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# Imagine Idylwyld Corridor Concept Plan

## Recommendation

That the report of the General Manager, Transportation & Utilities Department dated June 11, 2018, be received as information.

## Topic and Purpose

This report provides the results of a transportation and land use planning study for Idylwyld Drive between 20<sup>th</sup> Street East and 25<sup>th</sup> Street East.

## Report Highlights

1. The purpose of the Imagine Idylwyld Corridor Plan is to develop a conceptual plan to improve the function, safety, connectivity, and quality of the public realm along Idylwyld Drive, from 20<sup>th</sup> Street East to 25<sup>th</sup> Street East.
2. Key elements include reducing conflicting vehicular movements and improving signal timing coordination, reducing pedestrian crossing distances and wait times, inclusion of an All Ages and Abilities (AAA) cycling facility, gateway treatments at key intersections, introduction of streetscaping, and public art opportunities within the corridor right-of-way.

## Strategic Goal

This report supports the Strategic Goal of Moving Around by improving transportation safety and optimizing the flow of people and goods in and round the city.

## Background

City Council at its meeting held on January 20, 2014, received a report that identified Idylwyld Drive from Senator Sid Buckwold Bridge to Circle Drive North as a priority street for streetscape improvements. The report states that redevelopment of the Idylwyld Drive streetscape would enhance its functionality as a corridor for all users and support recommendations and directions emerging from current planning projects (City Centre Plan, North Downtown Master Plan, and the Growth Plan to Half a Million). The report identified a phased approach to implementation that would prioritize improvements from Senator Sid Buckwold Bridge to 33<sup>rd</sup> Street.

City Council at its meeting held on August 18, 2016, approved an award of contract for the development of the Idylwyld Drive Comprehensive Corridor Project and Streetscape Concept to HOK Inc. in the amount of \$183,708 (including GST). This report provides the project's findings and recommendations.

### Report

The purpose of the Imagine Idylwyld Corridor Concept Plan (Plan) is to develop a conceptual plan to improve the function, safety, connectivity, and quality of the public realm along Idylwyld Drive, from 20<sup>th</sup> Street East to 25<sup>th</sup> Street East. This portion of Idylwyld Drive is a key linkage between many significant and different land uses and is bordered by four neighbourhoods and two Business Improvement Districts (BIDs). The current configuration of Idylwyld Drive poses a challenging environment for pedestrians to navigate and to cross, tending to divide rather than unite, the surrounding neighbourhoods and districts. The corridor's current geometry provides poor driving through lane continuity, a variety of left and right turning lane types, and a lack of ability to coordinate traffic signal infrastructure. There is no cycling specific infrastructure.

The Vision for the project was established through extensive community input and served to lead the development of the design:

“Idylwyld Drive is a signature gateway into the city centre; a modern grand avenue that connects people and places in a compact, mixed use urban environment that supports daily life in Saskatoon.”

### Key Elements

The improvements outlined in the Plan will help link the adjacent neighbourhoods and the business districts, making it easier for people to move around the City Centre and help define the street as a gateway by cultivating a sense of arrival. Key elements of the Plan include reducing conflicting vehicular movements and improving signal timing coordination, reducing pedestrian crossing distances and wait times, inclusion of an AAA cycling facility, and introduction of streetscaping and public art opportunities within the corridor right-of-way.

A list of key outcomes are defined as follows:

1. Transportation and Connectivity - To provide efficient movement of users through the study area, connecting people with their destinations using their mode of choice. Community input received through the engagement process indicated a preference that Idylwyld Drive be designed to flow as smoothly as possible for the most number of drivers. This goal is achievable concurrently with the desire to support all modes of travel and enable redevelopment opportunities. General summarization of the transportation elements proposed in the recommended design are as follows:

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Item	Description
Main driving lanes are continuous	Two lanes enter the study area from the north, and two lanes enter the study area from Sid Buckwold Bridge. These four lanes are continued through the study area.
Left-turn bays face each other	All shared left/thru lanes are removed. Left turns are provided with a left-turn bay at all intersections through the study area, with the exception of the northbound left-turn at 24 <sup>th</sup> Street, where left turns will be prohibited.
Single left-turn lane at 22 <sup>nd</sup> Street	A single northbound left-turn lane at 22 <sup>nd</sup> Street reduces travel time for the most drivers, protected/permissive left-turn operation results in less delay during non-peak hours. The existing dual left-turn requires split phasing, a longer cycle length, and does not allow permissive left turns.
Right-turn lanes have been added at key intersections	A right-turn lane is added for southbound right turns at 22 <sup>nd</sup> Street and southbound right turns at 20 <sup>th</sup> Street.
Traffic signal timing and coordination is improved	Each movement has its own lane allowing the split phasing at 22 <sup>nd</sup> Street to be eliminated and cycle lengths at each intersection to be shortened, reducing driver, pedestrian and cyclist wait times.
Right-turn refuge islands are removed	Pedestrian crossing distances are reduced and pedestrian safety is improved by removing the right-turn refuge islands.
Sidewalks are widened and accessibility improved	Sidewalks are widened and obstructions (such as light poles, utilities) are relocated to the boulevard to accommodate all users, including those with wheelchairs, walkers or strollers.
A raised cycle track from 20 <sup>th</sup> Street to 23 <sup>rd</sup> Street	A unidirectional cycle track, separated from vehicle traffic by a landscape boulevard, provides access for people riding bikes and connects with the 23 <sup>rd</sup> Street Protected Bike Lanes and the Blairmore Bikeway.
A multi-use pathway from 23 <sup>rd</sup> Street to 25 <sup>th</sup> Street	A multi-use shared pathway is provided on the west side of the corridor and connects to the Southwest Connector Multi-Use Pathway.

2. Land Use and Built Form - To ensure the uses within the study area are supported by the transportation network. The study area is predominantly commercial in use and character. The long-term plan is to provide consistency in building heights, setback, and orientation to ensure a cohesive overall character with a well-defined street wall and urban edge. While complementary land uses will unite east and west sides of Idylwyld Drive, there will be a transition of land uses north-to-south to reflect the neighbouring uses in Riversdale, Caswell Hill, Downtown and Central Industrial.

The proposed land use strategy within the Plan seeks to:

- Ensure a consistent mixed-use, mid-rise (3 to 4 stories), main street character and identity for the corridor;
- Create higher levels of density (6 to 8 stories) and activity at nodes and gateways;
- Offer more housing options, including affordable housing, to encourage neighbourhood diversity; and
- Create an interesting and walkable pedestrian environment with active uses at-grade.

3. Public Realm and Urban Design - A design that, if implemented, will enhance the quality of the street and nearby open spaces. Streetscape installations will include the usual amenities such as sidewalk and street lighting, waste and recycling receptacles, poster drums, and seating along with creative elements such as sculptural art installations, or murals. The traditional linear application of street trees is not envisioned as street trees may not be successful in this location due to limited space for soil and irrigation. Instead, a combination of hardscaping (such as pavers) and salt-tolerant plantings (such as prairie grasses) is proposed. Plantings will incorporate low-impact-development principles, and include bio-swale or rain garden components.

At key intersections, such as 20<sup>th</sup> Street, gateway opportunities have been identified. These gateway opportunities include the provision of public art, lighting, and use of distinctive streetscaping materials. The gateway features will be part of the Idylwyld Drive streetscape character, but distinctive to each area to assist with wayfinding and to celebrate unique aspects of each area of the corridor.

4. Implementation – The Administration is currently updating the Major Transportation Funding Plan. This work includes prioritizing large transportation infrastructure projects. In late 2018 or early 2019 this funding plan, including a list of prioritized projects, will be provided to City Council for discussion. The implementation timing of the improvements to the Idylwyld corridor will be included in this future report.

The Imagine Idylwyld Concept Design Report Executive Summary is included as Attachment 1. The project included a Transportation and Connectivity Technical Report, and the recommendations from this report are included as Attachment 2. Functional plan elements of the Plan are included as Attachment 3. The complete design report can be found at [www.saskatoon.ca/imaginedylwyld](http://www.saskatoon.ca/imaginedylwyld).

### **Options to the Recommendation**

The option exists for City Council to not endorse the Plan as presented. In this case, the Administration would request direction on what changes need to be undertaken.

### **Public and/or Stakeholder Involvement**

Engagement efforts included three stakeholder events with key organizations, property owners, and businesses, two on-line public surveys, one pop-up event at the Farmers' Market, and participation at the Plan for Growth Community Open House on March 7, 2018, at the Western Development Museum. In addition, a Steering Committee was established to direct the project throughout the engagement process, and was comprised of representatives from various civic divisions, the executive directors from the Downtown and Riversdale BIDs, and representatives from Midtown Plaza and TCU Place. The Steering Committee and individuals who subscribed to receive project updates were advised of this report being presented to the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation.

The table below summarizes the engagement opportunities and approximate number of participants. A detailed engagement summary is included as Attachment 4.

Event	Date	Approx. No. of Participants
Stakeholder Event No.1	November 15, 2016	45
Online Public Survey No.1	November 16 to December 11, 2016	2,800
Stakeholder Event No.2	February 15, 2017	50
Pop-Up Event	June 10, 2017	200
Online Public Survey No.2	June 2 to June 27, 2017	2,100
Stakeholder Event No. 3	January 25, 2018	20
Community Open House	March 27, 2018	400

The information gathered from the stakeholders, public, and steering committee members, as well as the knowledge and experience of the consultants, led to the development of the concept plan. The presentation of the recommended plan was well received at the final stakeholder event and community open house.

### **Communication Plan**

Stakeholders and the public will continue to be informed of the project as it moves into the next stages. A variety of communication tools will be utilized to ensure that effective and consistent communication and messaging are integrated into each phase once the project enters construction. Examples include targeted flyers, portable message boards, website updates, social media posts, PSAs and notifications through appropriate Community Associations and BIDs.

### **Policy Implications**

Implementation of the recommended land use and built form will require changes to the existing zoning districts within the study area, which ultimately require amendments to the zoning bylaw. The Administration will examine the changes needed to existing districts to achieve the desired land use elements in consultation with stakeholders prior to the consideration by City Council.

### **Financial Implications**

The planning level cost estimate provided by the consultant is \$14.3 million, including all construction elements, traffic accommodations, urban design improvements, and a 30% contingency. This estimate would be refined through the detailed design process. The Administration is updating the Major Transportation Funding Plan and this project will be considered for inclusion in the funding plan. It is anticipated that in late 2018 or early 2019 a report will be provided to City Council updating the projects and potential funding sources for the various projects. More details on the expected timing of each project will also be provided at that time.

### **Environmental Implications**

The Plan identifies opportunities to introduce low-impact-development to the streetscape such as bio-swales or rain gardens, to balance reduction in peak flows of storm water runoff.

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The overall impact of the recommendations of traffic characteristics, including the impacts on greenhouse gas emissions, has not been quantified at this time.

### **Safety/Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)**

The CPTED process will be followed as the project proceeds through the detailed design and implementation stages.

### **Other Considerations/Implications**

There are no privacy considerations or implications.

### **Due Date for Follow-up and/or Project Completion**

The Administration will bring forward funding options for the implementation of this concept plan when the Major Transportation Funding Plan update is provided to City Council.

### **Public Notice**

Public Notice pursuant to Section 3 of Policy No. C01-021, Public Notice Policy, is not required.

### **Attachments**

1. Imagine Idylwyld: Concept Design Report Executive Summary
2. Imagine Idylwyld - Summary of Recommendations
3. Functional Plans – Transportation - Idylwyld Drive – Recommended Plan
4. Engagement Summary (Appendix A.1)

### **Report Approval**

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Reviewed by: Jay Magus, Acting Director of Transportation  
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