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## Community Support Program – 2018 Comprehensive Review

### Recommendation

That the Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development and Community Services recommend to City Council:

1. That \$17,955 be retained by the Community Support Program to be allocated to the 2019 budget, and any surplus funds in excess of \$17,955 be returned to the Streetscape Reserve – Core BID;
2. That the Downtown Saskatoon Business Improvement District continue to manage the Community Support Program;
3. That the City Solicitor be requested to update the existing Memorandum of Agreement between the City of Saskatoon and the Downtown Saskatoon Business Improvement District until December 31, 2023, including reference to an oversight group performing the function of the Street Activity Steering Committee;
4. That the Community Support Program report to City Council on an annual basis through the Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development and Community Services; and
5. That the Administration, in collaboration with a future oversight group, report to Committee in a timely manner, on options for future operating, programming, and funding models for the Community Support Program.

### Topic and Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide a comprehensive review of the Community Support Program. The Community Support Program was approved for permanent status by City Council in August 2015, and this review is an update on the first three years of operation.

### Report Highlights

1. The Community Support Program (CSP) key indicators of success continue to show positive movement.
2. Data shows a stronger partnership and increased collaboration with the Saskatoon Police Service (Police Service) through appropriate dispatch and call attendance.
3. The Street Activity Baseline Study (Baseline Study) Update 2018 results show that perceptions of safety have stayed consistent with previous studies at 85%.
4. Of the surveyed business respondents, 88% would like to see the CSP continue. The majority of responding businesses, community, and involved service providers also support further operations on Mondays and extended hours.

5. All three participating Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) support the continued operation of the CSP.

### **Strategic Goal**

This report supports the City of Saskatoon's (City) Strategic Goal of Quality of Life by ensuring Saskatoon is a safe, welcoming, and well-managed people place. This goal is achieved by reducing and preventing crime in the city, increasing public perceptions of safety, and identifying health and safety as top priorities.

The recommendations also support the long-term strategy to reduce and prevent crime and provide protective services in the Downtown and adjacent areas.

### **Background**

At its December 5, 2011 meeting, City Council approved, in principle, the provision of civilian-uniformed community support officers to patrol the Riversdale, Broadway, and Downtown BIDs for a two-year term. The Street Activity Steering Committee was established to guide the new CSP.

Significant research was performed to gather the information needed to craft a “made in Saskatoon” program. The Baseline Study was conducted in 2011, and through a combination of online and in-person surveys, focus groups, and interviews, a clear picture of what was happening on the streets of Saskatoon was compiled. The results of this study informed the mandate, operations, and scope of the CSP. The Baseline Study was updated in 2013 and 2015 to track changes in perceptions of safety in the areas in which the CSP operates. This information was used to inform the management and operations of the CSP as guided by the Street Activity Steering Committee. Results were also used to establish key indicators of success for the CSP. The Baseline Study 2018 update has informed this report, and an excerpt is included in Attachment 1. The full report can be found at <https://www.saskatoon.ca/business-development/planning/neighbourhood-planning/neighbourhood-safety>.

At its June 9, 2014 meeting, City Council approved an extension of the CSP to December 31, 2015. In September 2015, City Council approved the permanent status of the CSP, with permanent funding from the Streetscape Reserve – Core BID, and requested that a comprehensive review be completed in 2018. Attachment 2 is a summary that explains the CSP, roles, and mandate. Attachment 3 is a graphic that explains and shows how the CSP fits into the crime prevention and reduction continuum in Saskatoon.

Program modifications and key indicators of success were established based on the Baseline Study Update 2015 and presented to City Council in 2015 when the CSP was approved for permanent status. Attachment 4 shows the status of all key indicators of success. Attachment 5 is the CSP Supervisor's report for January 2015 to June 2018. All statistics in this report are drawn from the Baseline Study 2018 Update, CSP data, and the Police Service data.

## Report

### Key Indicators of Success Show Positive Movement

The majority of key indicators showed a positive change. Of note is a 79% increase in business contacts. These are contacts made outside of a call for service, specifically to engage businesses on a regular basis. The number of calls and individuals served has also increased, with 33% more individuals served in the past year and a 59% increase in the issuance of bylaw tickets.

Response times were 9 minutes in 2017 and averaged 15 minutes in the first half of 2018. This is due to the increased number of calls (up 21%), the severity of the calls, and the number of concurrent calls. However, staff time in attendance has decreased by 13%, which speaks to the improved efficiencies and the increased awareness of users.

### Working in Partnership with Saskatoon Police Service

The connection between the CSP and the Police Service has been strengthened through improved communications and regular meetings. Since regular meetings began in 2015, the Police Service and the CSP have realized a more efficient use of staff resources, which is reflected in the statistics collected by both groups.

Dispatch data is captured differently by the two organizations. Since the CSP and the Police Service are working closer together, data from both is now interwoven and captured for each organization's needs.

In order to better capture and record the number of calls attended, the CSP is connected directly to the Police Service through Police Service radios. All CSP service requests are now funnelled through the Police Service Dispatch Centre which records the start and end of all incidents. When a call comes in to the CSP, they are stopped on the street, or they come across someone who is in need while on patrol, they radio the call in to the Police Service and then clear the call upon completion. These calls typically relate to suspicious persons, drunkenness, disturbances, and panhandling. Calls to the Police Service enable their movements to be tracked and data captured. These are recorded as dispatches to the CSP in the Police Service data, even though the majority of the calls are initiated by the CSP themselves. This data shows an increase in the percentage of total calls, from 55% in 2015 to 78% of all calls in 2017, that are dispatched to the CSP (see Attachment 6).

The CSP Key Indicators data (Attachment 4) separates out only the dispatches that come directly from the Police Service and have bypassed the CSP initially. These numbers are showing a 13% decrease, indicating that most of the calls for service are made directly to the CSP. Although these numbers are complex, it helps both the CSP and the Police Service keep track of dispatches and where there may be gaps or opportunities to improve service to the community.

Although there will always be calls that both the CSP and the Police Service will be required to attend, the number of calls that the Police Service are dispatching to the CSP that require further assistance by the Police Service is declining.

The CSP concluded 71% of the incidents on their own, without the assistance of any other service provider, including the Police Service. If the CSP did not exist, it is unlikely that other providers would be able to match its response time.

#### Reported Perceptions of Safety - Street Activity Baseline Study Update 2018

Overall, 85% of residents feel safe or somewhat safe walking and cycling in Saskatoon. This is a slight decline (2%) from 2015 but considered statistically negligible according to the consultants.

Reported perceptions of safety vary somewhat between the BIDs. Perceptions for the Broadway BID have remained consistent, both day and night. The Downtown BID perceptions have declined marginally from 2015 during the day but night numbers have remained the same as 2015. The Riversdale BID has seen a statistically significant increase in feelings of safety during the day, as well as at night.

#### Awareness and Levels of Business and Community Support

Of responding businesses, 79% are aware of the CSP and 88% of these believe it should continue. In addition, 75% of those who would like to see its continuation believe that adding days and hours to the current schedule is important.

Of responding residents, 54% are aware of the CSP. This is a statistically significant increase (41%) over 2013. Of responding residents who have heard of the CSP, 39% believe that the CSP is effective (up from 35% in 2015 and 30% in 2013).

Almost 100% of the vulnerable persons interviewed were familiar with the CSP and had positive comments about how they had been helped by CSP officers.

All of the service providers that responded were aware of the CSP. Of the 83% of service providers surveyed that have interacted with the CSP, 71% indicated the CSP is effective, which is an increase from the 42% that rated the CSP as effective in 2015. Additionally, 83% of service providers would also like the CSP to operate with extended days and hours.

#### Level of Business Improvement District Support

The Downtown, Broadway, and Riversdale BID Executive Directors have indicated support of the CSP. However, the three BIDs continue to maintain that funding should be drawn from the general mill rate portion of the parking meter revenue rather than the Streetscape portion. Although other avenues for funding have been explored, an alternate funding source has not been identified at this time.

### Community Support Program Operations and Oversight

City Council established the membership and mandate of the Street Activity Steering Committee, which oversees the CSP. The Street Activity Steering Committee includes the Executive Directors of the Downtown, Broadway, and Riversdale BIDs; a representative from the Saskatoon Anti-Poverty Coalition; the Police Service; and support from the City Solicitor's Office and the Community Services Department.

As part of the City's review of Advisory Committees, the Street Activity Steering Committee is to be disbanded and its activities undertaken by the proposed Community Wellbeing and Safety Committee. As the Street Activity Steering Committee provides active oversight to the CSP, it is anticipated that this role will continue to be needed. Therefore, it is recommended that when the existing Memorandum of Agreement between the City of Saskatoon and the Downtown Saskatoon Business Improvement District is updated, to continue the CSP operations, it include reference to an oversight group performing the function of the Street Activity Steering Committee. This oversight group could be struck as an ad hoc committee by the Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development and Community Services, and be given a mandate to oversee the CSP; develop the CSP improvements, including future oversight of the CSP; and report annually to the Standing Policy Committee. The appointment of this ad hoc committee would allow for a long-term solution for the CSP oversight to be developed, in alignment with the changes proposed to the City's advisory committee structure.

It is also recommended that the Memorandum of Agreement include language recognizing the need for the oversight group and the City Administration to explore alternative operating and funding models that may assist with growing or enhancing the program in the future.

### **Options to the Recommendation**

An option exists for City Council to request all surplus funds to be either retained by the CSP or returned to the Streetscape Reserve – Core BID.

An option also exists for City Council to not appoint an ad hoc committee to provide oversight to the CSP. This is not recommended by the Administration or the current members of the Street Activity Steering Committee.

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

The Street Activity Steering Committee actively participates in the management of the CSP, and contributed to the preparation of the Baseline Study Update 2018.

The general public and a variety of local stakeholders contributed in the preparation of the Baseline Study Update 2018. A full copy of this report can be found on [www.saskatoon.ca](http://www.saskatoon.ca) under Neighbourhood Safety.

### **Communication Plan**

The Street Activity Steering Committee members will update their organizations directly. The CSP will inform service provider groups of the updated Baseline Study report. This

report is available on the City website: <https://www.saskatoon.ca/business-development/planning/neighbourhood-planning/neighbourhood-safety>

### **Financial Implications**

The Memorandum of Agreement between the City and the Downtown BID established up to \$450,000 annually, plus GST, as payment for services to manage and operate the CSP; the CSP has operated within this budget since 2011. The budget proposal for 2019 is \$477,955.

The amount of \$460,000 has been included for program costs in the 2019 preliminary operating budget, funded from the Streetscape Reserve – Core BID. However, the CSP needs additional funds to address wage increases, vehicular maintenance, software licensing fees, and an increase in Canada Pension Plan costs.

In February of 2016, the CSP returned \$131,069 to the Streetscape Reserve – Core BID. This was in accordance with the end of the existing Memorandum of Agreement at the time. The current Memorandum of Agreement ends December 31, 2018, and the CSP is requesting that \$17,955 be retained from any surplus to bring the identified \$460,000 budget up to the \$477,955 that is proposed for 2019. Any surplus above this amount would be returned to the Streetscape Reserve – Core BID.

At this time, the surplus is estimated at \$100,000. However, there are pending expenses for computer replacement, body armour for new staff, and the potential need for larger office space. By year end, the surplus is estimated to be closer to \$45,000.

### **Other Considerations/Implications**

There are no policy, environmental, privacy, or CPTED implications or considerations.

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

The CSP will continue to produce annual reports for Committee and City Council. A detailed report on budget, operational, and programing needs, into the future, will be submitted to City Council in June of 2019.

### **Public Notice**

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

### **Attachments**

1. Street Activity Baseline Study Update 2018 – excerpts only
2. Community Support Program Summary
3. Crime Prevention and Reduction Continuum
4. Community Support Program Key Indicators of Success Summary
5. Community Support Program Report – January 1, 2015, to June 30, 2018
6. Saskatoon Police Service Dispatch Data

**Report Approval**

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