roles for utility cut repair leads to confusion over who owns a cut and must address issues that arise
 - Communication gaps exist between work groups involved in the process
 - Working: (Themes – Team, Process, Legal, Technology)
 - Complaints are addressed in a reasonable timeframe
 - Lack of fatalities due to utility cuts
 - Systems exist to store utility cut data
 - Communication between divisions involved has improved in the past few years
 - Stakeholders are engaged and ready for a solution to gaps in the current process
- Current state process maps were completed for the public and private cuts programs.
- A value analysis of the current state process maps resulted in the following:

- Value added steps - are those that help to create a product or service for a customer.
- Business necessary steps – are those that required by law, collective bargaining agreements, civic bylaws, etc.
- Non value added steps – are those that create waste as outlined by the DOWNTIME acronym (i.e. waiting, excessive-processing, motion, defects/errors, non-utilized talent, etc.)

	Value Added	Business Necessary	Non Value Added
Total per Value Category	4	189	33
Total Process Steps	226	226	226
Percentage (%) Steps	2%	83%	15%
Current State Result: 98% of the process could be improved			

- Finally, a MEAT (Money, Errors, Amounts, Time) analysis was conducted with the review team. Current state improvement opportunities emphasized by this work include:
 - Create a common language for utility cuts – suggested “Private Cuts” (for all the cuts initiated by groups external to the City of Saskatoon) and “Public Cuts” (for all the cuts initiated by groups within the City of Saskatoon).
 - Eliminate the ability for “ghost cuts” to occur. A ghost cut is a utility cut that is not in either of the City’s tracking systems and therefore has no ‘owner’. By default the City will maintain/repair these cuts as added without funding.
 - From July to October 2017 this issue cost the Roadway & Operations Division more than \$33,000 in staff time and materials.
 - This will also reduce the claims burden the current utility cuts program has on the Solicitors workgroup. Improperly maintained/repared cuts often result in claims against the City to repay damages done to vehicles, motorcycles, bicycles, and people moving around the City. In 2017, \$3,400 was paid out for six claims against the City and eight other claims were successfully defended. However, each claim regardless of the result requires an average of hours of staff time to prepare for.
 - Improve tracking systems so all information is available in a single system that is easily accessed and used by all groups in Construction & Design, Water & Waste Stream, Roadways & Operations, City Solicitors, and in the Customer Service Centre. Five hours of staff time is wasted each time information must be chased due to system inconsistencies or incomplete records.
 - In 2017, ten instances occurred where customer service managers had to chase information to answer citizen or Councillor complaints. This results in 50 hours of wasted staff time at a cost of \$2,100.
 - Reduce the inconsistency in service delivery between internal programs and contractor programs. For example, look into methods and costs for reducing the internal sidewalk repair time wait periods and backlog as citizens often see contractors complete an entire restoration with a single work zone. Vice versa look into improving the quality of contractor landscaping rehabilitation work, as the work done by internal staff is often far superior.

AN IDEAL FUTURE STATE

HOW DOES THE TEAM DEFINE SUCCESS?

- Consistent quality control, quality assurance, and inspections throughout all aspects of the program.
- A single program owner that answers questions, manages/coordinates all different processes, and all work groups involved report to.
- A single data system that hosts all “spatially-based” utility cut program tracking data in one place that is easy to use and accessible to users completing work as well as those accessing data to answer citizen and/or Councillor inquiries.
- A permit system that contractors use to get permission to cut into civic infrastructure.
- Program standards and procedures take into account the work period as well as long-term sustainability of the areas where cuts are being made – to inform strategic decision making.
- A defined level of service outlines all aspects of the program: “why we do it,” “how we do it,” “what it costs,” and “who do I talk to.”

THE ACTION PLAN

The action plan involves breaking ideas for improvement down into workable projects that move the team towards the implementation of the ideal future state.

Action Item	Estimated Time to Complete	Resources Required
Decisions on large scale program changes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Single Utility Cuts Program Owner 2. Single Data Tracking System 3. City manages/completes all paving restoration 	Various	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision time • Potentially an administration report for #3
Complete future state process map and procedure documentation (<i>using the new public and private cuts language and a permit system</i>)	40 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation support • Time from staff • Meeting management support
Complete new tracking system requirements gathering process and move into IT solution-ing and implementation processes	350 hours (total project start to finish)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT support for requirements gathering • BRM support on processes request from start to finish
Complete utility cuts service level document and submit through approval processes (<i>using the new public and private cuts language</i>)	40 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation support • Time from staff • Meeting management support
Complete communication plan to support and inform on changes to program (i.e.: stakeholder consultation, draft update to website, knowledge base entry for CSRs, etc.)	20 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications Consultant support • New program owner support • Stakeholder engagement support

Explore and trial alternative practices for internal sidewalk repairs to reduce settlement wait times (<i>aiming for consistency between civic and external work practices</i>)	20 hours (monitor 1 – 2 seasons)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front-line employee support/ideas • Trial management and documentation support • Funding
Complete a landscaping quality education session with contractors “what is acceptable” and “what is not” (<i>aiming for consistency between civic and external work practices</i>)	20 hours (monitor 1 – 2 seasons)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder engagement support • Front-line (internal) staff support on standards documentation and/or training development • Inspections support
Complete a jurisdictional scan of ‘the processes other municipalities use to repair utility cuts’ to see if we can gain from this knowledge	40 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research support
Improve communication between W&S teams completing utility repair work and Paving crews – to expand the "one work zone model" for Priority 2 streets	8 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorming session support • Process change support
Set responsibility and process for permit rate setting	8 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedure and process for documentation and discussion

SUMMARY OF CHANGES AND ANTICIPATED BENEFITS

Process Change	Annual Benefits	
	Quantification	Description
Single System for Data Tracking Single Program Owner	~\$5,000 in staff time (waiting reduction, underutilized systems correction)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streamlines the number of tracking systems customer service representatives (CSRs) have to check to answer citizen questions. • Reduces the number of people CSRs have to ask for information when not available in the tracking systems, significantly improving customer service in
Permit System and City Completes/Manages All Paving	~ \$40,000 in staff time, materials, and claims costs (error reduction)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significantly reduces the ability for “ghost cuts” to occur, improving: citizen safety when moving around the City, long-term asset management data reliability, focuses repair activities on scheduled work, and reduces likelihood of claims against the City.
One-work Zone Model	~ 325 hours of citizen time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves citizen safety and quality of life when moving around the City through reduced traffic and service disruptions.
Consistent Standards for Work (City/ Contractor)	~\$5,000 in staff time (re-work reduction)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves citizen service and complaints related to utility cuts as “no matter who does the work” the outcome and quality of work is consistent.
TOTAL	\$50,000 in staff time, materials, and claims costs 325 hours of citizen time	

NEXT STEPS

The original project deliverables are outlined below. Any item coloured green is complete. At this point, 50% of the deliverables have been completed.

- Moving forward PIC support (Kristin Bruce and Tanya Bell) with remaining items under the “Ideal Future State” and “Create Action Plan” headings is likely, if this fits in with partnership work plans as directed by Kim, Celene, and Brandon.
- Support from Information Technology and Communications will be required for items under the “Communications Plan” and “Update Supporting Tech Systems” as each of these actions have their own respective processes guided by these divisions.

